



EVANGELIZATION TODAY

Following up the 1974 Synod

1. As a group of missionary sending Institutes, SEDOS could consider following up, as a service to evangelization, one or more of the issues raised but left unresolved by the 1974 Synod.
2. The terms of reference of SEDOS, of course, would be kept in mind in embarking on such an exercise.  
These are:
  - a) we have come together to cooperate
  - b) by pooling our experiences through a documentation service
  - c) by reflecting on them through our study services
  - d) we are a private group which represents what is probably the biggest number of missionaries; and, as such,
  - e) we are particularly interested in primary evangelisation, as this is practised by
  - f) cross cultural missionaries.
3. These terms explain the selection made below of 15 from the 66 points identified by the Synod as susceptible of follow up (see 74/734). Of these 15, nos 2, 9, 11, 13 & 14 are composite points and include concepts from the other 60. Our hope, however, is that the December Assembly further refines this list, by eliminating some of its points and assigning priorities to the rest. We would then form working groups to work on these latter during 1975.
4. Though we have much of the original documentation (see Bulletins 31, 32, 33, 34, 35) we preferred to work, at this stage, on the official list produced by the Synod. Where possible or opportune, however, we have inserted our suggestions as regards projects which these working groups could work on.
5. Selected list of evangelization issues which could be followed up by SEDOS:
  - i. The "signs of the times", or the active presence of the Holy Spirit in the events of human history must be examined and interpreted in the light of the Gospel (I c Project:--formulating guidelines to sift His signs from the rest: rules of discernment
    - identifying world events and trends relevant to evangelization
    - communicating above to missionaries
  - ii. Primary evangelization to all peoples is to be persued and fostered. For those who never heard of Christ it is, especially today, a most urgent need (IIa + III,d
    - listing of unevangelized "peoples" accessible to our missionaries
    - drawing up an inventory of the institutional resources of our Institutes which could respond to above.

- iii. The missionary nature of the whole Church, both universal and particular, must be stressed (III b)
  - the universal dimensions of mission today: multinational Institutes, world communications systems, the Secretariats for non-believers and non-Christians
  - the Institutes as "carriers" of the universal structure of the Church
- iv. There must be active participation of Religious, men and women, of Institutes of consecrated life, in the evangelizing mission of the Church. Above all, the importance of contemplative life must be stressed (III e)
  - the future of the Institutes
- v. The special role of women in evangelization (IIIg)
  - Postulata from the Institutes of Women Religious
  - The specificity of this "special role"
  - Women in primary evangelization.
- vi. The laity have their own proper role in the apostolate, especially in their own secular situations and duties (IIIh)
  - Our service to laity
  - Communitarian dimension of lay involvement
  - linkage with our Institutes
- vii. Priests have a responsibility in promoting vocations and the formation of lay people in the service of the Gospel (IIIi)
  - Trends in recruitment
  - Image of the missionary.
- viii. New ministries have to be approved and developed in the service of the Gospel, especially for Catechists (IIIj)
  - Survey of new ministries already undertaken by members of our Institutes.
  - Institutional demands on the new ministries and the response of our Institutes.
- ix. There is a need to step up cooperation with other Christians and ecclesial communities in order to evangelize the modern world. There is a need to develop further, in line with the teaching of Vatican II, the notion of true ecumenism (VIIa+c)
  - Further SEDOS involvement in WCC activities
  - SEDOS involvement with the Evangelical stream
  - SEDOS contacts with the Orthodox.

x. The term "small community" or "basic ecclesiastical community" has different meanings for different areas. We must define what makes an authentic ecclesial community and its significance in the life of the contemporary church. The constitutive elements are: i) community of faith, prayer, fraternal charity and mission

- ii) sharing in the Word and the Eucharist
- iii) witness of life and
- iv) active participation in seeking a proper ordering of civil society.

These communities must work with the hierarchy and be inserted into the larger, parochial and diocesan, community.

Pastors must show solicitude towards these communities in order to ensure that they are properly organized and that any spirit of divisiveness is eliminated (X a to e).

- How our "houses" can become such communities
- How to transform a group into a little church
- Formulation of guidelines to promote above on the basis of our experiences

xii. There is need of dialogue with non Christian religions in order to discover their positive values and to bring to perfection their valid religious experiences under the invisible guidance of the Holy Spirit (VI, e)

- Current channels of dialogue
- Lists of resource persons.

xiii. Dialogue with non-believers and atheists should be continued: we should engage in better collaboration with them in the service of the whole of mankind. There is need to study ways and means of proposing the Gospel to the modern secularized world in an attractive and significant manner (VI g + h)

- The Missionary Mandate and non believers
- Pooling our experiences in this difficult field
- Supporting our vanguard.

xiv. We must promote human development not merely as a means of ensuring the credibility of the Church but as an integral part of evangelization. There is an intimate connection between faith (which works through charity) and charity (which requires the application of justice). On the other hand, evangelization promotes human development and full freedom. Christian faith, in fact is indispensable in building up society as a brotherly community (VIII a to d).

- Identifying the concerns of our missionaries
- Searching for response.

xv. Christian families, schools, Church and apostolic groups must be encouraged and helped to fulfil their duties in the education of youth (IX, e).

- Schools, hospitals, institutions in primary evangelization
- Youth: their search for Christ and our Institutes.

xvi. We must recognize the pre-eminent place of the means of social communication in the evangelization of the modern world (XII, c).

- Supporting our members already at work in this field: ways and means.
- Global linkages for communication: an aspect of the universal thrust of Mission.

SYNOD '74: FAILURE OR SUCCESS? by Joseph M. Connors, SVD

In the closing session of the Bishops Synod on Evangelization, on October 26, Pope Paul VI adverted to the common desire "to pass a judgment on the Synod and to draw up a balance sheet." He then expressed his own "sense of sincere satisfaction and realistic optimism." During the remainder of his address he emphasized no less than ten times that his evaluation of the Synod was "positive."

At the same time the fifteen American delegates (Cardinals Sarreberry, Bearden, and Krol; Archbishops Bernardini and Shehan) released their own previously prepared statement, expressing their conviction that this had been "the best of the synods so far." Careful and thorough preparation, simple and well-conceived format, and the candid and perceptive exchange of views were among the elements which they felt had made it so.

The emphasis on the positive was clearly necessary in the midst of conflicting reactions during the Synod's closing days. Judgments had already appeared in the press that the Synod had reached an impasse on October 22 when the draft text of a final document was presented in the synod hall, and that the complete rejection of this text the next day had begun a new debate. In response to this the Holy Father stated in his closing talk, "We know that certain quarters have wished to interpret this episode as a sign that the Synod had failed; indeed this fact in no way detracts from the enormous richness and productivity of the work accomplished. The American bishops said: 'We share the view expressed by many, that the decision not to rush to publish a hastily composed document is a sign of the Synod's growing maturity and sense of responsibility.'"

From a faintly extensive informal sampling, it is a safe estimate that this positive view of the Synod had most supporters. It is a sincere conviction held by a great many who took part in the meetings themselves, and of many others who spent just as much time clearing up their doubts. On the other hand, there are more than a few who just as sincerely feel quite otherwise.

With such contrary opinions already in the air, it was understandable that immediately after the Synod closed, with only a few days and limited space had to choose unhappily between general disapproval of the Synod as a success or a failure. A more nuanced reaction required time for reflection and room for expression, and even something more. An evaluation is, by definition, based on values, and it was not readily evident at first what values had been involved in this complex event, and what relative weight should be assigned to each. This is the basis in judging the outcome of this Synod to consider the relative importance of arriving at clear decisions in a specific matter as distinguished from fostering general support and building a broad base of mutual understanding of fundamental viewpoints and attitudes in the current life of the Church.

Anyone who had been expecting from this Synod some theological clarifications and doctrinal proposals regarding evangelization had ample reason for doing so. This is exactly what had been led to expect from the materials issued by the Synod Secretariat, chiefly, its discussion outline, distributed far and wide in modern languages in June of 1973, and the

agenda document, distributed only in Latin to the Synod Fathers in June of 1974. This expectation was further confirmed in the extended press conference given by the Synod's General Secretary, Bishops Ladislaus Rubin, last September 10. But while amply justified from such indications, there were other signs all along that this expectation was unrealistic. Observers pointed out again and again that the theme was being viewed far too broadly, that it had to be focussed on a few key questions. The Pope himself said this to the fifteen members of the Council of the Synod Secretariat in a private audience on April 5. At the last minute, in his opening address to the Synod on the afternoon of September 27, he seemed to be trying, under the broad outline of the necessity, universality, and finality (purpose) of evangelization, to get the bishops to concentrate on a few essential points. These were chiefly ecumenism, dialogue with the adherents of non-Christian religions, and atheistic ideologies and the precise relationship between the task of evangelization and the need for human progress and liberation.

By then, however, it was too late. Members of the Synod had already prepared scores of presentations to be delivered as speeches in the synod hall or submitted in writing just as soon as the sessions began. Within the first week it was already evident that the great range of topics allowed and even encouraged under the general theme of evangelization was having two simultaneous effects. For those who believed that the main thing was to get everything said and to hear how everyone felt about it, all was proceeding very well; for those who believed that it was important to get something settled, attention and energy were being scattered and precious time was being lost. When the unacceptable draft of a final document appeared in the morning session of Tuesday, October 22, and the majority of the participants could not see extending the month-long Synod beyond its scheduled closing the following Saturday, it was clear to everyone that the time to express any real theological clarifications which may have been achieved, and even to generate any thoroughly considered pastoral proposals, had finally run out.

The summary rejection the next morning of the entire draft document, as not having succeeded in expressing the thinking of the participants, the apparently stop-gap decision to substitute a very general final message, and the similar decision to give to the Pope as pastoral proposals a simple listing of the points most talked about in the small discussion circles, all created in the next three days an impression of muddle and disarray which many took for total failure. For those whose chief or only expectation of the Synod was an immediate theological and pastoral breakthrough of some kind, a failure is just what it was.

Yet when a bishop from Madagascar rose on Wednesday morning, October 23, after the vote rejecting the draft document had been announced, to say exactly this, an overwhelming opinion to the contrary was expressed by a whole series of speakers throughout the rest of the day. One after the other, abandoning Latin in favor of the mother tongue in which they could better express themselves, the speakers poured out what they felt about the Synod.

They had come to Rome to consult with the Pope and with each other about the task of evangelization today, and that was what they had been doing for three-and-a-half weeks. They had been aspects of the worldwide situation as never before. They had talked them over

with full freedom and candor. And in the course of doing so they had come to understand and appreciate each other far better. They had been inspired and encouraged, and were more than ever dedicated to their responsibility to evangelize. How could describe all this as failure? As for rejecting the proposed document, the real failure would have been to accept it. And, anyway, no one should have expected a Synod to produce a lengthy theological or pastoral dissertation in a month. The most they had wanted to come up with was a short series of concrete proposals, for which there was still time in the remaining days.

The sense of solidarity among the bishops, the atmosphere of understanding and co-operation with each other and the Pope, and the earnestness of pastoral concern, as well as the determination to improve their procedures after this experience, transformed that Wednesday, October 23, which had begun with spirits at a low ebb, into what was perhaps the most inspiring day of the whole month. One Synod Father said later that evening, almost with tears in his eyes, that the expression of faith and devotion from bishops from all over the world and their appreciation of what a Synod meant to them and to the Church, had been an experience which he would cherish for the rest of his life.

The value being emphasized here was obviously that of a synod as a forum for the candid discussion of the ideas, insights, hopes, fears, obstacles and opportunities which the synod members and their fellow bishops around the world are experiencing at a given time. In a phrase used by Pope Paul in his closing address, it was the value of a synod as "a fruitful exchange between those in charge of the local churches, carried out in a fraternal, simple, and genuine atmosphere." It is a value implied throughout Apostolica Sollicitudo, the motu proprio of September 15, 1965, in which the Pope established the Synod as a new and permanent institution in the Church. In this document, which takes up only five pages in the standard English translation of the documents of the Second Vatican Council, the Synod is described in effect as a consultative meeting of a representative group of the bishops of the world, called together periodically by the Pope to offer him the benefit of their first-hand information and advice on a topic chosen by him from a list suggested by them.

Among the values involved in any synod, this one must be weighted heavily. In the course of a month in Rome a great many things can and do happen among two hundred bishops, both inside and outside the synod hall. Each one can "say his thing", more or less on the topic in question, and much more in the process. Anyone who feels the prophetic urge and Pauline boldness to "withstand Peter to his face" has an historic setting in which to do so, and can read in the eyes of his fellow bishops and sometimes in the next morning's newspapers the approval or reproach which tells him where he stands. The Pope himself, as he has shown, can both listen very carefully to all that is said and, in the opening and closing remarks to which he limits himself, can express his own views quite frankly. In both and all directions, the unfiltered communication can be as clear as any speaker wants to make it.

There is general agreement on some of the results of this process in the recent Synod. The bishops of Africa and Asia emerged with an energetic, self-confident, and articulate voice among the world hierarchy. Bishops from Latin America spoke with characteristic emphasis on the need of the Church to identify with the oppressed masses everywhere.

Bishops of North America and Europe expressed a new-found awareness of the impressive reality and diversity of situations of the Church in the third world. The stress upon subsidiarity, pluralism, indigenization, and the commitment to work for human promotion and liberation was strong and sustained. The weariness of the Church in former mission lands with attitudes of paternalism, theological colonialism, and the exporting to the rest of the world of problems which have grown up in Europe and North America was clearly expressed. At the same time the bishops from Asia and Africa -- especially the Africans -- took pains to point out that the desire for missionaries to come from Europe and North America in a truly fraternal spirit to help them meet the immense needs of their developing Churches is as strong as ever.

These and other features of the living exchange which took place within the Synod, especially in the twelve smaller discussion groups in which modern languages were spoken, do not readily appear in final documents. They are intangible, but real. To say, therefore, as so many of the Synod Fathers do, that in the free and frank exchange of experiences the recent Synod was the best so far is to chalk up a success which is significant for the whole life of the Church.

One is inclined, of course, to ask whether it wasn't possible to achieve both the value of this exchange and the value of specific decisions on some theological and pastoral aspects of evangelization. Reflecting on the whole process, the answer seems to be No, or at least that it wasn't possible to achieve both values within the space of a month. To come out with doctrinal clarifications beyond those already contained in the documents of the Second Vatican Council and others published during the past decade, and with thoroughly considered pastoral proposals based upon them, it would have been necessary to have them substantially worked out beforehand, and then to limit the discussions strictly to their approval or amendment. This would have greatly reduced the spirit of spontaneity.

Conversely, to come out after a month with the feeling that everyone had been given the chance to say what was uppermost in his mind on a very broad range of topics under the heading of evangelization, it was necessary not to work out beforehand any more than a general agenda outline stressing this sharing of experiences. Obviously the Council of the Synod Secretariat, when approving the working document in its meeting during the first week of April, 1974, chose the latter course. At that very time it was stated by members of the Council who had taken part in earlier synods that this one should not subject itself to the pressure and frustration of producing in a few weeks an extensive doctrinal pastoral treatise, but should limit itself to a short list of concrete proposals. Even though this conviction was stated early in the synod sessions, the obvious failure to make it really clear and to gain for it the general acceptance of the assembly, and the failure also to call a meeting of the drafting committee very early in the month to reach agreement on objectives, all led to the apparent confusion of the closing days.

In conclusion, the picture which one finally develops of the Synod as a whole depends very much on how far back one wants to stand when taking it. Up close to the one-month sessions in Rome, one frames a scene of much stimulating if repetitive discussion with little clear outcome beyond what everyone already knew. The value of the exchange is there, but it is



frankly hard to appreciate for the thousands who are keenly interested in evangelization but were not privileged to take part in this exchange themselves. Considering that even the Synod Fathers will find their experience difficult to communicate fully to others, and that they have perhaps already found it overlaid by the many concerns of the dioceses to which they have returned, the results of this Synod, measured at the moment of adjournment on October 26, must be largely disappointing.

Standing farther back, however, and seeing a larger picture which includes events leading up to the Synod and those which in great probability will follow it, the scene is much brighter. Not only did the Synod theme, broad as it was, generate a great deal of thinking and writing on evangelization, but the mass of ideas and insights so accumulated was given the warmth and earnestness of living voices in the synod hall itself. Little may have been said there which had not already been written before in hundreds of books and articles, but during the Synod representatives from every bishops conference heard it all at once, and the Pope meeting with them heard it all as well, from the spokesmen chosen to express the mind of the Church in the part of the world from which they came.

Having heard all this, even if they chose not to try to sum it up in a lengthy treatise composed under pressure, we must believe that the bishops will be deeply influenced by it. Like an underground river which flows unseen for great distances, this influence can well up or gush forth at the most unforeseen times and places whenever the relentless forces of history bring deep-lying strata to the surface of the Church's thought and life. Similarly, Pope Paul's closing address which he had to write under much the same limitations as the other Synod Fathers felt, can by no means be taken either as the public censure of his fellow bishops which some analysts have made of it, or as his own last word on any of the various points he treated.

Finally, one can only speculate upon a major impact which may yet come indirectly from the Synod. The theological clarifications and pastoral directives which can give a new and long overdue impetus to evangelization in the modern world may yet be offered to the Church and to the world in the form of a papal encyclical. Of the Popes in this century who have written on this theme, none has had the opportunity which Pope Paul now has of addressing himself to the task while the voices of leading bishops from every part of the world are still about him and their reports and speeches are stacked before him. It is going on a decade since the most missionary Council in the history of the Church. On December 7, 1975, just a year away, it will be exactly ten years since the simultaneous promulgation of the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes) and the Decree on Missionary Activity (Ad Gentes). If on that or an equally suitable occasion an encyclical on evangelization (Decem Abhinc Annos?) reflecting the whole experience of last October in Rome were to be published, then Synod '74 could indeed be pronounced a resounding success in every way that counts.

CO-RESPONSIBLE EVANGELIZATION

Extracts from the Declaration of the Bishops of Africa and Madagascar present at the 4th Synod of Bishops.

The fourth Synod of Bishops was an occasion for the entire Church to probe deeper, in reflection and common prayer, into the ways and means whereby Bishops, Priests, Religious men and women and Lay people proclaim the Good News of Salvation in Jesus Christ in the world today.

In the course of our exchange of views, several important problems were drawn to our attention:

- a) the aspiration of Africans to take into their own hands from now on, their own destiny in the development of the continent of Africa.
- b) the task of religious acculturation: Christian life insufficiently incarnated into African ways, customs and traditions; very often lived merely at the surface without any real link of continuity with the genuine values of traditional religions.
- c) the staggering fact that there are still 200 million Africans who have not yet heard of Jesus Christ, while at the same time Africa South of the Sahara seems to be opening itself more and more to the Spirit of Christ with a yearly average of 1,500,000 and more baptisms into the Christian faith.
- d) the appearance of a growing questioning amongst Missionaries come to Africa from sister Churches, as to the real significance today and the future of their work of evangelization on African soil.

Faced with such a situation, the time has come for us to insist on the master-ideas of communion in faith, hope, and love and coresponsibility between Churches in order to find together real solutions to the above problems.

The idea of communion and coresponsibility in the life of the Church is part of the message of the New Testament.

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same spirit, and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in everyone."

(1 Cor. 12,4)...

Our theological thinking must remain faithful to the authentic tradition of the Church; and at the same time, be attentive to the life of our communities and respectful of our traditions and languages, that is of our philosophy of life. (cf. Ad Gentes, 22; Unitatis Redintegratio 14, 17)

Following this idea of mission; the Bishops of Africa and Madagascar consider as being completely out-of-date; the so-called theology of adaptation. In its stead, they adopt the theology of incarnation. The young Churches of Africa and Madagascar cannot refuse to face up to this basic demand. They accept the fact of theological pluralism within the unity of faith, and consequently they must encourage, by all means, African theological research.

Theology must be open to the aspiration of the people of Africa if it is to help Christianity to become incarnate in the life of the peoples of the African Continent. To achieve this, the young Churches of Africa and Madagascar must take over more and more responsibility for their own evangelization and total development. They must combine creativity with dynamic responsibility.

It is important to note here that this way of ours must strengthen the bonds of unity within the universal Church, and in the first place with the Apostolic See. The grave problems of the hour and the very nature of the Church itself, the Body of Christ, make this imperative.

It is in this spirit that the Bishops of Africa and Madagascar denounce as contrary to the Gospel and to the authentic teaching of the Church, every gesture; every word, every writing likely or calculated to interfere with cooperation between the elder and the younger churches. This clear stand of ours should serve to set alight once more the missionary drive of those generous persons who are convinced in faith that there is still an urgent need to serve the Church both at home and abroad.

This cooperation will, however, have to take on new forms. Missionaries coming from abroad will take into account the aspirations of the young Churches for more autonomy and responsibility. They will be available for and participate in the searchings of the young communities under the direction of the local hierarchy. Present difficulties where they exist are passing ones. Passing friction and occasional confrontation are part of human inter-relationships, and when frankly and sincerely faced in common, lead to stronger and more mature work together. This is the case in Africa today. We have to be thankful for it.

The young Churches in their pursuit of financial autonomy call upon their flocks to be more self-supporting, and, at the same time, call upon their elder sister churches for help in a spirit of sharing and communion. Financial help coming from outside must be integrated into projects planned and to be worked out by the local Churches, instead of being decided upon unilaterally and handed over too mathematically...

To all, both at home and abroad, to all our brothers and sisters who continue to give themselves to the spreading of the Gospel, we wish to manifest our esteem and our gratitude.

CARDINAL MALULA STATES HIS VIEWPOINT.

Cardinal Malula, the archbishop of Kinshasa, who was attending the Synod of Bishops, granted an interview to the special correspondent of the Agency DIA in Rome.

Q. My Lord Cardinal, your intervention of the 2nd October at the Synod, regarding the present situation of the evangelization in Zaïre as well as some fundamental questions of theological nature, have had a repercussion in pastoral circles. Could you explain the reasons for this?

A. This is not the first time that I have thus been interviewed. People have spoken much about the unusual and unexpected character of my intervention on the present situation of the evangelisation of Africa and of Zaïre. It was said in particular that this was more theological than pastoral. These observations have hardly surprised me. In dealing with the evangelisation of Africa, it had to be expected that there would be talks on the adaptation of the liturgy; on the theory of tooting stones and on certain values of our cultures liable to be taken up by Christianity.

Such theories appear to us now as old fashioned and out of date, on account of the positions taken by Vatican Council II, which earnestly invites the Christians of the young Churches to take up in depth the analysis and study of doctrinal questions in the strict sense, starting from our historical situations and our own mental and verbal predicaments. This, it is true, obliges us sometimes to leave the traditional path.

The questions we have raised (relevance of Christianity, present recognition of the mission, value of non-Christian religions, relations between the history of salvation and human history, between faith and politics) are not revolutionary or inspired by any leftwing ideology, as some have said and written. They are simply true.

Being in charge of the young Churches, we elude these fundamental questions in an era in which the Africans are in search of their originality and identity. Africa, which we must evangelise, is not a "tabula rasa"; it has a history, a culture, a religion. Let us become aware of those realities in our evangelisation.

No culture, however rich it may be, may have the monopoly of the evangelical message. It is transcendent and catholic, it can be accepted and proclaimed by and in all human cultures.

Q. The theological part of your intervention seems to have been interpreted wrongly. Did you question the need of evangelisation when speaking of traditional religions and the specificity of Christianity?

A. These "interpretations" must first of all be examined, and particularly the reasons lying at their basis. Far from denying the necessity of the mission of evangelisation, the problems we have stressed bring out the actuality and depth. The problem of the specificity of Christianity is not new. We find it in all eras marked by great cultural and religious changes. It was put in the most radical and most clearest way in the beginning of this century in the European context. And now this problem is put to us in a new context of civilisation. Our Christian inquiry about the novelty and essence of Christianity. Are they obliged to convert themselves to a culture, a philosophy in order to adhere to Christianity? We earnestly invite all the agents of evangelisation to seriously think over this fundamental question if they wish that evangelisation leads the Africans to true salvation, through and in Christ.

Q. Your intervention was more theological than pastoral. What was the reason thereof?

A. It is true that my intervention presented more a theological than a pastoral character and I am aware of it.

I do not apologise for it, I am convinced that the problems put nowadays to evangelisation by the scientific and technical development on the one hand, and the evolution of the human societies on the other hand, call for a vigorous and systematic theological revision based on its sources.

The contribution of theology to the renewal of the Church is indispensable and necessary, and I am convinced also that only a basic theological vision will lead towards the establishment of local Christian communities which are at the same time true and in full development. This clearly shows all the interest we personally have for the problem of the theological language and theological pluralism.

Q. Are you of the opinion that the Churches of Africa have had the opportunity to express themselves in the course of this Synod and that they have brought new values to the universal Church?

A. In the course of this Synod of Bishops, Africa and Madagascar have had the opportunity to express themselves clearly and firmly and according to the unanimous opinion of the observers, the voice of Black Africa has certainly marked the activities of the Synod, particularly in the course of the debates and discussions with regard to the local Churches and to the integral promotion of man.

WHAT AFRICA EXPECTS FROM THE SYNOD

From a homily given by Brother Charles Henry Buttimer, FSC to the White Fathers in General Chapter.

So many of the African bishops have publicly expressed their deep appreciation and veneration for the missionaries who brought them the good news of the gospel, and their sincere hope that these same missionaries will continue to stand at their side, to second and support the young churches and their pastors as they move forward to complete maturity.

It is of interest to note the themes that most occupy the thinking of the bishops of Africa and Asia as they come to grips with the theme of the Synod. As I listen to their voices, as they speak with eloquence and sometimes with passion in the general assemblies, and as they speak more earnestly and intimately in the working group discussions, they are saying to us: the time of primary evangelization will never be over as long as so many millions have not yet heard or embraced the message of the Gospel, as long as so many millions have yet to know that charity of God, that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And the Synod, they insist, must tell this to the world firmly and clearly. Yet the task of the overseas missionary is evolving to meet new challenges and new needs, it is taking on a new challenge in response to the new insights and vision of Vatican II, and in response to the manifest signs of our times. The bishops of the young churches are asking their overseas Brothers in Christ to accept a supporting rather than a dominant role in these Churches. These bishops are also calling for a greater opportunity to adapt the manner of living the Gospel ideals, so as to respond to the deepest aspirations and traditions of their peoples; to express the oneness of Faith in a Plurality of Ways. They have no doubt but that there can be one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one rock of Peter, but they want to worship that one Lord in ways that are ingrained in their cultures; they want to formulate the nuances of that one Faith in a language that their people will fully comprehend; they want to live the implications of the new birth in Christ in ways that are indigenous to their cultures, but all in loyalty to him who is the Vicar of Christ on earth and the successor of Peter. They want unity in their plurality, they want their plurality to express that unity. And in this enormous challenge they avow their need of the missionaries, they express the prayer that the missionaries will remain to help them to find their way, they beg us to show the people that the Church is not African, not Zairois, nor Kenyan, nor Tanzanian, nor Uganda, but is universal; it is not white nor black, it is a universal brotherhood under God in Christ, ever inspired and enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

THE SYNOD WAS A SUCCESS

A careful study of the documentation reveals an evolution of thought. Perhaps the most significant conclusion is that the theme of evangelization must be studied repeatedly in order to find the most effective way to transmit the unchanging truth of the gospel to contemporary man. This approach calls for the relativization of much that is accidental -- added at certain periods of history in view of the situation of time and place.

Although the meetings of the Synod have been concluded, the work of the Synod is just beginning. All of us must study the rich documentation of the Synod to have a better grasp of what evangelization means for the Church in our time.

Although the Synod is advisory to the Holy Father, the thinking of the Bishops of the world is important for every Catholic.

Members of the Synod with whom we have had personal contact stated unhesitatingly that the Synod had been a personally enriching experience. The Synod was a treasury of information and insights; there was open dialogue and a fraternal atmosphere; there was an awareness of bigger problems than those of the local Church. The main criticism of the Synod was in terms of procedures as the members of the Synod attempted to assimilate the tremendous amount of input provided by the National Episcopal Conferences before the Synod and by the local representatives during the Synod.

Among the points studied by the Synod of Bishops, we would like to emphasize four as being of special importance. The first of these is indigenization or a new way of understanding the catholicity of the Church. The Church is not Catholic in the sense of converting all mankind to the faith with Western characteristics built up over a period of twenty centuries, but rather the Church is Catholic in the sense of the gospel being incarnated in all races and cultures with the richness of each period of history and each region of the world. This new understanding means that the Church, as one, precisely in the variety of cultural expressions. Until now we used to say that we want to make Africa or Asia Christian; now we would say more accurately that we want to Africanize Christianity, incarnate the message of the gospel in the African culture.

Emphasis on local Churches. With this understanding of indigenization and catholicity, it is understandable why the Synod, especially the Bishops of Africa and Asia, insisted so strongly on the importance of the local Church. There is need for greater creativity and initiative in matters of the liturgy, catechetical and theological language. At the same time it must be emphasized that Christ's Church is realized in each local Church, and all local Churches together constitute the Universal Church. The Church of Rome is one among other local Churches. It is the Universal Church centered in the See of Peter.

The laity. Throughout the Synod documentation there is a great emphasis on the role of the laity in evangelization. Perhaps this is most striking in the statements coming from the Third World where there are comparatively fewer priests to evangelize great numbers of people. There is a trend to give the laity, and specifically women, a greater participation in the

ministries. This thrust can be best expressed as a reminder to all Christians that their responsibility to announce the gospel is a consequence of the gospel itself and the action of the Holy Spirit. The mandate to evangelize comes from the very basic Christian vocation.

Youth. Various members of the Synod emphasized the theme of youth; some even wished to give it priority over other themes. The simple facts that youth make up half of humanity and will shape the future of the world are self-evident. But perhaps more striking is the realization by the Bishops that youth have rejected certain structures and institutions simply because they consider them outdated and inappropriate for our time and that the Holy Spirit may work through the youth of the Church to create new forms. This is a call for creativity and initiative to discern the most effective means of evangelization in our day.

In his concluding address, the Holy Father expressed reserve on four points as needing further refinement and study:

- 1) The local Church, but not at the cost of relations among the churches and relation with the center of unity the Church of Rome.
- 2) Theological expression : there is need for a new, contemporary expression, but the faith in itself is unchangeable.
- 3) Liberation is a vital theme, but evangelization must not be reduced to liberation.
- 4) Small communities give promise for the future, but must not be outside the fundamental discipline of the Church.

It is understandable that the press might emphasize these reserves of the Holy Father to the detriment of the positive evaluation he made of the Synod, stressing the open dialogue, the rich input, the hope for the future. It is significant that the Synod was convoked to advise the Holy Father and that Pope Paul assisted at nearly all the general assemblies of the Synod.

#### CONCLUSION

The members of the Synod have completed their work. The Church has received a message from the Synod. The Synod has given to the Holy Father a list of points pertinent to the evangelization of the world in our day. And, the Bishops have committed themselves to continue working along these lines on the local level in open dialogue with the priests, religious, faithful.



A RATHER JAUNDICED VIEW FROM "THE TABLET"

As an institution the synod is neither very confident nor very free. No self-confident assembly would decide to meet every three instead of every two years. As for freedom although it has been endlessly repeated that the synod is neither a parliament nor a mini-council, nevertheless if it is held on too tight a rein it will never grow up to be a healthy and vigorous body. Its freedom was severely restricted. The synod was not allowed to choose its own theme: a majority of episcopal conferences wanted to discuss the Family, and very few of them even mentioned Evangelisation, no doubt finding it altogether too vague. Nor was the synod allowed to elect its own drafting committee, and this was partly the reason why the prepared texts were thrown out on 22 October...

If the function of the synod is to "advise" the Pope, it is not a little disturbing to find that, already by the final morning of the synod, the Pope appears to have digested the advice overnight and, for the most part, to have rejected it.

This was true, for example, of what was for many the central discovery of the synod: the vitality and zest which characterise the Church in Africa, despite its poverty. Once we were treated as sons, said Bishop Sangu of Tanzania; now we wish to be treated as brothers. He insisted (against the position taken up by the French missionary magazine *Spiritus*) that expatriates were still much needed, but they must remember their place and be clearly at the service of the local church. The Church must be implanted, not transplanted. Archbishop Zor of Yaoundé, Cameroons, became the unofficial leader of the African group, gaining 127 votes in the election of the synod consilium. He was one of the most articulate and determined advocates of "Africanization" which he presented as a life-or-death matter for the Church in Africa. "Africanisation," he believes, extends not only into the field of liturgy, where it is already well-advanced, but into sacramental discipline and theology itself. African theologians have to do for their continent what the Fathers of the Church did for the first Christian centuries as they expressed the Christian message in Greek and Roman categories. The specific problems and characteristics, like Latin America or Asia - as a letter from Bangla Desh in this issue shows.

Now none of this was significantly reflected in the final 12-point declaration of the synod. Indeed it was for all practical purposes flatly rejected in Pope Paul's final discourse when he said that "it is dangerous to speak of diversified theologies according to continents and cultures." This left some loyal but rather puzzled Africans who had taken heart in their difficult enterprises from the Pope's own statement at Kampala in 1969: "You can, and must, have an African Christianity." They had also been encouraged by talk of "pluriformity" and by the varied approaches manifested in the New Testament itself, and by the conciliar statement that such different approaches should be considered "complementary rather than contradictory". Not for the first time, Pope Paul seems to have given an impulse to a movement, and then recoiled from acceptance of its consequences.

Almost everyone inside the synod agreed that the most enriching and fruitful exchanges took place in the discussion groups. Their reports represented the real achievement of the synod in its advice-giving role. If the members of the synod were happy with its outcome - and most of them declared that they were - it was to a great extent because they had learned much and been able to speak frankly in these groups. Yet on this point too there was disappointment on the final day as Pope Paul singled them out for special blame. It was especially from them that opinions emerged which "must be better defined, nuanced, completed and subject to further study."..

The suspicion arises that, as Cardinal Suenens pointed out long ago, "corresponsibility" is one way only: the bishops are to be corresponsibile with the Pope, but not vice versa...

The Synod has still a long way to go to realise its full potential.

LISTS OF PERIODICALS RECEIVED DURING OCTOBER 1974 compiled by Sr. Agnetta, SSPS.I. EXTERNAL PERIODICALS

<u>Issue;</u>	<u>Name of Periodical:</u>
August	ACDL Newsletter
Nos. 31 and 32	Action
No. 4, 1974	ADRS Newsletter
Nos. 1796-1801	Agenzia Internazionale FIDES Informazioni
Vol. 16, No. 1-3	Al-Mushir (The Counselor)
Nos. 6/742; 9/74/2; 10/74/2	AMECEA Documentation Service
Special No.	AMECEA Information
No. 4, 1974	BIT Informations
Vol. 4, No. 1	Catalyst
Nos. 30 and 31	La Chiesa nel Mondo
Nos. 32-38	Circulars (USG)
No. 20 and 22	Contact (also No. 13 French edition)
No. 4, 1974	Contacts
Nos. 476-526	Documentation and Information for and about Africa
No. 1661	La Documentation Catholique
No. 8	Ephemerides Notitiarum (USG)
No. 8	Exchange
No. 23	IDOC Bulletin
Nos. 55 and 56	Impact (Zambia)
No. 10	Informatiedienst
Nos. 464 and 466	Informations Catholiques Internationales
No. 34	Informissi
No. 2, 1974	Interkonkom
Vol. 26, No. 8-9	International Associations
Vol. 63, No. 250	International Review of Mission
Vol. 22, No. 72	Journalistes Catholiques
Vol. 8, No. 22	Kerygma
No. 49	LADOC
No. 14	Letters from Asia
No. 94	Mani Tese
September	MARC Newsletter
No. 107-108	Mensaje Iberoamericano
Nos. 255 and 256	Messages du Secours Catholique
Vol. 26, No. 29	Messis
No. 42	MISEREOR AKtuell
No. 39	Mission Intercom
September-October	Missions Etrangères
NOs. 8-10	Newsletter (Kenya)
No. 4, 1974	Newsletter (WCCU)

October	News Notes (AFPRO)
October	Notes and Comments (Agrimissio)
August	ODI (Overseas Development Institute)
Suppl. Sept, 1974	Omnis Terra (in English, French and Spanish)
Vol. 7, No. 1	One Spirit
No. 2, 1974	Orientamenti Pastoralis
No. 74	Peuples du Monde
No. 560	Revista de Misiones
Nos. 37-42	Ruhr Wort
Nos. 37 and 39	Scienza, Tecnica e Organizzazione
Vol. 21, N°2	Social Compass
June, July and special No.	South African Outlook
Nos. 7002-7005	The Tablet
No. 27	This Month
No. 19	Vida en Fraternidad

## II. INTERNAL PERIODICALS

Nos. 216-218	AIMIS (FSCJ et al.)
No. 10	Agenzia Notizie Salesiane (SDB)
Nos. 3-8	Arnoldus-Nota (SVD)
No. 105	Bolletino (FSCJ)
Nos. 1-6, 1974	Central Newsletter (MMI)
No. 6	CITOC (OCARM)
No. 5, 1974	CMM News
No. 59	Communications (SM)
July, August, September	Da Casa Madre (MC)
No. 78	Echos de la rue du Dac (MEP)
No. 7	Fede e Civiltà (SX)
No. 9	FMM Documentation
No. 18	FMM Information Service
July, August, September	Giuseppe Allamano (IMC)
Nos. 8-10	Hello? Frascati! (SA)
No. 6	ICA-ICM
Vol. 43, No. 1	The Master's Work (SSPS)
No. 32	Missionari Saveriani (SX)
Nos. 11-18	Missioni Consolata and Supplement: Amico (IMC)
No. 9-10	Missioni OMI
Series 3, No. 1	MMD Bulletin (PEF)
August	Monde et Mission (CICM)
Nos. 17-18; 20	Mondo e Missione (PIME)
No. 7/74	MSC General Bulletin
September and Oct.	Nigrizia (FSCJ)
Nos. 10-13	Notiziario Cappuccino (OFM-CAP)
No. 53	OMI Documentation
No. 98	OMI Information

No. 653	Petit Echo (PA)
No. 15	Piccolo Missionario (FSCJ)
No. 19	Popoli e Missioni (SJ)
Nos. 23-25	SJ Documentation
No. 14	SJ News and Features
No. 24	SMA
No. 75	SMI Intercontinent (SCM-4)

III. NEW PERIODICALS:

A. External - Name of Periodical and Organization publishing it:

Christ to the World  
 Pagine Aperte (Centro Edizioni Paoline)  
 AFER (African Ecclesial Review)

B. Internal - Name of Periodical and Institute publishing it:

News-Views-Interviews (FSC)  
 Vincolo (PIME)  
 Infor PIME (PIME)  
 Leadership (FSCJ)  
 Agape (SFB)

IV. SELECTED ARTICLES

<u>Code No.</u>	<u>Title of Article (Number of pages in brackets)</u>
2.FSCJ (M7)	<u>Dove sono i non Cristiani?</u> by G. Butturini. In NIGRIZIA, No. 17, 1974 (6)
2.FSCJ (105B)	<u>Il ruolo del missionario nell'ascolto e nell'annuncio della parola di Dio,</u> by Bruno Ramazzotti. In BOLLETTINO (FSCJ) No. 105, 1974. (53)
2. MM (B3/1)	<u>The missionary and myriad cultures,</u> by Eugene Hillman. In MMD BULLETIN, Series 3, No. 1, 1974. (1)
2.OMI (D53)	<u>OMI Northern Mission Congress.</u> In OMI DOCUMENTATION, No. 53, 1974. (18)
2.PA (PE653)	<u>Cardinal Rugambwa speaks to the press.</u> In PETIT ECHO, No. 653, 1974. (6)
2.PIME (IP21)	<u>A coloro che vogliono venire in India,</u> by G. Bonazzoli. In INFOR PIME, No. 21, 1974. (6)
2.PIME (MeM17-18)	<u>Quale evangelizzazione al Sinodo dei vescovi?</u> by Cesare Bonivento. In MINDO E MISSIONE, No. 17-18, 1974. (22)
2.PIME (MeM17-18)	<u>Partire o restare? Il ruolo dei missionari stranieri in Africa,</u> by V. Mertens. In MONDO E MISSIONE, No. 17-18, 1974. (5)

<u>Code No.</u>	<u>Title of Article</u> (Number of pages in brackets)
2.PIME (V109)	<u>La nostra fedeltà al carisma missionario</u> , by Pirovano, Gazza Agostino, and Bianchi. In VINCOLO, No. 109, 1974. (4)
2.PIME (Mem13-14)	<u>Com'è vissuto il Buddismo nel Laos</u> . by Marcello Zago. In MONDO E MISSIONE, No. 13-14, 1974. (21)
2.SMA (324)	<u>From Liberia to Ivory Coast passing through Nigeria</u> , by Joseph Hardy. In SMA, No. 24, 1974. (7)
2.SMA (324)	<u>What should be the place and the attitude of the expatriate missionary in Africa today?</u> by V. Mertens. In SMA, No. 24, 1974. (22)
5.ADS (6/74/2)	<u>Synthesis from the AMECEA countries for the Synod on Evangelisation</u> . In AMECEA DOCUMENTATION SERVICE, No. 6/74/2, 1974. (20)
5.ADS (9/74/2)	<u>World meeting of Catholic Women calls for dynamic commitment to justice</u> . In AMECEA DOCUMENTATION SERVICE, No.9/74/2, 1974.(4)
5.AM (16/1-2)	<u>News Report on the All Asia Mission Consultation, Seoul, Korea,1973</u> . by Bashir Jiwan. In AL-MUSHIR, Vol. 16, Nos.1-2. 1974. (6)
5.AM (16/1-3)	<u>The Beginning of mission work in the N.W. frontier province of Pakistan</u> , by Seppo Syrjanen. In AL-MUSHIR, Vol. 16, Nos.1-3, 1974. (17)
5.C (1/1974)	<u>A study from Southern Madang District of Papua New Guinea</u> , by Theodor Ahrens. In CATALYST, No. 1, 1974. (37)
5.C (20)	<u>Some steps through which hospitals may become more deeply involved health care</u> , by David Morley. In CONTACT, No. 20,1974. (22)
5.C (22)	<u>Towards a Christian perspective in family planning</u> , by John Sagiq. In CONTACT, No. 22,1974.(15)
5.C (USG32)	<u>Synod of Bishops</u> , by Thomas Langenfeld. In USG CIRCULAR, No. 32, 1974. (20)
5.CW (19/1)	<u>Evangelization of the contemporary world by the modern mass media</u> , by Giovanni Benelli. In CHRIST TO THE WORLD, Vol. 19, No.1, 1974. (6)
5.CW (19/2)	<u>A serious danger for world evangelisation: the crisis of religious congregations</u> , by T. Dubay. In CHRIST TO THE WORLD, Vol. 19, No. 2, 1974. (7)

- 5.CW  
(19/5) Evangelization today from the theological and spiritual standpoint. In CHRIST TO THE WORLD, Vol. 19, No. 5, 1974. (10)
- 5.CW  
(19/5) Our faithfulness to our missionary charism, by Pirovano, Gazza, Agostini, Bianchi. In CHRIST TO THE WORLD, Vol. 19, No. 5, 1974. (8)
- 5.CW  
(19/4) Evangelization and secularism, by Agnelo Rossi. In CHRIST TO THE WORLD, Vol. 19, No.4, 1974. (9)
- 5.DC  
(1661) Une nouvelle époque missionnaire. In LA DOCUMENTATION CATHOLIQUE, No. 1661, 1974. (12)
- 5.EO:FO  
(4/74) Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue on Papal Primacy. In ECUMENISK ORIENTERING: FAITH AND ORDER, Vol. 4, 1974. (30)
- 5.I/Z  
(55) All Africa Conference of Church and the Lusaka Assembly. In IMPACT (Zambia) No. 55, 1974. (5)
- 5.I  
(34) Demain la mission, by T. McCarthy, FSC. In INFORMISSI, No. 34, 1974. (10)