

(Sedos is grateful to the Order of Friars Minor for permission to print the following report on Taiwan given at their recent meeting in the Far East).

THE LOCAL CHURCH IN TAIWAN

By

Fr. Paul P. Pang, ofm

Introduction

Areawise I should be talking about the local churches in Hong Kong, Macao, Singapore and Taiwan. However, lest I should be guilty of giving you only a fleeting glance at all these churches, I have decided to limit myself to a consideration of the local church in Taiwan. I would like to reflect upon and share with you some views on its growth, its present difficulties and its future.

On the note of actuality, this paper draws heavily on materials provided by the secretariat of the Chinese Bishops' Conference, some as recent as December 7, 1977. The great kindness of its Secretary General, the Reverend Father Gabriel Ly, is hereby publicly acknowledged.

General Outline

Taiwan's population today is about 17,000,000 on an island area of 13,885 square miles. The Catholic population is said to be about 300,000, belonging to more than 400 parishes and 700 mission stations. Some of the mission stations function also as parishes because of their size and distance. The mobility of personnel involved in evangelization has been great the last few years and it is shown as follows: there were 834 priests in 1968, but 753 in 1975; 1256 sisters in 1974 but 1065 in 1975; 108 brothers in 1968 but 82 in 1975; 65 major seminarians in 1968 and 93 in 1975 - the only encouraging note in the mentioned survey of 1975. The age breakdown is as follows: average age for priests is 54.03: 51.83 for the 360 local priests and 56.05 for the 393 foreign missionaries; for the sisters the figure is 44.90: 41.34 for the 718 local sisters and 52.22 for the 347 foreign sisters; 51.43 for the brothers: 44.18 for the 33 native brothers 56.42 for the missionary brothers.

Evangelization first started in Taiwan in 1626 by five Spanish Dominicans from Manila. However, they were driven from the Island 16 years later, leaving behind more than 4,000 baptized aborigines. In 1715, a Jesuit priest, Father J. B. de Mailla, visited the Island to chart a map of Taiwan at the request of the Emperor of China. That was the only record of the presence of a priest in Taiwan in the two hundred years between 1642 and 1859 when the Island was again entrusted to the care of the Dominicans from Amoy, Fukien. They started work in the south of Taiwan, then called Formosa. It is to be noted that this early evangelization has taken deep roots as most vocations come from the two southern dioceses even today.

However, taking into consideration the fact that until the end of 1949, the whole of Taiwan was only one apostolic prefecture detached from the diocese of Amoy, Fukien, the church of Taiwan may still be considered young. Its real growth and expansion started in the early 1950's when a great number of priests and sisters, forced to leave the Chinese Mainland, chose Taiwan as their Mission field. It flourished rapidly for two decades, growing from a membership of about 10,000 Catholics in 1949 to a 300,000 member community in 1968. Taiwan is now divided into one archdiocese, six dioceses and two further special ecclesiastical regions.

The apostolate of the Taiwan Church has extended itself widely but thinly - engaged in all spheres of social and ecclesial life: education, social welfare, youth assistance programmes, social development, mass communications, an ecumenical movement as well as catechetical training, a liturgical renewal programme, pastoral schemes and indigenization programmes.

In education alone the expansion was monumental. Instead of the single catholic secondary school on the Island in 1950, the Church today boasts of one university, two colleges, some 30 secondary schools, 10 technical schools, 10 primary schools and more than 400 kindergartens. Despite the fact that the Government has been offering free nine-year education since the late 1960's, this record is quite an achievement. At present, about one fourth of our priests and brothers and one third of the sisters are engaged in educational work as their principal apostolate. However, education is not considered one of the most important forms of apostolate of the Church of Taiwan.

The social welfare programmes have likewise seen great growth. In the last two decades and more, from 1950 to 1975, some twenty hospitals with more than 3,000 beds and more than 40 clinics have been opened. There are also two homes for the aged and three orphanages. Hostels catering for students attending government schools and young workers number some 70 in 1977. One hostel alone in Hsintien near Taipei accomodates about one thousand working girls.

A new form of apostolate is the Migrant Worker Centres. The Friendship House in Taipei runs a Catholic Migrant Service Centre. Its staff receives and organizes the registration cards of the immigrants and shares the information with the pastors into whose parishes these people move and offers other related services such as job placement and hostel accomodations. Another Migrant Worker Centre, opened in Hsinchu, operates in conjunction with a Social Service Stand at the bus terminal in the city. This is also a joint service with government agencies. Vocational guidance and assistance in job placement are available. Here the social workers establish rapport with factory managers and acquaint them with Christian social principles. There is also a similar Social Service Centre in Taichung and a hostel catering for aborigines from five different tribes who come to work in factories in the Taichung area.

There are many other forms of apostolate requiring, almost all of them, some kind of specialized personnel, such as communications media, from radio to television programming, from simple publications of books and newspapers to highly technical film editing; family welfare programmes, from match-making, family planning to patching-up of broken marriages and families; hospital and clinical services, from caring for the sick to training nursing staffs as well as actively dialoguing in ecumenical committees with both Christian churches and non-christian religions.

Difficulties of Growth

However, by the early 70's, the Church in Taiwan has stopped growing almost completely, at least numerically. The annual adult baptisms have dropped from the 18,500 record high in 1963 to the less than two thousand low in 1973. And there is no sign that the drop has been stopped. The drop in church attendance too, is most alarming, especially in rural and township districts. Except in some fashionable churches in the big cities, the Sunday Mass attendance has fallen to a pitifully low 12-15 percent of parishioners. The ignorance of and the lack of interest in religion among the youth in general is indeed very alarming.

This unhealthy state of affairs is blamed on three factors. First, the conversions of the last two flourishing decades were not deeply rooted and those Christians are now generally termed "Noodle Christians".

Second, industrialization and urbanization have caused a great rural exodus with the result that many converts have lost contact with the Church. Third, the relatively high and still rising living standards have confirmed people's initial materialistic and secularistic approach in life, thus weakening very notably the notion of traditional values and community control and the sense of belonging. The Church has been rather slow in reassessing and adapting to the new situation.

Taking a realistic look at the statistical data obtained in 1975, the Church in Taiwan is painfully aware that the coming decade will see its active clergy significantly weakened by advancing age, deaths, retirements and people who continue to ask to be relieved of their sacerdotal obligations. There is a slightly encouraging sign of a return of vocations, but it is still too small to be of any comfort. Fortunately, there is a bright side in the dark picture of the things and that is the steadily growing communities of young local sisters.

Some Proposed Remedies

The Chinese Bishops' Conference is acutely aware of the growing difficulties the Church in Taiwan is bound to face in the near future: people's growing indifference towards religion, shortage of manpower both in maintaining existing institutions and in finding new forms of apostolate. The Church must make Christianity more relevant and more attractive to society at large.

Some remedies are proposed. First, since it is inevitable that the number of active clergy is getting smaller, it is desirable that sisters be trained to assist or even replace priests in pastoral and catechetical ministries. Therefore more training institutes should be established. At present there are already three such institutes in Taiwan where pastoral and doctrinal training is provided. They are: The Fons Vitas, the Taiwan Pastoral Institute and Fu Jen Theologate. However a more thorough study must be carried out to determine what specific ministries the sisters should be trained in and what actual role they should be asked to play in the future parish set-up.

Second, many of the present forms of apostolate such as hospital services, educational and social welfare institutions which at the moment still demand so much attention of many priests and nuns, should gradually be handed over to trained lay people, thus making priests and sisters available for their primary objective of direct evangelization. Therefore greater effort must be made to recruit, educate and respect lay talents.

Since it is the common wish of all people concerned to establish the local Church in China, a new and more viable concept of cooperation must be worked out between the local clergy and the numerous religious congregations. It is deemed most appropriate that the local clergy be given the responsibility of indigenization when deciding on forms of cultural apostolate, on orientation of philosophy, theology, spirituality and liturgy and seminary education and formation in general whereas the whole clergy, both missionary and local, religious and diocesan, can be equally involved in other forms of apostolate such as diocesan and parish administration, pastoral and catechetical ministries, student counselling and social services. The CBC is reserving its criticism of the tendency of some missionary societies to relinquish altogether parish obligations.

The CBC in fact re-emphasizes its official welcome and expresses renewed encouragement and invitation for more foreign missionary societies to come and take up missionary work in Taiwan. The process of establishing the local Church in Taiwan requires a great deal of close collaboration. The building of a local Church must in no way be construed as anti-foreign or exclusionistic. It must be regarded as a positive step toward a closer union with the Universal Church. The local clergy expresses great admiration and appreciation of the courage and determination that the

missionaries generally show in working hard to master the language, the way of thinking, customs, traditions and cultural heritage of the local people.

In this connection, a meeting was held last December between the diocesan bishops' representatives and representatives of the major superiors of religious congregations. There were frank and constructive discussions, with both sides genuinely determined to find out ways and means of closer cooperation. The meeting concerned itself with the basic concept and implementation of collaboration, the obstacles to actual cooperation and concrete formulas of cooperation between local clergy and religious congregations. It was painfully felt that the tendency is still prevalent for these two main forces of evangelization to separate rather than to join hands. This division is due more to tradition than to lack of good will. However, participants of both sides became ever more intent on ironing out differences and on working together toward building up the local Church.

Self-Evaluation and Self-Support

Early last year a large-scale survey was carried out to find out what ministries the clergy and the faithful thought the Church should be engaged in. This was in preparation for the Pan-Asian Colloquium on New Ministries in the Church in Asia. It is beyond this paper's scope and possibility to go into details of the survey. However some points of the survey's concluding section can be of help.

As regards the Church's long standing obligations of pastoral, sacramental and kerygmatic ministries, the survey showed an overwhelming affirmation. Both the bishops and the clergy are expected to fulfil these basic needs of the faithful. The survey also indicated a strong emphasis on the whole Christian community to be the faithful witness of Christ.

As regards new ministries, the survey found it impossible to draw conclusions as more than 60% did not answer the related questions and the remainder missed the point. However, it did reveal the general desire that some forms of ministry of service both inside and outside the Church be established or expanded.

Another high priority on the local Church's agenda is the self-support programme. It is of general knowledge that the Protestant churches have long been self-supporting. A special survey done on some Protestant churches reveals that the Protestant brethren are contributing four to five times more to the churches than their Catholic counterparts. The Catholic Church readily admits that this is so because Catholics simply have not been seriously taught or trained in this respect.

After repeated attempts and patient re-education, some churches in the southern region have at long last succeeded in making people understand the meaning of the self-support programme and the parishioners have shown their readiness, through the pledge system, to maintain their local churches. Some bigger churches in the north have also been self-supporting for some time, but for different reasons. Their richer collections are results of church-goers' better education, better income and greater generosity, and not because of any sense of maintaining the local church.

Of the self-support programme, a typical example is the following. A small southern parish with 600 Catholics (about one third attend church each week) uses both envelopes (which are presented at the Offertory) and special collections (which also require envelopes). When the programme began, the pastor and the parish council chairman explained the idea at Sunday Masses. In two years of trial it worked very well and the results have been most encouraging. Presently, the Sunday collections total more than NT2,000 a month (about U.S.\$50.00) and revenue from special collections and Mass stipends exceeds NT6,000 a month. A not so happy example is given

of another southern parish whose members are mostly government employees. They, too, started with the envelope system. Each family was expected to use it for Sunday collections. When the system began, it brought in monthly collections of about NT10,000 to 15,000. Subsequently however about one third of the parishioners stopped their contributions.

Renewal Programme

Another item of actuality which brings great hope to the Church of Taiwan is the renewal programme. It is an active programme consisting of, among other things, several movements: the Cursillo, the Charismatic, the Christian Life Community and the Bible Reading Movement. The Cursillo and the Charismatic Movements with an increasing following, cater for the needs of adult Catholics, both the clergy and the laity. The Christian Life Community is a movement exclusively for college students. The Society of Jesus is most active in this area of work.

The Bible Reading Movement tries to reach the grassroots of the Catholic community. It is jointly sponsored by the Chinese Bible Association and the Franciscans. Many reading groups have mushroomed throughout the Island and leader readers are being trained through intensive efforts. The CBC has repeatedly commended the Franciscans and suggested that they continue making this apostolate, the spreading of the Word of God, their primary objective in their service of the local Church of Taiwan.

Relations between Local Church and Universal Church

Relations between the local Church in Taiwan and the Universal Church can be described as most harmonious and beneficial. There is no magisterial defiance, no juridical quarrels, no disciplinary sanctions.

In drawing up plans for building up the Chinese Local Church, the Chinese Bishops' Conference enlisted backing from the fourth World Synod of Bishops and made the following suggestions. 1) The CBC should positively use whatever delegated authority is given by the Holy See to serve the National Church; 2) In dealing with specific needs of the Chinese Church, the CBC should take the initiative to ask for specific authority from the Pope; 3) For some local problems, which are not related to the Pope or the Curia, the CBC should use the authority it already enjoys to make its own decisions and plans; 4) In important problems concerning our National Church, e.g. the Nuncio in China, the appointment of bishops, the CBC should try to make its voice heard by the Pope and protect the interest and opinions of the local Church and the laity.

The Church in Taiwan in Perspective

To help you, dear Brother Participants, take a last look at the local Church in Taiwan in its actual form, I would like to quote from two recent official sources in which the local Church sets out six concrete objectives to achieve in the near future. The sources are: The Fourth Annual Colloquium (December 1976) and Minutes of the Chinese Bishops' Conference's Annual General Meeting 1977. The six objectives are worded thus:

- 1) Christianize family life;
- 2) Be open to society, taking positive steps in evangelization, making good use of Christian education in schools and colleges and of mass media;
- 3) Educate and put to good use the laity with full participation in Church building;
- 4) Extend social services;
- 5) Promote indigenized liturgy and
- 6) Strengthen the movement of self-support.

THE DOCTOR - A HINDRANCE OR A HELP?

By

Sr. Godelieve Prové, M.D.

(We reprint here the text of Sr. Godelieve's address given at the XIV World Congress of the International Federation of the Catholic Medical Association which was held January 29 - February 1, 1978 in Bombay, India. Sr. Godelieve is Superior General of the Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries (Medical Mission Sisters) and a Vice President of Sedos).

Dr. Fendall once said that if he were asked to compose an epitaph on medicine throughout the twentieth century, it would read:

Brilliant in its discoveries, superb in its technological breakthrough, but woefully inept in its application to those most in need. Medicine will be judged not on its vast and rapid accumulation of knowledge per se, but on its trusteeship of that knowledge. We are now experienced, and all that remains is the problem of translating what is common knowledge and routine medicine, and hence practice, to the other two-thirds of the world. The implementation gap must be closed. (1)

We are indeed facing a tragic situation: health services reach fewer than ten percent of the people in developing nations; malnutrition is the rule for two-thirds of the world's population. Up to the present time, in spite of all the progress in medicine, in spite of all the conferences sponsored by the United Nations and the World Health Organization, it has not been possible to solve the rather simple health problems that weigh heavily and constantly on two-thirds of the human race.

We too are gathered here in a conference. We are doctors and as such cannot remain indifferent to Dr. Fendall's judgement. We are Catholic doctors. We believe that God is our Father, that in Him all men, women and children are brothers and sisters. Whether we come from a poor or from a rich country, we doctors are all rich through our knowledge, our skills. And as such, as Catholic doctors, must respond to the challenge that Dr. Fendall puts before us.

We must. We have been urged to respond to the needs of the poor centuries ago by John the apostle when he wrote: "If a man was rich enough in this world's goods saw that one of his brothers was in need, but closed his heart to him, how could the love of God be living in him? Our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active." (2)

We are being urged today, by the Church, to serve the poorest and most abandoned of men. This is clearly said by the Pontifical Council "Cor Unum" created in 1971 by the Holy Father for 'Promoting Human and Christian Development'. One of its many objectives is to coordinate the Church's work in the field of health and medicine and to make that work more effective. A recent publication of this Pontifical Council on 'Health Work for Human Development' declares that where the Church has always been anxious to comfort the suffering, "the widespread distress in the world of today urges her to redouble that age-old effort at every level. Her constant aim is to use all the means at her disposal in order to serve the poorest and most abandoned of men." (3)

Let us ask ourselves then how we are going to share our knowledge, the many gifts we have received with our brothers and sisters who are poor and deprived of medical care and often enough of any kind of health service? They have a right to health, as much as the rich who can pay for it. How will the gap be bridged? Whose responsibility is it? What can we do?

One possible answer would be that it is the doctors' responsibility. That it is all a matter of time, of waiting for an adequate number of doctors to be trained. I would agree that a greater number of doctors would be one factor that could help to bring health to the poor, on one condition however: that they would be prepared and equipped for that particular task. Most of us here present have not been prepared for such a task: our training, our specialties, our interest in research and progress of medical science make it almost impossible for a good many of us to deal with health problems outside a familiar clinical environment. No wonder then that doctors who have been trained that way may continue all over the world to move from the areas of greatest needs to the cities. No wonder either - and this is even more distressing - that doctors of poorer countries continue to go abroad.

Using Iran as an example: In 1971 600 doctors graduated from their universities, but that same year 675 doctors migrated abroad. Yet: two-thirds of the people living in Iran have never seen a doctor.

What we need today is a new type of physician, one who will not be frustrated when working in poor areas, but challenged and stimulated because he or she can make a contribution towards the solution of the poor peoples' health problems. This new type of physician "would not only be an expert in diseases, but also a planner, an administrator, an organizer, a teacher, a consultant, and most important of all, a tireless and ever-present leader of his health team." (4)

Is there any medical school today that is making an obvious effort to train this new type of doctor, the doctor that is needed by two-thirds of the world's people? What are Catholic medical schools doing in this regard? They excel in educational standards, in high quality care, in their ethical code. If they only distinguish themselves in these, without paying special attention to the tragic needs of millions of people, they will not pass President Nyerere's test. He tells us:

Unless the Church, its members and its organizations express God's love for man by involvement and leadership in constructive protest against the present conditions of man, it will become identified with injustice and persecution. If this happens, it will die, and humanly speaking deserves to die because it will then serve no purpose comprehensible to modern man.

It is here, that we Catholic doctors who have gained prestige and can have an impact, should use this power that is ours in a just and constructive way. We can demand that the medical faculties that prepared us to the best of their insights in former days, now respond to the needs and insights of today and make a tangible contribution towards a just distribution of the wealth that is theirs in terms of knowledge and motivation.

While many medical faculties are sorely lacking, some - at least in their objectives - show awareness of today's unjust distribution of resources, as the Saint Louis University School of Medicine. It has a special goal in developing 'humanistic medicine' as a constellation of ethical and professional consideration among which is also listed 'devotion to social justice, especially as regards overcoming inequities in the availability

of needed personal health care', and 'humility and self-awareness of the inherent limitations of medical science in the cure and healing of the sick.' Hence we could expect that this school would raise its students consciousness of the health problems of the USA, of those living in inner-city ghettos, or scattered in the rural areas without easy access to effective health care. If it raises consciousness, it will also stimulate action worthy of a Catholic faculty.

The Medical School of the University of Nijmegen in Holland goes further and sets a leading example in reaching out beyond the boundaries of the Netherlands. It has a department called 'Medical Care in the Developing World'. This department pays special attention to the impact of the developing world on the medical systems in the Netherlands. It has close relation with the Mwanza programme; a joint public health project of the Ministry of Health in Tanzania and the Faculty in Nijmegen.

Among the medical schools in developing countries the Christian faculty in Jakarta has as its first aim to train doctors who will promote the primary health care approach as a response to the health problems of Indonesia. These doctors will be trained to recognise and solve the health problems of the people and will be taught now to provide the leadership element in the health team. The programme is such that the young men and women will actually be prepared to take on effectively the multifaceted role of the new type of physician as we described it a few minutes ago.

In this country, St. John's Medical College in Bangalore has recently made an attempt for an intense re-orientation to rural health. It wants to make the students not only aware of the health and socio-economic problems of the villages, but also competent in tackling them. It has adopted the Mallur Health Cooperative, 60 Km. from the city of Bangalore, as a rural training centre for interns. In the selection of students, those committed to social service would be given priority and a contract is being required by which they commit themselves to work, at least for a given period of time, in the rural areas. Everybody will agree that it will not be so easy to put this into practice, but the direction is set, the orientation is clear.

These few examples raise our hope that Catholic medical schools can become agents of change, immersed in reality, involved in researching new methodologies, open where relevant to existing traditional and indigenous practices, living up to the expectations of all those who are critically waiting and watching and asking themselves of it is still justified for the Church to invest resources in an enterprise as expensive as a medical school.

It is not enough that we encourage our Catholic medical schools. Such a clear orientation toward social justice should be demanded from all medical faculties, so that more and more men and women of good will can join hands and work together. Where this orientation exists, it should be made known, and be given much more publicity so that these schools would attract young men and women who through their high consciousness of today's social evils would themselves make a major contribution in the realization of these objectives. It is true that difference of philosophy between medical schools is not a commonly used criteria in undergraduate choice of schools. But where people do not ask, faculties that have something good to offer could make it a point to tell them, to make them see the difference.

It would be our hope that the future then will see not only an ever greater total number of doctors, but among that number an ever greater proportion to serve those most in need.

This however does not provide a complete answer to our initial questions: How will the gap between medical knowledge and its application to those most in need be bridged? Whose responsibility is it?

More well prepared doctors form only one factor in the solution of our problem. Why? Because the improvement of health is not just a medical issue. We know, and for a long time already, that the health of a population does not depend in the first place on the health services, but more on the social, economic and cultural conditions in which this population lives.

We see this illustrated in the statistical data available in Europe: 90% of the decline in death rate, of the raise in life expectancy over the past 100 years came about as a result of industrialization and social change which improved living conditions and hygiene. This 90% happened before the discovery of antibiotics and the other medical advances which have actually resulted in comparatively little further progress.

If this is the case we might conclude that it is the government's responsibility to see that living conditions improve to such an extent that the environment will no longer undermine the people's health. Health is indeed a political reality, and one in which we doctors are involved and in which we take part, directly or indirectly. We exercise political influence in the hospitals where we practise or send our patients, in the local medical society, in the larger state or national society, and ultimately in the Ministry of Health where the national health policies are being designed. To a great extent it depends on us whether a nation's health budget will be optimally used to the benefit of all, i.e. whether it will be used to allow doctors to practise medicine in their clinical setting which helps relatively few, or whether it will be used for more food, clean water, and a safe environment that are the basis for improvement in health conditions of a total population.

One ultra-modern hospital as well-meant development aid can easily reduce a nation's health budget to the breaking point, and absorb almost all its medical manpower. This is exactly what happened when the European Common Market presented Somali with an ultra-modern hospital. Only a privileged few in the capital city could enjoy the benefits of it. The nomadic masses saw even less resources allocated to cover their needs. The transfer of Western systems and approaches, of institutions that fit a highly developed environment may not only be a waste of funds, but in the end even become detrimental for those most in need of health services.

Have we really an idea of what Western medicine costs? The hard fact is that the total annual budget of the WHO is less than one tenth of New York City's health budget.

The present 'health care cost explosion' in the Western world is due to an ever greater number of physicians, para-medical and other personnel who want to earn their living in the health sector. It is likely that they will be taken up - under cover of progress - in the technological spiral which is pushing for more investigations, for newer and often more expensive procedures, for ever better equipment. This technological spiral becomes mutually beneficial for the health care providers and for the many industries that thrive on this progress in medical technology.

Can rich nations continue to spend freely and develop any kind of health delivery system as long as the national income can pay for it, or as long as the population can afford to buy it by way of taxes or health insurance systems? It seems to me that they cannot.

The enormous needs, the scarcity of human and material resources, call us,

in conscience, to use all our powers and influence in order to come to an equitable distribution, an optimal use of these resources among the total world population.

If our commitment to social justice is real and active we Catholic doctors could use our political influence in a variety of ways. Maybe we should begin by recognizing that we earn disproportionately high salaries, and that it is not enough to pacify our conscience with the resolution that we will share with the poor by giving regular donations. It is true that our income presents only a minimal portion of these fabulous health budgets. But when we opt, officially plead for less income, it could become a symbolic gesture understood by the common man that might inspire other professions to do the same.

If we would opt for less income for ourselves, we could raise a more credible voice for de-escalation of the health budgets in countries that are rich, demanding that the money thus saved would be spent on food, water, simple preventive medicine that will make a difference in the lives of millions of people in other parts of the world.

If we are convinced that there is a need for massive redistribution of health resources, we should conscientize others who may not be so knowledgeable. So much that the 'public' expects and demands from the health services goes back to what the medical profession have told them. We could exercise a strong impact on the public by our publications, by initiating and stimulating an educational process to this particular effect.

We have indeed the power to promote social justice or to prevent social justice. We can be a help or a hindrance. I hope that this international Conference will set a clear direction for Catholic Medical Associations by adopting at least one resolution that will call for action.

Such action, initiated and sponsored by Catholic doctors would not be extravagant. We would only be doing what John asked us long ago, and what Pope Paul VI repeated in this very city of Bombay: "Man must meet man, nation meet nation, as brothers and sisters, as children of God. In this mutual understanding and friendship, in this sacred communion, we must also begin to build the common future of the human race."

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Recently received:

Material - brochures and pictures - on various aspects of health care from Bureau d'Etudes et de Recherches pour la Promotion de la Santé KANGU-MAYUMBE, République du Zaïre.

Nutrition

Tuberculose

Santé meilleure source de progrès

Peut-on éviter les accidents?

Le dispensaire et sa nouvelle orientation

Pour une authentique éducation sexuelle

L'éducateur sanitaire

L'infirmier et la santé publique

Ma maison et ma santé

L'infirmier face au malade

La maternité et la promotion de la santé

Santé et tradition

THE ABOVE MATERIAL IS AVAILABLE TO ANYONE INTERESTED. JUST RING THE SEDOS SECRETARIAT.

An interesting comment on Contemporary Society from Periscope: by John F. X. Harriott in the Tablet, 29 April 1978, p.398

...The new prophets are not young dropouts who shake the dust of cities from their feet and settle for wig-wams in Wales. They are economists who tell us that economics is not the be-all and end-all of life; technologists who tell us that technology is out of hand, no longer our servant but our master; businessmen who tell us that giant corporations are unmanageable and humanly destructive; social psychologists who see symptoms of collective neurosis that no amount of sedatives can quiet. Even ten years ago these voices were few and could be dismissed as cranks. But now the cranks are springing up like daisies. And no matter what their starting-point--the energy crisis, the population explosion, third world poverty or first world affluence, technological overkill or pollution of the environment, unemployment or racial tension--they end up on the same platform delivering the same message.

One of the latest in the line is the economist and social psychologist, Ralph Glasser. He has much experience of industry and commerce, and has been involved in strategies of development for third world countries. It is not abstract theory but experience, the experience of seeing the human and cultural destructiveness of western industrialisation applied to non-industrialised societies which has led him, like others, to question the way we live. In his recent book, The Net and the Quest, (published by Temple Smith £8.50) he described how his disquiet drove him to live for a while in a small Italian village entirely by-passed by the industrialisation which over the past 100 years has changed the face of Europe; there to study what needs and kinds of fulfilment motivated people before that process began, before technological achievement promised instant nirvana, and, above all, before self-valuation and emotional satisfaction were so gruesomely narrowed down to the size of the wage-packet. He found there a community with a network of relationships and a traditional culture which sustain spiritual and emotional values either lost, derided or assaulted in industrial societies, and the hunger for which, so the author believes, no increase of income, material comfort, social engineering or diversionary entertainment can assuage. And from the lessons learned he puts together a coherent and practicable strategy of development applicable to both developed and developing countries.

The unease the book describes is felt increasingly. It is giving birth to a whole new range of ideas and experiments in different ways of living. Both the analysis and the conclusions have a now familiar ring. Yet how much of it will catch the politicians' attention, let alone find its way into the election manifestos--the contents of which we could jot down on a postcard even before they are published...

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The May, 1978 issue (No. 45) of Encounter deals with three questions which Muslims ask Christians:

- The reason for our presences as Christians among Muslims,
- The Eucharist
- The Divinity of Jesus and the Incarnation

RECENTLY RECEIVED:

- "Biblical Spirituality" by J. N. M. Wynagaards, mhm a talk given at Conference of the Biblical Apostolate held in Malta, April 1978. Sedos Doc. No. 4/2920.
- "Bible and Catechesis" by D. S. Amalorpavades from the same conference, Sedos Doc. No. 4/2919.
- Sri Lanka's First National Directory, edited by Fr. J. B. Clinton Anandappa, OMI, contains historical information on the church in Sri Lanka, details on all parishes, religious congregations and other organizations in the church there.

Population figures dating from 1972 show over 9 million Sinhalese and over 2 million Tamils. These belong to the following religious groups: Buddhists 8,567,570; Hindus 2,239,310; Muslims 909,941; Catholics 883,111, other Christians 103,576.

The majority of priests are local and there are currently 166 Sri Lankan seminarians. In the congregations there are 321 local priests (398 total), 220 brothers (total 245) and 2,252 sisters (total 2,425). Available at Sedos Documentation Centre Sedos Doc. No. C-1(Ref)6/635.

- A list of Ceeba publications including a notice of two recent works Studies in Central African Cultures and "Symbols and Society" (32 volumes of myths and oral traditions). Ceeba publications are distributed in Europe by Steyler Verlag, D-5205, St. Augustin, German Federal Republic.
- Moçambique - a new people, a new church? published by the Dutch Missionary Council, Halve Maansstraat, 7 's Hertogenbosch, Holland. The first part of the book deals with the birth of the Republic; the second part with the position of the Catholic Church in Moçambique. Sedos Doc. No. 4/2192.
- The Crucial Task of our Time: Serving the Faith and Promoting Justice - a reprint from "Los Jesuitas ante el Pueblo Salvadoreno" San Salvador, June 1977. The concluding paragraph notes:

We must not let the institutionalization of our orders snuff out the spark of Christian radicalism which burned when they were founded. The easiest and best way to let that spark be snuffed out is to let our orders become too adapted to the world, particularly to today's world with its injustice and lack of brotherhood. The latter are the greatest scandal for the Christian faith. If we religious accomodate ourselves to the world and stop going to the roots of things, then we will be betraying the hope that the spirit of Jesus has aroused in the Church, the hope that is our greatest mission and our greatest challenge. Sedos Doc. No. 2.MM(WP13/160/78).

- Discerning the Spirit - a value based model for use by a small community. This was drawn up by Fr. Benjamin Tonna and is based on his considerable experience in dealing with groups of religious. Sedos Doc. No. 4/2980.
- Signs of the Times for the Religious in Asia by Fr. E. Zeitler, svd - an address given at the meeting of the Asian Conference of Major Superiors in Bangalore. Sedos Doc. No. 4/2979.
- The Catholic Almanac 1978., a one volume encyclopedia of facts and information on the church. Edited by Felican A. Foy, ofm. (Available from Our Sunday Visitor, Huntington Indiana 46750, price \$7.95) Sedos Doc. No. 6/641 c-1 (ref).

TOPIC: Melbourne Conference, 1980

"YOUR KINGDOM COME"

An Invitation to Christians

Our Lord Jesus Christ teaches us to pray for the coming of God's kingdom. In the power of the Holy Spirit each generation is invited to seek first the kingdom and its righteousness, believing that all else that is necessary for human existence will be added.

As we pray for the coming of God's kingdom we affirm our trust in, and dependence upon, the God who is Creator, Redeemer, and Saviour, Lord of Lords and King of Kings. We pray confidently, for the kingdom is already in our midst, yet we pray expectantly, for the kingdom in all its fullness is still to come.

In this spirit of confident and expectant prayer the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches invites the world Christian community to participate in a personal and collective search for the contemporary meaning and fulfillment of the prayer for the coming of the kingdom.

In our search for the relationship between God's kingdom and our mission, we can together:

- celebrate what God is doing among his people in the world; the evidences of the kingdom now in our midst;
- better understand the implications of the coming of the kingdom for our day;
- sharpen our expectation of the fullness of the kingdom yet to come.

In May 1980 a widely representative body of the world Christian community will gather in a conference in Melbourne, Australia, to consider the insights gained from our preliminary study in order to express our collective understanding for this day of our oft-repeated prayer, "Your kingdom come," and to lead us into more faithful obedience under God's reign. This conference follows in an honoured line of gatherings focused on mission and unity that began at Edinburgh in 1910, and includes more recently the 1963 Mexico City assembly which introduced the theme of "Mission to Six Continents", and the 1972 Bangkok conference on "Salvation Today".

Is a world conference of this nature appropriate or needed at this time? We believe it is. The world Christian community must periodically reexamine its mission under God; the Gospel compels us to do so. Various sectors of the world community need to enter into close relationship with each other to hear what each is saying, all open to mutual correction and witness. The almost apocalyptic threats to the very survival of the world make it imperative that Christians together strive to know the contemporary obedience demanded by the kingdom in our midst and the kingdom yet to come.

As we issue this invitation we would be aware of (1) the context within which we speak and act, (2) the richness of the kingdom theme, and (3) possible misinterpretations of the theme.

The context

The world is desperately in need of the love, joy, peace, justice, forgiveness, reconciliation promised in the kingdom. As we look at our contemporary world we see many evidences of sin and disruption:

- sin, personal and collective, openly flouting God's holy will,
- meaninglessness in personal and group life,
- denial of bread and denial of abundant life,
- oppression of the poor and powerless,
- violation of elemental human rights,
- potential destruction by weapons of incalculable power.

Though tempted to pessimism and despair, we take hope when, as we pray for the coming of God's reign, we find multiple evidences of the reality of his kingdom in our midst:

- persons and communities committing and recommitting their lives to Jesus Christ,
- people of the kingdom suffering courageously in situations of great trial out of loyalty to Jesus Christ,
- Christians and others valiantly challenging powers and principalities that oppress and destroy,
- communities seeking out new ways to care for their members and others,
- the life and death of many who, in humble simplicity remain faithful to our Lord, witnesses to the abiding kingdom.

We believe that God cannot be defeated by human sin; God's coming reign will not be destroyed by human disobedience.

As we are preparing ourselves for the conference on "Your kingdom come" we want to look deeply into our contemporary reality, seeing God's hand in our present situation, and believing that our prayer for the coming of the kingdom and our expectation of the reign of God must also be informed by an honest realism about a world in anguish. Faithfulness in mission demands nothing less.

The richness of the kingdom theme

We do not dare try to encompass in words the richness in the theme of God's kingdom, but we can point to some aspects of it which seem promising as we begin our study of God's reign.

The kingdom as suffering power: At the heart of the kingdom is our Lord Jesus Christ, who came in meekness as the Suffering Servant, the Messiah despised and rejected by his own, the person for others nailed to the cross who overturns human calculations of power and lordship. The suffering God comes to us with a power we yearn to understand and to receive, inviting us to be with the suffering Christ in the struggles of the world. Such suffering power enables us to find strength amid struggle, courage in the face of despair.

The kingdom as judgment and mercy: The kingdom holds all human societies and achievements under God's judgment. All persons and communities are subject to his judgment and recipients of his mercy, but we particularly note that the church which claims the name of Jesus Christ is under God's judgment in a special way. We trust that out of this judgment and mercy may emerge a purified people that proclaims and embraces the kingdom.

The kingdom as task and challenge: The prayer for a coming kingdom is a prayer of responsibility. It challenges us to give ourselves in service to the God for whose kingdom we pray, not counting the cost but pledging all. Our mission is to proclaim the Word of God, to name the Name of Jesus Christ, that all humanity may respond to the call our Lord presents and turn to him. Our mission is also to offer good news to the poor, to heal the sick, to proclaim liberty to the captive, to provide

sight to the blind, to announce the acceptable time of the Lord.

The kingdom as hope: The kingdom is in our midst, offering us strength for the daily struggle; yet we pray for God's reign to come in fullness. The presence and work of the Holy Spirit give us great hope. The despair to which we are tempted can never be a final despair, for God is already victorious over the forces of sin and death.

Possible misinterpretations of the kingdom theme

As we invite the world Christian community to discover the meaning and richness of the theme "Your kingdom come" we are aware of certain interpretations that we regard as inadequate:

"Since God will bring the kingdom, we need do nothing." The announcement of the kingdom is not a call to passivity and inaction. It is characteristic of those who most trust in God's action that they work most untiringly in God's mission. The prayer for the coming of the kingdom offers no exemption from responsible work for righteousness and justice.

"Since the kingdom is not of this world, we need only to pray for a heavenly kingdom beyond this world." Our Lord clearly indicated that the kingdom is already in our midst. Promised the kingdom of heaven, we are nevertheless under an imperative to live joyfully in the world as pilgrims and participate in God's mission. As we pray "Your kingdom come" we look to the future with hope, but we are not allowed any exemption from present involvement in the issues and concerns of this world. The heavenly reign is in a very real sense here in our midst, and to it we must commit our best effort.

"The kingdom and a just human society are one and the same." In our emphasis upon the present reality of God's reign, and its coming fulfillment, we may at times appear to identify a particular human society with the kingdom, but we recognize that this is ultimately false.

All human societies stand under the judgment of God, a fact we must never forget.

Even as we work in the kingdom and seek its righteousness, we acknowledge our partial understanding of the full nature of the kingdom ahead, a kingdom whose dimensions and significance mere human arrangements cannot describe.

"The kingdom and the church are one and the same." The church and the kingdom are related, but never can be equated as one and the same. In worship, liturgy and sacraments we have a foretaste of the kingdom, a celebration of the glory of the Lord. God calls the church into being for kingdom purposes. The church is called to seek the kingdom, to commit itself to the kingdom, to pray for the kingdom, and to live in obedience to the kingdom under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The historic institutional church is itself always under the judgment of God's reign.

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This is an invitation to join in a process of prayer, reflection, search and obedience under the conference theme "Your kingdom come". We see the task as urgent, and we look forward expectantly to the response all Christians may offer to this invitation, as together we seek the understanding and obedience we now only see in part. May we, under God, learn more of the fulfillment of God's promises for us and for the world, as we pray

"Your kingdom come".

April 1978 - World Council of Churches: Commission on World Mission and Evangelism. P.O. Box 66, 150 Route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland.

Place	Total	Congregations
Latin America		
2.7 BRAZIL cont'd		MMH MM(F) CMM SPS SM SDS CIGM O-CARM OFM
2.8 COLOMBIA	2688	SJ SDB FSC OP RSCJ CM FMM IMC CP SVD MSC SX SM SDS O-CARM OFM-CAP OFM RGS
2.9 ECUADOR	928	SDB SJ FSC OF FSCJ CM SVD CP MM(S) OFM-CAP RGS
2.10 FRENCH GUYANA	24	CSSP
2.11 GUYANA	105	SJ FMM OSU
2.12 PERU	1787	SJ FMM SDB OP RSCJ CM MM(F) CP SM MM(S) MSC OSU OMI FSCJ SNDW SSND SCMMM SSC O-CARM OFM- CAP OFM RGS
2.13 SURINAM	52	SCMMT OMI FMM
2.14 VENEZUELA	1256	SJ OP SDB CM FSC CP RSCJ RGS MM(F) SDS SCMMM OSU OMC MSC MM(S) O-CARM OFM-CAP OFM
2.15 BELIZE	58	SJ RGS
2.16 CANAL ZONE	34	CM RGS
2.17 COSTA RICA	198	OP SDB CM SJ RGS FSC OFM-CAP OFM
2.18 EL SALVADOR	248	SJ SDB CM MM(S) RGS OP MM(F) CP OFM
2.19 GUATEMALA	572	SDB SJ MM(F) OP MM(S) FSC CIGM CM MSC IOM SSND OFM-CAP OFM RGS

Place	Total	Congregations
Latin America		
2.20 HONDURAS	152	SJ CM SSND OP SDB FSC CP OFM- CAP OFM RGS
2.21 MEXICO	2884	FSC SDB SJ RSCJ OP FSCJ CM CP FMM OMI OSU SX SVD MM(F) MM(S) CSSP MSF CRSA SM OFM-CAP OFM RGS
2.22 NICARAGUA	259	SJ FSC SDB OP MM(S) MSC CM RGS MM(F) SM OFM-CAP OFM
2.23 PANAMA	193	SJ FSC CM SDB MM(S) OP CP SVD OFM RGS
2.24 ARGENTINA	3372	SDB SSPS SVD RGS FMM SJ FSC RSCJ OP CM IMC CP OMI SSND MSF MSC SMA O-CARM SDS OFM-CAP OFM SM
2.25 BR. ANTARTIC TERR		
2.26 CHILE	1635	SDB SJ RSCJ RGS SSPS FSC FMM SVD OP MM(F) MSF MM(S) CP OMI CM SSND MHM SM SSC OFM-CAP OFM
2.27 FALKLAND ISLANDS	2	MHM
2.28 PARAGUAY	409	SVD SDB SJ OMI FMM FSC CSSP CM CP OP OFM RGS
2.29 URUGUAY	427	SDB SJ RSCJ FMM OMI OP CM CP OFM-CAP OFM RGS
2.30 ANTIGUA	8	ICM

Place	Total	Congregations
Latin America		
2.31 BAHAMAS	8	SDB CSSP SMA SM
2.32 BARBADOS	25	OSU OP SJ
2.33 BR. VIRGIN ISLES		
2.34 CAYMAN ISLANDS		
2.35 CUBA	87	SJ SDB CM FSC RSCJ OP CP OFM- CAP OFM
2.36 DOMINICA	36	ICM
2.37 DOMINICAN REP.	381	SJ SDB MSC CIGM FSC OP CM O-CARM OFM-CAP
2.38 GRENADA	27	SPS OP
2.39 GUADELOUPE	52	CSSP FMM FSC
2.40 HAITI	154	OMI CIGM SDB FSC ICM OP
2.41 JAMAICA	130	SJ CP ICM OP OSU FSC OFM
2.42 MARTINIQUE	45	CSSP
2.43 MONTSERRAT	5	ICM
2.44 NETHERLANDS ANTILLES	62	OP FSC CM
2.45 PUERTO RICO	470	RSCJ SSND CM SDB CSSP SJ CP FSC OMI OP SM O-CARM OFM
2.46 ST. KITTS-NEVIS		
2.47 ST LUCIA		
2.48 ST VINCENT	6	FSC
2.49 TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	89	OP CSSP
2.50 TURKS CAICOS ISLANDS		
2.51 US VIRGIN ISLANDS	19	ICM

m	TOTAL:	LATIN AMERICA	m
m		27,081	m
m			m
m			m