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COMING EVENT :

GENERAL ASSEMBLY I7.12.73 I6.00 RSCJ Generalate, Via Nomentana, I18

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Kindly remember in your prayers Fr. Tonna's father, who died peacefully on December 5, 1973, after a long illness.

A telegram expressing the sympathy of all members of SEDOS has been sent to Father Tonna.

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On 7th December 1973, Sister Godelieve Prové was elected Superior General of the Medical Mission Sisters in succession to Sister Jane Gates, Vice President of SEDOS. Sister Godelieve, of Belgian nationality, has been Provincial of Holland and Sector Superior of East Asia. She also worked as a physician in Malawi.

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Sincerely yours,

Fr. Leonzio Bano, fscj

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A S S E M B L Y O F G E N E R A L S

A G E N D A

The General Assembly will be held on 17th. December, 1973 at the RSCJ Generalate, Via No-
mentana, 118. The agenda is as follows:

1. Minutes of the last meeting (Assembly - 9th Oct. Bull. n° 32 - pp. 644/5)
2. Annual Report of the Executive Secretary (See Bull. 73/38 pp. 755-7 - 5. 12. 73)
3. Budget for 1974
4. Group discussions on:
 - a) Discussion of the report of Fr. Tonna
 - b) Discussion of the budget
 - c) Discussion on the present structures of SEDOSRecommendations of the groups
5. Vote on the Budget
6. Admission of new members

Sincerely yours,

Fr. Theo Van Asten, pb
President of SEDOS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee of SEDOS met at the Generalate of the FSC, Via Aurelia 476 on December 1st at 13 oclock. It took the form of a business luncheon. Present were : Father Van Asten, president, Sister Jane Gates, Sister Danita McGonagle, Sister Thérèse Mary Barnett, Father Willy Goossens, Brother Charles Henry Buttimer. Absent because of the illness of his father, the executive secretary Father Tonna.

Brother Charles Henry acted as secretary.

The action on the minutes of the previous meeting was postponed until the subsequent meeting because they had been received too late to be studied by the individual members.

Personnel of the Secretariat: Two additions are urgently needed: a full time documentalist. When he/she is engaged it will be time to evaluate the service that the documentation is really rendering to the generalates. The documentalist should be instructed to keep a record of all inquiries made in person or by letter to the documentation service, and every three months during the coming year submit a report to the executive committee. No sooner than six months after the full time documentalist is at work, the executive committee shall make a preliminary evaluation of the use being made by the generalates of the documentation service.

The second addition needed is a full time English language secretary, who will also be the personal secretary to Father Tonna. Two persons are under consideration, a priest of the African Mission Society and a sister of the Ursuline Congregation.

There was doubt that a clerk-typist will be needed if the English Language secretary is secured. But it was thought prudent to include the salary for a clerk-typist in the budget, but to hire one, only if and when needed.

Sister Danita was asked to contact the Congregation that has not paid its membership fee for the year 1973.

Catholic Medical Representative at Geneva: A reply from Dr. McGilvray, in response to our inquiry, indicates that the successor to Sister Gilmary Simmons need not be either a doctor or a registered nurse; a person with qualifications in the general area of health services, preferably with experiences in the mission apostolate, and French speaking if possible, will fill the need. It was noted that the nominee must have her name submitted to the Secretariate of State, in early January if at all possible. It was recommended that contact be made with the Franciscan Missioners of Mary, the Canonesses of St. Augustine, the Holy Family of Bordeaux Sisters, the White Sisters, to see whether one of their Sisters would be available for the Geneva assignment.

Secretary General's Report. The unavoidable absence of Father Tonna made the study of the Report less satisfactory since it was felt that in a few places clarifications were needed, and it was noted that Father Tonna clearly had the intention to elaborate certain parts of the report orally. The tone of the report is a bit pessimistic and discouraged, but this is quite understandable given the number of members of the secretariate who were ill during the past semester and the resignation of key persons who have not yet been replaced.

It was felt by the group that SEDOS should avoid telling missionaries, who after all have had a great deal of actual experience in the field, how they should try to exercise their mission apostolate. SEDOS is at the service of the missionaries to assist them according to their expressed desires. The competence of Father Tonna as an expert sociologist gives him the possibility of questioning some of the premises of the missionary and affording the missionary the opportunity of rethinking his / her premises and procedures.

The executive committee recognized the truth in the statement that several other organizations are taking some of the work previously done only or mainly by SEDOS (USG, UISG, Commission of I8); yet we believe that SEDOS is very much needed, and if it did not exist we would have to create it for documentation, for sharing, for mutual assistance. It was felt that we can be of assistance to other organizations, as we are at present aiding the USG and UISG in their preparation for the Synod. Of the women and men in Commission VI and the Commission of I8, a good number are SEDOS members and they bring to their tasks the values they have gained in SEDOS. Eight of the ten Superiors General elected to the Synod belong to SEDOS Institutes.

It was felt that SEDOS should not have a pre-determined program for the year, but that the member generalates should submit the questions and the problems that need answers and solutions, and that SEDOS should then mobilize its membership to work out the needed answers and solutions, if they cannot be found in the documentation section of the secretariate. Father Tonna will be able, when he has an English language secretary and documentalist, to visit the generalates systematically, and in dialogue to seek out the questions and problems that need to be researched.

BUDGET : Sister Danita presented the financial report for 1973 and the budget for the coming year. It was noted that there is a deficit for the current year, **which will** be covered by the surplus funds of previous years, the general assembly will be asked to consider concrete means to assure a balanced budget for the coming year. Sister Danita will confer with the treasurer of the White Fathers concerning possible placement of the funds in our bank balance to assure its being productive. It was noted that the increased printing cost of Joint Venture and Public relations (especially the former) resulted in an Operating Expenses deficit; and that the salaries of part-time employees (unforeseen in the budgeting for 1973) covered by the funds budgeted for the full time personnel who had resigned from SEDOS secretariate. Sister Danita pointed out the outlook for 1974 is for another deficit year.

General Assembly, December 17.

From 16 hours to 17, Secretary General will briefly present his report and answer questions of clarifications, no discussion of report; Sister Danita will present the financial report and budget, and answer questions of clarification, no discussion.

From 17 hours to 18, group discussions as follows: a) Discussion of the report of Father Tonna, in view of each group making concrete suggestions for the work of SEDOS during the coming year. b) Discussion of the Budget in view of concrete suggestions to treasurer to reduce the foreseen Deficit. c) Some discussion on the present structures of SEDOS, because of the greatly increased number of Congregations who are now members, because of the growing practice of general councils travelling as group and being frequently absent from Rome. One suggestion received from a superior general is that we plan quarterly or bi-monthly meetings by regions, for example, Via Aurelia region, Via Nomentana region, Via Cassia region, in place of three of the four quarterly meetings, reserving one general assembly for major decisions, elections, budget approval.

At 18 o'clock, assembly to receive the recommendations of the groups, and to vote on the budget.

It was recommended that the secretariate investigate the use of the Daughter of Charity house on Via Ezio as being more central. It was suggested that the coffee/tea service be arranged during the group discussions, so as to save time for the work of the assembly.

Admission of new members: The Executive committee voted unanimously to recommend to the assembly the admission of the Salesian Congregation as members of SEDOS. It was voted to invite the Consolata Fathers to pass from the status of observers to that of full membership of SEDOS.

Father Goossens accepted to be chairman of the assembly on December 17th.

The next meeting of the Executive council will be on January 8th at 4 p.m.

Recorder:

Bro. Ch. H. Buttmer, fsc

NEWS FROM AND FOR THE GENERALATES

1. Fr. J. Lecuyer, CSSP. Superior General, will visit Brazil from 8th January 1974 till 27th February. He plans to visit Holy Ghost Fathers in Brazil, starting in Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and S. Catarina, then Acre and Amazonia.

Fr. L. Ledit will go to Libreville to attend a meeting of the 6 Major Superiors of Central Africa, January 4-8.

2. Sister Camacho, Superior General of RSCJ, is leaving Rome on December 26, visiting Korea and Taiwan, and back to Rome on January 18.
On March 23, 1974, Sisters Camacho, McKay and Saade will leave Rome to attend the Pan American Assembly of Provincials.

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EVANGELISATION IN EAST AFRICA TODAY

Conclusions of the Regional Assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference (FABC) (from One Spirit, 24 October, 1973).

THE GENERAL CONCLUSIONS reached by the participants of the First Regional Assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) are presented with this SPECIAL ISSUE of One Spirit. Approved by the eight delegates to the Assembly, these General Conclusions are an expression of the unanimous agreement of the eighteen participants in the Assembly. The general theme of the Assembly was "Evangelisation in South-East Asia Today".

The East-Asian region is one of three sub-regions of the FABC, a voluntary association whose purpose is to foster solidarity and co-responsibility for the welfare of the Church and Society in Asia. This first Regional Assembly, convened at Fugen University, Taipei, Taiwan (R.O.C.), from August 21 to 26, was a partial preparation for the General Assembly of the FABC to be held in Taipei during the week of April 22, 1974.

Delegate participants to the Assembly were Paul Cardinal Yu Pin and Archbishop Stanislaus Lokuang of China; Stephen Cardinal Kim Sou Hwan and Bishop Daniel Tji of Korea; Archbishop Paul Nguyen Van Binh and Bishop F. X. Nguyen Van Thuan of Vietnam; Bishop Peter Lei of Hong Kong; and Mgr. Arquimino Rodrigues da Costa of Macao.

Other participants included Archbishop Joseph Kuo, Bishops Peter Ishigami, Mariano Gaviola, Julio . Labayen, Matthew Kia and Paul Cheng, Mgr. Joseph Ti Kang, Fathers John Chang, Edward Malone, MM and John Davies who substituted for Mgr. Francesco Colasuonno, charge d'affaires a.i. of the Apostolic Nunciature in Taipei.

EVANGELISATION EAST ASIA TODAY

"Like the yeast a woman took and mixed with three measures of flour till it was leavened all through" (Matt. 13: 33).

I. A Church in Diaspora

- I. The Catholic Church in East Asia today is a small minority of Christians, mixed with an overwhelming majority of non-Christians. She is a "Church in Diaspora." The fact that the Catholic Church is mirrored in the people's mind as a cohesive, religious body, dissociated from politics or other vested interests, definitely commands respect. There are many who place much expectation in the Church for leadership, initiative and cooperation; this is often beyond her available resources. This situation, the similar problems we are facing, and most of all, the sense of oneness in

Christ, compel us, in a spirit of brotherly solidarity, to unite and coordinate our spiritual and material resources in our one apostolate. In this first collegial approach to the common problems of evangelisation in East Asia today, we want to formulate our major concerns and present them to our brothers--bishops, priests, religious and laity-- as a concrete result of a most enriching and stimulating sharing of views and experiences.

2. China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Hongkong and Macao are countries with enduring common bonds of a high cultural and religious tradition. The way of life, the mentality of their people, from a remote past to our present day, have been permeated with the teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism and other oriental trends of thought. The overall modernization and swift changes we are witnessing today have already brought about a radical change from the past. Yet there is considerable insecurity regarding the future. This is particularly true for the younger generation. The social conditions lay bare the reality of divided countries, with a large part of their population separated, polarization in violently conflicting ideologies and a prolonged state of war. There are also problems of resettlement and reconstruction as well as poverty for a majority of people in a context of rapid economic development and ever-increasing population. The booming material progress visible in the industrialization and urbanization of our region should not allow us to forget our anxious concern over the quest for peace and social justice.

II. CULTURAL ADAPTATION

3. The Catholic Church is a sign of salvation for all nations. The Second Vatican Council's teaching that Christ's universal salvific will is not limited to the visible unity of the Church should in no way lessen the fervor of evangelisation. This will always consist in "bringing to mankind the light kindled from the Gospel, and putting at its disposal those saving resources which the Church itself, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, receives from her Founder" (G.S., 3). Conversion to Christian Faith is not to be perceived as a rupture with our cultural heritage but rather as a marvelous fulfilment far beyond our expectations. Evangelisation should impel us to study further the valid spiritual values contained in our cultural and religious traditions.
4. We must, then, make a conscious and enlightened effort to assume and integrate those values and religious currents of thought that have informed the life of our countries through the ages. Otherwise, the Christian message will continue to be an idiom foreign to our local culture, and we shall remain a minority unable to permeate the mainstream of our peoples' lives. Our traditional philosophies and religions can be good precursors for Christ in today's world. The Confucian philosophy in particular, with its ideal of humanity, its value-concepts of charity, justice, filial piety, harmony between God, man and the universe, can do much to illumine and to help us understand the divine revelation of God as our Father and the universal brotherhood of men, thus contributing to the Catholic richness of Christianity.

5. Without falling into a sort of revivalism of the obsolete, we must address our efforts of adaptation to the present-day East Asian as he is, and not as he is supposed to be, or as we wish him to be. In presenting the Gospel, we should be sensitive to the special frame of mind and attitude to life proceeding from oriental wisdom. Continued adaptation in liturgy and catechesis, the revitalization of the traditional family as the mainstay of fraternity and a greater sharing, responsibility and sacrifice for our fellow man can contribute towards a deeper cultural integration of the Gospel's message into the life of the people. But, in order gradually to elaborate a Catholic theology which will be fully ours, theological dialogue and research are essential. The teaching of oriental thought and religions in our higher educational institutions and the preparation of good theologians who are expert in both traditional and modern systems of thought, are absolutely necessary.

III. SOCIAL REALITIES

6. One can be sure that the genuine expectations which people in our countries hope for from the Church can still be met. However, this can only be on one basic condition; namely, that the Church, facing today's social realities, sharing the anguish, suffering and toil of the people, make the Good Samaritan's love incarnate by her action. Evangelisation today in East Asia must reassert in deeds more than in words, our full commitment to establish a better world through integral human development and the needed reform of structural abuses. The catholic Church in our countries cannot let herself be considered a mere haven for individual consciences. For evangelisation and credibility, faithful to her prophetic mission, she must present clearly her saving truth which is the best answer to the wrongs in society. She must intensify her action in the fields of justice and charity. Only then will she find credibility and relevance for the vast majority of Asians.
7. In helping the poor, we need comprehensive planning and cooperation. If all the East Asian Conferences of Bishops cooperate, much can be accomplished. If the Conferences of Bishops throughout the world cooperate, perhaps we may even change world structures. Nevertheless, each must start within his own country to promote social justice, side by side with those in greater need. Particularly, we have to search for a positive human and Christian solution to the rapidly growing population which has become a major concern for our countries. We positively encourage and promote the responsible contribution of science to the question of population control, provided it is according to the divine law in the light of our eternal destiny. We are committed to impressing on all the duty of responsible parenthood by legitimate means. However, our stand against abortion, based on respect for human life, is absolute.
8. Our solidarity with the poor leads us to re-examine our own personal attitude toward Christian poverty and detachment. The attraction of example is well corroborated by the hidden and effective apostolate of those who live poorly with the poor. They are deeply admired and loved even by atheists. This is an excellent approach to atheism in its present Asian form. It is perhaps the only valid answer to the widespread opinion

that the Catholic Church is a religion which favors the rich, and contradicts the very sign of authenticity Christ Himself gave her when he said:

"The spirit of the Lord has been given me, for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives..." (Luke 4:18).

IV. Youth

9. We focus our most anxious concern on young people, not only those Catholics who are under our immediate pastoral solicitude, but also the teeming millions of young non-Christians. With a consciousness of grave responsibility before Christ, we see the urgent necessity to bring the Gospel to them in a way and in a form which can answer their aspirations. To be attuned to our young people is imperative. They do not reject moral and spiritual values, but they want to receive them in their own way. They do not reject their religions and cultural heritage, although they break away from much of the conformism of the past; they want to keep what is really relevant to their life today. We perceive in them an earnest search for meaning, moral rectitude, spiritual ideals, and a thirst for justice which is one of the beatitudes:

"Happy those who hunger and thirst for what is right: they shall be satisfied" (Matt. 5:6).

We are also aware of the temptations of our youth, either in the easy pursuit of immediate interests, or the attractiveness of ideologies and movements of violence, or giving way to despair. Their indifference to religion is often due to a lack of adaptation in our religious education, an inadequate presentation of the message of Christ or even because our own witness of Christian life is blurred in their eyes.

10. We cannot afford to lose the expanding population of lively young people, whether they be laborers, students, technicians or those aspiring to the professional fields. We need to find new ways to communicate with them, deepen our contact with them, and bring them to Christ. We should select and prepare gifted personnel for this purpose. Leadership training of youth is a matter of great urgency. We must also cooperate in organizing youth services in our own localities, so as to minister to students who come to us from other countries.

V. UPDATING OUR APOSTOLIC FORMATION

11. The updating of ourselves as bishops and priests as well as the updating of the formation of seminarians and laymen, is another essential condition for a far-reaching evangelical renewal in our countries. We realize the progress made in the indigenization of the hierarchy, the secular and religious clergy, and the religious congregations of women. We rejoice in the remarkable movements of apostolic initiative among an increasing number of laymen. We feel deeply the pressing need of mobilizing fresh forces with present-day training to bring the Gospel to our countrymen in these difficult times. We see the need to engage in a renewal of our present seminary formation programs.

12. Seminarians today express doubts about the adaptation of their training. They feel it has too little bearing on the actual pastoral work of the priest. A good approach to the problems of formation would be to combine spiritual, intellectual and pastoral training, with an emphasis on the pastoral ministry, as the main goal. We need experts to update our total approach. The "Ratio Institutionis Sacerdotalis" gives direction, but we have to discover how to put its excellent principles into practice in our own cultural context. A concrete step will be to have the rectors and professors of seminaries in our region meet together to discuss a common approach to problems, and in particular the concrete way of giving more emphasis to the teaching of our own indigenous philosophies and religions.
13. Specific means of formation are needed for our laymen engaged in evangelisation. This deeper formation can be given through Bible study, retreats, seminars, theological courses and the learning of special skills. Lay leaders from our different countries should have contact with one another.
14. Apostolic formation should not end with the seminary. Refresher courses should be well organized, perhaps in a cycle program, over the years. In this updating of pastoral formation, the modernizing of our catechetical training requires particular attention. This is a field in which experts from our different countries could cooperate to make the religious education of young people more adapted to the oriental mentality, while using the advantages of modern methods.

VI. ADOPTED PROPOSALS

15. Until the next Regional Assembly, the President of the Chinese Bishops' Conference will continue the work of coordination and communication at the regional level (cf. statutes of GABC, art. 27). The Bishops' Conferences of the region will then take turns in assuming this service.
16. The next Regional Assembly will be convened in Korea in 1976; the President of the Bishops' Conference of Korea will assume the responsibility of convener.
17. By a deeper and sustained study of our traditional cultures and religions, we will continue to develop more fully the work on principles of "Indigenization". Bishop Paul Cheng, convener of the Regional Theological Committee, is entrusted with the execution of this proposal.
18. Within a year, we will call a meeting of the rectors of seminaries of our East Asian region.

19. It is recommended that concrete steps be taken to organize in each country a society of assistance to the Church of Silence. Local Bishops, however, will decide on the feasibility of this recommendation.

VII. CLOSING WORD: Church of Silence

20. To close this historical event of our first Regional Assembly of East Asian Bishops, we turn our hearts toward the Church of Silence in China, Korea and Vietnam. We are deeply saddened because of the present impossibility of free contact with our brothers bishops, priests, and faithful. We extend to them our greetings and the assurance of our support through personal prayer and the Eucharistic Sacrifice, as we yearn for the day of reunion and freedom of communication.

May Our Lady in her mercy obtain for
us this favor from her Divine Son.