

SEDOS

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SEMINAR
AND
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
REPORT

SPECIAL ISSUE

REPORT OF THE SEDOS SEMINAR
ON
A SPIRITUALITY FOR CONFLICT
AND
THE SEDOS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

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Coming Events:

SEDOS Residential Seminar

Villa Cavalletti - Grotta Ferrata.

MINISTRIES FOR A DYNAMIC LOCAL CHURCH

Tuesday, March 20, 18 hrs. - Saturday, March 24, 13 hrs.

A SPIRITUALITY FOR CONFLICT

Thomas Cullinan, OSB.

(Texte de l'intervention remarquable du P. Thomas CULLINAN lors de l'Assemblée annuelle de SEDOS, en 1983. Le conflit fait partie de l'histoire de L'Evangilae, à partir des récits de l'enfance, jusqu'au point final de la croix. Contester les idéologies dominantes et les situations de conflits, ne veut pas dire que nous sommes appelés à établir un programme alternatif et efficace, au nom de Dieu. Nous sommes appelés à reconnaître sa présence et sa créativité, son amour pour la vie des gens, et son royaume qui prévaut sur tout. Cela demande notre propre conversion et comprend notre condition mortelle, - notre mort - une mort qui, paradoxalement nous rend invincibles.)

I. DOMINE, QUO VADIS?

For the last two and a half years I have been involved, with others, in building a house. One of the many things my hands have taught me - as my head could never have done - is that to participate creatively in life we must first make an act of profound humility and obedience before the given reality before us. You cannot use tiles creatively and beautifully if you pretend they are slates, or even want them to be. You cannot learn from concrete blocks how to be a craftsman, as long as you want them to be bricks. You cannot afford to use pinewood without learning its own nature as distinct; it is not oak. We come to a singular freedom of action, unselfconscious and free of fear, only by listening to, searching for the truth that is given and present. Humility. Obedience. And "truth will set you free".

We are artisans in God's world, artisans whose only primary task is a loving and total response to truth. "For this I came into the world, to bear witness to "the truth". Sadly we slip in "the": to bear witness to "the truth", and think of Jesus bearing witness to the creed, or dogmas, or academic theology. No. 'Truth' - the present reality of peoples' present lives, what is happening to them, among them. And what does the divine love affair, called the Kingdom, look like in this reality?

I need hardly comment that the arrogant, independent, western mind of man come-of-age (who says so?) has quite a different approach to freedom. It is a freedom keeping the self intact and demanding the right of choosing as one likes. It knows 'hubris' but not 'humus'. It is self-concerned not self-forgetful. It seeks to be free from reality and relations, and cannot receive freedom and peace from reality and in relations, as bonus and gift. "My peace I give you".

Conflict: It is clear, as we re-read and re-ponder the gospel, that if our primary call is to a loving response to truth, born out of an original obedience and humility, then we cannot avoid conflict. It is an inherent part of living for truth; it is conflict unsought but freely accepted.

At this time of year we hear again the Infancy Narratives of Matthew and Luke. They are not childish sentimental nursery stories, but tough minded summaries of the main themes to be worked out in detail in the life story which follows. They are like the initial 'statement' in a symphony, highlighting and clarifying what is to be told more fully in the work as a whole.

Read the story of the Massacre of the Innocents from your knowledge of El Salvador, or any contemporary fascist regime, an effete royal regime already on its way out; the appearance, at least rumoured, of a new subversive alternative; the initial response of recognising, accepting the new; the discovered inability to do so; the vicious overkill; and Matthew's contrast between the inability of the royal regime to have compassion, to know grief, over against the essential voicing of grief, the Lamentation of Rachel. Blessed are those who mourn; naming the grief, sharing the suffering at a deep gut-level of agony and anger, caught in the Greek word "compassion" so often used in the Gospel; a necessary part of prophetic liberation, of de-mystifying the dominant illusion that all is well with the people.

Read again the Magnificat, with its terrible proclamation of the divine intention for, and warning to, the social and political order. The powerful removed from their god-like seats of power, and the powerless, the voiceless, raised up (not onto those seats, mind you, - the poor find blessing in the good news but not by becoming rich in turn). And the hungry are fed (we all want them to be) while the well-fed go hungry away (does God want that? What God are we dealing with?).

The gospel is not merely about private virtues and individual spirituality. It is about living in the public forum in the light and truth of God's love affair with people. To understand why, for Jesus, this led through non-comprehension, conflict and finally death let us focus on one aspect, one that I think we are not too clear about and which would enable us to re-read the gospel and to cope with our own times, in the light of each other. I start way back.

II. WHO ARE THE SINNERS?

When I was thirteen years old I was taught that the sinfulness of sin depended on it being Serious, Intended, and (k)Nown. S.I.N.

That was good teaching (I still remember!) and since at that age scrupulosity can be a great problem, it is wise to warn us that we could not sin seriously over trivial matters, nor if we did not really intend to, nor by accident. We could not fall into sin, only jump.

Since the time of the Jansenists that has been standard moral theology in the Church. And it tends to divide our own lives and our view of society into the naughty and the nice, the badly behaved and the virtuous.

As time went on I began to see that most of the evil in our world is perpetrated by high minded people who see themselves as virtuous. As we prayed and sang the psalms I began to wonder why 'the wicked' were so often those who actually crushed and destroyed others, whether they knew it or not. As we read and tried to hear the gospels I wondered why, if being well-behaved or consciously naughty were the significant issues in life, why did Jesus seem to favour the naughty and be in

collision with the well behaved?

You will have pondered similar questions, but we must pursue them further, whoever, wherever we are or else the Church will become even more bourgeois and middle class than it is at present. I'll share a little of my pursuit.

The man born blind: Off and on I have been worried about the question asked at the beginning of John Chapter 9. A blind man, and the disciples ask: who sinned, this man or his parents that he should be blind? How primitive! - to assume that sickness or affliction should be linked with personal or family guilt! I dismissed it as a primitive hang up that we had grown out of . . . until, in my few honest moments, I noticed a deep defence mechanism in my own psyche when I met with people afflicted, not just sick but silly, not just handicapped but lazy. Only by saying "Raca" somewhere in my psyche could I keep myself intact in the presence of suffering people. A lady said to me "Father, there are no really poor people in our country, only fickle ones."

So. Back to John Chapter 9. (Will you read it?) The story is bracketed between two crucial questions, two questions based on standard assumptions:

- a) Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?
- b) Some Pharisees said: We are not blind, surely?

To these questions, Jesus answers:-

- a) Neither he nor his parents sinned . . .
- b) Blind? If you were, you would not be guilty, but since you say, "We see", your guilt remains.

Between those two questions John tells the superb and witty story of the blind man's liberation and his vigorous, fearless, confrontation with the authorities (including his challenge to them, which would be like saying to our British defence minister: Why are you so fascinating by the peace movement? Are you going to join it?). Many details resonate for us today. The man's parents, not wanting to disown their son, yet not wanting to be counted as one of the subversives.

Now Jesus' confrontation with the dominant religious culture was not a conflict with the Law, the Torah, as such. It was a confrontation with the treatment of the Law as an ideology.

Ideology: The word, ideology, has had a varied history over the last 100 (?) years. I am not using it in the neutral sense, referring to the set of ideas which any culture or class has to interpret the world. I am using it in the pejorative sense, referring to a set of ideas, theories and principles, which have ceased to be a relative tool for understanding reality and have become an absolute machine into which reality is fitted.

In our own day we have two prize fighters and a third entering the ring: Russian Marxism, Western individualism - consumerism, and the third: Islamic Fundamentalism.

If we can clarify why and how Jesus confronted the ideology of his day, I think we would find the overt conflicts that many Christians are meeting in violent forms in Latin America, parts of Africa, the Philippines, South Korea and elsewhere, - that these overt conflicts are already latent and originate from the less evident conflicts in western society. In other words if the Church discovered its prophetic imagination and its call to confront the dominion of standard ideologies in the West, it would be in conflict back home in ways that our niceness can hardly picture.

CHARACTERISTICS OF DOMINANT IDEOLOGY

May we then feel our way through a number of characteristics of dominant ideology?

- a) Ideology comes out of high minded and usually long-cherished thinking. Western individualism, Marxism, the Law, each is at root not bad or careless thinking, but careful thinking about real values. It is therefore plausible and mentally attractive, even addictive.
- b) By taking limited criteria for assessing reality - usually today they are economic criteria - ideology reduces what is perceived as truth to a limited realm which can then afford to be extremely forthright and tend to be totalitarian (even in the name of democracy and freedom!)
- c) Having simplified the ambiguities, varieties, contradictions and mystery of human reality, ideology is able to set up the world scene in a strictly two camp way, a Manichean division of the world into those who subscribe and those who cannot or will not.
- d) For those who subscribe to the ideologies this provides a great sense of righteousness, and frees them from any sense of their own guilt. And it makes the misfits (by choice or circumstance) guilty.

In the time of Jesus it was impossible for many people, especially Jesus' associates in Galilee, to keep the law. They were therefore 'accused and outside the law', and in some way guilty.

In my own country a right wing ideology of self improvement, effort and wealth, creates a horrible righteousness in the dominant culture and an invoiced blame on those who do not better themselves. We have thousands of homeless families and recent housing law implies that it is normally their own fault (apart from a tiny minority who are the 'deserving' poor). So much blame for the great enemy, 'inflation', is placed on wage increases, that wage earners are blameworthy while executive salaries, expense accounts, business cars, are all righteously innocent. You meet the same attitudes whenever overseas aid is mentioned; if those people 'over there' chose to work and better themselves, they could do so.

- e) For the mis-fits and the afflicted, the dominant ideology not only sees them as guilty, but they come to think of themselves as being so. They come to have a self-

image of being under a bondage of fate which is somehow a bondage of sin. This is because the ideology generates a language that is extremely plausible and pervasive. Jesus liberated the blind man not only from being called 'a sinner through and through, since he was born' but above all from believing himself to be so.

Today, when our dominant ideology projects a constant image of material wellbeing as salvation, those who know they cannot aspire to that see themselves as blameworthy nobodies. The role of prophetic imagination, a good news of hope, must be able to lift that bondage of sin and fate - not by praying it into them, but by releasing them from illusions of the ideology. In a culture of 'death by bread alone' people cannot discover themselves as people by more and more bread.

f) "Who is not for us is against us". A strong ideology, having set the scene as a simple two-adversary confrontation, has no place for third parties. Everyone is either Loyal or the Enemy, or a dupe of the Enemy. Any criticism is subversive.

This is most vicious today in the USSR, and in National Security regimes in Latin America, and in other forms in Mozambique, Iran, the Philippines. . . Ideology legitimises extreme nationalism in a high-minded way, so that it is obvious that it is better that one man (or 10,000 or 30,000) should die for the sake of "the people".

But the two-adversary view of the world also means that anyone who is not 100% for us must be simply and 100% in the enemy camp. So Nicaragua cannot but be an immediate lackey of the Kremlin; there is no room for a Marxist socialism to create alternative, central America, forms. And the terrible irony is that by being so treated it leaves Nicaragua (or Angola, or Ethiopia) nowhere else to look for support except in the 'enemy' camp. Ideologies prove self justifying. "There you are, we told you so!"

g) Because a Dominant Ideology is primarily concerned with proving itself right it is ready to pervert language to its own ends. A conviction of being right is quite the biggest stumbling block to seeking truth and perceiving what is really taking place. Being right is an attempt to keep one's autarichic ego intact by means of keeping one's right thinking intact. It can never lose face nor admit changing its mind. It cannot make the basic acts of humility and obedience which alone admit us to perceiving truth and responding with self-forgetfulness. It is willing to interpret history and every contemporary event to prove itself and evolve jargon language to keep the ideology pure.

The USSR has evolved a whole philosophy of the use of language as support for its ideology and not as communication of truth. But the same perversion happens in our own countries. I think of the way the word 'communist' is used, even by Catholics who delight to celebrate saints who today would all be called subversive communists. (A few years ago a confrere and myself published a small anthology of the Church Fathers' teaching on the nature of ownership. Subversive stuff!)

And by what process of righteous thinking can anyone come to the point of saying, in the name of Christianity, we can only be peace makers from a position of power? Is that not the ultimate denial of the Cross?

Where we, as Church, should stand to-day. I think my suggestion to you, and we grope together, is that we could understand more clearly what ideologies do to people, and especially how they cast the vast majority of people, the poor, into being dispossessed and fated outcasts, then we could appreciate what liberation and hope Jesus was living for and also where we, as Church, should be standing today. Is it not along these lines -- and not along moralistic lines - that we should see Jesus as being 'counted among the sinners'?, that we should understand 'Lamb of God who takes sin away'?

It would help us appreciate why Jesus' good news seemed so ambiguous to many of his contemporaries, even his own followers. And it would help us to cope with similar misunderstanding and ambiguity in our day. It would, of course, be a good news that divides the hearts of many, a good news that would confront much that is accepted uncritically, a good news that would divide us even from our own brethren. But he did not come to bring peace, in that sense. To live the peace that he gives is to learn the art of being vagabonds, displaced persons, fools. Can we take it? (and not be righteous ourselves!?).

III. MORAL ENDEAVOUR

As we ponder all these things in our hearts, as we pray the psalms (which speak of them all), as we re-read the gospels, as we seek to open ourselves to the great powers of death and evil in our contemporary world, as we sense that much of our privatised, spiritualised and moralized spirituality cannot interpret the scene we are in, and then as we begin to sense the futility of God and his kingdom and ourselves as part of that, - what do we do?, how do we cope?

One reaction is a yearning to set up an alternative and effective programme for God.

Shortly before John Paul II left Britain he was at a large youth rally in South Wales. As he boarded the helicopter to leave, he turned, opened his arms, and said, "Young people, young people, build the kingdom, build the kingdom".

That phrase is common enough today, it appears in some of your constitutions, and even in liturgical prayers. But my naughty mind wondered at the time whether Jesus would ever have used it and if not, why not? And then I recalled that it was from near that corner of Britain, by the river Severn, that some years before a British monk had lived, a monk who also came to Rome but in his case to tell the loose-living Romans that they should get themselves organized, try harder, and save themselves. Was it perhaps his ghost which managed, at that last moment, to whisper in the Pope's ear? - the ghost of Pelagius?

Certainly the Anglo-Saxons and Celts have never needed another heresy. That one has lasted well for fifteen centuries.

The Kingdom: Jesus spoke of the kingdom being near at hand, among us, yet-to-be but here already. He told people they could, or could not, enter it, but never said they were in it. Only one man was said to be 'not far from it'. The kingdom was in history, yet always more than expected. It was always appreciated as gift, as grace, but it was never magic. It demanded all the preparation and pre-

disposition that gift-receiving does demand, (the social justice required by the year of the Lord's favour), and yet the kingdom was never merited.

Like all love affairs, the kingdom was enigmatic, better talked of in stories and celebration than in books and theses. And like all love affairs it was recognized only by those who knew it by experience. You could know it but not know about it.

I have come to think that the main thrust of all Jesus' preaching was to persuade people to accept this antecedent reality of God's presence and creativity. It is the love of God in peoples' lives, his antecedent kingdom, which urges us. It is not the building of something on his behalf, this spectator-God waiting for us to do great things in his name.

Who lights the lamp? Last year I was with some Medical Mission Sisters and we spent some time discussing a favourite quotation of their Foundress: "No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub Your light must shine in the sight of men . . .". Was Jesus saying that you must see to it that your light is effective?, be a searchlight?, or a lighthouse? Or was he saying that since it is God who is 'the one' who lights the lamp, if we are truly alight then we cannot but be effective? In the context of the Sermon on the Mount, of the Beatitudes, and in particular of the images of salt, and of leaven, he must have been saying the latter. Do not be anxious and worried about how and whether your life is being efficient and effective for the kingdom. Your focus must be on being true to your calling, a candle burning truly. If you are, you will give light, whether, how, when, to whom, you know not. And in addition you will not draw attention to yourselves as great patrons of God, but will become transparent signs pointing beyond yourselves, signs of the kingdom. "...seeing your good works, they will praise your Father in heaven".

The Lion is God: Let us hear a Masai elder speaking to Vincent Donovan in Tanzania:

He said: *"For a man really to believe is like a lion going after its prey. His nose and eyes and ears pick up the prey. His legs give him the speed to catch it. All the power of his body is involved in the terrible death leap and single blow to the neck with the front paw, the blow that actually kills. And as the animal goes down, the lion envelopes it in his arms (masai refer to the front legs of an animal as its arms) pulls it to himself, and makes it part of himself. This is the way a lion kills. This is the way a man believes. This is what faith is."*

I looked at the elder in silence and amazement. Faith understood like that would explain why, when my own faith was gone, I ached in every fibre of my being. But my wise old teacher was not finished yet.

"We did not search you out, Padri", he said to me. "We did not even want you to come to us. You searched us out. You followed us away from your house into the bush, into the plains, into the steppes where our cattle are, into the hills where we take our cattle for water, into our villages, into our homes. You told us of the High God, how we must search for him, even leave our land and our people to find him. But we have not done this. We have not left our land. We have not searched

for him. He has searched for us. He has searched us out and found us. All the time we think we are the lion. In the end the lion is God.

The lion is God. Of course. Goodness and kindness and holiness and grace and divine presence and creating power and salvation were here before I got here. Even the fuller understanding of God's revelation to man, of the salvific act that had been accomplished once and for all for the human race, was here before I got here. My role as a herald of that gospel, as messenger of the news of what had already happened in the world, as the person whose task it was to point to "the one who had stood in their midst whom they did not recognize" was only a small part of the mission of God to the world. It was a mysterious part, a demanded part: "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel".

It was a role that would require every talent and insight and skill and gift and strength I had, to be spent without question, without stint, and yet in the humbling knowledge that only that part of it would be made use of which fit into the immeasurably greater plan of the relentless, pursuing God whose will on the world will not be thwarted. The Lion is God. (Vincent Donovan in *Christianity Rediscovered* Orbis Books, 1973).

IV. THE STILL POINT OF ENDEAVOUR

When we first set out to work for God the chances are that we are more or less Pelagian and have a reasonably clear ideology. We set out 'to do God's will', and he is indeed lucky to have us around to do it. We the actors, he the spectator.

For some, that state of affairs lasts until middle age tempers it and they slide quietly and sadly into mediocrity.

But what should happen, and I believe is the normal progress for Christians in any walk of life who have remained alert, seeking and prayerful, is a transition from being in dialogue with God as neighbour (with all the demarcation disputes that it involves) to being in union with God. The mystics talk much to us about this, but we should not think of it as proper to a privileged few. Most of the Church's contemplatives are not in 'contemplative' communities. And there is no doubt that mission in areas of conflict, or crises in life which remove any clarity about what we can or ought to do, imprisonment, the destruction of all we have given our lives for, serious illness, even being present to scenes of irrational violence (as in our riots in Liverpool eighteen months ago), - these moments are demands from God to step into quite a new type of presence and communion.

It is a conversion which we cannot programme or achieve, but which God's Spirit will work in us if we are open to it and persevering. We recognize it by hind-sight. It is, I believe, the transition:-

- from 'coming to do God's will' (Psalmist) to really seeking 'that God's will be done in us' (Mary)
- from moral endeavour for God to contemplative union with him

I have died already. Or as Paul sings at the end of that chapter: I am now sure that neither death, nor life... no 'power'... can come between us and the love of God.

Conversion: As I say, this conversion should happen in all our lives, this conversion from active endeavour to contemplative union. It may happen dramatically, it may creep up on us softly, softly, but it is not an oddity for a mystical few. On the other hand it can easily be missed because it feels like a loss of certainty, a loss of faith, a leap into the dark. It is like a ship leaving the security of navigation lights and finding itself in open sea. There is need for mutual encouragement in this. When you are afraid of 'going around the bend', friends to go round the bend with, is precious - or even guidance from those who have already gone round.

Four final thoughts to share with you:

1) This conversion ushers in an intense solitude of communion. We discover that the heart of ourself is not in the end an ultimate aloneness but a radical solidarity and communion with all God's beloved people.

And you missionaries will know that this communion is a living conversation with the poor, the forgotten, the voiceless, the wounded, the dispossessed. So we carry in ourselves, wherever we are, a deep suffering (perhaps the social equivalent of that wound of love that St. Teresa and other mystics speak of). We bear wounds of love which never heal, the wounds of the risen Lord.

2) But also we carry an intense joy, because the Christian is not merely a striver for liberation yet to come but a bearer of a liberation of which the down-payment, the pledge, has already been made. It is an enigmatic co-existence of suffering and joy which makes our lives, especially our community lives, living signs:

from being patrons of his Kingdom, to being instruments of his Kingdom (Today we have a thousand patrons of peace to every one instrument of peace);

from Jesus' initial 'follow me' to Peter by the lakeside calling him to work for and preach the kingdom - to his second 'follow me' by the lakeside after Peter had lost any self assurance other than loving the Lord! *When you were young you girded yourself and went where you would; but the time comes when you will be girded by others and not go where you choose. Follow me. (Domine, quo vadis?)*

3) It is a conversion, - from living out of duty and thereby keeping our self-image intact, our autarchic ego respectable, to abandoning that entire game of 'being somebody' before God and others. It is the conversion which Paul talks of so often in Romans, and is beautifully worked out in Chapter 8. God's Spirit releases us from loving through moral endeavour, to being able to love freely, as it were, naturally.

The conversion always involves a death; indeed, this side of the grave, it involves a constant dying, but only that a new life and freedom may be released in us. We learn what it is to constantly carry in the Body (our community of faith) the dying of Jesus so that his

risen life may be manifest. And, surprise, surprise, this freedom from fear makes us invincible: you cannot kill me for I have died already.

4) Living in the present - one final comment to end with: all our work and missionary endeavour is surely, in the end, enabling the daily things of peoples' lives to give glory to God. It is the experience of a number of people I know that the conversion I have tried to speak of enables us to live far more fully in the present, and to savour all things.

In practice the way to contemplation is an obscurity so obscure that it is no longer even dramatic. There is nothing left in it that can be grasped and cherished as heroic or even unusual - And so... there is a supreme value in the ordinary routine of work and poverty and hardship and monotony that characterise the lives of all the poor and uninteresting and forgotten people in the world. (Thomas Merton in Seeds of Contemplation).

We are not really artisans in God's world are we! We are "God's work of art" (Ephesians). All the time we think we are the lion. In the end, the lion is God!

- end -

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF SEDOS
TUESDAY, 13th DECEMBER, 1983

The meeting was chaired by Fr. Henry Heekeren, SVD
 President of SEDOS.

83/1 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on December 9, 1982 was proposed by Sr. Christine Middelhoff, SA., seconded by Sr. Betty Ann Maheu, MM., and approved unanimously.

83/2 Election to Membership of the Executive Committee. Nominations to membership of the Executive Committee due to the resignation from the Committee of Fr. Permananda Divarkar, SJ., were tabled. Fr. Divarkar's resignation had been caused by his appointment to Bombay following the recent General Congregation of the Jesuits. A ballot was taken and the result was: Fr. Michael Amaladoss, SJ., 17 votes; Fr. Mel Brady, OFM., and Fr. Francesco Pierli, MCCJ., 3 votes; Sr. Ann Lynch, SNDN., 2 votes; Sr. M. Louis Vanderstraeten, ICM., 1 vote; Fr. Michael Amaladoss was declared elected with an absolute majority.

The President congratulated Fr. Amaladoss and thanked his predecessor, Fr. Divarkar, SJ., for his dedicated service on the Committee.

83/3 Hall-Tonna Meeting at Università Salesiana. Fr. Benjamin Tonna presented a brief explanation of the meeting which he, together with Dr. Brian Hall and two Assistants would be holding on the morrow, December 14, at the Università Salesiana. He had already sent invitations to all Superior Generals of the USG and UISG together with the Questionnaire elaborated by Dr. Hall and himself.

83/4 Financial Statement: Leo-Paul Nobert, OMI., Treasurer, presented the Financial Statement for the year 1983 (1st December, 1982 - 30th November, 1983). The year ended with a deficit of lire 10.877.574. This was due mainly to additional costs arising from the following: Salary of temporary staff; registration of staff in the NRPS which involved provision for medical and pension expenses; travelling expenses. Income was slightly above that estimated. The overall financial situation of SEDOS was healthy and the deficit was absorbed by general savings.

Budget 1984 The Treasurer presented the 1984 Budget. Overall savings enabled the budget to be based on a deficit again in 1984 without increasing members' subscription fees.

Approval of the Financial Statement 1983 and the Budget for 1984 was proposed by Fr. Mel Brady, OFM., seconded by Fr. Gabriele Ferrari, SX., and approved unanimously.

The President expressed his gratitude to the Treasurer for his

generous help in supervising the finances of SEDOS so excellently.

83/5 Executive Secretary's Annual Report, 1983.

1 1. The report dealt with the activities of the Executive Committee throughout the year and noted an increase in membership of SEDOS in 1983. It reviewed the Annual General Meeting of 1982, the Seminars held in 1983; the SEDOS Documentation Centre; the SEDOS Bulletin, the meetings of special interest on some situations in mission; collaboration with other organizations and Centres of Research and Documentation and the Secretariate staff. The Executive Secretary also reported that four additional applications for membership of SEDOS had been received in the last few days.

2. Arising from the report Sr. Thérèse Mary Barnett asked whether a greater participation on the part of Superiors-General and their delegates could not be ensured at the Annual General Meeting? The overall number attending the business meeting was only about half the number of those who had attended the Seminar section of the Assembly. In reply the Executive Secretary said that many Superiors General were away from Rome at this time. He would do his best to ensure that the dates were well known in advance for 1984.

The Proposed dates for Seminars in 1984 should be re-examined as meetings on Tuesday could clash with dates already fixed by UISG. The Executive Secretary will liason with USG/UISG and publish the January Bulletin.

The dates for the SEDOS Villa Cavalletti Residential Seminar, March 20-24, 1984, will not be affected.

3. Sr. Laura Jean Spaeth, SSND, asked for some indication of the use made of the Documentation Centre? The Executive Secretary replied that there is no fixed pattern. Use of the Centre by Research students at the Universities or other Institutes is haphazard. Some members of SEDOS consult it before going to visit mission situations.

The President thanked the Executive Secretary for his devotion to the work of SEDOS.

83/6 Possible further Collaboration among SEDOS members: The President drew attention to possible situations arising in Mission today where one Society did not have the resources to provide adequate personnel. He suggested that up-to-date statistical information could be gathered indicating where SEDOS Societies had members. In the event of special appeals being made SEDOS could invite members to collaborate with one another or to support a particular Society when it initiated a search for a solution. He instanced the difficulties experienced in obtaining qualified formation staffs for new Sisters Congregations in some countries of Africa and projects concerning Justice and Peace.

The Executive Secretary undertook to collect the statistical information and to pursue the proposal in the coming year. Sr. Betty Ann Maheu of the UISG offered the co-operation of UISG with statistics.

83/7 The Assembly approved unanimously the proposal of Sr. Thérèse Mary Barnett that congratulations be sent to Fr. Henri Mondé, WF., on the occasion of his Golden Jubilee as a priest on December 23, 1983. Fr. Mondé was one of the founder-members of SEDOS in 1966.

83/9 The President thanked Fr. Thomas Cullinan, O.S.B. again for his very valuable address to the Seminar on Spirituality for conflict. The large attendance greatly appreciated his coming to SEDOS for this Seminar. He thanked Fr. Mike Fitzgerald, PA., for moderating the session and the other panelists - Sr. Paquita Tomayo, RSCJ., Fr. Gabriele Ferrari, SX., Fr. Jack Thora, WF., and Fr. John Gorski, MM. He also thanked the translators, the Brothers of the Christian Schools and all who had collaborated in preparing the Assembly.

Sr. Paquita Tomayo concluded the proceedings with a prayer.

- end -

CONGRATULATIONS

FR: HENRI MONDE, SMA., CO-FOUNDER OF SEDOS

In the early days of the Second Vatican Council a small group of missionaries met and discussed the problems of missionaries and the possible new directions in mission which would emerge from the Council. They were Fr. Mondé, SMA., Fr. Meltzen, O.CARM., Fr. Volker, WF. and Fr. Schütte, SVD.

The meetings and discussion of this small group had far-reaching consequences for the elaboration of the Council's Missionary Decree AD GENTES. The group also launched the idea of founding SEDOS and from this group came the first three Presidents of SEDOS, Fr. Volker, Fr. Schütte and then Fr. Mondé.

Fr. Mondé is still happily with us and celebrated the Golden Jubilee of his ordination as a priest on 23rd December, 1983.

Congratulations Fr. Mondé!

We in SEDOS remember you with gratitude and good wishes that you may continue to enjoy good health, happiness and God's loving care for many years.

POINTS FROM THE SEMINAR PANEL DISCUSSION

John Gorski, MM., who worked in Bolivia for 18 years reminded us that ideologies need not necessarily be understood in a pejorative sense. Any ideology will indeed be partial. A plurality of options arising from a plurality of political parties and their ideologies is not necessarily unhealthy. We have to guard against the tendency to regard only "others" as having ideologies. We all have had different experiences of the living God. It is essential that ideologies be subjected to the word of God and to our experience of God.

Paquita Toya, RSCJ., from Chile emphasized the need to approach situations by accepting the reality of conflict in our own communities and our peoples. Latin America is developing its own characteristic spirituality in response to the challenge of conflict. We have to accept ambiguity as part of 'the reality'; it is difficult to build community, to find the road, to give answers in concrete situations. Only when we accept the reality of a situation is it possible to be creative, to discover the values in peoples. The sanctification of people that can be a consequence of this approach leads to martyrdom to-day. We need to accept the reality of universal love. We need to listen to the Spirit in given situations. That is sufficient.

Jack Thoro, W.F. who lived in Uganda since 1953 often had to fall back on the basic attitude of being willing simply "to be there" Journeys were often begun literally 'in Gods' name' not knowing what would happen on the way and whether one would arrive at one's destination. We need to give our friends situated in these areas of conflict a message of hope, of courage realising that basically, all we have to hold on to is our faith.

Gabriele Ferrari, SX., Superior General of the Saveriani has had to deal with recent continuing expulsions of members of his society, an occurrence no longer uncommon today. He suggests as elements of a spirituality: acceptance of the situations, faith, compassion, having "a reconciling heart" in the midst of the conflict and lastly, flexibility. The Italian text of his comment follows:

UN CASO PARTICOLARE: IL BURUNDI E LE ESPULSIONI
DEI MISSIONARI

Davanti ai casi ormai frequenti di espulsioni di missionari si pongono dei problemi ben concreti di reazione da parte di un Istituto che ha già oltre venti confratelli messi alla porta. Si tratta certamente di espulsioni causate da una politica razziale e - conseguentemente - anticlericale in seguito ad una presa di posizione evangelica dei missionari che non accettano supinamente la politica governativa.

La tensione ne confratelli a causa di queste espulsioni si fa forte; molte domande nascono nella loro testa; i conflitti sono comprensibili:
 con lo stato che espelle,
 con la Chiesa locale che non prende posizione e non difende gli espulsi;
 con l'Istituto stesso che non può prendere decisioni adeguate.

CHE SPIRITUALITÀ PER UNA STAGIONE
 COSÌ POCO FELICE?

1. accettazione della situazione: non sfuggirla, accettarla positivamente come una sfida (challenge): è la situazione normale della missione oggi: non siamo più guardati come i benefattori, ma piuttosto come i trouble-makers indesiderati dallo stato e anche dalla chiesa, qualche volta!...
2. fede per leggere queste situazioni e vedervi il lato positivo ed anche quello negativo; fede per restare con la popolazione e per condividere il loro destino difficile.
3. compassione ossia soffrire insieme con la popolazione le loro difficoltà, senza sottrarci alle nostre responsabilità, infondendo loro speranza: l'ora attuale è carica di potenzialità positive per la crescita della chiesa, anche se ora sono più visibili quelle negative.
4. lottare con la popolazione, ma con cuore riconciliato, senza seminare ulteriore odio o volontà di vendetta.
5. flessibilità per poter rispondere alle necessità del momento senza essere costretti dalle leggi rigide che (forse) possono andare bene per i tempi normali, ma che certamente devono essere usate con una maggiore elasticità nei tempi della conflittualità.

Roma, assemblea del SEDOS, 13 dicembre 1983.

- end -

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
TO
SEDOS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, DECEMBER 13TH, 1983

This Report is for the period December 1, 1982 to November 30, 1983.

I. MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 1983

President:	Fr. Henry Heekeren, SVD
Vice President:	Sr. Marciana O'Keefe, NDA
Treasurer:	Fr. Leo Paul Nobert, OMI
Members:	Fr. Permananda Divarkar, SJ
	Fr. Michael Fitzgerald, PA
	Sr. Christine Middelhoff, SA
	Sr. Giuseppina Tresoldi, SMC
Executive Secretary:	Fr. Willie Jenkinson, CSSP.

Meetings Held: Meetings were held every month except in July and August, 1983.

Resignation: Due to his re-appointment to Bombay following the recent Jesuit Congregation Fr. Permananda Divarkar, SJ. resigned from the Committee. His successor will be elected at the Annual General Meeting on December 13, 1983.

II. SEDOS MEMBERSHIP

New Members who joined SEDOS during the past twelve months were:

1. The Missionary Sisters of the Holy Rosary: Their application for membership was approved at the Executive Committee meeting of May, 1983. The Superior General is Sr. Margaret Ledwith and her address is at 23, Cross Avenue, Blackrock Dublin, Ireland.
2. The Congregation of the Daughters of Joseph and Mary: Their application for membership was approved at the Executive Committee meeting of June, 1983. The Congregation was known formerly as the Ladies of Mary. The Superior General is Sister Bernadette Lecluyse and her address is Via Rivarone, 100-int.9, 00166, Roma.
3. Total Membership is now 54, 20 Societies of women and 34 Societies of men.

III. ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1982

The General Assembly was held on December 9, 1982.

Participants: There were seventy-six present representing thirty-nine member Societies.

Speakers: Dr. Emilio Castro, Director of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) of the World Council of Churches (WCC).
Msgr. Basil Meeking, Vatican Secretariate for Promoting Christian Unity.

Topic: Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation.

The addresses of Dr. Emilio Castro and Monsignor Basil Meeking were much appreciated. There was good participation and the discussion revealed a wide convergence of views on Mission to-day on the part of the CWME, SEDOS and the Vatican Secretariate.

Here it is appropriate that I draw your attention to the appointment of Sister Joan Delaney MM, past Executive Secretary of SEDOS as Consultant to the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) of the World Council of Churches between the Secretariate for Christian Unity in Rome and the World Council of Churches in Geneva. Sincere good wishes to Sister Joan.

IV. SEDOS SEMINARS 1983

The general theme chosen for the Seminars was DIALOGUE as a follow-up to the SEDOS research Seminar on the future of Mission held in March, 1981. Following is a brief note on the Seminars which were held.

1. DIALOGUE IN MISSION: This Seminar was held on March 1-5, 1983 at Villa Cavalletti.

Participants: There were fifty eight present representing forty-six member societies.

Speakers: Monsignor Jean Zoa, Archbishop of Yaoundé, Cameroun.
Fr. Ignatius Hirudayam, SJ, India.
Sr. Ishpriya, RSCJ, India.
Sr. Eugenia d'Costa OLM, Bangladesh.
Fr. Desmond Hartford, SSC, Philippines.
Sr. Maria Arlinda, Brazil.

Conferences: Dialogue with Hindus, Muslims, Traditional Religions, the Poor.

Assessment: The personal accounts of lived experiences in situation of dialogue were highly appreciated; We experienced some difficulty in arriving at the final synthesis which lacked the richness of the experiences and reflections. Future Seminars should take this difficulty into consideration when adopting a methodology; Overall assessment: very good to excellent. (See SEDOS Bulletin 83/No.8 for the full Report).

The assessments of the March Seminar remarked on the absence of a treatment of dialogue with Buddhists and "Post Christians". The Executive Committee decided to hold two Seminars of one day duration on these topics.

2. DIALOGUE WITH BUDDHISTS: This Seminar was held on October 11, 1983 at the Passionist Sisters Centre.

Participants: There were thirty three representing twenty member Societies.

Speakers: Fr. Marcello Zago, OMI, Secretary to the Vatican Secretariate for Non-Christians.
Fr. Edward Malone, MM, Secretary to the Federation of Asian Bishop's Conferences, FABC.

Conferences: Dialogue with Buddhists and 'The FABC and Dialogue'.

Assessment: The speakers were excellent. Many participants lacked personal experience of Buddhism and so reflection tended to deal with dialogue in general. Speakers agreed that the theology of dialogue has not yet dealt sufficiently with the basic conflict between the salvific nature of other religions and the call to evangelisation. The Secretariate for Non-Christians is organising a theological reflection on this issue. The concluding Celebration of the Eucharistic was much appreciated. (See Sedos Bulletin 83/No.14 for the full Report).

3. DIALOGUE WITH 'POST CHRISTIANS': This was held on November 8, 1983 at the Generalate of the Christian Brothers. This Seminar concluded the current series on Dialogue.

Brothers.

Participants: There were seventy present representing 33 member societies.

Speakers: Ms. Christine Weizsäcker-Radtke,
Fr. Jean Yves Calvez, SJ.

Conferences: Modern Youth on the Verge of De-Secularisation?
The 'Post Christian' phenomenon to-day with Special Reference to Asia, Latin America and Africa.

Assessment: The Speakers were excellent and participation was lively and involved. The Seminar widened horizons and focused attention on many of the problems and opportunities associated with the post-christian situation in the world to-day with special reference to youth. Participants would have welcomed a longer panel discussion in the afternoon session. The Seminar concluded with the Celebration of the Eucharist. (See Sedos Bulletin 83/No.19 for the full Report).

V. MEETINGS AND CONSULTATIONS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

During the year Sedos held a number of special meetings. These were open to all but were of special interest to some members. The following were the main topics, speakers and dates of the meetings:

1. Sudan: Friday, January 21; Shared information.
Wednesday, May 25; Fr. Burgos, W.F.
Wednesday, October 8; Sr. Josephine Tresoldi, SMC.
2. Guatemala: Tuesday, February 15 & Wednesday February 16; In conjunction with the Justice and Peace of USG/UISG. Representatives of the Guatemalan Justice and Peace Commission.
3. Mozambique: Friday, October 14; Fr. Salvatore Calvia, MCCJ.

4. Nicaragua: Thursday, November 10; Sr. Marlene de Nardo, SNDN.
5. South Africa. Monday, November 21; Fr. Ignaz Dekkers, CSSR.

VI. SEDOS BULLETIN

There is a further increase in requests for the Bulletin. Circulation is now approximately 800. The Bulletin is published every two weeks except at Christmas and Easter and in August. The normal cost is \$12.00 in Europe and \$14.00 in other Continents. Generalates of member Societies receive the Bulletin free. The price charged is meant to help defray the cost of postage and printing.

In February, 1983 we made a first attempt to obtain an evaluation of the Bulletin from readers. 345 evaluation forms were sent out, 120 to Italy, including one to each member Society, and 225 to other countries in Europe and to other Continents. 69 (20%) completed forms were returned. An analysis of the replies follows:

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>V.Good</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>(Total</u>
Bulletin in General	29 (42.0%)	27 (39.1%)	12 (17.3%)	1 (1.4%)	-	69
Choice of Articles	23 (33.0%)	35 (50.7%)	9 (13.0%)	2 (2.8%)	-	69
Presentation	15 (21.7%)	26 (37.7%)	23 (33.3%)	3 (4.3%)	2 (2.9%)	69
Mailing Arrangements	27 (39.1%)	23 (33.3%)	15 (23.2%)	3 (4.3%)	-	69

(The numbers in brackets above indicate the percentages of completed forms).

Distribution of the Bulletin apart from the Generalates of Member Societies in Rome is as follows:

Europe (outside Italy) - 100	North America - 46
Asia - 80	Australia/New Guinea - 18
Africa - 70	Latin America - 16
Italy - 70	

Articles, both original and re-prints, appearing in the Bulletin are frequently quoted in other Reviews.

VII. DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

The Documentation Centre has very nearly reached the limits of being kept up-to-date manually. The Executive Committee has begun a feasibility study into the possibility of using a Computer aided system which would be used also for the SEDOS Bulletin and the General Office.

VIII. SECRETARIATE

The staff is as follows:

Ms. Antigóné Lloyd	: Bulletin.
Ms. Jacintha Alagiah	: Secretarial.
Ms. Ingrid Besch	: Documentation.

The Staff (continued)

Sr. Ursula Stolz, CPPS. : Temporary Secretarial.
 Sr. Agnetta Pionkowski, SSPS. Part time: Documentation.
 Ms. Philippa Woolridge Part time: Documentation.
 Sr. Kathleen England, OSU. Part time: Documentation.
 Fr. Willie Jenkinson CSSp. : Executive Secretary.

The post of Assistant to the Executive Secretary remains unfilled. Sr. Ursula, on Sabbatical in Rome, is temporarily working at the Secretariate. The Executive Secretary's term of office was renewed for a period of three years as from July 1983.

The Secretariate maintained contact and collaboration with the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, Vatican Secretariats for Promoting Christian Unity; Vatican Secretariate for Non-Christian Religions; The Unions of Superiors General of women and men (UISG and USG) in Rome; Multimedia, Agrimissio and other Organisations having a mission interest or dimension.

The Secretary represented SEDOS at the Mission Congress organised at Baltimore in March 1983 by the United States Catholic Mission Association (USCMA). He also collaborated with other Centres such as Pro Mundi Vita, (PMV) Brussels; the Centre for Concern (USA); the Centre for applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), USA, the Advisory Committee to the Catholic Lectureship at Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, England; the Commission for World Mission and Evangelisation (CWME) of the World Council of Churches (Geneva).

IX. ALIA

1. MISSION IN DIALOGUE, New York, Orbis Books; Pp.688, the account of the SEDOS Mission Research Seminar, 1981, has been very well received and reviewed. It was singled out by the International Missionary Bulletin for special mention as one of the 15 outstanding books on Mission published in 1983.
2. LA MISSIONE NEGLI ANNI 2000 Bologna, Editrice Missionaria (EMI); Pp.490, a translation of part of MISSION IN DIALOGUE, is also selling well. Both books are available in Rome Bookshops.
3. SEDOS collaborated with the Diocese of Rome in organising the Memorial Service on Wednesday, March 3, 1983, on the third anniversary of the martyrdom of Mgr. Romero.
4. WCC Vith ASSEMBLY, Vancouver 1983. A Report on the mission aspect of the Assembly was prepared by Sr. Mary Motte FMM at the request of the Executive Committee. The Report appeared in SEDOS Bulletin 83/No.16. It is being translated into German for publication in Verbum SVD the review of the Missiological Institute, Sankt Augustin.

X. CONCLUSION

There is once again a modest increase in membership and inquiries about membership have been received from a number of Societies. The

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
SEDOS GENERAL ASSEMBLY DEC.13, 1983

<u>Cong.</u>	<u>Names:</u>	<u>Cong.</u>	<u>Names:</u>
CMF	João B. Megale	SCJ	Willibrordo Van Den Boogaard
CSSp.	Thomas Farrelly	SCJ	Jack Steffen
CSSp.	Jim McDonnell	SCJ	Peter Sanders
FMM	Sheila O'Neil	SCMM-T	Thérèse Mary Barnett
FMG	Bernadette Lecluyse	SDB	Anthony Smit
FSC	Benildo Feliciano	SFB	Eithne Hughes
ICM	De Meyer Armandine	SFB	Marie Odile Sabatier
ICM	Vanderstraetan Marilou	SJ	Casimir Gnanadickam
ICM	Fernando Matilda	SJG	Aloysius Shannon
MC	Delia Busso	SJG	Brian O'Donnell
MCCJ	Francesco Pierli	SJG	Bro. Gabino
MCCJ	Greggio Silvio	SM	Barry Malone
MEP	J. Itçaina	SMM	Marcel Gendrot
MM	Joseph O'Neill	SMA	W. Van Frankenhuijsen
MM	John Gorski	SMSM	Margaret Slaughter
MMS	Denise Elliot	SMC	Giuseppina Tresoldi
MHM	Heinrich Pallhuber	SNDN	Ann Lynch
MSC	John Bosman	SPS	John Brady
MSC	Denis Murphy	SSND	Laura Jean Spaeth
MSF	John Kroegman	SSND	Patricia Frost
NDA	Marie Rose Bequ�	SSS	Maureen Flood
O-CARM	Janar Poespowardojo	SSC	William Halliden
OFM	Mel Brady	SSPs.	Eugenia Berning
OLM	Marie Vianney Lawless	SVD	Henry Heekeren
OMI	Francis E. George	SVD	Carlos Pape
OMI	Bill Sheehan	SVD	Jacob Kavumkal
OMI	John Greene	SX	Gabriele Ferrari
OMI	Leo Paul Nobert	SX	Marini Francesco
OP	B. Olivier	TOR	Aiden Mullaney
PA	Michael Fitzgerald	UISG	Betty Ann Maheu
PA	Thora Jack		Bob Drake
PA	Aelvoet Walter		
PIME	P. Franco Cagnasso	SEDOS	Willie Jenkinson, CSSp.
PIME	P. Domenico Colombo		Agnetta Pionkowski, SSPs.
RSCJ	Millicent Francis		Jacintha Alagiah
RSCJ	Paquita Tomayo		Ingrid Besch
RSCJ	Vivien Bowman		
RSCJ	Georgie Blazer		<u>Translators</u>
RSCJ	Paulina Lopez		Sr. Bernadette Ganne
RSCM	Victoria Busch		Sr. Maria Paula
RGS	Monica Meehan		Ms. Bianca Bellelli
SA	Maria Pouliot		Ms. Cathleen Elslander
SA	Pierrette Coud�		
SA	Violet Sammut		
SA	Christine Middelhoff		

SPEAKER: Thomas Cullinan, OSB

SEDOS RESIDENTIAL SEMINAR 1984

MINISTRIES FOR A DYNAMIC LOCAL CHURCH

Villa Cavalletti, Via 24^o Maggio 54, Grottaferrata,

Tuesday, March 20, 18.00 hrs.

to

Saturday, March 24, 13.00 hrs.

SPEAKERS

David Power, OMI., Catholic University, Washington. (Ireland)

Robert Schreiter, CPPS., Chicago Theological Union. (U.S.A)

Catharina J.M. Halkes, Katholieke Universiteit, Nijmegen. (Holland)

Carlos Pape., Mission Secretary, SVD Generalate. (Peru)