



News:

Situation in the Sudan: Fr. Barto Burgos, W.F. who had just returned from the Sudan, gave a very interesting and informative account of the situation there, to the Sedos meeting held at the SVD Generalate on May 25, '83.

Fr. Burgos dealt with: relations between Bishops, missionaries and diocesan clergy; relations with other Christian Churches; distribution of missionaries and collaboration between mission Institutes in undertaking new missions; the conditions of roads, canals and communications in general; the particular situation of Jongli; the importance of lay-leaders; the political tensions in the South and relations between South and North; the procedures for applying for visas; vaccinations needed and recommended; the question of languages and the place of Arabic; climatic conditions and housing; proposed Catholic University of Khartoum; Sudanese Congregation of religious women.

Third order Regular Franciscans. Congratulations to Fr. Angelo Giuseppe Angulo from Spain, elected Superior General at the recent General Chapter. He succeeds Fr. Roland Faley, TOR.

Notre Dame des Apôtres. Congratulations also to Sister Marciana O'Keefe from Ireland, re-elected this week as Superior General for a second term. The chapter is still in session. Both these Congregations are members of Sedos.

Abbot Simon Tonini who participated in the recent Sedos Seminar on Dialogue in mission, and who has much experience of dialogue with Buddhists, was re-elected as Abbot General at the recent General Chapter of the Silvestrine Benedictines.

Missionary Sisters of the Holy Rosary (MSHR) have joined Sedos. The Superior General is Sr. Margaret Ledwith, and the Congregation has its Generalate at Cross Avenue, Blackrock, Co Dublin, Ireland. We welcome them to membership.

Towards a New Spirituality of Mission. The Report from this Sedos Seminar held in December, 1981 and published in the Special Issue, Sedos Bulletin, 82/No.2, has now been translated into Spanish by the Revista Misiones Extranjeras, published at Ferrer del Rio, 17, Madrid-28. The Report was already translated into French. Enquiries about both translations to Sedos Secretariate.

Forthcoming General Chapters. The General Chapter of the Dominicans will commence on August 28, 1983 and the General Congregation of the Jesuits will commence on September 2, 1983.

"HT Inventory" Canon Benjamin Tonna, Executive Secretary of Sedos until 1974, is well known to many in Rome. He will come here on 13th, December, 1983 to present "HT Inventory," in collaboration with Professor Brian Hall of Santa Clara University, at the Universita Pontificia Salessiana.

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INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN BIRMINGHAM  
THE MULTI-FAITH RESOURCE UNIT

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An Interview with Dr. Mary Hall

*(Soeur Mary Hall, est membre de la Congrégation des Religieuses de Jésus et Marie. Elle a été choisie comme l'une des quatre femmes catholiques de 1983, en Grande Bretagne "pour son oeuvre de promotion d'une compréhension internationale entre les religions du monde". Elle appartient à l'équipe de direction de Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, Angleterre et elle est directrice du "Multi Faith Resource Unit" de Birmingham. L'origine de ce Centre remonte à une initiative du Cardinal S.Pignedoli qui recommandait aux évêques d'Angleterre et du Pays de Galles d'établir un organisme pour favoriser les relations entre chrétiens et non chrétiens en Angleterre. Elle vient d'être interviewée au sujet de ce Centre par le rédacteur de Missionwide. N.D.L.R).*

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**MISSIONWIDE:** Sr. Mary, how did you get involved with these Hindu and Muslim friends?

**SISTER MARY:** It all goes back to 1978. The late Cardinal S.Pignedoli, President of the Secretariate for non-Christians, in Rome, suggested to the Bishops of England and Wales, that some structure should be initiated to establish relationships between Christians and non-Christians in Britain. I was requested by the Bishops' Missionary Commission to formulate a questionnaire for this purpose. My experience of 8 years in Pakistan prompted me to approach the subject in a different way.

The ethnic minorities resent the many questionnaires that are put before them, so I decided to get groups of the various traditions together to speak for themselves. In other words, provide an opportunity for them to tell us what it means to be a Hindu or a Muslim in England today and their various reactions to their Christian neighbours.

**MW:** What kind of groups did you get? Doctors and teachers or ordinary people?

**SR..M:** There were two criteria involved. They had to be citizens of Birmingham, from different parts of the city whose faith and beliefs were central to their lives, 8 to 10 members in each group from the highly educated to the unemployed. I began with groups of Christians; German Lutheran, Chinese Evangelical, Black Pentecostal, Catholic, Methodist, Anglican and groups from the United Reformed Church and the Church of Christ. These were joined by Buddhists, Jews, Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus, 14 groups in all, a total of 156 people.

**MW:** Did you ask the clergy from the various religions to join them, e.g. a Buddhist monk or a Jewish Rabbi?

SR. M: No, if their religious leaders are present, they look to them for the answers. I wanted the groups to give their answers to such questions as; "How do you see yourselves - Muslims from Pakistan, Hindus from India - practicing your religion in Birmingham?" Subsequently, we discussed how they saw other religious groups, their strong points and their failures.

Initially, the answers gave the impression of an almost perfect observance of religious practices, but gradually, as the groups began to interrelate, it was easier to discuss the problems arising from the younger generation e.g. "We are all supposed to wear turbans, but many of our younger Sikhs do not wish to do so".

MW: In the beginning, each religion was working with its own group. How did you move towards mixed groups, Christians, Muslims, Sikhs in the same group?

SR. M: The suggestion actually came from the groups themselves when we began to deal with problems common to all of us; unemployment, schooling, housing, etc. I was very pleased as it showed a growth-point in their thinking. However, it was easier said than done; the Muslims could not meet with us on a Friday, nor the Jews on a Saturday, and finally we decided to meet on Sundays, once a month, from midday to 5 p.m., and, to avoid diet complications, share a vegetarian meal. The whole experience was quite exciting, as was the role-play situations in which everybody joined.

They learned a great deal about their own religions, their practices and their own beliefs. As one member said, "I have learned so much more about what it is to be a Muslim by working in the Project".

MW: Regarding the research you were doing for the Bishops, were you able to offer them any conclusions?

SR. M: Yes, in my initial report I suggested that rather than setting up a commission for World Religions, I would suggest acceding to the request of the research groups to establish themselves as a Unit for further collaboration and learning. Hopefully, it would be possible to bring in groups from other denominations and religions to join the people already involved. We would like to share our "Methodology of Dialogue" with other groups in other parts of Britain working in inter-faith or multi-cultural situations.

MW: How did you choose a name for the Unit?

SR. M: The title Multi-Faith Resource Unit was decided after a great deal of discussion. The groups did not want to be called an Inter-Faith Unit. They argued that inter-faith seemed to describe a situation where one group is here and another group is there and we have cups of tea together but do not really grow together. After the experience of working and growing over the three year period of the research, they thought that "Multi-Faith" was a better description of the complete integrity of each group in a joint endeavour.

"Resource" equals people, not books or equipment, and it is the wealth of ideas, co-operation and collaboration by people from different countries, cultures and religions, working together that make our many

programmes possible. The Unit itself, is managed by a 30 member committee, representing all the groups involved, who contribute towards the financial cost of the secretariat.

MW: Here in the Unit, you have several rooms at your disposal. Who provides the necessary finances?

SR. M: As I have explained, the groups, according to their means, finance the running of the office. A Catholic trust has given a grant for the rent of the rooms and a grant from one of the Cadbury Trusts pays the part-time secretaries. Our immediate requirement is for some financial support to provide bursaries for people to attend our courses and be given the tools to set up the same type of co-operative work in their own areas.

MW: So you are on the way to getting rid of some of the prejudices that we English have about other religions, immigrants etc. At the same time are you getting the immigrants to come out of their ghettos and work with us?

SR. M: I prefer to use the description ethnic minorities rather than immigrants. It is all a question of education. You cannot build up relationships or expect collaboration unless you work at clearing away mistrust. This only happens when people have time to get to know one another. The three years research turned our members into a cohesive group of people, willing to co-operate. Each gives of their own particular expertise - any time we are arranging a programme, the Hindus offer to make a presentation, the Sikhs to arrange a visit, the Muslims to provide a meal and so on - and the people are truly our resource.

MW: -So far you seem to be alone in trying to build these bridges between Christians and non Christians in Britain. Do you think that anything can be done in an ordinary parish in Britain?

SR. M: I think it is very difficult for the average parish to suddenly start building bridges without some enlightenment of the culture and religion of others. If you take the Catholics from Goa living in this country, I worked with many of them when I was in Pakistan and they are a highly talented people, second to none in the practice of their faith and their loyalty to the Church. Yet, for the most part, they are associated in many peoples' minds with "coloured immigrants". They have such a lot to offer the church in Britain but how often have they been asked to do so?

If this is the case with Goan Catholics you can imagine the chasm there is of misunderstanding and unease that lies between the average Catholic parishioner and people wearing turbans or attending a mosque.

MW: I sometimes wonder if missionary work done overseas becomes undone when African Christians or West Indian Christians come to this country. What can we do for them?

SR. M: It is quite true that many of them do not feel at home in our churches or parishes because our services are a very formal affair,

far removed from what they are used to in their own country. I am also quite convinced that there is no effort to make them feel welcome.

When I was working with students from overseas, I persuaded some families in catholic parishes to adopt the "stranger in their midst" by inviting them to share a meal and their family life at least once a week. As a result, many of them have continued the relationship, even when students return to their own country.

A welcome programme for christians from overseas is needed in every parish. I would also like to see a programme for our seminarians in which they have the opportunity to come to terms with work in the multi-faith, multi-racial areas of our cities. My experience has been that their extra-mural commitments are along well-worn tracks and they hardly ever venture into the unknown.

However, I am quite certain no one of us can change the world but it is surely possible that we can make an effort to grow in love and understanding of the wealth of tradition and culture on our own door-steps. The Multi-Faith Resource Unit has broken some barriers and we would like to share our experiences with others.

Ref : Missionwide (Holy Ghost Fathers) Spring 1983. 6, Woodlands, Rd.  
Bickley, Kent, England.

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#### AFRICAN CARDINALS

There are now fourteen African Cardinals, and since none of them has reached the age of eighty, they are all electors! Here are their names and dates of birth:

DO NASCIMENTO Alexandre, Angola (1 March 1925)	OTUNGA Maurice, Kenya (January 1923)
DUVAL Léon, Algeria (9 November 1903)	RAZAFIMAHATRATRA Victor SJ, Madagascar (8 November 1921)
EKANDEM Dominic, Nigeria (1917)	RUGAMBWA Laurian, Tanzania (12 July 1912)
GANTIN Bernardin, Bénin (8 May 1922)	SIDAROUSS Stephanos I, C.M., Egypt (22 February 1904)
MALULA Joseph, Zaire (12 December 1917)	THIANDOUM Hyacinthe, Senegal (2 February 1921)
MCCANN Owen, South Africa (29 June 1907)	YAGO Bernard, Ivory Coast (July 1916)
NSUBUGA Emmanuel, Uganda (11 November 1914)	ZOUNGRANA Paul, W.F., Upper Volta (3 September 1917)

Ref. Hello Frascati. Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa.  
Via Frascati, 49.

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**TENSION IN MISSION**

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Sr. Maria Rieckelman, MM.

MISSION TO MISSIONARIES

*(Sister Maria Rieckelman of Maryknoll, is a physician and a specialist in cross-cultural psychiatry. For the past ten years, she has been assisting missionaries in different parts of the world to cope with some of the stresses they are experiencing. She comes to missioners at their request. She goes to them as co-missioner, friend, educator and consultant. Maria was interviewed recently by a member of the Jesuit Educational Center for Human Development. These are a few of the questions and answers which seemed pertinent to the Editor of Intercontinent, the Bulletin of the Medical Mission Sisters).*

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*(Soeur Maria Rieckelman, de Maryknoll, est un Médecin et une spécialiste en psychiatrie inter-culturelle. Durant ces dix dernières années, elle a prêté son concours à des missionnaires dans plusieurs pays du monde pour les aider à faire face aux tensions qu'ils subissent. Elle vient chez les missionnaires, à leur demande, en tant que missionnaire, amie, éducatrice et médecin consultant. Elle a été interviewée récemment par un membre du Centre d'éducation jésuite pour le développement humain. Ci-dessous quelques-unes des questions et des réponses qui ont semblé pertinentes au rédacteur de Intercontinent, le Bulletin des Soeurs Médicales missionnaires. N.D.L.R.)*

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Q. What sort of problems do you encounter among missionaries?

A. More and more, their needs around the world, are arising from the stress that results from increasing poverty, political pressure, and upheaval, repression, and violence. We are always dealing, too, with the issues of communication, self-understanding, and ways of coping with tensions existing between the individual missionary and the various groups with whom she is living, working and interacting. We are facing everywhere, the challenge to witness our call to be followers of Jesus in a world of increasing violence and oppression.

Q. You said you help Sisters who are living and working among the poor and in difficult political situations, to deal with the stress in their lives. What are they experiencing?

A. Many of them are finding that the people with whom they share their lives are being deprived of the bare necessities of life. Their people are becoming less and less able to provide food, clothing, shelter and education for their children. The Sisters are seeing people displaced from one part of the country to another because of weakening economies, multinational and governmental pressures, and in some cases virtual civil war.

I think the refugee problem is increasing all over the world for many reasons. As a result, we are experiencing people who are living with considerably more insecurity. Sometimes, because of a particular political stand they have taken, or because of particular associations they may have, they are attracting violence toward their whole family.

Q. And as your sisters experience such poverty and distress with the people they serve around the world, what happens to them?

A. The emotional toll is tremendous. That's one of the reasons I go to be with them and why they often need help in order to reflect on what their situation is and how they are to relate to their people. All of us carry deep inside us, a basic belief system that urges us to deep caring and service of others. However, at times we have an exaggerated sense of responsibility to take care of things for people, to improve life for them.

What we need to realize is that we can accompany and can enable people to make their own situation better, but we can't rescue or save them. We can't be their saviours. And even though we have, in our minds, some idea of a perfect world, we have little power to translate that into reality instantly here and now. Again, our human reality viewed within a faith context keeps our perspective clear.

Q. You are helping the women, then, to realize that some of the basic beliefs out of which they have been operating are unrealistic. But when they don't change these and they experience inevitable frustration and disappointment, what do you see happening to them?

A. First of all, illness. I think for people who grew up in our Western culture that has always been the most usual and acceptable way for stress to express itself.

Q. Any certain forms of illness?

A. Just the common types: bronchitis, chronic headaches, gastrointestinal illness, cardiovascular and asthmatic problems, and so forth. And a whole range of emotional illnesses. I think it is very easy for us to become angry and hostile toward whomever we perceive as the enemy doing harm to our people. Stress also shows itself through a tendency to become overwhelmed with a sense of disappointment in ourselves and depression.

We eventually discover that what we want, what we hope for, and what we think we would be able to accomplish if we were more perfect people than we are just doesn't happen. Our expectations are, at times, far in excess of what we can realistically hope to achieve, and we end up with a sense of despondency. What we have to do is get rid of the erroneous basic beliefs that set us up to feel repeatedly disappointed, angry, hostile, and afraid. If we can't correct them, the outcome will eventually be either physical or emotional illness.



Q. How do you go about helping sisters to examine the beliefs that underlie their emotional reactions?

A. We usually begin in groups by examining what they are experiencing on their mission, what they are feeling, and how they are thinking about what is happening to them. My own role is to facilitate the conversation. These women usually give a great deal of feedback to one another, when encouraged. I've observed a growing capacity on the part of many to affirm one another, to point out each other's real gifts, and say something like, "Look, you are doing a worthwhile thing here, and you can continue to do it, so why mess it up and ruin yourself because you think you have to do everything?"

I try to help them recognize what they are feeling and channel their beliefs more realistically. Everywhere I go I find that we have unrealistic expectations of ourselves and one another. We need to keep paring these down so that they match reality and become a part of ourselves that we can live with. On the other hand, I try to help them activate their real power to love, to be agents of growth and change in others.

Q. It is more difficult for sisters to move into some cultures rather than others?

A. I believe so. But it is also true that some individuals get along better in some foreign cultures than they do in others. Studies have shown that "cultural distance" always puts people under stress to adapt, and the more different from my own culture a new culture is, the more stress I am likely to experience in trying to adapt myself to it. The stress might not be painful--it could be felt as a challenge--but often it is painful.

At times a person who moves into a new culture is practically reduced to the status of a helpless infant, when the language, type of work, customs, food, climate, values, and so forth are very different from those experienced at home. A person who is not very spontaneous and needs structured situations in which to feel in control will find some new cultural situations extremely stressful and debilitating until an adaptation is achieved. Some people simply have to withdraw one way or another--either by returning home or maintaining a certain amount of cultural distance from the local people. It's practically never possible to identify oneself with them completely. But when this is achieved, it takes a long, long time.

Q. You have said that you are working with both men and women who go to mission regions and into cultures different from their own. Who holds up better in such potentially stressful situations, the women or the men?

A. I think that in general, women get along better. If you ask me why, I'd say that I believe that they are better able to be in touch with their feelings. The effective aspect of a woman's personality is much more within her awareness than feelings usually are among men. Women in our country have permission to be affective in a way men don't, or at least haven't in the past. When women are dealing with stress,

are feeling impoverished in their life situations, or are experiencing difficulty in their relationships, they are often much better able to get in direct touch with their emotions than men are. And because they are aware of their pain they can begin to deal with it.

Q. Would you say that women, more than men, have an ability to do something about the stress they are experiencing?

A. A difference I've seen between men and women is that women become aware of their problems more easily, but men seem freer to make a move to do something about theirs, once they do become aware of it. However, men tend to live under such pressures as "I've got to be perfect; I've got to take care; I've got to be in control; I can't be weak; I can't be tender; I can't withdraw from the situation." Such beliefs can put a man under tremendous pressure.

Q. Do you find that a lot of stress that missionaries experience is related to their sexuality?

A. Yes, I do. Many religious people have trouble accepting their own sexual feelings and urges; they struggle and experience too much conflict in regard to close relationships and friendship. But friendship and relationships are more important than ever, now that we are moving into a new understanding of mission and evangelization as being relational--not what we do for people as much as how well we enable people to find God within each other and to respond to this God in hope.

We can hardly be in ministry to another in a way in which we haven't come to be in relationship to ourselves. The whole dimension of sexuality--as it relates to self-acceptance, friendships with others, and ministerial relationships--is very underdeveloped in most of us. I'm talking about our capacity to relate with intimacy, depth, and openness, not just to persons of the opposite sex, but of our own sex as well.

Q. How do you prepare people to keep making progress after you have conducted a workshop or a program for them?

A. I try to help them learn from their own life experiences, to draw profit from their own failures as well as successes, to recognize in their own interpersonal relationships what coping skills are useful, and to see how those skills can be used effectively within their own community or ministry team. In other words, I try to help people become more reflective and responsible about their own behaviour and feelings and what these tell them about themselves.

My aim is to help them discover what the elements are that enable them to develop as persons, to reach out to others with love, and to accept their own life and death with equanimity and hopefulness. My underlying belief is that these same skills that we use for our personal development can be communicated to others for them to use for their own growth and ministerial effectiveness.

Q. You are learning from your own life experiences how to diminish stress, and you're also teaching missionaries how to do the same.

A. That's what I'm endeavouring to do. I don't believe that studying a textbook will ever take the place of learning and gaining insights from one's own experiences; they are the best teacher of all. One of the most important things I've learned is the fact that the situations in my life that have been the most painful have also produced the most growth. Out of illness has come a whole new understanding of my own gifts, my limits, and of the way I can live more creatively with people.

Q. Would you say that when you are helping people to learn how to cope with stress in their lives, you aren't promising to teach them ways to eliminate it completely?

A. Absolutely not! I'm telling them that it's possible to reduce unnecessary stress and that some stress is valuable. If there is enough stress in our lives we can grow; if there is no stress at all, we are dead.

Ref. Intercontinent (Medical Mission Sisters), 619 Washington Blvd., Baltimore, Maryland, 21230, USA.

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News: continued from page 188

The "HT (Hall/Tonna) Inventory" is described in the preliminary folder as "an instrument for the integral human development of persons concerned with human relations, training and management, and with the human and spiritual growth of persons and organisations...It is a computerised process which prints out for respondents their values and relevant questions about self, environment and peers". Further details later.

Dialogue in Mission: The Special Issue, Sedos Bulletin, 83/No.6 contains the Report of this Seminar. A limited number of additional copies are available at the Secretariate.

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REFLECTION ON SPIRITUALITY  
AND LIBERATION THEOLOGY

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Segundo Galilea

*("Pour moi", écrit le P. Galilea, "mon expérience de Dieu se résume dans l'humanité de Jésus.....Pour un chrétien, une spiritualité qui n'est pas enracinée en Jésus, ne peut pas durer.....Pareillement, un mouvement dans l'Eglise, qui n'est pas lié à l'Eglise officielle, aux évêques, ne peut pas tenir.....Je pense que nous sommes en train de nous rendre compte que la théologie de la libération est effectivement davantage une spiritualité de l'action, qu'une théologie proprement dite.....Je ne puis que penser à trois personnes, dont le nom survivra pendant de longues années...Ce sont tous des évêques: Oscar Romero, Hélder Camara et Manuel Larrain". N.D.L.R).*

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Hard reality has been our great teacher in Latin America. In the 1960s our hope was in Cuba, the first of our countries to break out of the old capitalist patterns, but these hopes have faded. It's a closed society and few see it now as a model. Christians for Socialism is gone as an important force. Then came Nicaragua. It's hard to say much for the time being but I wonder if good revolutionaries don't often make poor politicians.

The Pope's visit didn't help the situation. Both the government and the bishops have made mistakes in the past and the atmosphere between them is cool. The pope reinforced this. I think he could have tried to bridge this gap somewhat: he could have praised the people's efforts; he could have somehow indicated the present government is better than Somoza's. I agree, though, with his main point that the Church must not be identified with any regime or ideology.

We're less enamoured with structural analysis, facile economic predictions (is economics considered a science anywhere anymore?) theories of colonialism, etc. They're part of the problem but we realize we must first settle accounts within our countries. Change must begin within. We look more at facts now, less at theories, We're more realistic. We've learned from experience.

The Church in Latin America is a positive factor, It moderates abuses of human rights, violence and dictatorships. It is in many areas the voice of the voiceless, but it is not able to change economic and political policies. The Church can make a contribution but only a contribution. It can't change structures. Maybe Puebla saw it doing more than it could.

Let me go back to Nicaragua since it is so important. First I wonder if the priests are needed any longer in

the government. Maybe they should get out to show the Church is not identified with a regime that has its weaknesses. I'm not on the other hand excusing the bishops. Perhaps they've been overcritical and suspicious of the regime. Church people I think should be clearly seen as being for the poor, but their motivation must be seen to flow from Christian wellsprings, that is from the gospel. They must be prophetic, but they must be first of all involved prophets, not arm-chair critics.

It's all right to have your own ideology but not to the degree you surrender your right to criticize what is unjust. I'm not saying this is easy to do in the concrete.

We Christians can be overly pragmatic: We can say, "change is everything" and let the abuses and weaknesses fester in our movements and even forget the roots of our own commitment, our own identity. I think we did this in Latin America in the 1960s and 70s when the hopes for liberation overshadowed Christian spirituality.

Christianity can become a means to an end. One sign of this is that the value of prayer and liturgy is down played. This is extremely dangerous for we exchange the social role of religion for its substance. Religion is important in itself. Again, sad experience and disillusionment changed us. We see now that the means we take in our movements are all important, for the end is in the means. We have learned to relativize grand schemes and theories. If a Christian is sincere he or she will find the true balance.

#### SPIRITUALITY

A religious person is one, they say, who deals with the experience of God, in the poor and in others and somehow communicates this experience. For me, my experience of God is summed up in the humanity of Jesus. This is what I value as an experience of God. Jesus' practice is the source of spirituality. Our efforts to know God and others, to combine action and prayer are all done through the humanity of Jesus. I especially try to be sensitive to Jesus' mercy and compassion. Christian identity today is one with biblical compassion.

You often hear Christians say their spirituality or motivation is based on the poor - the suffering poor, their goodness, etc. - and these people seem to give little specific attention to Jesus. But people, even the poor will disappoint you; they, too, are problem-ridden and a source of crisis. For a Christian, a spirituality that is not rooted in Jesus will not last. It will not sustain you in ups and downs for 15 or 20 years. So too, a movement within the Church that does not relate to the official Church, the bishops, will not last. n

Prayer and Liturgy We should give importance publicly to prayer and the liturgy. We should preach conversion of life to the poor for they expect it. We should share what we feel about our faith and life. We shouldn't downplay all this because of some

overriding program of liberation that may or may not succeed. I was amazed to find in the Philippines the same enthusiasm for structural analysis and liberation formulae we left behind ten years ago.

Theology of Liberation. I think we're coming to see that the Theology of liberation is actually more a spirituality of action than a theology proper. We've reworked our theology thoroughly, for example no one today would read Gutierrez's first book - but still I think it has to do more with how we face life and motivate ourselves than with rational understanding.

Theologians like Gutierrez and Segundo are hopeful, positive people. They are aware of the conservative trends in the Church, the plateaus we reach where nothing seems to be happening. They know how sketchy and shaky the Church's programs are, but I'll say they're happy, despite all the abuse they have taken. Probably they're happier than they were four or five years ago. Remember with our Church you have to take a perspective of many years, twenty at least, to see change and progress.

Three persons. I can only think of three persons whose names will last down the years. They are all bishops - Oscar Romero, Helder Camara and Manuel Larrain. The last man had much to do with the founding of CELAM, our Latin American bishops' conference. They were all true pastors.

Our sisters have done tremendous work in the pastoral field. They have great scope for pastoral work, because of the lack of priests. No bishop can do much unless he gives a big role to sisters. The sisters have no ambition to be writers, priests or administrators, unlike North American sisters. Perhaps the challenges in the two continents are different. Perhaps the spirit of competition is not so strong in Latin America.

In the United States they're always telling me the Theology of Liberation should get into minority questions (for example, black people's issues) and women's issues. I've always thought they're really saying "do things as we do them" and I want instead to do things on our terms.

Ref. INFO ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, (Federation of Asian Bishops Conference) P.O.Box EA. 12, Ermita, Manila. Pp. 8-9.

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"DIALOGUE DANS LA MISSION"

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Sedos Seminar 1-5 mars 83

Fr. Joseph Gross CSSp.

*(Joseph Gross attended the recent Sedos Seminar on Dialogue in Mission. He presents here a brief summary of his impressions of the Seminar and then reflects on some of the possible consequences of the Seminar for Missionary Institutes, as for example the new motives for dialogue which emerged at the Seminar. The second part of his reflection will appear in the following Bulletin. In it he will consider possible new approaches to dialogue and different elements of dialogue, both of which can be of help to missionary Institutes as they examine their own attitudes towards this important direction in mission to-day. Ed.)*

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INTRODUCTION

Au Seminar de Sedos, mars 1981, sur "l'Avenir de la Mission", quatre activités missionnaires ont été reconnues comme voies privilégiées du "comment" de la Mission aujourd'hui, à savoir: Proclamation, Dialogue, Inculturation et Libération.

Ce Seminar a voulu approfondir le dialogue. Il ressort de la réflexion des participants, que le dialogue ne semble pas retenir une place importante dans les Instituts, qu'il présente bien de confusions et pose des questions comme celle-ci: "est-il partie intégrante de l'évangélisation?".

Des questions peuvent se poser. Le dialogue n'est-il pas une des démarches par excellence pour rejoindre "tous les hommes et tout l'homme"? D'aller vers la périphérie ou les situations-frontières? N'est-il pas une réponse aux évolutions de Vat. II, présentant un "salut incarné", la liberté religieuse, la valeur des religions et des réalités terrestres. Aux Instituts missionnaires, on peut poser la question: Où se trouvent-ils? Sont-ils avec la minorité de chrétiens (1/4 ou 1/5) ou tentent-ils des chemins parmi la grande majorité (3/4 ou 4/5 de l'humanité)?

I. LES TÉMOIGNAGES

(quelques éléments)

Le P. Ignatius Hirudayam, S.J., en dialogue avec le monde hindou pense que "les religions sont providentielles"; il ne souhaite pas qu'elles disparaissent; affirme que "les religions se corrigent l'une l'autre"; se demande comment rester hindou en étant chrétien; s'interroge pourquoi tant d'occidentaux se rendent en Asie pour trouver autre chose.

Pour la soeur Ishpriya, RSCJ Inde, "la communion est une priorité dans la Mission"; elle insiste sur le dialogue de vie; qu'il faut aller vers l'autre "dans une attitude d'amitié et poser les questions avec le coeur", la femme est plus facilement acceptée, elle n'est pas, comme le prêtre, celui qui doit prêcher.

L'expérience du P. Fitzgerald, PA, fait ressortir que le dialogue avec l'Islam est possible (milieu universitaire et en mission - Uganda).

La soeur Eugenia d'Costa, OLM, Bengladesh, est née, a grandi, vit et travaille en milieu musulman. Elle mène "un dialogue de vie", au fil des jours, au gré des situations. Vivant sa foi, son témoignage de vie fait poser des questions aux musulmans. Elle-même se trouve enrichie par les musulmans et approfondit sa propre foi. Quelques affirmations: 'Je ne fais rien pour convertir....Ils ont déjà la foi. Le dialogue permet un contact plus profond avec le Christ". "Je trouve davantage la présence de Dieu parmi les pauvres et les gens qui souffrent que parmi les riches". "Je suis heureuse d'être de ce pays et dans un tel milieu".

Le P. Desmond Hartford, SSC, a vécu deux ans dans une famille musulmane. Insiste sur la rencontre au plan humain (fraternité) avant la rencontre en tant que chrétien ou musulman. Le dialogue religieux surgit spontanément. Est convaincu que Dieu se rend présent dans le dialogue. "Le dialogue est orienté vers l'avenir, vers quelque chose qui arrivera dans l'avenir". Qualifie son expérience de "présence de réconciliation".

La soeur Maria Arlinda, Brésil. Au Brésil: 80% de pauvres, 15% de classe moyenne, 5% de riches. L'Eglise qui, jadis, était du côté des 20% a fait l'option des 80%. Sortant du couvent avec trois autres compagnes, elles se sont implantées parmi les pauvres (petite maison, porte ouverte, travail comme tout le monde). Formées dans et pour le monde des riches, nous nous sommes converties au monde des pauvres: "Nous voyons maintenant le monde du point de vue des pauvres". "Nous découvrons le Christ des pauvres et re-lisons l'Evangile autrement". Notre communauté se renouvelle, la prière prend une grande importance; notre dialogue et la prière reçoit l'impact des pauvres, des choses de la vie concrète. Tous les mois, nous faisons deux jours de recollection. travail de sensibilisation et de réflexion surtout dans les communautés de base. "Une nouvelle manière de vivre la vie religieuse émerge".

## II. QUELQUES RÉFLEXIONS SUR LES EXPÉRIENCES

1. Les expériences témoignent d'une autre approche des religions et des pauvres. Elles sont aussi un autre regard sur les personnes, les relations, les choses de la vie.
2. Les expériences sont des essais de traduire et d'intégrer quelques orientations importantes de Vat II: respect, liberté et valeurs des religions; option préférentielle des pauvres; effort de réconciliation avec le monde et des personnes entre elles.



3. Quelques traits ressortent: importance de la relation personnelle: rencontre sur le plan humain; dialogue de vie; témoignage de vie; "être avec". Le dialogue religieux s'insère dans ce contexte.
4. Pour eux, le dialogue religieux (voir l'évangélisation) commence en ces éléments signalés ci-dessus (un autre regard sur ces éléments).
5. La foi personnelle, le témoignage de Jésus-Christ, sont présents dans tout dialogue. On a insisté sur la nécessité d'avoir une foi solide et formée. En même temps, on a souligné l'interpellation et l'enrichissement de la foi personnelle.
6. Tous relèvent la rencontre (la présence) de Dieu, de sa Parole dans les personnes, les relations, les religions, et plus spécialement dans les pauvres.
7. La motivation la plus souvent mentionnée était: "Caritas Christi urget nos".
8. Le P. Amstutz, à la fin de son exposé, a dit: "ce sont des expériences pilotes"; elles pourraient devenir une voie normale en Mission".
9. Les témoignages ont suscité quelques questions importantes: Qu'est-ce que le dialogue? Est-il une activité missionnaire? Est-il constitutif de l'évangélisation? Des réponses dépendra l'impact sur nos Instituts.

### III. REFLEXIONS SUR LE DIALOGUE

#### A. MOTIVATIONS

On a dit au Séminar qu'il faudrait sensibiliser et motiver les Instituts au dialogue.

Les motivations fondamentales. On peut d'abord présenter les motivations fondamentales qui valent pour toute activité missionnaire et pour le dialogue:

- Le mandat du Christ: l'Évangile à toute créature, l'Évangile jusqu'aux extrémités de la terre (cf. Mc. 16.15, Mt. 28. 18-20). Motivation exprimée par A.G. 5 (envoie par le Christ); A.G. 7: raison de l'activité missionnaire. Paul: 'Pour moi évangéliser...c'est une obligation' (1 Cor.9.16)
- La foi en Jésus Christ, envoyé, mort et resuscité pour tous les hommes, principe et fin, "ressembler dans l'unité tous les enfants de Dieu, dispersés" (Jean 11.52), "recapituler toutes choses" (Eph. 1.10). Tant de fois est affirmée cette foi en J.Ch. comme motivation: L.G.N.10 par. 2; L.G. 22, par. 5; A.G. 3.
- La "Caritas urget nos". C'est l'amour de Dieu, du Fils, du disciple

(même amour) pour tous les hommes, sans exception, qui nous porte vers tous: cf. A.G. 12. Cette motivation a été fortement soulignée par les témoignages.

2. Les motivations de notre temps. Des motivations proviennent plutôt de notre temps et concernent plus spécialement le dialogue.

- Le monde qui se transforme en "grand village" et prend conscience des interdépendances. Des structures de dialogue se sont mises ou se mettent en place à tous les niveaux. Ce phénomène amène l'Eglise à la fois à entrer dans ces réseaux de dialogue et à avoir aussi ses structures de dialogue.
- Des situations (ou phénomènes) provoquent l'Eglise au dialogue: divisions, chocs, racismes, matérialisme, les pauvres; réconcilier ce monde avec la foi. Aspirations d'un monde juste et fraternel; fraternité universelle.
- Expérience, dans le passé, de l'échec auprès des grandes religions et qui demande la recherche d'autres voies. Les 3/4 de l'humanité vivent étrangers à l'Evangile (probablement plus).
- Un nouvel espace d'évangélisation s'est créé, que le dialogue veut combler en partie, du fait de la liberté religieuse, des valeurs salvifiques des religions, et d'une autre approche du salut (salut Incarné) que développe "Lumen Gentium" (voir infra).

3. Motivation qui tient au Charisme des Instituts.

- Toute l'Eglise est missionnaire. Le rôle des chrétiens et des petites communautés dans l'évangélisation de ce monde est primordial. Encore faut-il être sensibilisé et formé au dialogue avec "ce monde" pour cette tâche d'évangélisation. Un tel rôle revient aux Instituts (pas exclusivement).
- Plus spécifiquement, les Instituts missionnaires (ou religieux-missionnaires) ont la tâche de frayer des chemins pour que l'Evangile atteigne "toute créature".. Le dialogue est un de ces chemins nouveaux, qui tient compte des motivations et situations nouvelles indiquées ci-dessus (Voir 2) (cf. Ev. Nunt. No 69)
- On a aussi mentionné le renouvellement des Instituts par cette voie du dialogue, qui est un mouvement vers la périphérie (cf aussi témoignage de Soeur Maria Arlinda).