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Rome, 26 September 1975

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COMING EVENTS:

Executive Committee 29 September 1975 4:00 p.m. SEDOS Secretariat

MINUTES OF SEDOS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - 15 SEPTEMBER 1975.

The minutes of the previous meetings were accepted as presented.

Father Dano gave a report on the office activities since the office re-opened in August. One copy of the bulletin was published between 18th August and 14th September. The final issue of Joint Venture is ready on stencil to be mimeographed, but the present shortage of office staff has prevented its completion.

The position of Executive Secretary: Brother Charles Henry noted that previous offers for this position had not materialized. Two new offers were considered. More information was needed. Once this was obtained, following the meeting, it was subsequently decided that Brother Charles Henry should contact Father Paul Brekelmans of the White Fathers, and ask if he would accept the position of Executive Secretary for a six-month trial period.

The Assembly of Generals: the Assembly will be held on 15 December 1975, and following the request from the June evaluation of Sedos, this Assembly will be the first of two Assemblies for this year, and will last one day. The topic for the Assembly will be as decided at the July meeting of the Executive Committee, namely, On-going Formation. A suggestion was made and accepted that the responsibility for the Assemblies be assumed by the member generalates of Sedos. Presently contacts are being ^{made} to request the participation of three generalates for the December meeting, and this will be reported at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

The Four Priority Projects: The suggestion was made and accepted to ask one of the persons who had participated at the meetings for these various projects in the Spring 1975 to prepare a summary and present the same at the next executive meeting in order to assess the present situation in regard to the projects. It was noted that both the health and development working groups have work underway and will be meeting sometime in the near future.

Membership Fee for 1976: it was decided it was still too soon to calculate the fee since the staff was still in the process of change.

Brother Charles Henry reported on his meeting with Father de Reidmatten, o.p. from Cor Unum. The planned cooperation for documentation between Cor Unum and Sedos is still under study, and hopefully will develop.

The resignation of the french-language secretary, Antoinette Fernandez, was noted, effective as of 3 August, 1975. The Catholic Media Council of Aachen has requested participation in a forthcoming meeting, and this is under study. Sedos has received information about the coming Nairobi meeting of the World Council of Churches.

The Executive Committee will meet on the 29th September at 4 p.m. at the Sedos Secretariat.

DISTURBING THE PERCEPTUAL PATTERNS: A REFLECTION ON THE LIBERATION OF MEN

by Margaret Brennan, IIM

(Paper delivered to CMSM at the Annual Assembly, New Orleans, Louisiana 1975)

INTRODUCTION:

The women's liberation, both in society and in the church, has been characterized by a conscious attempt to shatter stereotypes imposed by cultural mores which, for the most part, have caused woman to be looked upon primarily in their relationship to men and to children. The need to be accepted as persons in themselves without such over-riding, all-embracing attention to a so-called "role" or "place" is a serious question that is no longer disregarded or by society, by men or by women.

The dimension of the debate reach from the Equal Rights Amendment in this country to the International Women's Year proclaimed by the United Nations. It has also reached the portals of the still male, clerical dominated church of the post-Vatican world, and the first serious reflections on how to respond to the question have already been recorded. Statements of Pope John in both Pacem in Terris and Mater et Magistra had already referred to the emerging role of women as a sign of the times. Archbishop Bernardin, President of the NCCB, called attention to the International Year of Women and its challenge to the church in a pastoral statement. Two lengthy pastoral letters on the role of women have been widely publicized and well received by the American Church. Responsible and challenging testimonies on women's position in the church have been heard in the public forum of the Bi-Centennial hearings on Liberty and Justice for all, and most recently when the Board of Governors for the CLS (Canon Law Society) met at Notre Dame with the leaders of 32 church, professional and grass roots organizations.

Groups convening across the country this year - such as yours - can scarcely dare to leave this beguiling question out of the planning of their conferences. While there is an obviously high interest level in the woman's question, it would appear that the motivation for such attempts at understanding it is not immediately so clear. I feel certain that the statements of support and encouragement are sincere enough in that they express a willingness to acknowledge the very real injustice and disregard that have marked the world of women. But I feel also that the roots of the question have far deeper dimensions than have yet surfaced and consequently been searched out.

In the context of the theme of this conference - what is the Spirit saying to us today in the signs of the times - it is indeed a real challenge to speak to you on the women's question in today's world and church.

This is especially true since the "us" to whom the Spirit is speaking in this Conference is more you than me - which puts me in the disturbing dilemma of either lining myself with the Spirit (and who is so presumptuous!) - or trying to cross the line and hear Him (Her?) speaking with the ears of your hearts. But then... that, I surmise is what you have been trying to do for years with regard to women... I don't know about your experience - but I find it a risky road!

There is so much written on this subject that must be digested if we are to truly understand the real issues of the women's movement in society and in the church. Further there is the irrepressible need to assume with conviction new revolutionizing attitudes on the women's question so that the energizing forces and life-giving presence of spirit can be truly turned to the universally plaguing problems of peace, justice and reconciliation both within and outside the church.

At the risk perhaps of being a bit presumptuous and also at the risk of rushing in where the proverbial angels fear to tread, I would like to shift the question to quite another level of reflection. I would like to assume - and this is where I might be presumptuous, but hope not - that you are quite consciously engaged in an ongoing attempt to become fully located in the key and indispensable issues of the women's movement. I would also like to think that you have already become engaged in the absolutely necessary institutional change that such an informing process must bring about. Instead of focusing on these aspects of the women's question, I think it might be profitable to reflect with you today on liberation in its deepest sense - the liberation described in the gospel - and then to uncover with you - (and this is where I may be rushing in where angels fear to tread) - specific areas of the need for men's liberation, for your liberation in and of and by the Spirit.

Your singling out the women's movement as one of the signs of the times is to be commended. I am convinced, however, that the deepest meaning of the women's movement for men is yet to be discovered, for I believe that the women's struggle for human rights, especially in the Church, cannot really be understood and supported by you until you also recognize more deeply your own need for liberation.

The women's liberation movement - along with many other movements in our recent political and religious experience - has served and is serving both a literal and a symbolic need. At the literal level, while much lies ahead by way of true and lasting achievement, some real breakthroughs have occurred in the areas of political rights and religious activity. At the symbolic level, the movements' truest achievements seem, to me at least, to lie in their signaling the need for all of us to take a deeper and more critical look at ourselves, both personally and institutionally. Liberation movements in general question the accepted, challenge categories, break boundaries. In short, they disturb our perceptual patterns and reach forward for new truth and forms of action.

This is in some sense a sign of the times. The question is: can we read it? Can we read what the spirit is telling us in it? It is my conviction that we cannot identify what the spirit is telling us if we do not know what it is ourselves to be led and driven by the Spirit. For this experience we need to live life in and from the consciousness of Jesus, the true liberator, the ultimate category breaker, the real Saviour.

For this reason, I would like to focus for some time today on the Lukan gospel - the gospel of the Spirit consecrating, leading, and driving Jesus in his ministry of liberation. Then, against this background, in the latter part of this paper, I would like to offer some insights drawn from some of my experience of working with both men and women in the church and suggest some areas for you to grapple with in discussion regarding some of your inherited attitudes and categories that might well need to be challenged and changed. Only then, I am convinced, can we begin to understand and embrace the signs of the times, including the women's movement for liberation in the world and in the church.

I. Jesus, Called and Confirmed in the Spirit: Category Breaking
in the Inauguration of His Mission.

Luke place special emphasis on the fact that Jesus is called and confirmed and led by the Spirit from the very first pages of the Gospel. In the first three chapters, not only Jesus but also all those persons surrounding the events of his birth and early years are especially chosen and filled with the Holy Spirit - Mary, Elizabeth, Zachariah, John the Baptist, Simeon. Concerning Jesus, Luke puts into strong relief the fact that he is conceived in the Spirit, blessed by the presence of the Spirit in his baptism, and being filled with the Spirit is led into the desert for the triple testing of his faith.

These preliminary life-giving, confirming, and strengthening events reach their full climax and deepest significance in chapter four when Jesus inaugurates his ministry of preaching and the making present of the reign of God among us. Luke makes it clear that Jesus' anointing by the Spirit and his testing in the desert are not without significance. The evil spirit having left him, Jesus himself departed from the desert, and "with the power of the Spirit in him, he returned to Galilee." There, in Nazareth, courageously and in the face of opposition, he stands up in the synagogue and signs in the new day of salvation in his personal appropriation of Isaiah's words:

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me,
 for he has anointed me.
 He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor,
 to proclaim liberty to captives
 and to the blind new sight,
 to set the downtrodden free,
 to proclaim the Lord's year of favor.

The narrative makes it strikingly clear that in the very first act of his public ministry, Jesus stands securely in the Spirit as Prophet, Teacher and Saviour.

From the outset, Jesus fearlessly breaks the boundaries, challenges the categories, and exorcises the expectations of who it is that is to be saved, of who it is that is truly in power. The poor, the captives, the blind, the downtrodden are to be set free. Those who welcome the word - the Sidonian widow, the Syrian leper - not those who so easily assume they have it, will be saved. And Jesus the carpenter's son, speaking with power and authority, enrages the crowds precisely because he is the carpenter's son and not the man of position. No man such as this can dare to speak to us, and no man such as this can possibly have the truth is the unspoken attitude in the synagogue. The spontaneous reaction of the crowd is to protect its expectations by ridding itself of the challenger. "They hustled out of town. . . intending to throw him down the cliff."

Luke's dramatic narrative of the synagogue event is intentionally Christological and it sets the tone for the reading of the rest of the gospel. For Jesus does precisely what he is not supposed to do in fulfillment of his own reading of the Isaian text. He is prophet, teacher, and Saviour. Further, the Lukan gospel intentionally interweaves the texts on the disciple and on discipleship with the revelational Jesus events. Is this not to say that the disciple must also be a category breaker, must also be a liberator, must also be a prophet, teacher, and Saviour?

But can the disciple truly crack open the categories that imprison others if he has not yet broken boundaries in himself, if he is not possessed by the power of the Spirit? Let us turn now to see more specifically how Jesus preaches and realizes his liberating message and how he challenges those whom he calls to be his followers to exercise these expectations, to break away inner boundaries, to shatter stereotypes and to be led instead by the Spirit.

II. Jesus, Led and Driven by the Spirit: Category Challenge

in the Exercise and Fulfillment of His Mission

Let us take a look at Jesus as he reveals himself in the Lukan record of his sayings, his actions, and his choice of disciples.

The most striking characteristic of the sayings of Jesus is that of absolute contradiction to the accepted social norms and categories of his time. His proclamation of the kingdom reverses the value scale of any previous or hoped-for kingdom. The very words of the Beatitudes echo the contradiction that is the kingdom of God. "Happy the poor, happy the hungry and those who weep. Alas for the rich, you who laugh will weep. . . rejoice when people hate you. . ." Further, the prophetic announcement that here, with the lowest, the most insignificant, the reign of God begins on earth, is an unheard-of statement. . . and so contradictory to our normal tendency to prize the rich and the powerful, that we have not yet even now begun to come to grips with it.

The same reversal of the normal categories of "success" and "power" is repeatedly stressed by Jesus. In response to the question who is the greatest, he points to the little child -- practically a non-person in the Jewish society of his time. Further, Luke tells us that at the Last Supper, Jesus states that it is among the pagans that the king or "those who have authority" are considered as great. (Lk. 22:24). But in the kingdom of God, it is the youngest and the one who serves who is the greatest.

Jesus' statements concerning his own mission as Savior reveal a man who clearly stands in opposition to the expected, powerful, victorious leader. Three times in Luke (9:22; 9:44; 18:31) Jesus declares that his mission is -- in his words -- to suffer grievously, to be rejected, to be put to death. Perhaps most striking here is the second passion prediction (9:44), where Jesus counters his disciples' admiration at his miraculous deeds with the admonition: "For your part, you must have these words constantly in your mind: The Son of Man is going to be handed over into the power of men." And his disciples could not understand this . . . and they were afraid to ask what it meant.

The same contradiction between the powerful leader and the suffering, unsuccessful Jesus who is unable to carry out his mission smoothly and with no problem -- who does not solve problems but rather provokes them and ultimately is crucified by them -- is made painfully clear in two particular statements of Jesus. In chapter 13, Luke tells us that Jesus voiced his anguish over Jerusalem, the city he longed to heal and make holy: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often have I longed to gather your children, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you refused!" (Lk. 13:34) Again, at the very moment of his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus is aware of the failure of the city to understand him and his message. And the Messiah before whom the people spread their cloaks and the disciples praise God

"at the top of their voices" weeps over Jerusalem and utters a wrenching cry: "If you in your turn had only understood on this day the message of peace!" (Lk. 9:42). Thus even in his moment of glory Jesus knows and more significantly, gives voice to the anguish of being misunderstood, of being rejected. And such misunderstanding is inevitable ... for the words of Jesus reveal a Savior who proclaims a kingdom which stands for nothing in the social reality of the world.

The action of Jesus - his everyday deeds, his miracles, his way of responding to people - make this even more clear. The normal everyday actions of Jesus, particularly in the Lukan accounts of the meals which Jesus shared with others, reveal a man who consistently refused to accept the stereotypes, the categories of "acceptable" and "unacceptable", both in terms of others and in terms of himself. He refused to be bound by the presuppositions of the expectation of those around him. He is the Messiah who eats with sinners, who allows his disciples to eat and drink while the "respectable" disciples, those of John the Baptist and the Pharisees spend their time in fasting. He welcomes the extravagant action of a notorious woman. He allows her to come near to him, to weep before him, to touch him. Others see in his public acceptance of this very private -- and embarrassing -- act a sign that he is not a prophet: "If this man were a prophet, he would know who this woman is that is touching him, and what a bad name she has." (Lk. 7:39) Jesus, however, sees the love she has shown in her act and he gifts her, the sinner, and not his very proper host, with forgiveness, with wholeness. Moreover, he learned perhaps from this very tender action of a woman, "how to be himself a man of tenderness." ... how to kneel before his own disciples ... how to wash their feet...

The extraordinary actions of Jesus, his miracles, also reveal to us a man who breaks all categories, who goes beyond all accepted norms - that he might allow the power of the Spirit to flow from him. He cures at all times, frequently on the Sabbath, Luke tells us. And in so doing, incurs the wrath of the Pharisees, the keepers of the Law. He cures all kinds of people: the leper, the servant of a Roman centurion, the only son of a widowed mother, the daughter of wealthy Jairus, all who come to him in need and in faith. Further, he reaches into and encounters each of these people in a personal, tender, involved way. The instinctive, almost intuitive compassion of Jesus is made very clear when we recall that Jesus touched the leper; that he felt and responded to the touch of a woman while he was surrounded by a crowd of people, that he stopped and sought her out, spoke with her and sent her on her way with peace; that Jesus went to the home of Jairus to heal a child who was already dead.

The actions of Jesus, then, the ordinary ones, the miraculous ones, point once again to the fact that for Jesus there were no boundaries. He refused to be inhibited in his mission by the people's expectation of a Messiah. He refused to limit the mercy of God to those who were acceptable. Ultimately, he refused to place limits upon the extent of his involvement, his self-gift for the sake of others: the Savior perished upon a cross.

Let us turn our reflection now from Jesus himself to those he chose to be with him. The twelve whom he called to be his closest disciples were not very logical candidates. Among them, Luke tells us, there were four fishermen, a tax collector and a traitor. The closest of them all, Peter, failed Jesus. And Jesus knew this, and yet he did not reject Peter, but rather he prayed for him and for his recovery from sin.

Besides the twelve, the others who surrounded Jesus were no more illustrious. There were the women who had been cured of evil spirits and of ailments, and who followed him from Galilee to Jerusalem and to the cross. There were people like Zaccheus, the senior tax collector, a wealthy man and a sinner. There were the seventy-two whom Jesus sent before him ... like lambs among wolves, carrying no purse, no haversack, no sandals. All of these people strike us as being unlikely disciples, with no preparation for their tasks, no special abilities, no outstanding personalities, no great resources from which they could draw. There is no unanimity among them, they differ greatly: men - women, tax collector - fisherman, wife of Herod's steward - Mary the Magdalene from whom seven demons had gone out. Yet they all share one basic characteristic: they have left all, have done the illogical thing of dropping everything and following Jesus ... simply because he was Jesus. Without certainty of proof, they sensed that in this man - failure though he seems to be - they touched their own salvation.

And this is one demand that Jesus made upon his followers: that they throw away everything for the sake of the kingdom. Luke particularly stresses the totality of dedication required for one who would follow Jesus. "Leave the dead to bury their dead, your duty is to go and spread the good news of the kingdom of God (Lk. 9:60); Once the hand is laid on the plough, no one who looks back is fit for the kingdom of God (Lk. 9:62); none of you can be my disciples unless he gives up all his possessions (Lk. 14:33); if any man comes to me without hating his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, yes and his own life too, he cannot be my disciple (Lk. 14:25-36). A rather harsh demand to place upon such weak and ill-equipped followers. An irrational demand which stripped them of all security and all control over their lives ... a demand that led them to stand helpless at the foot of the Cross; but also one that made way for the reality of the resurrection and created space for the gift of the spirit.

In Luke's gospel the stress upon the radical demand of discipleship is counter-balanced with an equal stress upon the necessity of trust and confidence. Faced with insecurity and at the mercy of their destiny as followers of Jesus, the disciples are admonished over and over again that they must not be afraid. In the first Lukan account of the call of the disciples, Jesus tells Peter and the others that they must not fear, for he will make them fishers of men -- (Lk. 5:10). Later, when Jesus speaks of the persecution that awaits the disciples, he again tells them that they must not be afraid, for they are of great value in the heart of the Father. Again, in the parable of the flowers of the field, Jesus tells the disciples not to worry, that there is no need for anxiety because: "There is no need to be afraid, little flock, for it has pleased your Father to give you the Kingdom." (Lk. 12:32) Finally, Jesus admonishes his disciples not to worry, not to prepare their defense in case of persecution, "Because when the time comes, the Holy Spirit will teach you what you must say," (Lk. 12:12).

With the mention of the Spirit, we come to the promise which Jesus makes to his followers. In the face of their insecurities and inabilities, Jesus promises them the

gift of his own Spirit. The same Spirit who empowered Jesus is to be the dynamic force in the life of the disciple. The last words of Jesus in the Lukan gospel are a reminder that the Father will send the Holy Spirit. The first words of Jesus in the Lukan Acts are the promise of the Spirit. The disciples will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon them, and then they will become witnesses of Jesus. It is the Spirit, then, who is the power, the guarantee, the security of the follower of Jesus. It is important to recall here that the promise of the Spirit is made for all who follow Jesus. Luke tells us that at the end of his first address to the people of Jerusalem, a transformed Peter declares: "The promise that was made is for you and your children, and for all those who are far away, for all those whom the Lord our God will call to himself" (Acts 2:39)

Sealed by the Spirit, then, the unlikely disciples become the dynamic, power-filled witnesses of the kingdom. Once again we see that, as he has done in his proclamation, in his teaching, in his every act, Jesus has broken the categories. He has chosen most unsuitable people, he has asked them to live a life of total insecurity, and he has told them they are not to be afraid while they live such a life. Finally, instead of any material support, any conventional sign of success, Jesus offers them one gift: that of his own spirit, the spirit who leads men to break all categories, destroy all stereotypes, to go beyond all boundaries, even that of death. The spirit who lives in us...

III. Reading the Signs of the Times in the Spirit

We have reflected at some length on Jesus' prophetic ministry of liberation. Preaching and acting in the power of the Spirit, Jesus reversed expectations, shattered stereotypes, and broke all boundaries blocking the outpouring of His Father's totally gratuitous gift of salvation. The gospel, I believe, is a saving and enlightening word not exclusively of women's liberation or of men's liberation, or of any other group's liberation, but of human liberation. It forcefully challenges all of us. It asks and answers the fundamental question of what it means to be led by the Spirit.

Jesus breaks the categories not only of those who await salvation, he also asks of his disciples that they break the boundaries they find within themselves, that they challenge the categories from which they ordinarily operate and live their lives. While the followers of Jesus are both male and female I find myself able and invited to ask today if there is not a special challenge for you - male religious - in some of the insights which emerged in our reflections on Luke's gospel today .

The first challenge which I would like to suggest lies within the categories of success and failure. In your awareness paper, you state that in the past religious men prized material success, building programs, efficient techniques as highly as the majority of American citizens. I wonder, however, if the emphasis upon success and achievement is not still a very strong - if un-spoken factor within the life of men in the church today. I wonder, further if the search for success is not - at bottom - a fear of failure. A fear perhaps, to face what is weakest, most needy in the depths of the individual heart.

There is, I think, an ingrained, unexpressed conviction that doing God's work, spreading the kingdom, building the Church of Jesus Christ must be marked by achievement and success; that those who fail, who are less than successful are somehow inadequate; that if the individual fails to achieve, he is less than a whole person. Further, I wonder if such fear does not lead men to protect those areas where they are successful against the encroachments of anything or anyone who might threaten them - even to the detriment of the Church.

One of the reasons behind this fear of failure, it seems to me, is the necessity of male clerics to live up to the stereotyped expectations so prevalent in their "ecclesial role". While the Awareness paper speaks of moving into new ministries, and questions the life-styles of communities in terms of poverty, there seems to be little or no question of the male religious as such. It strikes me, rather, that the questions of who you are and what is the meaning of your lives as men, as religious, as priests, have not yet been seriously faced.

And so long as this absolutely fundamental question remains unasked and the expectations which the American Church and the American society force upon you remain unchallenged, you cannot really understand the "woman problem", for the "woman problem" stems from such a basic questioning of who we are in the light of the Gospel and a resultant refusal to be bound by the sometimes non-Gospel expectations placed upon us.

In quite another context, Philip Slater in his book Earthwalk alludes to this problem of stereotyping and polarizing who we are as men and women. He points out significantly, I think, the division and dehumanizing that results from these perhaps unconscious attitudes that form the basis of our society: He says:

"Women are oppressed to some extent in all civilized societies. But Western culture is founded on the oppression of women and of the values associated with them: wholeness, continuity, communion, humanism, feelings, the body, connectedness, harmony. In Eastern cultures, women have often been even more powerless and constrained, but a higher value has been placed on their sphere -- They have been viewed as having a more central note in the basic round of life. The women's movement emerged in the West when the social significance of women in the culture had reached its lowest point in history -- when women were excluded from valued occupations, isolated from each other, frequently uprooted by their mobile spouses, and even had their domestic tasks reduced to triviality by technology."

Such a separating, I think we can say, is very much in tension with the spirit of the Gospel which promotes wholeness

The degree, it seems to me, with which you reject the stereotypes and the expectations, will be in some part the measure of finding yourselves more involved in the struggle to humanization of which Fr. Simon Smith speaks in his CMSM Report to the General Assembly. Rather than standing at a distance, looking outward from your own unchallenged positions within the Church; rather than merely supporting the struggle for the liberation of women, you might perhaps find yourselves - individually and collectively - looking inward to your own hearts, finding them challenged by the Spirit and then struggling along with all persons towards the terrifying freedom given and demanded by Jesus Christ.

And such a struggle with, rather than support of, inevitably leads, I think, towards the breaking of yet another boundary, the smashing of still another stereotype: that of the well-planned, confidently predicted project. For once we are involved within a problem, or a struggle, ready-made plans and easily projected solutions seem to disappear ... and, sometimes, grace and saving mystery re-appear. One is led to wonder every now and then if the propensity for prediction and pre-planning does not at times remove male religious from the true reality of the Gospel message and, perhaps, "plan-out" the Spirit.

CONCLUSION:

I hope that these observations which I have just shared with you have not seemed overly harsh or exaggerated. I am convinced that they are operative - even if unconsciously - in many quarters of Church life today, and that they are one of the basic reasons for the fear of permitting competent, dedicated women to assume public leadership positions in the church. A serious "coming-to-grips" with these stereotypes and their power over men is a basic requirement for understanding the women's movement as it applies to the church. Further, such stereotype shaking is necessary for entering sympathetically into the issues that most concern women actively engaged in furthering the kingdom. While conscientiously attempting to serve real needs, women are also restless with whole new sets of problems that are arising and are not being faced head on out of undue caution, or perhaps fear of women's gifts that yet await full expression in the Church.

In general, there are three areas of application of the women's movement to current church practice. First there is the need to incorporate competent women as equals in policy-making bodies or in leadership roles in diocesan structures and pastoral situations.

Secondly, there is the need to correct the present exclusion of women from installation into official, non-ordained ministries, (ex. lector, catechist, etc.). This seems especially incongruous since women are already engaged in many such ministries and on a widespread basis. Thirdly, there is the need to explore more thoroughly the possibility of admitting women to the orders of the diaconate and the priesthood.

Again, especially with respect to the diaconate, women are already extensively engaged in diaconal functions. Why their exclusion from ordination? Is it really preserving the so called "tradition" (in fact, there are instances of women being ordained to the diaconate in the early church.) or is it rather preserving the power structure? In either case, concern for the needs of the Christian community demands that we take fresh looks and creative approaches toward our present problems. In regard to some of the categories, stereotypes and boundaries that surround and inhibit the full exercise of women in ministry by men in the Church, I single out three:

Confusion between Power/Right

The so-called "limitations" of femininity

The question of complementarity

1) POWER: Confusion between Power/Right

I think that the point made by the WCC that "the burden of proof is now on the side of those opposed to the ordination of women" is accurate... but not yet fully appreciated by many women, including those involved in the theological dialogue.

In any sphere, including the religious, when human beings wish to live or act in a certain way the presumption is in their favor.

-Freedom is intrinsic to the person...

If it is to be curtailed, the burden of proof rests with the one curtailing it. If women wish to be priests because they have discerned a genuine vocation from God and a call from the people, those who wish to hinder them from following the will of God must demonstrate clearly that it is not His will.

There is a fundamental confusion here between power and right. Just as white people tended to speak of "giving the Blacks rights", when, in fact they were recognizing rights which they had culpably denied, so, many male clerics (especially at the upper echelons) tend to speak of "allowing women" or "permitting women" to do certain things when, in fact they have no rights to deny women freedom commensurate with their nature and dignity. Women do not have to prove that they are capable of ordination; those who deny them the exercise of their Christian identity must prove that women are incapable.

Politically, it may be advisable to build very good cases for the ordination of women. But, in my opinion, all such presentations should be preluded by a clear statement that the one presenting the argument is doing so as a concession to the lack of understanding on the part of authorities, not because the one giving the argument accepts the authorities' assumption that women do not have the right until these are granted. It may be true that women cannot exercise their rights until these rights are recognized. But that is because the power is on the side of those who have the control...not because rights is on the side of the powerful.

2) LIMITATION: A more subtle - less offensive expression of the power/control is that of women's so-called limitations.

I think any talk about "limitations: in re: ministry has to be very carefully clarified because again many male clerics think that femininity is a God-made limitation which women must learn to accept....

Part of the urgency of the question of ordaining women is derived from the limitation that many people see in an all-male priesthood... many men do not and cannot see this. The question of/about "limitations" is at best ambiguous. There are, in fact, no limitations to "woman's role". Individual women may have many limitations, just as individual men do. Furthermore, what the local Church is open to, and what a given culture or society is ready for, are "limitations" only in a very relative sense.

The Church's task is to bring Good News, including the challenge to be beyond the present cultural horizons and locally-accepted pattern (so well illustrated in Jesus' own ministry-)

The only limitation on a woman's ministry is her limitations as a person. She may do whatever she is able and willing to do. "The Spirit is given without measure" - the only limitation is the receiver. In my opinion, all talk of 'limitations' on anyone's ministry is counter-apostolic and self-serving.

3. More subtle still is the language of COMPLEMENTARITY.

Complementarity cannot be used as a principle in the development of reflection on the practice of ministry - the reason is that we never knew what "complementarity" means in any given case until we see it in operation.

-All human beings have complementarity relations with those with whom they have positive relations at all.

-Two men are complementary as two women.

-That there is also a special complementarity between men and women as groups is also true. But what that means in the case of any particular man or woman or group of men and women cannot be predicted or programmed.

Consequently, to talk of complementarity as an a priori in the development of ministry cannot serve much purpose except to continue stereotypes which are counter-productive.

In my opinion, it would be better to say that men and women are complementary in the sense that no human activity is integral if it is carried on by men alone or by women alone. The fact of complementarity, as I see it, has only one a priori consequence: both men and women should be present to any humanly important affair.

The principles for the development of ministry would seem to be equality and collaboration.

The equality is unqualified...

And the collaboration does not mean that women "collaborate " with the men who are already at work - it means that men and women work together in initiating, carrying out, evaluating, revising...

I am aware that opening up these areas implies some theological refinement and pastoral preparation, and also that new problems will arise around the pole of new forms for these ministries. I only wish to say that the advance must be furthered, and that men recognizing their own need for liberation has something to do with finding solutions to today's new ministerial needs. I am aware, too, that women may also not be free to some of the stereotypes that we have spoken of today. We too, must grow in listening to the Spirit, in facing the gospel challenge honestly, in finding truly new ways to minister to today's needs, to truly preach the saving and healing word of the Lord. Your challenge is to be released from unconscious stances of power and position and ours is to assume them gracefully and with the humility and clarity of the heart of Jesus.

I conclude now with a final, most fundamental question of liberation which I pose for all of us who would claim to follow Jesus. Do we think, feel, and act from within the boundaries of conscious or unconscious scales of values, unchallenged stereotypes, and unquestioned expectations which stand in contradiction to the risen yet wounded Jesus? If so, do we not then hinder the work of salvation? Do we not then show ourselves to be bound more by our sinful condition than giving clear and striking witness to our being liberated in and through the humility and hope of Jesus? In short, are we truly faithfilled and faithful? Are we truly engaged in liberation at its deepest level?

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THE EXPLODING CITIES

At the beginning of this century the world was a rural planet. Only one fifth of its population were townspeople. By the year 2000 A.D., we will be living on an urban planet. Two thirds of mankind will be in cities.

According to U.N. figures, in the next 30 years the equivalent of 3500 new cities each of 1 million inhabitants will have to be built just to keep pace with the growth of population. That is ten times the number of such cities that there are today.

The city explosion is a silent one in the sense that very little attention has been given to it. A welcome exception was the Conference on the Exploding Cities in April last year. This was sponsored and set up by the Sunday Times, as its contribution to World Population Year, to study this phenomenon.

Peter Wilsher and Rosemary Righter have distilled the essence of this Conference, which brought together many of the most distinguished experts on cities from all over the world, into a brilliantly written book The Exploding Cities that fascinates even it horrifies.

This book is not a Report of the Conference. It is a work in its own right which has organised, summarised, added to and made extremely readable the debate of April 1st - 6th 1977. "Between practitioner and theorist, between police chief and pollution protester, and between the eminent architect who jets easily from one city's spatial inadequacies to another half a world away and the social researcher who sees these inadequacies from the festering unrelieved underside".

In the statistics, we are shown the appalling dimensions of problems especially of the cities of the developing world. The population density of Calcutta, for example, is 84,000 per square mile. By natural increase alone, apart from migration, "this suppurating image of what other cities could become" will double or even treble its poorest quarters by the turn of the century.

In an evocative sentence, the authors sketch the situation which has called forth despair and prophecies of doom. "To many, officials, politicians, journalists, doctors, academics, planners, who have tried and failed to wrestle, with the bursting, milling, grimy, disease-ridden, illiterate, unskilled, detribalised, unurbanised hordes who arrive each year to clog up the world's housing lists, elementary schools, bus lanes and social services, the cities of the late twentieth century, especially in the Third World, can only be described as "cancers not catalysts".

Still there are empirical grounds for a more hopeful attitude. There are immense reservoirs of talent, of self-help, of ingenuity, even of tolerance, in the ring of squalor which girds most South American cities. There is less crime in Calcutta than in New York. People in poorer areas of cities throughout the world are even reluctant to leave

their slums for "high rise" improvement, if it destroys the complex human relationships which enable them somehow to "get by" and which slum dwellers regard more highly than shelter or adequate sanitation.

The only long term policy the authors conclude must be to help the teeming toiling millions of the Third World Cities to do as much as they can, and want, to help themselves. But to make use of the regenerative powers of the cities themselves faced with the enormous problems of the last part of this century and the beginning of the next benign neglect from a political and human point of view is not enough. On the other hand, man-made solutions should underpin rather than erode the city's natural recuperative powers. It is for these reasons that some of the failures such as the low cost award-winning housing project which had to be dynamited (a dramatic photo of this is on p. 31) may be as significant as successful efforts, for the whole world can learn from them what not to do.

It was natural to devote a good deal of space to the problems of the cities of the developing world. But the cities of the industrialised countries with their many and often different difficulties come in for full treatment.

Rich and poorer countries are then both faced with urban problems. This gives hope that HABITAT, the U.N. Conference on Human Settlements (Vancouver May 31st-11th June) will not be marred by too much politicking and politicising but will be solution oriented. This book will provide a good basis for such an approach. For it shows the complexity of the problems for which there are no simple ideological or technological answers.

The excellent studies in the last section on Communes and Communism are much fuller than the Oxford Conference itself produced and are obviously the result of balanced research. They show that, even with the immense power of the state and the absence of the capitalist land developer and land exploiter, really viable human solutions are still to seek. The Soviet Union's efforts are plagued by bureaucracy and other evils which lead to inertia. "Until that inertia is broken" the authors say, "the Soviet cities will offer few models, and even fewer solutions to the rest of the "world".

China has the largest city in the world, Shanghai. In the early days of the Revolution, when population was considerably (probably several hundred millions) less than it is now, basic services were assured through many Chinese cities in an admirable way, in spite of immense difficulties in the Fifties. But in the Sixties, urban communes proved to be failures and re-location, the return to the countryside, was tried. The cultural Revolution of the later years of the decade centred on the city because it was there that the Chinese has failed most significantly to remould society, but neither was this conspicuously successful. The authors are fair but less than enthusiastic: "The Chinese can point to considerable achievement in the government of their rapidly growing urban environments. In terms of containing that growth they have done no worse than any swiftly organising society. But they are not about to patent a model society."

DOCUMENTS RECEIVED DURING JULY compiled by Sister Agnetta, S. Sp. S.

I. INTERNAL DOCUMENTS

<u>Code No.</u>	<u>Institute</u>	<u>Title of Document</u> (Number of pages in brackets)
1.531	SVD	Synod '74: Success or Failure? by Joseph M. Connors, SVD. (1)
1.532	SA	We have chosen the Mission, by Archbishop Gantin. (16)
1.533	PIIE	Atti del Consiglio Plenario, Roma 1975. (38)
1.534	SND-N	On the Theology of the Signs of the Times, by Arevalo. (7)

II. EXTERNAL DOCUMENTS

<u>Code No.</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Title of Document</u> (Number of pages in brackets)
4.1865	JOS Conference	Draft programme for the JOS Conference: Christianity in Independent Africa.
4.1866	WCC Study Encounter	The Unity of God and the Community of Mankind.
4.1867	Ediciones Mundo, Chile	Orientaciones Pastorales 1975. (22)
4.1868	CEVAM, USA	CEVAM: Leadership for organizational values development. (8 p. brochure)
4.1869	A.S.Neill	Modern India and its struggle for viability. (19)
4.1870	Ibid.	Modern China in transformation. (18)
4.1871	IIADES	Rapport d'Activité Année 1974. (36)
4.1872	USG	Le Sens existentiel des vœux aujourd'hui. (72)
4.1873	CRS	Annual Public Summary of Activities: Upper Volta Program. (6)
4.1874	Conference Episcopale du Zaire	Colloque médical 1975. (4)
4.1875	Ibid.	Projet de "Colloque sur la participation des Chrétiens à l'action médicale au Zaire". (8)
4.1876	Ibid.	L'Hôpital rural et l'assainissement de la localité, by Dr. Fountain. (8)
4.1877	Marcos G. McGrath	Ariel or Caliban? (20)
4.1878	Research Institute of the Lutheran Church in Finland	Orthodox-Lutheran intermarriage, by Voitto Houtari. (10)
4.1879	The Irish Times	Ecumenical message for Rome Synod on Evangelisation, by John Cooney.
4.1880	Jan Van Cauwelaert, CICM Bishop	Le Bilan du Synod 1974. (5)
4.1881	Synod of Bishops, Rome	De Evangelizatione mundi huius temporis. (22)
4.1882	Ibid.	L'Ecole Catholique comme Milieu d'Evangelisation, by Br. Charles Henry Buttimer, FSC. (6)
4.1883	Ibid.	Evangelisation of non-practicing Catholics, by Br. Charles Henry Buttimer, FSC. (1)
4.1884	Ibid.	De Adolescentibus Doctrinis Evangelicis Institutendis. (3)

4.1885	Ibid.	Third and Final English draft of Intervention in aula, by Fr. Tarcisio Agostini, FSCJ. (2)
4.1886	Ibid.	De Evangelizatione missionaria seu de verbi proclamatione. (9)
4.1887	Ibid.	De Vita Interiore. (11)
4.1888	Ibid.	Address of the Holy Father at the conclusion of the Synod of Bishops, 26 October 1974. (5)
4.1889	Ibid.	An Act of Dedication to the Evangelisation of the Modern World. (5)
4.1890	Ibid.	Intervention of H. E. Mgr. Angelo Fernandes, Archbishop of New Delhi, India. (2)
4.1891	Ibid.	Report of English Group "A". (2)
4.1892	Ibid.	De Evangelizatione mundi huius temporis (Pars (Prior). (40)
4.1893	Ibid.	De Evangelizatione mundi huius temporis (Pars altera). (37)
4.1894	Ibid.	Schema "Nuntii-Documenti" Patrum Synodaliū sub fine suorum laborum. (6)
4.1895	Ibid., Information Committee	Bulletin. (Nos. 8-9; 11-19A; 21, 25)
4.1896	WCC	Consultation United Church of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands with the cooperating Churches, Nov. 25-27, 1974. (14)
4.1897	PMV	Budget (PMV) 1976. (8)
4.1898	Ibid.	Nederlandse Accountantsmaatschap. (18)
4.1899	Ibid.	Buts et Orientations de PMV. (4)
4.1890	USG Commission VI	Contributi a una riflessione sulla vita religiosa nelle giovani chiese. (8)
4.1891	GABA Publications, Uganda	Biblical Catechesis: Gospel Miracles, by Pierre Simson. (32)
4.1892	Ibid.	Biblical Catechesis: Authority-Reconciliation. (38)
4.1893	ICICO, Geneva	Vingt-Huitième Assemblée Mondiale de la Santé. (21)
4.1894	WCC(CWME)	Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting, June 7-9, 1975. (53)
4.1895	Diocese of Hong Kong	Summary of Caritas-HongKong Services 1975. (12)
4.1896	UISG	Meeting on June 3, 1975, on Chapters. (6)
4.1897	Ibid.	Focal Points/Themes of Chapters. (4)
4.1898	USG Commission VI	Minutes of Meetings and Questionnaire, by Father Bühlmann. (19)
4.1899	Edward J. Quinn	Something about the Taiwanese Goals-Values system (11)
4.1900	Rosaire Gagnon	Catholicism in Taiwan. (47)
4.1901	José Fontecha	Recreation in Taiwan. (24)
4.1902	Taiwan Sociographic Survey	The Family in Taiwan (Present situation and tendencies). (27)
4.1904	Ibid.	Economy in Taiwan (Present situation and tendencies). (27)

NEWS FROM AND FOR THE GENERALATES

RSCM - The Chapter of the Marymount Sisters elected their new Council:

Superior General: Sr. Marie de Lourdes Machado, Brazil;

Assistants: Sr. Edmund Harvey, USA, and Sr. Consilio O'Regan, Anglo-Irish Province.

SDS - The Salvatorians also elected a new Superior General in their Chapter:

Fr. Gerard Rogowski.

The Chapters of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and of the Verona Fathers have re-elected their General Superiors: Fr. Eugene Cuskelly MSC, and Fr. Tarcisio Agostoni FSCJ.

Congratulations and best wishes to them all from all SEDOS members.