

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF SEDOS

As announced on July 12, 1974, the 44th Assembly of Superiors General associated in SEDOS will meet on Monday, September 23, 1974 at 16.00 at the SJ Generalate, Borgo S. Spirito, S.

The topic will be "Laymen in small communities as agents of dialogue with non Christians and non believers". It will be approached as follows:

- 16.00 : Introduction by the Moderator, Sr. Claire Rombouts, ICM.
 - 16.10 : Trends emerging from the preparatory meetings (Islam, Africa, Latin America, Oriental Religions) by the Executive Secretary, Fr. B. Tonna.
 - 16.20 : Break up into four groups, each under the chairmanship of a Superior General who will be attending the '74 Synod: Frs. Lecuyer, Arrupe, Goossens and Bro. Buttimer.
- The guidelines and other details of each of the four groups are attached. Participants will be expected to provide the Chairman with fresh insights on the Assembly topic.
- 18.00 : Coffee break
 - 18.15 : Reassembly; a) Impressions of each of the four Chairmen.
b) Reactions (not discussion) from the floor.
 - 19.00 : Closure.

As was the case in June this Assembly is not restricted to Superiors General and/or their delegates. Its purpose is to generate more insights, which the Synodal Fathers who are also members of SEDOS could offer to the whole Church on the occasion of the Synod. Those who "know more" are especially invited to help us render this service.

The full reports of the preparatory meetings can be found in SEDOS 74/570-573 and 74/580-584. These will be taken as read by the Assembly.

The report on Lausanne '74 will also be taken as read (See SEDOS 74/519-537).

GUIDELINES FOR THE GROUPS

Group 1 Chairman : Fr. W. Goossens CICM

Room 1 Language: English

1. How do we conceive of the evangelization of non-Christians, especially followers of the great non-Christian religions ?
 - a) As presence and witness of individual Christians and of living communities of Christians, who work as closely as possible with non-Christians in e.g. social matters ?
 - b) Have you concrete experiences to offer especially as regards small communities?
 - c) What can Religious contribute to this community idea ?
 - d) Should we attempt to convert non-Christians (e.g. Buddhists etc.) to the Christian faith ?
2. The young Churches still need the help of the older Churches but they too have much to offer. How can the churches receive from and give to each other in fruitful exchange?
3. Some missionaries, including the most zealous, are discouraged a) because so little has been done to prepare the Young Churches to face the future, and b) because they are not being treated within the young Churches as responsible collaborators having their own ideas and personalities. Can anything be done to remedy these situations?

Group 2 Chairman: Fr. J. Lecuyer CSSP

Room 2 Language: French

1. Where do we stand as regards dialogue with non-believers?
2. Style, content and occasions of dialogue.
3. Opportunities of dialogue with non-Christians.

Group 3 Chairman: Bro. CH. Buttmer FSC

Room 4 Language : English

1. There is a feeling that the initiative of the laity in evangelization is not being stimulated or even encouraged. Is this true in the mission situations you know of? How do we get this point over at the Synod? Are Clergy and Religious in need of conversion of heart in this matter?
2. Do we need new ministries so as to give the layman the opportunity of developing his potentialities in the service of the Church ?

3. We stress evangelization through community. But in which communities can the laymen exercise an evangelizing influence most effectively ?
4. The role of the women is of special importance in evangelization and dialogue but are women in fact given a sufficiently active role? Are the Sisters e.g. given a fair share in planning and decision - making in the local church?
5. How can we harness and use to the full the idealism of the young generation ?

Group 4

Chairman: Fr. P. Arrupe, SJ.

Room 4

Language: English

1. Could laymen take over much of the work now being done by priests ?
Do we need new ministries?
2. Must a small community be introverted of its nature? If not, how can we open it to dialogue with non-Christians and non-believers ?
3. How do we build up a sense of responsibility concerning dialogue among the laity?
4. What place have Religious (men and women) in our vision of the Church?

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PREPARATORY MEETINGS FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY

BLACK AFRICA GROUP

The Group met at the SMA Generalate at 4 pm - 9 September 1974

Present: Sr. Mary Henriette HOENE, SSND
Sr. Mary Motte, FMM
Fr. Martin Boelens, CMM
Fr. Georg Lautenschlager, CMM
Sr. Melmarie Gentry, SSND
Sr. Mary Anne Williamson, FMM

Fr. Pietro Ravasio, FSCJ
Bro. Jose Pablo Basterrechea, FSC
Fr. René Motte, OMI
Fr. H. Van Hoof, SMA
Fr. John Power, SMA
Fr. Sean Coughlan, O.CARM

Chairman: Bro. Ch. H. Buttmer, FSC

From SEDOS: Fr. B. Tonna, Fr. L. Skelly SMA and Miss C. Gilroy.

Topic: "Laymen in small communities as agents of dialogue with non-christians and non-believers".

1. The general consensus was that until very lately, we had not shown enough trust in the laity. To some extent this arose from fear of excessive and poorly-informed zeal but also in part from a form of "perfectionism" on our part; we distrusted any standards other than our Western-clerical ones. True, we entrusted a certain amount of responsibility to teachers and catechists - often the same people - but in the process we clericalized them and moulded their thinking to suit our own predilections. Laymen - especially young people - who put forward new, perhaps critical ideas, tended to be treated as trouble-makers.

Lay Leaders need to be formed but we must lay stress on the fact that they are to remain lay. The people should be encouraged to put forward their own natural leaders who could then be trained. This process is already under way in the Francophone territories of West Africa. The leaders of natural groupings e.g. teachers, merchants, women and youth, are given several months of formation during which they return to their own milieu for a couple of weeks at a time to test out what they have learned and detect the problems that really concern their fellows.

Several speakers stressed the importance of up-to-date catechesis in the schools, especially among senior students, so as to make youth aware of their responsibility for the life and growth of the Church. The ladies present urged that more attention be devoted to women since they had tremendous influence not only in the home but in women's organizations, small scale business etc. Indeed they are the backbone of society and the church in every part of tropical Africa. The Sisters could have a profound influence on

lay women but until recently we had made no effort to give them the sort of preparation needed for such work.

2. As regards Community there was a general feeling that we were still seeking to impose western forms despite the fact that African society had its own tradition of communities based on tribe, clan, the extended family, age groups, vocational associations etc. We should rethink our strategy and make use of what already existed. There were dangers, of course, particularly in tribalism but such affinities existed and our best approach was to widen the idea of "neighbour" so that it took on its New Testament meaning. The schools could - and in many areas already did - help to break down the exclusivism associated with tribal pride without destroying the good things involved in such loyalties. The types of loyalties developed in the social and sporting activities of our schools could also be useful from the point of view of dialogue across the tribal and religious divides. Indeed the youth could help to soften rivalries and divisions through their influence in the house. But this must be done with the greatest of tact and with all due respect to the principles of seniority.
3. The meeting then considered dialogue with non-Christians - since only a tiny minority of black Africans can be called non-believers. The biggest obstacle to dialogue with animists was a reluctance on the part of Christians to evaluate what was good and worthwhile in the traditions they had abandoned. There was a genuine fear that to reclaim what was of value from the past might involve a return to animism or, at least, to a diluted form of Christianity. Only Christians who knew the essentials of their faith and had integrated these into their lives were capable of a discriminating dialogue with non-Christians.

In many areas there was particular reluctance to enter into dialogue with Moslems. In both East and West Africa Moslems are seen as the descendants of the slavers of the last century and it is difficult to persuade Christians to study Islam sympathetically and appreciate how much we share with them. This is a mental block which it will take much time and effort to overcome.

Perhaps we should begin by seeking a truly ecumenical approach to other Christian bodies before attempting dialogue with those not of the Faith. African Christians have not inherited many of the prejudices and bitternesses which, historically, have conditioned Europeans e.g. in Northern Ireland. But over the years rivalries between the denominations have developed and missionaries have not altogether been blameless in this regard. We must try to eliminate these sources of tension and the extended families include members of all religious persuasions, and this is a great help to tolerance and of course - though they may not be aware of it - dialogue.

Great stress was laid on the fact that the best form of dialogue consisted in Christian living which of itself testified to belief in God and his saving providence. The

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meeting recognized the difficulty of having dialogue with Africanized churches - especially the so-called Independent Churches - so long as the Catholic Church presented such a Western image in clerical personnel, liturgy, etc.

The attention of those present was drawn to America Documentation Service No.8/74/1 of August 16 1974 which treats of a conference held at Gaba, Uganda on "Dialogue with African Traditional Religious".

The meeting ended at 6.15 pm.

L. Skelly, SMA
Secretary

PREPARATORY MEETINGS FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ORIENTAL RELIGIONS GROUP

The group met at the S.J. Generalate Borgo S. Spirito at 4 pm - 10 September 1974.

Present: Bro. Michael Jacques, FSC
Fr. S. Ryan Hughes, IM

Sr. N. Murata, FMM
Sr. Mary Motte, FMM

Chairman: Fr. B. Tonna

From SEDOS: Fr. L. Skelly SMA and Miss C. Gilroy.

1. It was decided to consider the topic of "Laymen in small communities as agents of dialogue with members of non-Christian religions". Both Fr. Hughes and Sr. Murata underlined the fact that there are probably several million so-called "anonymous" Christians in Japan. These people were not professed or baptized Christians but follow Christian ideals in their lives. This may well be true of other parts of Asia too. The Good Shepherd Movement which operated radio and television programmes and bookshops was extremely successful in what could be termed pre-evangelization courses, which prepared the groundwork for a deeper study of Christianity. The Movement also operated a catechetical correspondence course. The whole operation was extremely professional and used really skilled people. It cost money, of course and obtaining finance was a problem, as they were now seeking prime time on the air. The programmes were very well received and evoked a large correspondence. Vatican Radio is also very popular in Japan.

In general however the Church in Japan is inclined to be very conservative and little responsibility is given to (or desired by) the laity. The latter (and the hierarchy) have inherited the traditions of the Nagasaki Christians who found it more prudent not to seek converts.

2. Bro. Michael then spoke of the situation in South East Asia. In that area race and religion tended to be identified with each other e.g. all Malays were considered to be Moslems and no effort could be made to evangelize them. Such work could be carried on among the Chinese and other non-Malays. Most Christians were recent converts and their religious convictions tended to be shallow. They left the work of spreading the Church to the clergy. Few of those entering the seminaries persevered. There were some signs of improvement with parish councils being set up in Sabah. These helped to organize parish functions and also prayer services in the absence of the priest.

The Catholic schools - certainly those operated by the F.S.C. - were open to students of all religions and so there was a basic social dialogue. There was no danger of the Catholic-pupils developing a ghetto mentality. Much could still be done however to educate the more senior ones to engage in intelligent dialogue with their fellows.

The adults also needed encouragement to join with people of other religions in various forms of social and charitable activities - a very real form of dialogue. Anything which threatened the good relations between the various religious groups had to be avoided at all costs. In India, for example, anything that even vaguely resembled proselytism was bitterly resented by Hindus.

3. Sr. Mary Motte urged that new forms of ministry, which could be exercised by laymen, be created. Br. Michael pointed out that properly trained, well paid catechists could do an enormous amount of good and would have real standing among the people. Could not these be given the diaconate, Sr. Mary asked. They would then be in a position to administer several sacraments. Fr. Tonna pointed out that this would be to clericalize the Church and further reduce the sense of responsibility for the Church among the laity.
4. In several countries becoming a Christian amounted in practice to becoming a foreigner since Christians for fear of syncretism cut themselves off from what seemed a pagan cultural background. Every effort should be made to isolate the truly pagan elements in a culture and these had to be rejected. In many areas however seeming "pagan" customs and festivals were in fact religiously neutral and could be observed by Christians e.g. many aspects of Shinto; the Feast of the Dead among the Chinese. Only in this way could the Church be truly incarnated in the local culture.

The meeting came to an end at 5.50 pm.

L. Skelly, SMA
Secretary

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Executive Committee of SEDOS was held on September 16, at 16.00 at the Secretariat.

Present: Fr. Joseph Hardy, SMA
 Sr. Godelieve Prové, SCMM-M
 Sr. Maura O'Connor, FMM
 Sr. Danita McGonagle, SSND
 Sr. Claire Rombouts, ICM

Chairman: Bro. Ch. H. Buttiner, FSC

Secretary: Fr. Benjamin Tonna.

1. The minutes of the July meeting of the Executive Committee were taken as read and the following clarifications were made:
 - Item 4: SEDOS had been represented at the Assembly of Religious in Brazil by Bro. Francisco, FSC, who had handed a message from Bro. CH. H. Buttiner.
 - Item 5: The duties of office management have now delegated to Fr. L. Skelly.
 - Item 6: "Editorial responsibility" for Joint Venture (under n.6) should be understood as responsibility for writing it.
2. The Committee considered in detail the SEDOS Assembly of the 23rd September 1974 and agreed:
 - a) to propose as its immediate purpose the provision of more insights to the Synodal Fathers who are also members of SEDOS.
 - b) to take a synthetic view of the Assembly topic (Laymen in small Communities in dialogue with non Christians and non believers) and, hence, to discard the idea of breaking up into groups by cultural area, or into groups by particular aspects of the topic (youth, laity, etc.) and to let each group take the global approach to the same topic.
 - c) to invite the Synodal Fathers who are also members of SEDOS to chair these groups and to guide the same in considering the topic; these Chairmen would be invited to provide guidelines before the Assembly.
 - d) to invite members of the Assembly to "give" (rather than "receive") to these Chairmen - especially in terms of our experience as representatives of missionary sending Institutes.
 - e) to take the reports of the preparatory meetings (by cultural area) as read but to offer the Assembly a brief synthesis of the ideas they produced.

- f) to conclude the Assembly with a plenary in which each Chairman would give his impressions of his group and the floor would react (not discuss).

Sr. Claire would moderate the Assembly.

It was also agreed to consider, at a future meeting the idea of having less but longer Assemblies per year.

3. SEDOS would follow the Synod by :

- a) reporting regularly, in the weekly bulletin, on its thrusts and of their significance for the missionary sending Institutes.
- b) inviting a panel of experts, from the member Generalates, to act as a watchdog committee and thus help the Secretariat evaluate developments.
- c) eventually distributing to the Synodal Fathers extracts from these reports.
- d) making contact with the secretariat of the Synodal Fathers of Africa, Asia and Latin America.
- e) keeping in touch with the press services of the Synod, perhaps through Fr. Bamberg appointed by the USG as its press man.

4. a) A delegation from the Executive Committee, consisting of Bro. Ch. H. Buttner, Fr. Hardy, Sr. C. Rombouts and Sr. G. Prové would spend the morning of Thursday September 19, with the Staff of the Secretariat to give them the opportunity to express their feelings and to offer their ideas.

b) The job description for the assistant to the Executive Secretary would be finalised during Thursday's meeting with the Staff.

c) The Executive Secretary was asked to go ahead and fill the clerk-typist vacancy. Meanwhile he would draft a circular inviting Generalates to consider assigning members of their Institute, by turn, to the vacancies which would materialize in 1975 and after.

d) Ideas for the 1975 budget could be generated during Thursday's meeting.

5. The vacancy at the Christian Medical Commission was considered. It was reported that, besides the firm candidature communicated to the Committee before the meeting there was the probability of another two. Pending a definitive answer on each, no firm proposal would be made to the Secretariat for Christian Unity.

6. The Committee would meet on October 28, 1974, at 16.00 at the ICM Generalate. It would henceforth alternate: a meeting at the Secretariat and another one there.

SITUATION REPORTTRENDS IN EVANGELIZATION TODAY

1. There are at least four ways in which the Church can relate to the World. It can enter into dialogue with it. It can animate its temporal structures. It can supply for its deficiencies. This Synod is going to investigate that relationship which is specifically its own and which gives it its identity: evangelization. This has now been defined as that "complex of activities through which the People of God starts and stimulates living faith". This faith means participating in the mystery of Christ proclaimed in the Gospel. The three main types of activities which "start and stimulate" it are:- (a) preaching of the Gospel, (b) witness, and (c) "administration" of the Sacraments.
2. The whole point of the Synod investigation is to renew such activity, making it more relevant and responsive to the contemporary world. This renewal would not be based on theoretical considerations but on a humble reading of the signs of the times. If there is going to be change in such activity, it must be the change which the Spirit wants, and which He is already working at, in the signs provided by the experience of our times. Change however implies a move from a given point in a certain direction and it can be observed by pinning down the trends of this movement. This situation report attempts to disengage "evangelization trends", or those "observable, gradual and persistent changes in our evangelization practice over the last ten years." This is one sure way of grasping better the direction in which the Spirit wants us to change and to renew. For He surely is at work in today's agents of evangelization.
3. In fact, the main source of the trends identified here is the recent experience of these agents as this has been distilled by Bishops and other Church leaders. Now, an experience involves a historical situation, ongoing or completed, in which people interact and thereby modify their previous state of existence. An evangelization experience would thus involve a specific relationship between the representatives of the people of God (A) and their counterpart (B). The activity which goes on between (A) and (B) would give us a clue about the nature of that relationship (C).
4. To go back to trends, therefore, we have to look out for changes which take place in either of parties (A) and (B) or in the very relationship (C). This explains the way this brief review is organised: we try to pin down trends in the People of God (A), in the World (B), in the "evangelization" relationship between the two (C). The outcome will necessarily be rather generic but could help us discover where the Spirit is blowing. To reduce the generic nature of the trends, however, we have attempted a step by step approach: from the Evangelicals and the Ecumenists, we go to the Catholics as these grapple with the challenge in the three Continents of Africa, Asia and Latin America.
5. This is of course, only a first attempt and we hope to update it, at least every quarter, as new documents come in. Meanwhile we would appreciate your comments.

THE EVANGELICAL CAMP

Protestants who feel they belong to the stream of the great revivals of Christian history like to consider themselves as Evangelicals, insofar as they give the Great Commission (or missionary mandate) which concludes Matthew's Gospel, the importance it merits. We call their many groups the Evangelical camp and we reported on their ideas in 74/477 ff and 74/519. Here are the trends we observe in their ranks:-

A. WHO EVANGELISES

- 6. Towards a more acute sense of urgency "to go" and finish the job of reaching all those who have not yet "met" Jesus Christ before the end of the century.
- 7; Towards a feeling that responsibility for evangelization falls almost exclusively on the evangelical Protestants, other Christians being "distracted" about other problems.
- 8. Towards more reliance by the individual, on the Holy Spirit, as he feels sustained by the Bible, the fellowship of his church and careful planning.

B. WHO IS EVANGELISED

- 9. Towards a "break down" of the world into specific "peoples", using the Gospel concept of "ta ethne" and criteria like language, class, race, age, occupation and education, and more important, respecting cultural differences and methodical demands.
- 10. Towards a classification of these "peoples" in terms of the criterion of culture distance. When this distance is at a minimum, (E1), the bearers of evangelization do not have to adopt another "language" in making contact with the non-evangelized. When it is at a maximum (E3) they have to grasp the language as well as the mental categories of the non-evangelized. The evangelization relationship should be pushed to a maximum at E1, and be kept to a minimum at E3.

C. HOW EVANGELIZATION HAPPENS

- 11. Towards a relationship in which it is assumed that the "evangelized" are aware of their need for help, of their willingness to consider help from the Transcendent.
 "Faith then develops into an acceptance of gratuitous salvation through Jesus Christ, who is the Transcendent God. Once accepted, this salvation will develop into 'adequacy to relate to current social needs and issues'!"
- 12. Towards a simpler concept of evangelization, defined as the proclamation of the historical biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to Him personally and so be reconciled to God.

THE ECUMENICAL CAMP

We call "Ecumenicals" those Protestants who feel they belong to the spirit of the World Council of Churches in Geneva. If the Evangelicals stress the evangelization relationship of Christians to the world to the point of giving the impression of severely restricting the other three, the Ecumenicals seem to be reserving the same treatment to the "dialogue" stance. Unlike the Evangelicals, they dedicate at least as much attention to the "destinataires" of evangelization as to the bearers of evangelization. This affects the ensuing relationship.

A. WHO EVANGELISES

13. Towards the fusion of "evangelizer" and "evangelized" in a dialectical process: the evangelizer is increasingly aware that he will be evangelized in the process of evangelizing the other because the same Christ works in both to reveal Himself more fully to each.

14. Towards the discovery of the Christ of the Bible in current history, taking the deep concerns of contemporary man as so many signs of His work.

B. WHO IS EVANGELIZED

15. Towards the poor, as God's own preference, expressed in Luke 4: 18-19....

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; He has appointed me to preach Good news to the poor..."

C. HOW EVANGELIZATION HAPPENS

16. Towards the development of the relationship from dialogue to solidarity, from the communication of a message to all round - (not excluding political) involvement, to fight God's war to save the poor, to free them from their plight right now, here on earth.

17. Towards the adoption of a servant role among the new groups of urban and industrial society.

"As participants in God's mission in history our task is to hold up God's hope and promise and make it real in new communities and changed lives. Three priorities were declared: 1) to listen seriously to the voices of the poor and the powerless, 2) to take people into account in the emerging technological world and 3) to deal with the organizational structures which play such a determinative role in modern society".

(Struggle to be Human, p. 61f)

THE CATHOLIC CAMP

If Evangelicals appear to be primarily concerned with the bearer and Ecumenicals with the beneficiary of the Gospel, Catholics seem to be paying more and more attention to the relationship which develops between the two. What they thought was a question of handing on a message (faith is taught) is becoming to them one of communicating a relationship with Christ (faith is caught). The word is becoming life.

AFRICA

A. WHO EVANGELIZES

18. Towards sharper awareness that the prime agent of evangelization is the smaller indigenous Christian group, the most accessible manifestation of the local Church.

"These communities have to learn to be more outward-looking. They must have an open eye for the needs of the whole village, of the whole diocese and of the whole country."

(Ugandan Bishops)

19. Towards a feeling that the religious community could serve as model and animator of these smaller groups.

20. Towards more differentiation and proliferation of lay ministries within this group; in particular more status for Catechists, more space for women and more scope for teachers.

"The catechist can be called the priest's right hand man,....instructing the catechumens, preparing children to receive their First Holy Communion, convening the Marriage Advisory Board of his particular area, proper preparation of young couples about to be married, pre-marriage enquiries and distributing Holy Communion....organising funeral ceremonies."

(Kenyan Bishops)

21. Towards a better focus, on the part of these lay ministries to "educate" the individual baptized to move from the state of Practitioner-Christian to that of Faith Christian, to overcome the dichotomy between African and Christian; to take over evangelization duties from clergy and whites, to animate the extended family.

22. Towards more openness and intercommunion with other (non RC) Christians (ecumenism). The Church will become more aware that it will proclaim in Gospel in the measure that it will be communion.

"Mutual respect and collaboration among religions and Churches are officially encouraged...(The general situation in Malawi) is an invitation to the practice of courageous and authentic ecumenism."

(Malawi Bishops)

23. Towards more outreach to frontier situations, in real partnership and not in dependence, overcoming, in this way, the moratorium (dependence) issue. Overseas missionaries are wanted if they know how to listen and learn, if they put personal relationships before efficiency.

B. WHO IS EVANGELIZED

24. Towards a sharper specification of these frontier situations; in particular the following "peoples" are being identified:-

- a) the Independent Churches
- b) the traditionalist religion groups open to evangelization
- c) the smaller, poorer tribes
- d) Muslims

25. Towards a "second" evangelization of Practitioner Christians; in particular youth and the extended family.

"..changes are evidenced in the aspects of courtship and marriage contracts, honour and respect to elders, loneliness for young and old people in contrast with the family ties of traditional family life."

(Tanzanian Bishops)

26. Towards authenticity, justice, liberation, integrated human development in each of these peoples, for these peoples.

"Concerning the question of human rights the bishops condemn tribalism, colonialism (such as perpetuated by Portugal in Africa), exaggerated nationalism, apartheid and all oppression either by individuals or by a group."

(Tanzanian Bishops)

C. HOW EVANGELIZATION HAPPENS

27. Towards more clarity on comprehensive Salvation as the primary objective of evangelization; this salvation is progressively seen as also communal, not merely individual.

28. Towards more reliance on the Spirit.

"The Church's prophetic role in contemporary society is an important aspect of evangelization today."

(Tanzanian Bishops)

29. Towards a more illuminated osmosis of local African values and universal Christian concern more localization of symbolism, ritual, art, language, theology, structure, methods.

30. Towards more situations of dialogue experiences with Muslims.

31. Towards more involvement - economic, political, social, cultural, in the quest for African liberation and indigenization (nation building) open to the future.

32. Towards a greater awareness of the demands of evangelization in the urbanization process.

33. Towards a wider and better use of the media.

34. Towards regional structures (N.S.E. and W. Africa), as supports for the bearers of Evangelization.

ASIA

A. WHO EVANGELIZES

35. Towards a more effective realization that the Church and not the individual is the primary agent of evangelization.

36. Towards a better synthesis, in the minds of the agents of evangelization, of Asian patterns of thought and wisdom with the Christian message (i.e. not its western wrappings). Towards an orientation and rooting of this synthesis in day to day life.

"The evangelization of a country of ancient spiritual traditions and religious faiths, in which the experience of the divine holds first place, demands that the Church in India be perceived as a community rooted in God."

(India Bishops '73)

37. Towards a two way current of cross cultural missionaries.

"We are grateful to the foreign missionaries who have given their lives to evangelization in Asia. There is a continuing need for missionaries - especially for those who have the humility and courage to adapt themselves, completely, to the culture of the country.

Asia is beginning to send out missionaries of its own. Some nations, which are older and stronger in Christianity, are sending priests and sisters to other Asian countries which have greater need. We feel that the day is fast approaching when Asia will send missionaries to other continents."

(Asian Bishops '74)

38. Towards the emergence of agents gifted in also communicating an experience of Christ rather than just a Christian doctrine.

B. WHO IS EVANGELIZED

39. Towards sharper awareness of the fact that Christ and His Church remain unknown or far and foreign to most of the 2,000 million Asians.

40. Towards an identification and a subsequent approach to the truth and goodness that characterize Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Shintoism, Islam.

41. Towards better specification of the ways and means in which the mosaic of Asian races, classes, traditions, immigrants, can be evangelized in a climate of division and underdevelopment.

"The people of Asia are rich in spirit, but often poor in material things. Injustice - social, economic and political - is built into the structures under which we live.

Dialogue with the poor means real experience of poverty. It means that we must not only work for them, in a paternalistic way, but with them! We must learn from them. We must know their real needs, their real hopes. We must help them to share in the decisions which determine their lives."

(Asian Bishops '74)

C. HOW EVANGELIZATION HAPPENS

42. Towards dialogue as the mainstay of evangelization with the people at every level: the strength is in the grass roots.

"The local church must revere the great religious traditions of Asia. We must recognize their profound spiritual values - their power to shape minds and hearts and lives.

Down through the centuries the ancient religions of the Orient have given light and strength to our ancestors. They have expressed the noblest longings in the hearts of our people, our deepest joys and sorrows. Their temples have been the home of contemplation and prayer. They have shaped our history, and our way of thinking. They are part of our culture. For us in Asia, they have been the doorway to God.

In dialogue with these religions, we will find ways of expressing our own Christian faith. This can become a common quest for God. It can be a sharing in friendship, a brotherhood.

Christianity, in turn, can offer a new understanding of man, and of human dignity. It offers an eternal vision which gives new meaning to love, to the family, and to life itself."

(Asian Bishops '74)

43. Towards responsibility, self-reliance.

44. Towards the promotion of justice - even before development - but without losing the religious touch.

45. Towards indigenization: in theology

with Hindus: only at the contemplation level can dialogue take place.

46.

46. Towards a greater acceptance of the fact that the Church will always be a minority and that grace embraces more than the institutional Church.

"Action for justice is a constituent element in the preaching of the gospel." This was the teaching of the Synod of Bishops in 1971. Since millions in Asia are poor, the Church in Asia must be the Church of the poor. One element in holiness, here, is the practice of justice. Evangelization and development are not opposed. In Asia today are integral parts of preaching the gospel.

Those who identify with the poor must constantly meet with difficulty, with hardship, with opposition, with failure. We, the Bishops of Asia - knowing this - feel that we must identify with the poor.

These are the elements of crucial importance in the task of preaching the gospel in Asia today:-

*Inculturation, which renders the local Church truly present with the life of our people.

*Dialogue with the great Asian religions, which brings them into contact with the gospel, so that the seeds of the Word in them may come to full flower.

*Service of the poor, uniting with them in their struggle for a more human world.

(Asian Bishops '74)

LATIN AMERICA

A. WHO EVANGELISES

47. Towards deeper awareness that the Church derives its identity and its mission from the proclamation of the Gospel.
48. Towards more basic communities, permanent de cons, catechists, in a context of less and less priests per head of the population.
49. Towards a better diversification and distribution of ministries in terms of (a) less overseas missionaries (b) more involvement of men and women Religious in direct pastoral work (c) deeper insertion of laymen in old and new Church structures.
50. Towards new attitudes in overseas missionaries who would now (a) be better able to adapt and integrate in the local teams, (b) be better prepared - culturally, theologically and spiritually, (c) have attitude of service to the Church, love for the community, solidarity and commitment to the local community, (d) give themselves to the animation of laity in groups.

B. WHO IS EVANGELISED

51. Towards a deeper awareness of the hidden presence of the Word in the different cultures of Latin America (1) Velgar-CLLAM-Misioneros No 27-8, and of the need to assume, when possible, their thought pattern.
52. Towards the poor, the 'little ones'.
53. Towards the expanding sects, syncretist groups, autonomous religious movements.
54. Towards a more positive interpretation of the phenomena of popular religiosity and more appreciation of their opening to 'situación catechism' impregnated by the novelty of the Gospel.
55. Towards more attention to the structures of the cities where secularization is not, as in other Latin American situations, just beginning and where the new technology and the mass media dominate.
- "The main pastoral problem seems to lie here. The very possibility of the persistence of faith here exactly where it is in jeopardy."
(A.L. Trujillo)
56. Towards more concern with the family, as this moves from the traditional to a transitional pattern.
- "Vast areas where the family as a religious, social and juridical reality is barely an ideal." - (Ibid.)
57. Towards youth - especially in our schools and universities.

C. HOW EVANGELIZATION HAPPENS

58. Towards the proclamation of comprehensive salvation and integral liberation, in solidarity and unity with all "peoples".

"Evangelical liberation brings together expectations of communion, reconciliation, conversion. It opens us to our social responsibilities and reveals the structural vices and the 'states of sin'; it recognizes the conflicts of our society without identifying them with a vindication of the dialectics of the class struggle."

(A.L. Trujillo '74)

"Closure in the 'strictly religious' sense is understood as a flight from the responsibilities of our historical plight and the limitation of a Church task to efforts at human development are more serious risks."

(Ibid.)

"There is the double temptation, for the missionary 'to become an agent of social change or to confine his efforts to the purely spiritual..."

(Ibid.)

"The Church, through the preaching of the Gospel is simultaneously the 'heart of the world' (fountain of life, sharing its abundance in the Lord) and 'critical conscience' which orients, stimulates, corrects, confronts, exposes, denounces, shows the limitation of our interests and keeps humanity in motion, in eschatological tension."

(Ibid.)

59. Towards more (a) animation, (b) conscientization, (c) liberation activities on the part of the 45,000 Priests, 140,000 Sisters, 1,000,000 laymen, under 600 Bishops.

"Evangelization is the glad tidings of the Kingdom, happens in the Church and through the Church, as a reality which is at the grass roots of the life of our communities. In this sense it is the Community which simultaneously supports and becomes the sign of the contents of the tidings... The reason why the Church proclaims is because, first and foremost, it lives the mystery of communion, the Lord's presence in history. To evangelize is, above all, the joyous proclamation of the presence of the Lord, discovered in faith."

(Ibid.)

"As the Word generated the Church, so this is constantly re-generated, re-created, when it is explicitly announced."

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