



EVANGELISATION ET SALUT - cinq documents de travail de la Commission VI de l'U.S.G.

Dès l'annonce du thème du prochain Synode des évêques un petit groupe de travail de la Commission des Missions (Commission V?) s'est mis à l'oeuvre pour étudier les problèmes de "l'évangélisation du monde contemporain". Une réunion commune de la Commission VI et de SEDOS a permis de dégager la problématique du base. (cf. SEDOS Documentation 73/283-289)

Pour dépasser les simples questions de méthode, il a paru essentiel au groupe de diriger ses recherches vers "Le Salut: notion centrale du mystère chrétien" (Bundervoet). Deux membres du groupe ont essayé d'analyser la situation du monde contemporain tandis que trois autres ont cherché dans la Bible, la théologie et les documents de Vatican II une doctrine du salut qui puisse donner ses vraies perspectives à l'évangélisation. Le P.G. Peeters, M.S.F., les a constamment aidés de ses conseils.

Les premiers résultats de ces travaux ont été remis aux membres de la Commission VI, lors de la réunion du 12 septembre, sous le titre: EVANGELISATION ET SALUT:

José Pablo Basterrechea, F.S.C., La notion du salut. Quelques aspects psychologiques du problème;

Atanasio H. van der Weijden, O.S.A., Situazioni concrete di non-salvezza nel mondo di oggi;

G. Linssen, CICM., Evangelisation in Biblical Context;

A. Bundervoet, M.S.C., Salut: notion centrale du mystère chrétien;

L. Kaufmann, W.F., The Theology of Salvation in the Documents of Vatican II.

Le Secrétariat de l'U.S.G. s'est entendu avec SEDOS (cf. SEDOS Doc. 73/608) pour que le bulletin hebdomadaire de SEDOS assure une diffusion plus large à ces documents de travail qui, sans être parfaits ou définitifs, peuvent être des instruments de recherche pour d'autres missionnaires, engagés dans la même réflexion. Le Bulletin du 5 Octobre a déjà publié le texte du Frère J.P. Basterrechea, F.S.C. Nous continuons aujourd'hui et dans les semaines à venir avec la publication des autres textes qui, en partie, ont pu être retravaillés en vue de cette diffusion plus large.

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THE THEOLOGY OF SALVATION - perspectives of Vatican II.

As theme for the Synod of Bishops in 1974 Pope Paul VI has chosen "Evangelisation" and he has invited Episcopal Conferences to study the conditions and implications of Evangelisation in the world of today. Since evangelisation is the proclamation of the message of salvation, our understanding of it depends on how we see the salvation we have to announce, to live and communicate.

Fortunately this study has been greatly stimulated by the Bangkok Conference on Salvation Today, convened December 29th 1972 - January 8th 1973 by the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches. The careful preparation and the lively debates of this important ecumenical meeting awakened many of us to a clearer grasp of the Good News of Liberation and Salvation proclaimed once for all in the Gospel to be relived ever anew in the changing circumstances of history. Some have even opposed Bangkok's emphasis on today's needs and aspirations to what they consider as Vatican II's narcissistic concern with the Church.

Is this contrast real or merely due to our already having forgotten the spirit and basic orientations of Vatican II? It is a rewarding experience and a helpful preparation for the 1974 Synod to reread the documents of Vatican II in the new atmosphere created by Bangkok. May be Vatican II may still provide a useful frame of reference in 1974.

Vatican II was indeed a major event in the life of the church and of the world in the 20th Century. Christians realised that they had a message to offer to the world and the world listened expectantly because people felt understood and concerned in their deepest needs. What were the insights and perspectives which at the time seemed to open up new horizons and new hopes for church and world?

Salvation is liberation and ultimate fulfilment. Its message meets man's deepest questionings and aspirations in terms relevant to his experience and mental background. Jesus preached the Kingdom of Heaven; Paul re-framed the same message in terms of justification from sin and liberation from the curse of sin, death and law; John announced the Gospel of light, life and love to men lost in darkness, hatred and sin. The one reality of salvation is thus interpreted in terms of different anthropological and cosmological conceptions. Yet the living experience of salvation in the life, death and resurrection of Christ as well as in the life and spirit of the Christian community remains for all centuries and for all cultures the one common frame of reference. The living unity of salvation offers wide scope to a plurality of theologies of salvation.

For a thorough analysis of the theology (or theologies) of salvation in the documents of Vatican II, it would be necessary to study carefully the history and content of each document as well as the relation between the various documents. In the reading list which we submit here for further personal study, it may be sufficient to point out the common trends and themes. We hope that this simplified picture remains fundamentally true to the basic orientations of the Council.

A. A Theology in terms of salvation history.

The pastoral orientation of Vatican II dictated its theological method in which the analysis of the contemporary situation is an integral part of theological reflection. Salvation history is not only derived from the past; it takes place here and now in the church and in the world of which the present situation is to be seen and understood in the continuity of salvation history.

Theology is the reflection of the church on the meaning of salvation history and on Christ's place in human history. The teaching of the church is centred on the mystery of Christ in the history of salvation. Christian education introduces young people into the life-stream of that history.

Salvation history occurs today in the liturgy of the Church, in its teaching in its life as a community of Christians and in the life of all men.

Salvation history has been always and remains an intimate union of salvific events and prophetic interpretation of them. The Church reveals in its teaching the mystery of God's love for men which is manifest in its life and activity.

B. An analysis of salvation history.

1. The divine plan of salvation.

Salvation history is the realisation in human history of the divine plan of salvation as it embraces all men of all times. The key texts of Vatican II derive the whole of ecclesiology and of missiology from God's design to communicate Himself to men in merciful love.

2. Man to be saved.

God carries out His plan of love despite man's rebellion and sin. He saves man from sin and its dreadful consequences in the life of the individual and of society. Fallen man's real situation is marked by sin; sickness, ignorance, oppression and death are the consequences of sin. Sin is embodied in dehumanising structures; it manifests itself in economic conflicts, in international tensions, in the armament race and in war; it affects the cultural life of man and the family.

Salvation will thus necessarily be liberation from sin, from oppression and from death; that is, it signifies reconciliation and redemption. Man's situation is full of paradoxes and of internal contradictions. Fully human solutions have to be found to his conflicts, to his most basic questionings and aspirations. The whole man has to be saved and brought to fulfilment.

3. The dimensions of salvation.

Man's salvation has to be seen at the same time in relation to God and in relation to man himself.

a) Salvation in relation to God.

Salvation is a divine initiative revealed by God; man's duty is to accept the offer of salvation and to take an active part in the saving mission entrusted to the Church.

In relation to God salvation is communion with Father, Son and Holy Spirit; it is participation in the divine life, i.e. it is a life of the Spirit in men through faith, hope and charity; it is intimate union with Christ and knowledge of His mystery; it is the Kingdom of God among men. The glory of God the Father is to be achieved in Christ. "That glory consists in this: that men knowingly, freely and gratefully accept what God has achieved perfectly through Christ, and manifest it in their whole life." (P02)

b) Salvation in relation to man himself.

The re-established communion with the source of life and love transforms man in a new life and leads to a new situation among men marked by personal fellowship, genuine brotherhood, unity, peace and justice. The deeper the communion with God, the stronger becomes the mutual brotherhood as well as the inner freedom, truth and peace. Thus human dignity is restored and man relates all reaction to God's praise.

4. Salvation history and eschatology.

Salvation is given and realised in a history which embraces past, present and future; it takes place in history and yet transcends history. The Kingdom of God has its beginning here on earth and its consummation in heaven; the present reality of salvation already given is a sign and pledge of the world to come, liturgy is a fore-taste of the fulfilment. God intends to appropriate the whole world into a new creation, initially here on earth, fully on the last day; the pilgrim church on earth tends to the heavenly glory and to the full revelation of divine salvation. Eschatological hope gives strength and dynamism to the whole life of the church on earth; it becomes particularly manifest in the charism of the religious life and of priestly celibacy as well as in the life of the Christian family.

This situation of pilgrimage and hope involves a necessary tension between the present reality and future fulfilment; it involves serious problems as to the right relation between humanisation and divinisation, as well as between the immanent (temporal) and transcendent (eternal) aspects of salvation. Some men limit their

horizon to the present world and seek salvation exclusively through human efforts in human history, as if the hope of the beyond limited the effort in the here and now of human history. At the other extreme, Christians may be tempted to neglect their present duties while awaiting eternal salvation, thus provoking the indignation of atheists and humanists. In reality, faith in Christ, hope in His Kingdom, love of God, stimulate the active involvement of Christians in social, economic and political programmes aiming at justice, peace and progress. By such activities, Christians participate in the saving mission of the Church and in the spread of Christ's Kingdom.

There is a close link between humanisation and divinisation. Spiritual values and religion have a deep influence on society. The Gospel reveals the full dignity of man. Love is the sign of the messianic kingdom. Salvation must prove its reality and power through the renewal of the temporal and secular order of human values and human cultures. The laity have a special role to play in the salvation of the temporal order.

The intimate union between the temporal and spiritual, between the human and divine and between the present and future sets the right perspective for the mission of Bishops and priests, for the role of Christian education, of Catholic schools and universities, of Catholic Action.

#### 5. Salvation through Christ.

The history of salvation culminates in Christ. The work of salvation was completed in the mystery of the Cross, in the Paschal mystery of the Passion, of the Resurrection and Ascension. Christ reveals to men what salvation is while accomplishing it, at the same time effecting reconciliation and redemption for all men.

From the beginning of the history of fallen man, all grace is given in anticipation of Christ the Redeemer ("intuitu Christi" L.G.2). His incarnation tightens the bonds of human solidarity. He inaugurates the Kingdom of heaven on earth. The whole universe is re-established in Him. Christ sent his life-giving Spirit at Pentecost to carry on His saving work.

#### 6. The role of the Church in the history of salvation.

Christ has instituted the Church as universal sacrament of salvation. Sometimes "sacramentum salutis" in the Council texts underlines the mystery of the Church's divine-human constitution; most of the time it expresses the Church's mission to the world.

"Sacrament of salvation" means "sign of salvation". The visible reality of salvation experienced in the Church becomes a sign for all men. The holiness of the Church is a sign of the presence of the Spirit in the life of Christians. Certain charismata like religious life or priestly celibacy have special power to reveal the ultimate

meaning of salvation.

The Church is necessary for salvation because it is called to share in Christ's own salvific mission. Its presence in the world is a mission of salvation. Solidarity with all men is the basis of its saving activity.

The salvific mission of the Church comprises the exercises of prayer and dialogue. The Church announces the Good News of salvation and actualizes it in its life and liturgy, especially in the Eucharist. Relating earthly goods and human institutions to man's total salvation it humanises the economic and political world.

Like Christ, the Church saves through the Cross. The way of the Gospel and of the Apostles is not the way of this world. Church structures are to be organised in a way best fitting to this work of salvation which is a call to freedom. The Church only claims the right to love and serve.

The Church knows that Christ's saving mission and His action is not limited to its visible boundaries. Separated churches and communities have a positive significance in the mystery of salvation. Even in non-Christian religions Christ's light and love are already present and His Spirit is at work. His grace reaches out to atheists. "Since Christ died for all men and since the ultimate vocation of man is in fact one and divine, we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit is in a manner known only to God offering to every man the possibility of being associated with this (Christ's) paschal mystery." (G.S. 22)

In a unique way salvation is shown in the life and mystery of Mary. The absolute simplicity of her life reveals to the full what Christ's salvation is to achieve in the whole Church and in all men.

7. The place of evangelisation in the mission of the Church.

Within the activity of the Church evangelisation in general and preaching the gospel to "peoples and groups who do not yet believe in Christ" (AG6) in particular play a central part.

"The apostolate of the Church and of all her members is primarily designed to manifest Christ's message by words and deeds and to communicate His grace to the world." (AA6)

"The gospel has truly been a leaven of liberty and progress in human history, even in its temporal sphere, and always proves itself a leaven of brotherhood, of unity and of peace." (AG8)

The evangelisation of the world is the essential task of the Church. It comes first among the many duties of Bishops, of priests, and of all Christians. Evangelisation is not only preaching, but comprises word and deed. "The Church in its teaching, life

and worship, perpetuates and hands on to all generations all that it itself is, all that it believes." (DV8) Evangelisation is described both as means and purpose of missionary activity; through the proclamation of the Gospel the People of God is called together.

Evangelisation requires a context of freedom and religious liberty. Its methods must conform to truth and to the Gospel. "The truth cannot impose itself except by virtue of its own truth." (DH1) The use of modern means of social communication must respect this law.

Dialogue and Christian Witness should not be opposed to evangelisation. The gospel makes its presence felt in many ways though sometimes the stress is on witness, at other times on the spoken word. It is in this context that we understand the use of charismatic gifts.

The Synod of 1974 will have to study how to make the gospel relevant today. Vatican II already insisted on the need to learn from the world of today so that the Good News may once again reach the ears and hearts of men.

8. A comprehensive view of salvation and evangelisation.

From our rapid analysis there emerges a comprehensive view of salvation and of evangelisation. Salvation is not merely an individual affair between man and God. Full personal development can only be achieved in community; salvation is inseparably personal and communitarian. The God-spel is a force of renewal in the family, in economic and social life, in the national and international community.

Evangelisation accordingly concerns man and the human community, human solidarity and man's tasks in this world. The gospel preaches peace and international cooperation; it relates temporal tasks to their eternal fulfilment and embraces the whole range of human efforts and aspirations in God's plan of salvation.

CONCLUSION.

An enormous wealth of insight lies in the documents of Vatican II. For the 1974 Synod it would seem a matter of urgency to propose a line of concrete action for the proclamation and actualisation of salvation in the world of today, rather than to try to produce an ever more polished doctrine of Salvation.

The doctrine of the Church is only understood from its life. Instead of starting to implement our previous programmes of reform and aggiornamento we are easily tempted to polish our theories still further. How will the world come to believe in our programmes and promises if we do not put them into practice?



This does not mean that Vatican II offers ready-made solutions and concrete programmes to the circumstances of today. It advocated local study and local application of its guidelines to the concrete needs of each region.

Today we are more critically aware of certain limitations of the Council which did not always live up to its high programme. An occasional lapsus proves that the Council Fathers did not always maintain their comprehensive view of salvation. Some texts stress too exclusively "eternal" salvation. Occasionally the Council also refers to "salvation of souls" while in other texts it more correctly refers to "salvation of men".

Vatican II has too easily used the indicative when a strong imperative was necessary. The ecclesiastical style often states ideals as if they were already reality; it hides difficulties and tensions rather than bringing them into focus; it compares unfairly the ideal of the Church with the sorry reality of the world, and goes on to preach to the "lost sheep" as if from outside, from a secure haven of salvation. It might be necessary for the next Synod to underline the conflicts and tensions in the Church; the present crisis might at least help us to realise that together with everyone else we are in trouble and have to be saved from the same evils.

This sense of solidarity with all men would give to our message of salvation a more authentic ring. The message is addressed not to outsiders in the first place, but to us. It will never be taken seriously by the world until we demonstrate its impact and effective power not merely in words but in lives that have been inspired and changed by Christ's ideals and values.

24th September 1973

Fr. Leonard Kaufmann, wf

(See reference list next page)

Theology of Salvation - perspectives of Vatican II

A Reading Reference List to the Council Documents.

List of abbreviations used:

- A.A. "Apostolicam Actuositatem" (18.11.1965)  
Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity
- A.G. "Ad gentes" (7.12.1965)  
Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity
- C.D. "Christus Dominus" (28.10.1965)  
Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church
- D.H. "Dignitatis humanae" (7.12.1965)  
Declaration on Religious Freedom
- D.V. "Dei Verbum" (18.11.1965)  
Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation
- G.E. "Gravissimum educationis" (28.10.1965)  
Declaration on Christian Education
- G.S. "Gaudium et spes" (7.12.1965)  
Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World
- I.M. "Inter mirifica" (4.12.1963)  
Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication
- L.G. "Lumen gentium" (21.11.1964)  
Dogmatic Constitution on the Church
- N.A. "Nostra aetate" (28.10.1965)  
Declaration on Relationship of Church to non-Christian Religions
- O.E. "Orientalium Ecclesiarum" (21.11.1964)  
Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches
- O.T. "Optatam Totius" (28.10.1965)  
Decree on Priestly Formation
- P.C. "Perfectae caritatis" (28.10.1965)  
Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of Religious Life
- P.O. "Presbyterorum ordinis" (7.12.1965)  
Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests
- S.C. "Sacrosanctum Concilium" (4.12.1963)  
Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
- U.R. "Unitatis redintegratio" (21.11.1964)  
Decree on Ecumenism

A. A theology in terms of salvation history

The mystery of Christ in the history of salvation as the centre  
of theology: SC 16; OT 14, 16; DV 2,24  
of the teaching of the church: SC 35; CD 30  
of Christian education: GE 2

Salvation history occurs today

in the liturgy: SC 6,7,102; PO 5; LG 3; AG 16; OT 4,8,16  
in the teaching of the church: DV 8,21,25; PO 4  
in the life of Christians: OT 14, 16; PO 14  
in the life of all men: LG 2,16; OT 14; GS 22

Intimate union between salvific events and prophetic interpretation:  
DV 2,14; AA 6; AG 6,9,10; GS 45

B. An analysis of salvation history

1. The divine plan of salvation: SC 5; LG 16 (Key-texts: LG 2; DV 2; AG 2)

2. Man to be saved.

- Situation of sin: AG 8,9,13,14  
Dehumanizing structures: GS 25  
Economic conflicts: GS 62,66  
International tensions: GS 83  
Armament race: GS 81  
War: GS 77,79,80  
Contradictions in cultural life: GS 56  
Family conflicts: GS 47,51

- Salvation as liberation

from sin: AG 8,9,13,14  
from oppression: AG 12  
from Death: AG 12

- Searching for fully human solutions to man's  
conflicts: GS 11

basic questionings: NA 1; GS 3,4,10,21,41  
aspirations: GS 9

- The whole man to be saved: GS 2,11,22,31

3. The dimensions of salvation

a) Salvation in relation to God

Divine initiative: DH 1

Man's response: DH 1,2; DV 5

Man's active part in salvation: DH 14; AA 3; AG 14, 15,21,36

Salvation as communion with God: AG 2,3,7,13; LG 1,8,40; GS 19,21,41; UR 7,15;  
PC 5,6; PO 6; DV 1,2,4,6

as participation in the divine life: LG 2,9; PO 2; AG 14,15;AA 4  
as union with Christ: AA 4  
as knowledge of Christ's mystery: AG 7,8,13,14  
as Kingdom of God among men: LG 5

The glory of God in the salvation of man: AG 7; PO 2

b) Salvation in relation to man himself

A new life: LG 7

A new situation

- of fellowship: GS 23,24,42,93; UR 3
- of brotherhood: AG 3,4,6,7,8,11,12,21; DV 10; UR 7
- of unity: SC 26, 48; OT 9; NA 1; LG 1,8; GS 83-90; UR 1,2,4,12
- of peace: AG 5,11; GS 77-82
- of justice: AG 12
- of inner freedom: AG 5,8; DH 1
- of truth: AG 7
- of human dignity: AG 12; DH 1,9,11,12

Relating all creation to God's praise: LG 36

4. Salvation history and eschatology

A history embracing past, present and future: LG 2,3,9,48; DV 2,14

In history and yet transcending history: LG 9,44

The eschatological perspective

- of the Kingdom of God: LG 5,48,50
- of salvation: PO 16; SC 8
- of the new creation: AA 5
- of the pilgrim church: LG 48,49

The dynamism of eschatological hope

- in the whole life of the church: LG 48
- in the religious life: LG 43-47; PC 12,13,15
- in priestly celibacy: PO 16
- in the life of the Christian family: LG 35

The necessary tension between present and future: LG 31,35,44,48

- Deviations - Christians neglecting their present duties: GS 20,36,43
- man limiting their horizons to the present: GS 19,20

Active involvement of Christians for justice etc.: GS 21,34,38,39,40,43,57,72

The full scope of the saving mission of the church: AG 12; AA 2; GS 39; LG 33,36

Link between humanisation and divinisation: LG 40,46; AA 2,5,16,29; DH 6

Influence of religion on society: DH 4; CD 19

Human dignity: DH 12

Love: AA 8; LG 9

A power of renewal

of the temporal and secular order: LG 31,34,35,36; AA 7,13,14,16

of human values: LG 13,17,36

of human cultures: LG 13,17,36

The special role of the laity: LG 31,41; AA passim

Perspective on the mission

of Bishops: CD 12,19

of priests: PO 6

of Christian education: GE 1,2,3,5; of Catholic schools: GE 8; and of universities: GE 10

of Catholic Action: AA 20

## 5. Salvation through Christ

The history of salvation culminating in Christ: DV 4

The incarnation: GS 22,32; AG 3

The Kingdom of God clearly visible in the person of Christ: LG 5

The mystery of the Cross: AG 3,5; DH 11

The Paschal mystery: SC 5; GS 38

The work of salvation and redemption: SC 5,6; NA 4; DV 2,4

All grace through Christ: DV 2; LG 2,16

The universe re-established in Christ: GS 45

The life-giving Spirit sent by Christ: LG 4,24,40,48; AG 4; UR 2, DV 17

## 6. The role of the Church in the history of salvation

The Church, universal sacrament of salvation: LG 1,8,9,26,44,46,48,52,59; SC 2,5,26;  
UR 3; GS 21,45; AG 1,5,15,20,21

The divine-human constitution of the Church: SC 2,5,26; LG 8,52,59

Sign of salvation for all men: LG 15; UR 2,4; AG 15,21; GS 21,92

Holiness of Christians: LG 39-47

Religious life: PC 12,13,15; LG 43-47

Priestly celibacy: PO 16

Necessity of the Church for salvation: LG 14; DH 1; AG 7

Its share in Christ's mission: SC 7; CD 3,22,23,25,32; AA 2,3; DH 14; IM 3

Its solidarity with all men: PO 3; GS 3

Announcing the Good News of salvation: SC 6,9,35

Actualizing it through - prayer: SC 53,83

- the liturgy: SC 9,10,12,48, especially through the Eucharist: LG 3; SC 47

- the life of Christians: SC 9,10,12

- dialogue: CD 13; GS 92; NA passim

Relating earthly goods to man's total salvation: CD 12; AA 29

Humanizing the economic and political world: GS 72,76

Salvation not through this world's ways: DH 11,12; GS 76, but by way of the Cross:  
LG 5,8,9,42; UR 4; AG 5

Church structures to be adjusted to the work of salvation: LG 18; CD 22,23,25,32

Claiming the right to love and serve: AG 12; DH 13; GS 42,76

Calling men to freedom: DH 1,2,4,14

Positive significance of separated churches and communities: UR 3; LG 15

The presence of the Spirit: LG 15

The presence of Christ's grace: LG 16; GS 22,41,92; AG 3,7,8,9,11; NA passim  
in non-Christian religions); LG 16; GS 22 (among atheists)

The mystery of Mary: LG 54-69

7. The place of evangelisation in the Church's mission.

Mission-evangelisation: AG 5

Evangelisation of non-Christians: AG 6

Influence of gospel on human history: AG 8

Evangelisation of world as essential task

of the whole church: DV 1,7; UR 2; GE proem.; AG 1,2,5,7,35; SC 6; LG 1,5,8

of Bishops: LG 19,21,23,25; CD 2,6,11; AG 6,29,38

of priests: LG 28; PO 4,10; AG 39

of all Christians: LG 10,11,12,17; AA 3; AG 14,15,21,36; DH 14

Evangelisation comprises word and deed: AA 6,16; AA 15; DV 8

Described as means and purpose of missionary activity: AG 6

Calling together all People of God: PO 2,4

Evangelisation and religious liberty: DH 2,3,10

The method of the gospel: DH 4,9,11,12,14

The use of modern means of social communication: IM 3,13

Evangelisation and dialogue: AG 11

Evangelisation and Christian witness: AG 11,12

Stress on witness: AG 6,11,12; GS 21,43,93

Stress on spoken word: AA 6,13

Charismatic gifts AA 3; LG 12

The need to learn from today's world: GS 40,44,48,62

Trying to reach the hearts of men: PO 4; GS 2,3

8. Comprehensive view of salvation and evangelisation

Salvation inseparably personal and communitarian: LG 2,15; GS 24-25

A force of renewal: in the family: GS 48  
    in economic and social life: GS 63-72  
    in national and international community: GS 75-90  
Evangelisation concerns the whole man: GS 24  
    the human community: GS 24,26,32  
    man's tasks in this world: GS 34,37,38,39,42,57  
    peace and international cooperation: GS 77,78,82,88,90  
Relating temporal tasks to their eternal fulfilment (cf. supra B.4)

CONCLUSION

The need for local study and application: GS 91  
A varying terminology - "eternal salvation": OE 26; DV 19  
    "salvation of souls": CD 19; DV 10  
    "Salvation of men" : AA 6,10  
Stating ideals as if already reality: GS 34; 57.

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Sedos Social Communications Work Group                      September, 1973  
 Common Effort Documentation Sheet n°7    APOSTOLIC COMMUNITY

The Sisters of Charity and Apostolic Community.

INTRODUCTION    Perhaps an indication that it has been useful is the fact that this series of reports was commented on favourably in the SCMM-T Roman Bulletin of June 15th '73

We are reproducing their analysis of main issues and also two reports on initiatives in which these Sisters are involved; it is especially encouraging for us to see that they value intercongregational experience.

The Sisters of Charity (not of St Vincent de Paul - the T in SCMM-T is for Tilburg, The Netherlands) have been in existence since 1832; they now number 2,700, are of six nationalities and work in 10 countries. They were founded for teaching and are mainly concerned with Christian Service in schools and hospitals. Wherever possible, they hand over ownership and management responsibility of their institutes to lay boards.

Those of us who have worked with Sister Thérèse Barnett and her central team, who have enjoyed their hospitality or shared their liturgy, know that they live their mission. We are grateful for this further sharing.

#### " 1. Apostolic Communities.

Major points from the discussion and the exchanges of information about the new forms:

a) It could be difficult to have a "lasting" bond when there was complete diversity of interests and tastes. But the community should be seen as a "family" rather than as a "task force" type of group. The family allows for an advanced diversity of interests and tasks among its members. Because these are bound together by a set of deeper, common bonds. Is not the common faith in Christ a powerful enough bond to unite people of different professions?

b) The person best fit to live in community is the person who can live on his/her own. This statement implies a typology of persons based on the community principle: a person who cannot live without the support of a community may be a liability rather than an asset to community building.

c) All communities need a constant input from their environment if they are to maintain a healthy atmosphere. In this sense, the diversity of tasks performed by its members in the environment of a community becomes a precious asset.

d) A number of institutes, consequently, have adopted a policy of building communities around the core values of faith (and its major expressions: love, acceptance etc) rather than around a task or a service or a function.

e) An apostolic community is more than a group. Sociologically, a healthy group is shy of admitting new members and, in any case, is very strict on their qualifications. This is often expressed in the evaluation of the candidates for membership - evaluation undertaken by group members. Not so



the apostolic community (which here becomes an "activation" of the Church) which sees, precisely in the new ideas of new members a contribution rather than a threat to the health of the community. Here evaluation becomes a two-way street: the "new" as well as the "old" are evaluated. And thus the old principle that the new have to conform to the old is discarded. f) Identity is thus not threatened by sharing. Unfortunately, not all religious Institutes have accepted this insight.

2. OUR LIFE AND WORK IN GURINHEM..... report by Sister Marie Lijnen scmm-t.

In the archdiocese of Joao Pessoa, several small communities have arisen in recent years under the impulse of the Bishop, Dom José. We have been asked by Dom José to work in Gurinhem. The starting point is to live our religious being, the pastoral work follows from this. We live in Gurinhem in the midst of people who have always been oppressed by the large landowners. Even the priest always had his own way. Poor people who are illiterate, who ascribe all that happens to God, who are very fatalistic, thus take little or no initiative. The most capable people leave this dry area for the big city, almost only the illiterate and weak stay behind. In the midst of these poor but good people we are trying to live the mystery of the Incarnation.

We could describe our being in Gurinhem in three steps, which however flow yet again into each other.

First step: our identification - discovery - being sisters.

It is a fact that we are rich people, and wherever we come we are very quick to want to give and teach while the poor just receive. When we went to live in Gurinhem, we began as though we were poor, on the advice of the Bishop, in this sense: we did not begin by organizing and giving everything, but with looking and seeing..... seeing so as to listen... and not doing anything. This seeing and listening was not a passive but an active involvement with the people. We have made many house visits, listening to joys and sorrows, absorbing their misery. We have gone with the people to their work. Sometimes we worked along with the people in the fields. Thus they had the courage to teach us all kinds of things, for example how to plant beans, maize and cotton, how to roast coffee, how to prepare maize. This gave them a feeling of self-esteem. An agricultural worker said once: "Today I have been your teacher; another time you can teach me."

So doing, we are discovering the gross injustices under which they are bent and the divisiveness that reigns among them. The process of raising consciousness and seeking for a human existence demands much time.

We have involved ourselves in the midst of this. We have quietly come to know the people with their work and concerns and a true friendship has grown. We are one big family. We are their Sisters. We learn from them and they from us. We want to live with them as Christ lived with his townspeople. We want to give witness to evangelical living, to love as equals, not from above. We pay much care to our community life in order to be a sign of unity.

- we pray together an hour mornings, meditating especially on the Gospel and also on the life of the people. The Spirit of God is already at work in these people. Our task is to discover the plan of God for these people.

Soc. Comm. Work Group: CEDS n°7

If we are sometimes discouraged, something always comes up from among the people that gives us new courage. An example: at the end of the year we asked ourselves "What has changed in the mentality since we came here?" At first we were disappointed. Then a small group of youth came to us to speak about a family in need. We were happy that they are starting to see needs by themselves.

- we hold regular reviews. Even the problems that we have heard on that day are discussed with each other, in order to keep informed about everything. The people always consider us as a trinity! If you are out alone, they ask after the other two; if we are two, then they ask after the third!
- we have found a priest who coaches us in group living.
- we do the work together and have a system of taking turns for this.
- twice a year we go to a meeting of small communities who are doing the same work as ourselves, where our lives are very openly discussed.
- for our prayer life we are seeking help from the Benedictine sisters, who also live as a small group among the people.

Second step: the forming of small groups.

a) We are trying to get the people to unite themselves in small groups.

Already formed are:

- a group of teachers
- a few Bible-study groups
- a group of agricultural workers
- a group of catechists
- a youth group
- a group for nursing
- a singing chorus
- a group learning to sew
- a group responsible for the maintenance of the church.

Most of the groups are still without leaders and have been formed under our encouragement. They shall have to choose their own leaders themselves. Up till now this has been difficult.

We must be careful not to make decisions in the place of the people. It is not possible to speak of human promotion if they do not have the responsibility themselves and if we just let them accomplish our programmes.

We must also start from their level of consciousness and not from ours; we must have patience, wait for their growth and not give ready-made decisions. This is very difficult for us! We are trying to draw them out, to stimulate, to talk with the people everywhere, at home, in the street, in the shops, at their meetings, so that the groups can really begin from the base and become real "comunidades de base."

b) We would like to bring those who are responsible for the various groups to a greater deepening in the Gospel. We want to analyse with them what is happening in the groups, in the community, to discover what the Gospel, what Christ says to us concerning these facts. They express this in their popular language and so are sent back to their group where they pass on the Gospel message in a language that we do not know but which is really rooted in the reality of their lives.

Soc. Comm. Work Group: CEFS n°7

Third step: the promotion of brotherly service in the groups.

We want to help the people see and bring them to the realization that service to the members of one's family, to neighbours, is service to God, the true service of God. We are stimulating them to come to grips with community problems together. For example: the improvement of a road, health problems, agricultural land, salaries, illiteracy etc.

We are not the ones who teach, nurse, lead the groups and give catechism lessons, but the people who are prepared by us. Then the community can go along by itself; it can go ahead without us. And then our community can go to other deprived people, always maintaining contact however with those responsible for the groups in Gurinhem.

This is our life in Gurinhem.

We are also called upon by others outside. Petri gives orientations in the Casa Maternal in Mulungu and has already singing courses in our zone for the coaching of teachers. Our Bishop said to us when we went: "You are not going to Gurinhem as pastors, neither as helpers for the priests, but to live with and for the people, as the serving church and not the institutional one." And his secretary, Father Everaldo, said to us: "You are going as stimulators of the faith. What you need most of all for this is faith."

....We have faith in this.....

### 3. An Inter-Congregational Formation in North Sumatra..... Sister Elizabeth Tjia writes to Mother General, Sister Thérèse Mary Barnett.

Since August 1970 there has been functioning in Pematang Siantar a centre where each year the following activities take place:

- .. a 2-month course for first-year novices
- two two-month courses for second-year novices
- .. courses for professed Sisters
- 7 Indonesian and 2 Dutch retreats.

The overall responsibility for the centre is entrusted to Fr Ferdinand Knoops ofm cap., who works with a team of three other Capuchin Fathers and four Sisters from different congregations. There are also three laymen and a friar on the staff.

At present 7 Congregations of Sisters are concerned with the project: the Sisters of Charity (Tilburg), Sisters of Schijndel, Sisters of St Joseph of Amersfoort, and Franciscan Sisters of Dongen, Breda, Adenhout and Bennebroek. They contribute equally to the upkeep of the programme and in addition there is a fixed fee for candidates.

It is still hard to find staff for the centre, and there is rotation of the faculty members: the variety of the programme necessitates specialisations... Holy Scripture, Liturgy, History of the Church, Psychology and Sociology, Music and Singing, Hygiene and Gymnastics. Community life gets due attention; for the first-year novices emphasis is on vocation and living in common, and for those in second year, emphasis is rather on the vows.

It is one of the aims of the centre to give Sisters a wide view on religious

life, to enable sharing of ideas and mutual appreciation in pursuit of a common ideal. The results are noticeable when the students return to their own communities: they have matured and been enriched.

The daily timetable includes 4 or 5 class periods, 1½ hours of study, joint prayer and domestic work (including kitchen and laundry) allotted to groups.

The Sisters on the staff live in community and arrange their life together according to the demands made on them by the work.

The property is far from town and has an enormous compound which serves the retreatants looking for quiet and solitude. There is accomodation for fifty participants in the courses.

An interesting feature of the courses for novices is that when the noviciate is over, they come back to the Centre to discuss and evaluate what they have found; they meet first in small groups and then all together.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE:

For the time being at any rate, the Group does not intend to produce any more accounts of this kind on innovations in community living and approaches to community apostolate.

We do feel that there is a great deal to be learnt from the contributions that have been so generously put at our disposal for the advantage of the whole SEDOS membership. In due course, and we hope before too long, we shall prepare our own analysis of the content of this series and communicate the same to you.

Just as this text is being finished, our attention has been called to the FSC (Brothers of Christian Schools) publication "Formation", vol.19,n°1(1972). It is prepared for private circulation only and has come into the SEDOS shelves. It is full of interesting reflections on changes in community life and on the modifications they have induced in relations, authority, communication and in prayer. It is very valuable in a theoretical sort of way and, since it carries articles by old friends like Sister Helen Connolly and Brother Michel Sauvage fsc, and since it is edited by our faithful colleague in translation, Brother David Leo fsc, it is a sort of family album.

## LISTS OF DOCUMENTS RECEIVED DURING SEPTEMBER compiled by Sr. Agnetta, SSps.

I. Internal Documents

<u>Code No.</u>	<u>Institute</u>	<u>Title of Document (number of pages in brackets)</u>
1.328	SCMM-M	Black Christians must liberate whites, by M. Buthelezi (6)
1.329	Ibid.	Authority in the Society (7)
1.330	SJ	Self-Evaluation and Organizational Growth, by O. Summerton, SJ (12 plus charts)
1.331	FSC	Objectives and Style of the General Chapter of 1976, by Bro. Ch. Henry, FSC. (8) also in French.
1.332	SA	Justice in the World. (24) also in French.
1.333	Ibid.	National "Justice and Peace" Commissions and Regional Services (7)
1.334	Ibid.	The Faith of Christ. (4) also in French.
1.335	SCMM-M	SCMM Addresses. September 1973. (14)
1.336	Ibid.	SCMM Popular Reports of the Districts. (65)

II. External Documents

<u>Code No.</u>	<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Title of Document</u>
4.1049	RSAT, Tanzania	General Meeting 1973: Minutes. (7)
4.1050	Ibid.	Contracts of Missionary Institutes with Local Ordinaries in Tanzania (5)
4.1051	Ibid.	Contracts of Missionary Institutes with Local Ordinaries: A Study of their financial agreements-June 1973 (4)
4.1052	Ibid.	Activites 1972/73 (4)
4.1053	Ibid.	Missionary Commitment (4)
4.1054	Ibid.	Planning for the Church in Africa for the 1980s, by Bishop McCauley. (2)
4.1055	Ibid.	Contracts of Missionary Institutes with Local Ordinaries: Appendix 2. (4)
4.1056	Ibid.	Tanzania in the 70's: Is it drifting towards Unbelief? (14)
4.1057	Ibid.	Religious, ecclesiastical and other related attitudes of students in University College, by Richard Walsh, (16)
4.1058	Research Institute of the Lutheran Church, Finland	School-age ethical norms and their background, by Timo Vuorinen. (10)

External Documents (Cont.)

<u>Code No.</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Title of Document (number of pages in brackets)</u>
4.1059	Research Inst. of the Lutheran Church, Finland	An Evangelising revival movement, by Julia Kauppinen(9)
4.1060	Ibid.	The Research Institute of the Lutheran Church in Finland (brochure). (3)
4.1061	UN	World Population Year 1974: A Partnership between the United Nations and Nongovernmental Organizations(2)
4.1062	WCCU	1973 Yearbook (16)
4.1063	World Bank	Trends in developing countries, 1973 (72)
4.1064	WCC	Patterns of Ministry, by S.G. Mackie, A book review.(2)
4.1065	PMF	La Course aux armements et l'Eglise. Note Speciale No. 29. (24)
4.1066	International Ass. for Mission Studies, Norway	IAMS (brochure (3)
4.1067	International Conf. on Sociology of Relig. (CISR)	Membership Directory 1973. (117)
4.1068	Association of Zambian Catholic Clergy(AZACC)	Constitutions (7)
4.1069	Ibid.	The African Priests in Zambia speak their mind. (20)
4.1070	Ibid.	Minutes of the Fourth Annual Conference of the Assoc. of Zambian Catholic Clergy, 1972. (44)
4.1071	Ibid.	Minutes of AZACC Eastern Regional Seminar, 1973 (18)
4.1072	Ibid.	Mozambique: Church-State Relations.(2)
4.1073	Episcopado Peruano	La Justicia en el Mundo. (32)
4.1074	Ibid.	Justicia un clamor en la selva (74)
4.1075	Bishop of Talca,Chile	Construyendo en la esperanza. (86)
4.1076	Chinese Bishops'Conf. Taiwan	Fourth National Pastoral Workshop in Taiwan. (3)
4.1077	Ibid.	The First Regional Meeting of the Federation of Asian Bishops'Conferences (2)
4.1078	Catholic Media Council	Minutes of the Kuratorium Meeting of the CMC,London(8)

External Documents (Cont.)

<u>Code n.</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Title of Document</u>
4.1079	Cath. Media Council	Cooperation on Project Evaluation. (8)
4.1080	PHAM, MALAWI	Dawn over Malawi (5)
4.1081	International Finance	1973 Annual Report. (53)
4.1082	Pontifical Commission	An appeal to all contemplative Religious (10) for Social Communic.