

75 n. 31

Rome, 5 December 1975

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COMING EVENTS:

|                     |                  |          |     |            |
|---------------------|------------------|----------|-----|------------|
| Executive Committee | 9 December 1975  | 4:00 pm  | FMM | Generalate |
| General Assembly    | 15 December 1975 | Full day | FSC | Generalate |

N.B. Due to unexpected shortage of paper this issue is edited on the 5 December 75.

SEDOS GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 15 DECEMBER 1975

Theme: On-going Formation, a SEDOS priority.

Place: FSC Generalate, Renewal Center, 476 Via Aurelia.

Four Presentations: each one based on actual experiences in On-Going Formation Programs in different areas.

- a) Sister Josephine Iozzo, FMM, missionary in Malaysia, Provincial in Indonesia; involved in inter-community formation programs in Indonesia, and programs in Malaysia. An American by birth. (see Appendix)
- b) Father Francis George, OMI, also an American, mid-west, at present Vicar General of his congregation, in charge of continuing Formation, organizer of programs. (See Appendix)
- c) Brother Vincent Rabemahafaly, FSC; theologian, professor, presently staff member of FSC international renewal program in Rome, organizer and director of renewal program for African FSC at Yaoundé, collaborator African Sisters' Program at Accra (French) (See Appendix)
- d) Mr. Terry Waite, SEDOS consultant on development and on-going formation, has directed many programs in Africa and Asia, recently directed an inter-community program in southern Philippines, and program for medical mission personnel in Ghana. Mr. Waite is English. (See Appendix)

General perspective: 8:30 Registration - (pay for dinner, - Lit. 2.000)

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 9:00-10:00  | First 2 presentations  |
| 10:00-10:30 | Coffee Break   |
| 10:00-11:00 | Group discussions  |
| 11:30-12:00 | Third presentation   |
| 12:15       | Eucharistic Celebration (priest members invited to con-<br>celebrate bring alb and cincture) |
| 1:00        | Dinner   |
| 2:15-2:45   | Fourth presentation  |
| 2:45-3:30   | Groups discussions   |
| 3:30-4:00   | Tea  |
| 4:00-5:00   | Plenary Session:   |
|             | -Reports of discussion groups  |
|             | -Presentation of Budget for 1976   |
|             | -Any other official business   |

There are four group discussion leaders, chosen because of their experience in on-going formation:

- Fr. Denis Sheehan, Director of on-going formation for USA diocesan clergy, at the North American College on "Humility Street".
- Sr. Mary Elaine Tarpy, SNDN, Director of the ARC program for Sisters, Rome.
- Fr. Fitzgerald of the White Fathers, Islamic Institute, ecumenical and French programs between Christians and Islam-collaborates with Mr. Waite.
- Sr. Antoinette SA, SCMM, who has worked in programs in India.

On December 1st the four speakers and four discussion leaders will meet with Fr. Brekelmans and Bro. Charles Henry to have a mutual understanding of roles and procedures. The four speakers have already had a preliminary meeting with Father and Brother on 3-11-75.

- N.B. a) The presentation of Bro. Vincent Rabemahafaly will be in French and also one of the four discussion groups.
- b) Simultaneous translations will be provided (French-English/ English-French)

A P P E N D I XSister Josephine Iozzo (Franciscan Missionaries of Mary).

For the past fifteen years Sister Josephine has worked in the field of education/formation in Southeast Asia. After eight years in Indonesia, she spent some time in both Singapore and Malaysia. In 1969 she was elected Provincial of the Province of Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, and was re-elected in 1972. During her time as provincial, she was actively involved in the Major Superiors Conferences of both Malaysia and Indonesia, and participated in/or initiated on-going formation programs both inter-congregationally and among her own sisters. Sister Josephine completed her second term as provincial in September 1975, and is presently spending a year in Rome, doing some refresher work in spirituality.

Father Francis E. George, OMI.

## Academic Degrees:

- B.A. Phil.
- M.A. Phil. -- Catholic University, Washington, D.C.
- B.Th., M.A.Th. -- Ottawa University, Canada
- Ph.D.-- Tulane University, New Orleans

## Work since ordination:

- Director formation house for OMI Scholastics
- Retreat work with religious; campus ministry
- Taught philosophy at seminary and in University
- Provincial of Central U.S. Province of OMI
- Vicar General of OMI (since Chapter of 1974)—special portfolios on General Council: ongoing formation and justice and peace.

Brother Vincent Rabemahafaly

Born in Madagascar: member of the Brothers of Christian Schools, residing at the FSC Generalate in Rome.

License-es-Lettres (University of Bordeaux)

S.T.L. (University of Latran)

Professor of Christology, Grande Seminaire de Tananarive

F.S.C. Provincial Superior, Province of Madagascar

Staff Member, Renewal Center, "Centro Internazionale Lasalliano", Roma

Director, On-Going Renewal Session for African FSC, Yaounde, Cameroon

Collaborator, On-Going Renewal Program for African Sisters, Accra

Elected delegate from Madagascar Province for General Chapter 1976

Mr. Terry Waite

Anglican. Qualifications: Christian Theology—Ethics—Church History—Pastoral Psychology—Adult education. Group and Organizational studies. Development Education.

1954-69 Lay Training advisor to Bishop and diocese of Bristol.

1969-71 Provincial Education Officer—Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. (Three year Development programme). Coordinator Southern Sudan Development Programme.

1971-74 Coordinator Renewal Development Programme for SCMM-H.

1975 Consultant with SEDOS. On-going formation and Development.

Experience throughout Europe—North and South America, Africa and Asia.

MINUTES OF SEDOS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - 12 NOVEMBER 1975.

Present were: Fr. L. Hardy, sma  
Sr. Frances Webster, scmm-m  
Sr. Danita McGonagle, ssnd  
Fr. Parmananda R. Divarkar, sj  
Sr. Mary Motte, fmm

In the Chair: Bro. Charles Henry Buttimer, fsc

Secretary: Fr. Paul Brekelmans, pa

After the opening prayer, the program for the Assembly to be held 15th December, 1975 was presented by Brother Charles Henry. A brief discussion followed; some clarifications were made. The program will be published in the Bulletin. Due to the Evaluation of Sedos carried out at the June Assembly, it was decided that the reports of the President and the Executive Secretary, customarily given at the end of the year, would not be necessary for this year.

Sr. Danita then presented the budget for 1976, which included the adjustments requested at the time of the Evaluation (June 1975). The budget will be presented to the Assembly on the 15th December for study and approval.

Forthcoming resignations in the office staff (Mrs. Lazear and Father Bano), and possible new adjustments were discussed briefly. A few members of the executive committee arranged to meet with an applicant for the staff during the following week.

The question of the Sedos Geneva Office was mentioned briefly, but it was noted that although this had existed at one time, it had been decided some time ago not to continue this representation.

Discussion of the program for 1976 was deferred to the next meeting of the committee, which will be on the 9th December, 16 hrs., at the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, Via Giusti, 12.

Mary Motte, fmm

NEWS FROM AND FOR THE GENERALATES

1) S.C.M.M-T. The Sisters of Charity-Tilburg, at their General Chapter in Belgium, last October elected their General Board:

a) Full-time members resident in Rome:

|                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Sr. Thérèse Mary Barnett, | Superior General, England  |
| Sr. Bernadette Steele,    | General Assistant, England |
| Sr. Lea Vandickelen,      | General Assistant, Belgium |

b) Provincial Superiors, members of the General Board:

|                        |                              |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Sr. Mediatrix Hoes,    | Vicaress, The Netherlands    |
| Sr. Mary Schaefer,     | General Assistant, U.S.A.    |
| Sr. Constansa Lowette, | General Assistant, Belgium   |
| Sr. Agnes Mc Adam,     | General Assistant, England   |
| Sr. Elisabeth Tjia,    | General Assistant, Indonesia |

Best wishes to them all from SEDOS members.

2) P.I.E.A. - The PASTORAL INSTITUTE OF EASTERN AFRICA, will move from Gaba, Kampala, Uganda, to Eldoret, Kenya in 1977. The Gaba premises are needed by the Uganda National Seminary, to accomodate the encreasing number of pupils, and as they belong to the Archdiocese of Kampala, the local seminary must have precedence. The premises offered by the Kenya Episcopal Conference at Eldoret appear suitable and nearly adequate, but need an additional residential block and alterations. The P.I.E.A. will be suspended in 1976 and resume regularly in 1977, continuing in the meantime its publication and research departments.

3) We are grateful to the Maryknoll Fathers for sending two free copies of another ORBIS book, by SUDHIR SEN, REAPING THE GREEN REVOLUTION - Food and Jobs for All, on the impact of agricultural development (Green Revolution) in India. One may not share the optimistic views of the author or his suggestions on the demographic flood (Population Explosion), but certainly here is ample food for thought on how to provide food and work for the teeming millions of the future. Like so many good things, this book is now available from our Documentation service which is open to everyone from Monday through Friday daily from 9 - 1 and from 1:30 - 5:30 at the SEDOS Secretariat.

LA QUATRIEME ASSEMBLEE DU SCEAM. Rome, 22-28 septembre 1975.

SEDOS donne ici le texte de la communication que le P. W. Neven, p.b. secrétaire des RCA a faite au Groupe-Afrique le vendredi 31 octobre 1975.

1. Le SCEAM veut être une structure souple; il est un organe de liaison entre les 31 Conférences épiscopales d'Afrique et de Madagascar. Au sein du SCEAM fonctionne le comité pour les affaires intérieures de l'Afrique (CAIA); c'est le comité permanent élargi avec un Evêque d'Afrique du Nord et un autre d'Afrique du Sud, qui est chargé de suivre l'évolution générale de l'Afrique et de Madagascar; il y apparait des phénomènes nouveaux comme Africanisation, Socialisme, Pouvoir absolu et passivité inexilicible, l' Islam, la démocratie africaine avec le parti unique, la recherche des valeurs authentiques. Récemment le SCEAM a voulu structurer sa collaboration avec les Instituts missionnaires par la création des RCA.

2. La participation au IV Symposium: 47 Evêques dont 6 Cardinaux. Les représentations d'Egypte, de Guinée Conakry et du Mozambique étaient absentes. Deux laïcs du secrétariat panafricain de l'apostolat des laïcs, cinq généraux et une générale, le Chanoine Burgess Carr, du CETA furent présents. La proximité de Rome a permis d'inviter des représentants de la SCEP; du Secrétariat du Synode, des commissions pour les communications sociales, du secrétariat pour les non-chrétiens. D'autres personnalités ont honoré de leur présence la séance d'ouverture: comme le Cardinal Garonne; Mgr. Benelli; ainsi que celle de clôture, le Cardinal Jean Villot, secrétaire d'Etat. Missio et Misereor étaient également représentés.

3. Pourquoi à Rome. L'année sainte est la première et principale raison. Nous sommes venus en pèlerins, en pénitents. Nous sommes venus pour affirmer notre attachement au successeur de Pierre au moment où en Afrique on voudrait le réduire à un simple chef religieux occidental, étranger à l'Afrique. Nous sommes venus aussi, pour dire merci à travers l'Eglise de Rome à toutes les églises d'Europe, d'Amérique et même d'Asie d'avoir envoyé leurs fils et leurs filles chez nous. Les missionnaires restent d'indispensables collaborateurs. Il y a eu une référence très explicite à la déclaration des Evêques africains à la fin du dernier synode contre le moratorium. (1)

4. Evénements marquants: Ouverture: messe concélébrée, discours programme du Cardinal Zoungrana. "Journée de l'Afrique". Messe à St. Pierre, homélie du Cardinal

(1) Dans son article écrit pour THE TABLET, Desmond O'Grady dit qu'un des points les plus délicats qui fut abordé pendant le meeting fut le désir des Evêques d'Afrique d'exercer un contrôle plus grand sur les missionnaires étrangers qui, encore maintenant, dépendent plus de leurs Supérieurs que des Evêques africains sur place. ( cfr. Sedos Bulletin 75/607). In n'est pas tout à fait exact que cette question ait été débattue. On a parlé de la collaboration des missionnaires; on n'a pas abordé la question de leur collaboration sous l'angle d'un conflit de juridiction. La présence quasi constante de quatre généraux et d'une générale d'Instituts missionnaires spécialement engagés en Afrique, ainsi que la déclaration faite par l'un d'eux au nom de l'USG et de l'UISG témoignent d'une volonté de collaboration sincère. La place et le rôle des missionnaires non-africains dans les Eglises locales ont été étudiés dans un document élaboré en commun à Accra en novembre 74. Ce document n'a pas été discuté au Symposium mais on l'a mentionné pour qu'on l'appréciait beaucoup et qu'il constituait vraiment une charte de la collaboration entre Evêques et Instituts missionnaires.

Zoungrana (cfr. Pourquoi à Rome n°3). Audience chez le Pape, avec adresse d'hommage et réponse du pape: veillez à la transmission de la foi; vous êtes une première génération d'Evêques et votre responsabilité est grande. Clôture: visite du Cardinal Jean Villot avec un mot plein d'affection et d'encouragement.

##### 5. LE CONTENU DE LA QUATRIEME ASSEMBLEE. EVANGELISATION DE L'AFRIQUE AUJOURD'HUI

Un programme très vaste, trop vaste peut être. Les neuf études étaient regroupées autour de trois thèmes centraux: 1) Evangélisation et Esprit Saint. 2) Indigénisation et Eglises Particulières. 3) Communications sociales.

Le discours d'ouverture avait tracé les lignes directrices. Il fallait éviter de répéter le Synode, éviter les slogans faciles; il fallait approfondir les sujets tant du côté anthropologique et que du côté théologique. Du côté anthropologique, recenser les valeurs vécues par les Africains, dégager celles qui sont suffisamment universelles par delà la multiplicité des ethnies. Du côté théologique, il faut approfondir la théologie de l'incarnation, exercer un discernement continu à la lumière de l'Evangile et veiller à conserver ce bien de l'inter-communion ecclésiale; il faut aussi situer le rôle des collaborateurs non-africains.

On donne ici un très bref aperçu des différentes contributions écrites. Mgr. Jean ZOA. Vue panoramique du Synode. Il a fait le tour des grandes régions d'Afrique et a décrit les traits essentiels de ces régions. Un trait commun: aspiration profonde de tous les africains à prendre en mains leur destinées; l'action de l'Eglise doit tenir compte de ce climat; il ne faut pas qu'elle apparaisse comme dépendante d'un centre extérieur à elle; il faut qu'elle puisse expérimenter, et décider dans des domaines comme la catéchèse, la liturgie, la législation du mariage et la question des ministères. Importance du laïc, de la petite communauté, de la famille, c'est à travers toutes ces réalités que le message va s'incarner. Pour Mgr. Zoa l'indigénisation se réalisera lorsque les africains comme les samaritains, pourront dire: nous l'avons entendu nous-mêmes! et nous savons qu'il est le Sauveur du monde. L'Afrique a été évangélisée par ses maîtres (le monde antique l'avait été par des petits, des politiquement non-existants): la coopération missionnaire doit à tout prix éviter de prolonger une telle situation. Clergé local et missionnaires doivent devenir des attelages solidaires et complémentaires. L'Eglise africaine est très vulnérable, dépendante dans son organisation matérielle.

Mgr. James Sangu a souligné les tâches missionnaires de l'Eglise, peut être le temps est-il venu pour l'Eglise africaine de fonder ses Instituts missionnaires. L'Eglise d'Afrique doit progressivement trouver son style à elle dans ses relations avec l'Eglise universelle et les Eglises.

Mgr. Patrick KALILOMBE. Evangélisation et action de l'Esprit Saint. Un très bon document théologique et missionnaire. La tâche première de l'évangéliste est de découvrir l'Esprit de Dieu à l'oeuvre partout dans le monde. Le projet d'évangélisation doit rejoindre le dessein de Dieu dans son immense variété. L'attention à l'Esprit commande une attitude de dialogue (exempte de prosélytisme) avec les religions non-chrétiennes; il est la source d'un œcuménisme authentique, pas de tactique.

Mgr. Joachim RUFUNA. L'Eglise sacrement de Salut pour l'Afrique d'aujourd'hui. Un document assez pastorale avec des vues sur l'Islam, les religions traditionnelles et l'œcuménisme. Trois secteurs où il faut continuer la recherche. Grand souci de maintenir à travers tout cet effort de recherche une grande fidélité aux exigences dogmatiques



et morales de l'Évangile. A cette condition seulement l'Église peut être vraiment sacrament de salut pour l'Afrique aujourd'hui.

Mgr. Bernard YAGO. Église particulière et adaptation. Un document qui est assez scolaire dans sa première partie où il clarifie les termes d'Église particulière et locale etc. La partie sur l'adaptation rappelle utilement les constantes sans lesquelles l'Église ne serait plus l'Église. Née d'une Parole, elle vit de la Passion et Résurrection célébrée dans la liturgie, et est animée par un souffle vital qui lui vient de Son Seigneur. Toute adaptation qui obscurcirait un quelconque de ces éléments serait une trahison. La théologie africaine n'est pas tant adaptation de la Parole au génie africain qu'une interpellation de la réalité africaine par ce que Dieu a dit de manière définitive; l'adaptation en liturgie ne doit pas verser dans une prolifération de rites suivant la grande variété des ethnies. En ce qui concerne la vie et l'organisation de l'Église, l'adaptation doit promouvoir la coordination non l'uniformisation. Les conférences épiscopales ne doivent pas faire oublier les différences qu'il y a dans le développement des différents diocèses qui en font partie. Un diocèse peut très bien revendiquer une légitime autonomie et pourrait donner le ton à toute la conférence épiscopale alors qu'un autre diocèse a encore un très grand besoin de coopération missionnaire dans tous les secteurs.

Mgr. Peter SARPONG. Indigénisation. Un document optimiste au départ: Église bien implantée un peu partout, etc.; mais il y a des signaux 'danger' qui doivent faire réfléchir. L'image de l'Église n'est pas partout positive: elle est souvent contestée; beaucoup de chefs qui oppriment, sont de formation chrétienne; tribalisme, magie et sorcellerie à l'état endémique; les problèmes de mariage... l'incarnation du message est un problème bien plus profond que celui de quelques adaptations en matière liturgique ( tambours à l'église, etc.). Il ne sera pas résolu par des conférences internationales mais il recevra un commencement de solution dans les communautés à la base; rôle important du curé et du vicaire en contact avec le peuple. Les laïcs engagés devraient être davantage écoutés. Les missionnaires ont implanté l'Église, maintenant il faut aller en profondeur. Il y a un gros investissement à faire du côté recherche dans des domaines comme tribalisme, magie, sorcellerie pour en dégager les valeurs positives, la visée religieuse, etc. Le problème des ministères est à réexaminer dans le cadre des traditions africaines. Il ne faut pas non plus passer à côté des sacramentaux et des dévotions populaires. Le problème du mariage chrétien doit être sérieusement étudié; il y a trop de non-pratiquants à cause de situations irrégulières. Bref, un document qui a fait sérieusement réfléchir.

Mgr. Christophe MWOLEKA. Évangélisation et promotion humaine. Un style très différent, très concret; pratique donnant des indications simples pour le lancement et la vie de petites communautés. La vie quotidienne des croyants révèle un profond dualisme; d'une part, rien ne les distingue du reste des hommes et, d'autre part, au niveau des idées, ils professent un ensemble de vérités qui fait qu'ils sont catalogués chrétiens. Il a beaucoup insisté sur la nécessité d'une spiritualité du laïc. Ils doivent avoir autre chose que ce qui tombe de la table des prêtres. Rôle irremplaçable dans l'ordre temporel... il s'agit de mettre de l'ordre dans la création de Dieu.



N.S. Thiandoun et Njenga. Evangélisation et communications sociales. Deux études qui ont mis en évidence la complexité de la situation actuelle de l'Afrique: elle doit démarrer dans ce domaine alors qu'on saisit des journaux, des hebdomadaires, que les heures de programmes religieux et autres sur les antennes nationales sont supprimées ou très réduites. Il faut absolument former des hommes capables de participer à cette montée des Mass Media, capables de profiter de toutes les occasions qui se présentent. Le SCEAM devra apporter sa contribution dans cet effort en informant les conférences épiscopales de tout ce qui se passe et se fait dans le domaine de la formation d'utilisateurs de Mass Media. Il faut aussi plus de concertation dans les demandes d'aide et de soutien.

6. Conclusions. S'il fallait résumer, dégager les grands axes, on pourrait dire que tout convergeait vers une plus grande incarnation du message dans une double fidélité: au Christ, à son enseignement, à ses principes de vie, d'une part, et à l'Afrique en mouvement, d'autre part. La somme des problèmes recensés pourrait donner le vertige mais en les abordant par le biais de la communauté locale, on aperçoit des issues. Les problèmes posés par le mariage chrétien en Afrique revêtent une importance particulière.

On a manqué de temps pour aller à fond dans beaucoup de domaines. Les discussions de groupes étaient intéressantes mais n'ont pas pu approfondir tous les sujets. Le temps a manqué également pour permettre des échanges sur les points chauds de l'Afrique. Cependant les représentants de l'Angola, de l'Ethiopie, du Soudan et du Zaïre ont pu faire un petit tableau de la situation dans leur pays respectif. On a peu parlé des grands courants qui influencent l'Afrique: Islam, matérialisme, grands organismes internationaux.

Ceux qui ont participé à d'autres assemblées générales ont constaté un progrès dans la qualité des études préparatoires.

Les résolutions furent nombreuses et généreuses; (2) il sera difficile de les mettre toutes à exécution. Ce sera la tâche du comité permanent de veiller à ce qu'une suite soit donnée à cet ensemble de résolutions. Beaucoup sans doute resteront à l'état de pierres d'attente pour de prochaines assemblées.

Le SCEAM a renouvelé son comité permanent en reconduisant le Cardinal Zoungana comme Président. Le Cardinal Otunga, de Nairobi, remplace Mgr. Amissah, d'Accra; Mgr. Thiandoun, de Dakar, remplace Mgr. Zoa, de Yaoundé, comme Vice-Président; Mgr. Yungu, de Tschumbé (Zaïre), remplace Mgr. Lesambo, de Inongo (Zaïre). Mgr. Patrick Kalilombé, de Lilongwe (Malawi) est élu membre du comité.

On peut dire que cette quatrième assemblée fut un grand événement dans la vie de l'Eglise africaine à l'échelon du Continent. L'ambiance fraternelle qui a régné pendant tous les travaux a donné la preuve que quelque chose de l'Evangile était passé dans ce groupe. Le SCEAM a pris sa vitesse de croisière et c'est sans doute pour cette raison qu'il n'a pas voulu changer de capitaine. Malgré l'abondance, l'urgence et la gravité des problèmes avec lesquels les Evêques sont confrontés, ces derniers n'ont jamais cédé à des sentiments de pessimisme et de résignation. Ce fut un beau témoignage de foi dans l'Esprit Saint.

Note (2). Les Informations Catholiques Internationales du 1er Novembre 1975, N. 491 ont donné un bref compte-rendu du Symposium. L'article est manifestement trop bref pour qu'il puisse donner une idée exacte de ce que fut cette quatrième assemblée du SCEAM. Il privilégie indument certaines réactions négatives et ne mentionne que très brièvement ce qui constitue les aspects positifs de ce symposium.

La publication des Actes officiels de l'Assemblée de Cavalletti permettra de se faire une idée plus exacte de la portée des travaux. Le secrétariat général du SCEAM prépare cette édition complète et officielle.

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EVANGELISATION AND THE ACTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

By Rt. Rev. P. A. Kalilombe

Bishop Patrick A. Kalilombe, W.F., 42, is the Bishop of Lilongwe, Malawi. He was one of the 45 bishops of Africa and Madagascar who met in Rome from 22-28 September 1975 to study this year's SECAM theme: EVANGELISATION IN AFRICA TODAY. Bishop Kalilombe is currently a member of the Standing Committee of SECAM (Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar.)

In reflection on the theme of this year's SECAM Plenary Session: "Evangelisation in Africa Today", the Standing Committee referring to the African interventions of the 1974 Synod on "Evangelisation of the Modern World" grouped the big questions of African Evangelisation around several levels among which "Evangelisation and the Action of the Holy Spirit" was ranked first.

In the enclosed document, Bishop Kalilombe reflects on Evangelisation as initiated by the Bishops' 1974 Synod and applies it to Africa and Madagascar.

The Holy Spirit, he said, is present and active in all men and societies, leading them towards the fulfilling of God's plan; namely, the building of God's Kingdom in the world. Some accept the action of the Spirit, others resist it.

The Church's task is to cooperate with the Spirit's action, and the first necessity for this is contemplation - listening to the voice of the Spirit and putting ourselves at his disposal.

We must break with sin in our own lives and try to get others to turn fully to God as well. In all our missionary endeavours we must try to follow the Spirit's pedagogy and methods. In the light of this, Bishop Kalilombe discussed what the Catholic approach to traditional African religions, Islam and other Christian Churches should be.

THE HOLY SPIRIT - PRINCIPLES OF EVANGELISATION

The first thing that seems to have been impressed on the Synod members was that Evangelisation is first of all God's own work and not man's enterprise. This may sound commonplace; but the fact is that those who undertake to preach the Gospel anywhere are prone to pay mere lip service to this truth and then just carry on as if preaching is their own affair.

THE HOLY SPIRIT PRESENT AMONG ALL MEN OF THE WORLD

They would forget that whoever goes out to meet his fellow man in order to proclaim to him the Good News of Christ is not treading on virgin soil. He is not going to offer something that is totally novel to his fellow man. On the contrary, the Spirit of God has preceded him, because He has always been in dialogue and in action in all men: individuals and societies, cultures and ages. From the very beginning of mankind God has been present everywhere, and has been at work. For, as the Scriptures say: "The Spirit of the Lord, indeed fills the whole world, and that which holds all things

together knows every word that is said. (Wisdom 1,7).

When God created man and the world He had his Plan for him. God has been present in the world ever since, trying to realise this Plan among his children. In the first chapters of Genesis, Scripture teaches us about this Plan of God: a Plan whereby man should realise that he is a child of God destined to be one with him forever; and consequently forming with his fellow men one family in which love, concern, justice, and collaboration must be the ruling factors. We also learn there that man's own refusal: sin, has always been an obstacle to the realisation of this Plan. But Genesis 3,15 is an assurance that in this struggle between God's perduring will for man and the resistance of the forces of evil, the upper hand is on God's side: the Woman's offspring will crush the head of the serpent even if the serpent has the possibility of striking at the heel of the Woman's offspring. Revelation 12, which is a commentary and an explicitation of this theme, assures us that the Woman's offspring are the children of this woman, "that is, all who obey God's commandments and bear witness for Jesus" (Rev. 12,17). In other words, from the very beginning of mankind's history there has been war: the forces of God struggling against the forces of evil, "light shining in the dark, while darkness tries to overpower it (John 1,5). This is a serious struggle: "it is not against human enemies that the children of light have to struggle, but against the Sovereignities and the powers who originate the darkness in this world, the spiritual army of evil in the heavens" (Ephesians 6,12).

#### God is not a Spectator

In this mortal struggle God is not a mere spectator, He is an involved protagonist. For, as we proclaim at Mass (Eucharistic Prayer IV) "when man lost God's friendship by turning away from Him, God did not abandon him to the power of death. In His mercy He came to the aid of all men so that they could seek and find Him." "From one single stock He not only created the whole human race so that they could occupy the entire earth, but he decreed how long each nation should flourish and what the boundaries of its territory should be. And he did this so that all nations might seek the deity and, by feeling their way towards him. Yet in fact he is not far from any of us, since it is in him that we live, and move, and exist, as indeed some of your own writers have said: 'We are all his children' (Acts, 17, 26-28).

And so God is present in all mankind: "He is at work seconding man's poor efforts in the struggle against sin and death. His presence, his activity, is very real, even if it is sometimes veiled and anonymous. In everyone of man's efforts to do good, to avoid evil, to conquer death in all its manifestations, God is mysteriously present and active. He inspires men's minds and strengthens their hearts so that they may be filled with "everything that is true, everything that is noble, everything that is good and pure, everything that we love and honour, and everything that can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise" (Philippians 4,8). This mysterious presence and activity of God among men is what the Scriptures call God's Holy Spirit. Wherever men are to be found, in all cultures and ages, this Holy Spirit is present. He is speaking to men, inviting them to seek the truth and find it in spite of the darkness of sin and error that overshadows the world.

The preacher of Christ's Good News is nothing else but the mouthpiece of Jesus, God's Word of Salvation. Christ came as the definitive, decisive and ultimate expression of God's presence and activity in men for the accomplishing of his Plan. Christ is the Incarnate Word of God in the two senses that - 1) in and through him God's self-revelation to man is personified and reaches its final stage, and 2) in and through him man can finally answer God's call adequately in this on-going dialogue of salvation. Through his life and teaching Christ explicitated and brought to its clearest expression the presence of God and his speaking which had gone on over since the creation of man. His death and resurrection was the perfect realisation of the struggle between the forces of God and those of evil - a struggle resulting in the definite victory of life over death: "Mors et vita duello conflixere mirando, Dux Vitae mortuus regnat vivus". Christ's victorious presence in mankind is valid for the whole of the world: being the work of the God-Man, it transcends time and space and spans the whole of the extent of man's existence, from the beginning to the end, across the frontiers of civilizations, cultures societies and individuals.

But it is not a mechanical or automatic realisation of God's Plan of Salvation, since it involves human beings whom God had endowed with intelligence and freedom. God cannot impose this victory of Christ on man: he can only propose it insistently to man's free acceptance in faith. It is through the incessant dialogue of faith and love that man can accept Christ and make Salvation his own. This call to faith and acceptance of it can be explicit or implicit. And so Christ continues to live among men in order to be available as the Saviour.

#### WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

The Church is Christ's presence in the world. She is Christ's own Mystical Body. She is composed of those men "impossible to count, of people from every nation, race, tribe and language" (Rev. 7,9) whom "chose specially long ago and intended to become true images of his Son, so that his Son might be the eldest of many brothers. God called those he intended for this; those he called he justified, and with those he justified he shared his glory" (Romans 8,29-30). This election is a free gift and not man's merit: "It is by grace that you have been saved, through faith: not by anything of your own, but by a gift from God; not by anything that <sup>you</sup> have done, so that nobody can claim the credit. We are God's work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it" (Ephesians 2, 8-10). These members are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people set apart to sing the praises of God who called them out of the darkness into his wonderful light" (1 Peter 2,9).

#### The Church is a Sacrament

God's salvific purpose is not, however, limited to this Body of Christ, the Church, just as in the Old Testament God's benevolence could not be restricted to Israel.

The Church is not a sect of the elect who would feel that salvation is for them alone, or that God's kind design is exclusively for their benefit. On the contrary, like the chosen Abraham of old, she is meant for the whole world, so that "all the tribes of the earth should bless themselves by her" (Gen. 12,3). "Christ is the light of all nations...By her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind. She is also the instrument for the achievement of such union and unity" (Vat. II, Lum.Gen.1). "The Church, consequently, equipped with the gifts of her Founder and faithfully guarding His precepts of charity,

humility and self-sacrifice, receives the mission to proclaim and to establish among all peoples the Kingdom of Christ and of God. She becomes on earth the initial budding forth of that Kingdom. While she slowly grows, the Church strains towards the consummation of the Kingdom and, with all her strength, hopes and desires to be united in glory with her King" (L.G. 5).

The Church is the Sacrament, or efficient sign, of the coming Kingdom of God in the world. She is at one and the same time the picture or model of what God is striving to achieve among all men (and in this she is the spotless bride of Christ, already washed in his blood, and possessing the first-fruits of the Spirit), and the image of the whole of mankind as it strives to open up to God's saving activity. She is not purely and simply identical with the Kingdom, but is on the same painful pilgrimage towards this Kingdom. She shares in that "groaning of the entire creation in one great act of giving birth"... For "we too groan inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free. For we must be content to hope that we shall be saved - our salvation is not in sight, we should not have to be hoping for it if it were - but we must hope to be saved since we are not saved yet - it is something we must wait for with patience" (Rom. 8, 22-25).

#### EVANGELISATION AND CONTEMPLATION

By insisting on the role of the Holy Spirit in Evangelisation, the Synod Fathers wanted to recall this mysterious but real presence and activity of God in the world, a purposeful presence slowly leading men towards salvation, towards the coming of His Kingdom. They also wanted to say that when the Church is proclaiming the Good News to modern man, she must realise that she is going to meet this Holy Spirit already mysteriously present in those people whom she intends to evangelise. She must, therefore, come with awe and respect for the work that the Spirit has already been accomplishing, respect for the ways and methods that the Spirit has been using in this salvation dialogue. For her role in evangelisation is not to "abolish the Law or the Prophets, but to complete them" (cf. Matthew 5, 17).

#### Contemplation is Vital

Evangelisation demands first of all CONTEMPLATION or a prayerful observation of the presence and activity of the invisible God among the people that have to be evangelised. Whoever would proclaim the Good News must first stop reverently in prayer and open his eyes of faith to discover the presence of the Spirit among the people, and open his ears of faith to capture the mysterious dialogue that is already going on between the Spirit and those to be evangelised, be it individuals, societies or cultures. Without this contemplation, the evangelisers runs the risk of ignoring the presence of God and the accomplishments of his action. And this can be fatal, because he might be tempted to start something not in line with the action of the Spirit. He might thus want to break what the Spirit has preserved and on which He has been building his saving activity. He might try to build a new structure on a foundation other than the one put by God. Or he might want to keep and preserve what God has been trying to break down and replace. He would run the risk of introducing a totally new "language" of his own, instead of using the idiom that the Spirit has been employing all along. In this way the message he brings will sound inauthentic, hollow, irrelevant, disrespectful. It will be mere human talk and will lack the power of the Spirit. Any wonder, then, if the people will ignore his

preaching? What right has mere man to impose his ideas and viewpoints on others with a pretence of sacred authority?

### Obstacles to Evangelisation

When the Synod Fathers were examining the obstacles to the evangelisation of the man of today quite a lot of points were brought forward: secularisation, de-christianisation, atheism of marxism of the masses and the intellectuals, rejection by youth of traditional values, seeking by the working class of an earthly paradise through violent revolution or secular development, materialism, superstitious popular devotions, etc. This long litany of the evils in the modern world figured prominently during the early exchanges of experiences in evangelisation. And it is perhaps not fortuitous that this jeremiad came mostly from the Western Church. Not that anyone would deny the existence of these evils: they are all too evident and real. But what quite a few Synod Fathers remarked (especially those same ones who had insisted on the presence of the Spirit in the world) was that there was a curious tendency to look at them only from the negative side. It was as if "the Church" could only look down disdainfully on these evils as so many ills in need of redress; and as if "the Church" already fully understood them and had neat and ready-made remedies for them.

Was this not an alarming indication that perhaps in looking at the world today the Church was forgetting that, whatever the situation, God's Spirit is really present in this world of ours, and is efficiently at work leading modern man towards salvation? What we like to call "evils" of the modern world might simply be the negative and dark side of the Spirit's desperate message to the evangelising Church. Possibly, God is speaking all along through these "signs of the times", trying to spell out in what directions the Spirit's work of salvation is pointing today. Rather than assume an attitude of a complacent "we-know-all-that-already", would not the Church profit more from a change of heart, a humble readiness "to listen to what the Spirit is saying to the Churches" (Rev. 2,7). If the Church first developed a spirit of prayer and contemplation (as against mere activism and human aggressiveness and propaganda) she might succeed in capturing in the confusion of the modern world a consistent and clear message coming from the Spirit.

### LISTENING AND OBSERVING

In fact only a contemplative can effectively evangelise. Contemplation means the power and ease to "see the Invisible" behind the events and realities of the world, and the capacity to be affected by this Invisible and enter into a meaningful dialogue with God as revealing himself in these events and realities. Prayer is the exercise of this contemplation. A man of prayer is one who moves easily in this inner world, has the habit of God's presence everywhere and is accustomed, in his ways of thinking, acting, and reacting, in his likes and dislikes, to be guided and influenced by this presence of the Invisible. Such people alone have the inner eyes and ears capable of "seeing" God at work in the world and discerning his voice in the events and realities of every day. Since through the exercise of prayer they are used to listening to God and to answering Him, their speaking to the men of today will not be mere human talk inspired by human motives and methods. But it will bear the imprint of this dialogue with God, so that men will succeed in hearing God's Word through their poor human words. And perhaps evangelising will have more success. That is why there was much insistence on the place



of contemplation and prayer in evangelisation.

### Listen to the Spirit

Much was said about the need for the evangeliser first to "listen" and "observe" before he ventures to preach the Gospel of Christ. He has first to listen to what the spirit is already trying to say, and observe what he is trying to accomplish, and how. He will thus acquaint himself with the dialogue of Salvation that is already going on. This dialogue results from God's constant call to salvation made to man (individuals and societies), and man's response to this call: a response which is always partly "Yes" and partly "No", and never totally "Yes" or totally "No". For as we pointed out above, there is an on-going struggle in mankind: both in societies and cultures, and in the individual; a fight between Good and Evil, Light and **Darkness**, Life and Death, Grace and Sin.

Sin means man's resistance to God's call, and it is expressed in attitudes and actions that are opposed to God's plan of Love, his building of the Kingdom. Such are the attitudes and actions of hatred, injustice, oppression, greed, materialism, egoism, etc. Wherever these are found, man is saying "no" to God and to His Kingdom, even if the people do not know explicitly that this is so. The hidden spirit of God is constantly trying to break this opposition by inspiring and promoting good thoughts and intentions, and seconding men's efforts to do good.

For, in spite of sin, man is still basically open to God: he can and does say "yes" to grace. And so in every man, in every society and culture, there is to be found an amount of good, the traces of God's success in the dialogue of Salvation.

The evangeliser will indeed observe man's sinful resistance to God. He must take full account of it since his role is to second the Spirit in breaking this resistance and making way for grace. But he must also discover those "seeds of the word" (the "semina Verbi" of the early Fathers), for his role is also to offer himself humbly to the Spirit as his instrument in promoting and bringing to full maturity these seeds. The Church is called upon to bring the Gospel of Christ and thereby explicitate or give the Christian name to the often inarticulate and groping efforts of man in answering God's call. And then the Gospel brings to its full expression and destiny the good that the Spirit had already started to accomplish.

### EVANGELISATION IS FIRST OF ALL "CONTINUITY" WITH THE SPIRIT'S WORK

This is what was meant by many Synod Fathers when they insisted that evangelisation works "in continuity" with what the Holy Spirit has been doing among men. In this connection a plea was made to the evangelising Church to develop a sincere respect for all the religious expressions of mankind: the great world non-Christian religions which have moulded the known civilizations and cultures of many peoples for ages and continue to do so: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, etc. The same respect is due to all those religious expressions of less known cultures and peoples which in the past tended to be globally dismissed as paganism, idolatry, animism, and what have you, - like our own traditional religions of Africa. These too deserve an equal respect, because in them also are to be found authentic traces of the Spirit's salvific action over the ages.

Even the contemporary attitudes which strike us mostly by their negative aspects: materialism, secularisation, atheism, negation of what we call the traditional Christian values (e.g. in the attitudes of modern youth and the working class), de-christianisation etc., - even in these, the evangeliser must first listen and observe so as to discover behind the negative expressions the positive and good values that are being sought by contemporary man. For no attitude or action of man can be totally dark and evil, "there is always the silver lining". This too is the work of the spirit; and the evangeliser must first take full note of it and give it due respect. Only thus can he hope to work in continuity with the Spirit when he sets out to preach the Gospel. He will start from the good that is being expressed and pursued. And that, not just a clever tactic, but as a sincere respect for God's action, and respect for God's pedagogy in dealing with his children.

#### EVANGELISATION IS ALSO A "BREAK" WITH MAN'S SIN (NEED OF CONVERSION)

Many episcopal conferences had asked that the Synod explicitly deal with the theme of "Conversion" in evangelisation. The preaching of the Gospel represents God's judgement on man's sin and resistance. It is true that man is open to grace, it is equally true that sin has reigned over him. In each individual as well as in all societies and ages the traces of Original Sin are apparent. In all men there is sin. The preached Word of God comes to unmask this sin, expose it, and deal with it, for in so far and as long as sin reigns in man, God's Kingdom cannot flourish. In all men God's Spirit has been always at war against evil. He has been at work inspiring men with a realisation of the evil at work in their lives, those attitudes, ways of thinking and acting, institutions and customs, that oppose the flourishing of good. In spite of evil we can discover everywhere, in the conscience (individual and collective) of man real efforts towards "conversion" or the breaking of evil. These efforts may not be very evident or successful, still they are there: the result of the ever-present and active Spirit.

#### God sees Everything

The evangeliser comes to put himself at the disposal of the Spirit in order to further his work of converting men from evil to good, to promote the change of heart in men. The Gospel Word, representing the decisive power of Christ in his Paschal Mystery, becomes for man "something alive and active: it cuts like any double-edged sword but more finely: it can slip through the place where the soul is divided from the Spirit, or joints from the marrow; it can judge the secret thoughts. No created thing can hide from God; everything is uncovered and open to the eyes of the One to whom we must give account of ourselves" (Hebrews 4,13). Evangelisation brings to all men, all societies and cultures, God's judgement which sifts the good from the evil, condemns the evil and offers effective ways of destroying it. The evangeliser is not a naive optimist who would accept or recommend men's lives wholesale. He knows that in all men, all cultures and societies there is need of conversion. The Synod Fathers insisted on conversion, not only for the non-christian world but also, and first of all, for the Church herself. "Conversion, or metanoia, is the primary purpose of the preaching of the Gospel, and a permanent condition and duty of the pilgrim Church" (Official list of the Main Questions discussed in the 1974 Synod of Bishops, 2, e).

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH: EVANGELISATION AND WITNESS OF LIFE

In fact, when the Synod insisted on the role of the Holy Spirit in evangelisation they were not just thinking of his presence in the world at large. They wanted it explicitly stated that the Spirit is at work first of all in the Church herself. She cannot become the instrument of salvation for the Word except in so far as she herself is under the constant influence of the same vivifying Spirit of Christ and is being converted from evil and led into the accomplishing of God's will.

The Church too needs to be saved, for the same fight between good and evil that goes on in the whole of mankind is also present in the Church. She is not<sup>a</sup> gathering of the perfect; she is "the dragnet cast into the sea that brings in a haul of all kinds" (Matthew 13,47), the field in which both the wheat and the darnel grow (Matthew 13, 24-30). She too needs conversion and needs the feeling of God's Word. "The Gospel is to be proclaimed also in the Church, through preaching and catechesis, constantly, and with new arguments, if necessary, in order to form Christian Communities fervent in faith, charity and prayer" (Official list, 2,b).

The evangelising Church is to be the Light, Salt, and Yeast of the whole world. How can she be effective if her light is put under a tub, or she becomes tasteless (Matthew 5, 13-16), or the yeast has lost the power of leavening the mass (Matthew 13,33). She must be alive and active; only then can she second the coming of the Kingdom of the world. "The witness of life, both in individual members and in the community itself must be an integral part of evangelisation, adding to the credibility of preachers" (Official List, 2,d). The spirit of Christ who vivifies the Church makes it possible for her to be a witnessing community.

THE SPIRIT'S PEDAGODY OF SALVATION

If really we believe in the presence of the Spirit in the whole world and take this activity seriously, we are bound to respect also his pedagogy. We must learn to watch the way he is working among men. His ways may be incomprehensible and rather different from what we human beings may think is ideal. For "the wind blows wherever, it pleases; you hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going" (John 3,8). But it is we who have to bend to the Spirit's ways and methods; it is worthless to want to do things our own way or follow our wishful thinking. The reality of God's activity is the only valid basis for evangelisation.

One may be permitted to regret that not enough time was given to the examination of the Spirit's methods and ways in the dialogue of salvation. True enough, time again a number of Fathers in their interventions made an appeal for such a salutary examination. If their plea had been taken more seriously probably the results of the Synod's deliberations would have been different.

It was sometimes remarked that the Synod did not make it very clear what the ultimate aim or objective of evangelisation really was. Was it the expansion of the visible Church? Was it the explicit presentation of the Gospel of Christ to as many people as possible? Or was it much more the reform of the Church herself? Evidently all these, and many others are the aims or objectives of evangelisation. But it would

have been more fruitful if in the first place the Fathers had been quite agreed as to the ultimate or final objective of evangelisation. This would have helped to place all the other intermediary aims in their true perspective. It would have helped to find the appropriate and adapted means and methods of evangelisation, having in mind the wide variety of situations and possibilities in the **world** of today which is to be evangelised.

We would venture to suggest that, after all, the ultimate aim of evangelisation is nothing other than the aim of Christ's coming into the world: the establishment of the Kingdom of God among men. This too is the aim of the Holy Spirit's presence and activity in the world from the very beginning of time. As we said, Christ's Gospel of which the Church is the official trustee, is the ultimate and definitive expression of this perennial presence of God's Spirit. The Church herself cannot be the ultimate aim of evangelisation: she is just the instrument of God for his work in the whole world. The whole of mankind is the final objective of God's salvific activity, in so far as mankind is destined to be transformed into the Kingdom of God.

It is therefore important for the evangelising Church to watch carefully God's pedagogy and methods in this activity. She will do well to take this pedagogy seriously into consideration.

#### NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS AND MEN OF GOOD WILL

The first reality to consider is the presence in the world of non-Christian religions. We have already seen that through these too the Spirit is at work building God's Kingdom. It is important to realise that the Christian Church, as a historical and tangible reality, is of very recent origin when compared with the whole span of man's history. Before the advent of this historical Church many religious systems and practices had been at the disposal of mankind. And even after the coming of the Church, in many parts of the world such non-Christian religious expressions have continued to function. For the vast majority of men these religions are the only available and practically relevant ways of relations with God.

Even after centuries of Christian evangelisation a large section of mankind does not have the Gospel realistically available to them. We know that even in the territories where the Gospel has been or is being preached, many people do not manage to be affected by this preaching up to the point of explicitly accepting Christ - and this, through no culpable fault of theirs. Often it is simply due to historical, social, cultural or geographical factors that are none of their making.

#### As regards all these Peoples, what does Evangelisation mean?

Are they necessarily to be excluded from its scope? In some cases explicit or patently Christian evangelisation is out of the question for them, because such a preaching is either impossible or counter-productive (e.g. where prejudice, fanaticism, or ignorance is such that Christianity is invincibly seen as an evil). In those cases, can we still speak of the possibility of real evangelisation?

#### Use the Spirit's Method

At the Synod there was happily a group of Fathers who were familiar with such situations, e.g. those living in predominantly Moslem areas or in atheistic

totalitarian states. Their reflections were a great help. In the words of one of them (actually Cardinal Duval of Algiers, North Africa), the evangeliser in such territories should model his action on the Spirit's method. Thus in the work of the evangelising Church what has to be given priority is Charity. This charity means the gratuitous love of the others, a love that is not feigned but sincere; a love that is not conditional or interested, e.g. just in view of winning adherents; but a love that is like that of God "our Father in heaven, who causes his sun to rise on the bad men as well as good, and his rain to fall on honest and dishonest men alike" (Matthew 5,45). This is how the Spirit works. This charity will inspire the evangeliser with a sincere and scrupulous respect for these people, their way of life and their religious convictions. For although these convictions are not fully in line with the Gospel of Christ, still they are the results of the progressive work of the Spirit. The evangeliser must also scrupulously respect the freedom of conscience of these people. There must be no vulgar proselytism or pressure, using unfair means and methods to force adherence to the Church, e.g. through education or health services given only in view of attracting "converts". On the contrary, he must respect the Spirit at work in them and the rhythm he is following. This demands a great sense of "discernment of spirits", helping to discover the good that is already there and also the resistances to the Spirit.

### Dialogue

The appropriate method of evangelisation here is dialogue. By dialogue we mean a sincere joint searching for the will of God with the other partner. We do not impose prematurely our ideas (even if they are Gospel ones) before we are sure that the Spirit has led our partner up to the point where he can see these ideas and accept them from a real interior conviction. Dialogue means also being open to learn from the other, remembering that, even if we bear the Gospel of Christ, we do not possess the monopoly of the Spirit. He also speaks in the other, and there can be instances when the spirit will be talking in and through the other rather than in and through us. On both sides we must be ever open to listen to the Spirit with humility and submission, for the point is not our winning the other over to our point of view at all cost, but all of us together finding what the Spirit wants in the circumstances, and then following that with our whole heart. We do not wish to anticipate the work of the Spirit, or try to force him to what we ourselves want, but to respect the rhythm of progress of the Spirit. "In other words, the only thing that counts is not what human beings want or try to do, but the mercy of God" (Romans 9,16)

### The Gospel Inspires to meet Non-Christians

We should not be surprised or scandalised to see that the progress is too slow for our liking. We might find out that God's plan is that these people will not come to the explicit acceptance of the full Gospel, or even that the open preaching of the Gospel will not be possible. This should neither surprise nor discourage us. For it does not mean that God does not want us to evangelise. It only means that he is forcing us to use another method. This method is that of dialogue, whereby we join our non-Christian interlocutor in a sincere search for the good that God is trying to promote and in the work of finding the appropriate means of achieving it. At the same time we jointly discover the obstacles that man's sin is putting up against this good, and work together to find ways of destroying these obstacles.

In this work, we who are Christians will be guided and inspired by the Gospel of Christ, but applied to meet the concrete situations. And thus, even if we may not be able to say explicitly that we are preaching the Gospel, our contribution to that dialogue of salvation will be an authentic preaching of the Gospel. The end result will perhaps not be that our interlocutors will become explicit Christians, but they will have been exposed to the evangelical values, and been influenced by them. Their life will have been transformed by these values, and this will mean that our dialogue has resulted into some progress towards the coming of God's Kingdom. After all this is what evangelisation is for. Pope John XXIII loved to speak about "collaborating with all men of goodwill" to build a better world. This is exactly what such a method of evangelising does, and it is real evangelisation.

In many parts of Africa, where Islam or traditional religions are in power, this method of evangelisation is the only possible one. The Church will have to learn to use it not just as an expression of failure to do the real thing, but as fidelity to the rhythm and method of the Spirit himself.

#### EVANGELISATION AND ECUMENISM

Another reality that has to be faced by the evangelising Church in Africa is the existence on the scene of our evangelisation of many other non-Catholic Christian Churches and communities. They too are sincerely seeking to proclaim Christ's Good News of Salvation. They do it with different religious beliefs and practices. It is evident that this situation is not the ideal because Christ's will was that all his disciples should be one so that the world would believe that the Father had sent him (John 17,21). It is through the believers' own sin that divisions have arisen and continue to exist. We would all like that Christian unity is re-established, and we must indeed do our utmost to make this come about. And yet, here too, we have to remember that the work is not of us human beings, but God's own.

We men are all too capable of creating divisions, but only God can gather again in unity his scattered children. While doing our best to heal these divisions we must nevertheless learn to be humbly patient and leave to God the determination of the exact time and modalities of this healing. We can rest assured that He is at work doing this even if we are not always clear as to how exactly. The important thing is that we become resigned to God's own time and ways and not attempt to create an artificial unity of our own, for this will be to no avail.

#### Why are there Differences?

Meantime we have to accept the fact that in the field of our evangelisation fellow Christians are also active. Let us remember that their presence cannot be attributed simply to their bad will, for most of them are people of upright and sincere convictions, just as we ourselves try to be. Moreover the fact that such or such people have accepted this or that Christian Church is not really the result of their free choice; it is often the result of circumstances of history, culture, or geography which are none of man's own free will. It is therefore correct to admit that this too is a sign of God's will and plan. So rather than just sit back and pine away in useless regrets, we had better pray to understand better God's intentions and plans in this reality. For it is both a challenge and a programme.

Even the Spirit is at work amongst Non-Christians!

Let us remember first that God's Spirit is really at work in and through our fellow Christian Churches. Just as in our own Church God is at work and we men partly collaborate with him and partly resist his will, so also among them. Through them God is trying to build his Kingdom among men. We must therefore learn to respect them sincerely. Just as for the non-Christian religions, there must be a true respect of their freedom of conscience. If God is calling them to join us in our Church, he will surely give them the possibility to do so. But let it be through his own ways and not through the sinful methods of us poor human beings. For if God's will is that they will remain where they are, who are we to question his intentions or to ask him: Why are you doing that? If he wants to do his work through them too, what right have we to feel bad about it? We would do better just to find out what he wants us to do about this situation.

Collaboration with Sincerity

God's will is surely that if he wants them to join us we do our best to facilitate that. But also, if he does not want this, he surely wants that in our work of evangelisation we should collaborate with them in a sincere and fraternal way. The method of collaboration is, as for the non-Christian religions, that of a sincere and respectful dialogue. We should all learn to search together the will of God for the areas of our joint evangelisation. In doing this, we shall find out that there are points of differences among us. Here we must learn to respect one another in those differences even as we frankly work to iron out these differences.

In this laborious work we should not be impatient and want to make short-cuts in the programme of God, nor should we allow ourselves to resort to sinful methods like hatred, ridicule, heated discussions, slander and calumny, unfair and divisive competitions or methods of counter-proselytism that are inspired by mere human motives. Many people think of "Ecumenism" as aimed at drawing members of other Churches to our own Church at any cost. This is a wrong understanding of ecumenism. Ecumenism is a sincere and fraternal joint effort to find God's full purpose and humbly to try to accomplish it.

We shall also find that there are many points, and basic ones, on which we all agree. True ecumenism means to make sincere efforts to establish fraternal collaboration on such points. Since we are all committed to the building up of God's Kingdom, there are vast possibilities of doing this together in true love and fraternity. In an area where different Christian bodies coexist, there is surely a challenge and a call from God to reflect and pool forces together so that the joint evangelisation can result in progress for the Kingdom. We in Africa must learn to base our coexistence on the acceptance of brotherly love. This will inspire us with new and daring insights into methods of joint evangelisation while we wait for God's own time of gathering us again in one sheepfold.

CONCLUSION

The theme of "Evangelisation and the Action of the Holy Spirit" which was part of the Synod's deliberations on Evangelisation in the Modern World, was a theme that is of basic importance for the Church in Africa. The implications of this theme have a very practical incidence on the work of evangelisation in the context of the realities obtaining in most of our territories...



ARE MISSIONARIES STILL NEEDED?

Dakar, 24th October 1975 (DIA)

In its second 1975 October issue, the fortnightly "Afrique Nouvelle", published in Dakar, Senegal, gives an article of Bishop Theodore Adrien Sarr of Kaolack in Senegal, entitled "The mission still questioned".

After explaining the meaning of "Mission country" and of "Young Churches", the prelate substantially said the following:

"We indigenous bishops and priests of the mission countries are aware of our responsibilities and are determined to assume these as well as possible. But generally we are overwhelmed by the number of Christians who must be helped in the deepening of their faith, and of non-Christians who must be evangelised.

In support of this statement, I give as example the case of the diocese of Kaolack which has a population of 640,000 inhabitants, only 7,000 of whom are Christians, whilst the others are Moslems for the greater majority. For the work of the deepening of the faith and the evangelization there are but 21 priests among whom 2 Senegalese; 7 men religious of whom but one Senegalese; 39 Sisters, 7 of whom are Senegalese; and 78 catechists. There is but one major seminarian and in the minor seminary are only 10 students.. How can the 7,000 Christians properly be animated and how to do the work of evangelisation with only the bishop, 2 priests, 1 men religious, 7 sisters and 78 catechists, most of whom are aged and but little accustomed to the new methods.- The editorial staff adds here that according to the document of the 3rd Assembly of the Senegalese Clergy there are 55 Senegalese priests and bishops working in the following circumscriptions: 14 in Dakar diocese, 27 in Ziguinchor diocese, 10 in Thiès diocese, 1 in Saint Louis diocese and 3 in Kaolack diocese -.

To the question whether missionaries are still needed, we answer: yes. The missionary countries have already indigenous apostolic workers, but their number is far from sufficient. Help from abroad, from the ancient Churches, is still needed so that the Christian life can rapidly develop and the Church so can firmly take root.

It is up to the indigenous bishops, priests, religious and lay people to give a "local" expression to the Christian life by assimilating the Gospel according to their own sensibility and philosophy. The foreign missionary is no longer the only apostolic worker or the primary responsible of the mission, but he is still very useful. He is indispensable collaborator in many aspects. First of all, he makes up for the shortage of apostolic workers. As witness of a secular Christian experience, he is also an indicated guide for the perception of the evangelical needs felt by new converts, and a term of comparison for the different expressions of the faith in the local culture.

In bringing about their own theology, catechesis and liturgy, the young churches can save pains by making use of the historical and comparative study in depth of the ancient churches in this field; and in order to authentically live the priesthood of the Apostles, the evangelical counsels and the sacrament of marriage, without disowning the values of their culture, they must take their stand on experience of their predecessors in the faith.

This is the reason why the foreign missionaries in the young churches are not merely people carrying out the directives of the local hierarchy; they have their place in

the theoretical research and in the practical applications related to all the fields of the life of the communities. They are full-fledged collaborators. It is up to them to psychologically adapt themselves to this role.

As they are no longer the only apostolic workers nor the first people in charge of the mission, the foreign missionaries must set themselves to listen so as to understand the indigenous people; they must accept objectives and methods which are not identical to those of their countries; they must adapt to the rhythm of the young churches, the research work and experiments necessary are marked by slowness as uncertainty of the first steps of a child; they must be very suspicious regarding the unconscious after-effects of the old superiority complexes of the western man to start a respectful dialogue with the local culture.

In a commentary, called "notes of the editorial staff", the periodical "Afrique Nouvelle" throws a realistic light on this document of the Senegalese prelate. Here follows part of the commentary of the periodical:

"On the one hand the bishop says: "Missionaries are needed for the evangelisation of Senegal, and Kaolack in particular"; on the other hand, the Senegalese priests, considering evangelisation, disregard the missionaries... where is the meeting taking place?

In the field of economic and even political cooperation we are witness of research, we see progress, mutual concessions. In the field of spiritual cooperation we witness an opposite phenomenon: summit meetings are always stimulating, deviations are soon shaded off, but at the basis, the cooperation in this field is more difficult than the other. The question put above is justified in some places: we do here and now need and want missionaries? The answer "No" to such instance of a well localised particular church does not say no to the mission.

It means that they recognise that this local church has taken stature and has become missionary in its turn. Who would not be glad about this?"

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