

News:

New Constitutions, SVD. Thanks to the Society of the Divine Word for the copies of their new Constitution (English and Spanish version). Also for the preparatory documents and the "Documents from the General Chapter". Document No. IX deals with "New Ministries". All available for consultation in SEDOS Documentation Centre.

Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples: Among the list of members up-dated on December 6, 1983, are three Superiors General; Fr. Salvatore Calvia, MCCJ., Fr. John Vaughan, OFM., and Bro. José Pablo Basterrechea, FSC.

The Church in Uganda To-day: Fr. Schrenk W.F. who recently returned from a six week visit to Uganda met at SEDOS Secretariate with a small group from the Verona Priests and Sisters, Mill Hill, the Religious Sisters of the Sacred Heart and a diocesan priest from Karamajong, all engaged in mission in Uganda. He gave an objective and well balanced account of his impressions of the situation there. He described the overall political and economic situation, the role of the army, the activities of guerillas or so-called guerills, the refugee problems, the role of political parties.

Dealing with the situation of the Catholic Church he spoke of vocations, the school system, the vitality of Catholic communities and their reaction to the difficult situation to-day.

Other aspects of the church life which he commented on included the significant role of the Bishops in leadership, the large proportion of young Ugandan priests in the presbyterum, African religious Sisterhoods, the nearly total absence of ecumenism, marriage, the Muslim community and the absence of reprisals after Amin's departure, the Catholic Press, the beginning of a missionary spirit in the Church, the paucity of a Catholic presence at Makerere University, the growing number of racially mixed communities of priests and sisters, and devotion to Our Lady as a characteristic of the people. There was a lively discussion following his presentation which was very much appreciated.

Constitutions of Indigenous Institutes, Burundi: Fr. Leonard Kaufman, W.F. has collaborated with six indigenous Institutes in drafting their Constitutions. There may well be an example here of possible collaboration on other such projects. See: Petit Echo 1984/2.

Jesuit Missions USA, Executive Secretary, Fr. Simon Smith has been appointed Africa Co-ordinator of the Jesuit Refugee Service. He will be stationed in Nairobi, Kenya to co-ordinate the work of an increasing number of Jesuits at work in refugee camps in Chad, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zaire and Sudan. There are four and a half million refugees in Africa.

Centre for Indian and Inter Religious Studies: Lecture on "Inculturation and Inter-Religious Experience" by Fr. Michael Amaladoss, SJ. on Thursday, February 16 at 5.00 p.m. SATSANG meditation on Saturday, February 25, from 5.00 - 6.00 p.m. (294, Corso Vittorio Emmanuele. Tel.65.64.414).

MINISTRIES IN A DYNAMIC LOCAL CHURCH

SEDOS SEMINAR - MARCH 20 - 24, 1984
AT VILLA CAVALLETTI, ROMA

(Following the SEDOS Research Seminar of 1981 the General Assembly of SEDOS approved a three-year programme of residential Seminars at Villa Cavalletti to study in greater detail some of the key issues which had emerged there. The third in the series of these Seminars will take place at Villa Cavalletti from March 20 to March 24, 1984. The Executive Committee of SEDOS decided on this topic as being one, if not the, most important topic for missionary Institutes and those engaged in mission in local churches to-day. A Preparatory Committee of the Seminar met at SEDOS Secretariate on January 31, 1984 and made the following decisions concerning the Seminar).

AIM OF THE SEMINAR

It will attempt to identify and analyse key issues concerning ecclesial ministries as these affect missionary institutes and the local Church particularly in the period following Vatican Council II.

The Seminar will indicate in a final report the result of its analysis of the issues as a basis for reflection and action by the missionary institutes.

Prayer: There will be a scriptural reflection each morning on the Seminar theme of ministries; the Eucharist will be celebrated in the evening as the culminating point of each day.

Experiential approach: Following on the experience of previous seminars and the requests of members as indicated in their assessments this seminar also will be based on an experiential approach.

Methodology:

1. Presentation of shared experiences of diverse ministries in the different continents.
2. Reflection on these experiences in the light of:
Gospel values,
the ecclesial reality to-day,
the personal experience and expertise of participants.
3. Drawing up of conclusions which emerge from the analysis and reflection, relevant to missionary Institutes.

Time-table: The time-table was finalised and is being sent to SEDOS members and to those who have already registered for the Seminar.

PREPARATORY NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP MEETINGS

The Executive Committee of SEDOS decided to convene these meetings in preparation for the Seminar. The aim of these meetings is:

- to sharpen the prospective participants' understanding of the issues involved,
- to draw up short reports indicating their concerns, questions, hopes about ministries.

Questions for the Group Meetings: The preparatory Committee proposes the following questions for consideration by the Group Meetings:

1. What do you see happening to-day with regard to ministries?
2. What are the positive and negative elements in what you see happening?
3. What do these mean to you?

The Group Reports will be made available to resource persons and participants at the Seminar.

We invite prospective participants from overseas to join in the preparation process and would be glad to hear from you.

A SUGGESTED LIST OF ITEMS FOR
POSSIBLE CONSULTATION BEFORE THE SEMINAR

Asian Colloquium on Ministries in the Church; Hong Kong, 1977.
(The conclusions of this Colloquium in FABC Papers. No.3, are available at Sedos: Doc. No.4/2618).

Feminism/ Ministry/ Priesthood, Theology Digest 30, (1982) No.2.

John Paul II, "The Lord's Supper: Letter to Bishops," February 24, 1980, The Pope Speaks 25 (1980) 139-164

_____ "Precatio Feria V in Cena Domini anno 1982 Recurrente, Universis Ecclesiae Sacerdotibus destinata," AAS 74 (1982) 521-531
(Prayer of John Paul II addressed to Priests; Holy Thursday, 1982 Available at Sedos)

Official Ministry in a New Age, The Jurist 49 (1981) No.2.

O'Malley, John W., "Developments, Reforms and Two Great Reformations: Towards Historical Assessment of Vatican II," Theological Studies 44 (September 1983) 373-406

O'Meara, Thomas F. Theology of Ministry. New York, Paulist Press, 1983.

Power, David N., Gifts That Differ: Lay Ministries Established and Unestablished, New York, Pueblo 1980

The Right of the Community to a Priest, Concilium 133 (English - in other languages 153), New York/Edinburgh 1980

Sacra Congregatio pro Doctrina Fidei, "Epistula ad Ecclesiae Catholicae Episcopos de quibusdam quaestionibus ad Eucharistiae ministrum spectantibus," AAS 75, 3 November, 1983, 1001-1009

(A Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church about some questions concerning the minister of the Eucharist. - Available at Sedos)

Schillebeeckx, E., Ministry: Leadership in the Church, Crossroad, New York 1980

 AWARE OF OUR POSITION

Rene Dionne, WF
Michael Fitzgerald, WF

(Un missionnaire ne peut donner aux autres que ce que ceux-ci veulent bien recevoir.)

Vivre, avec la disponibilité de donner, est suffisant si, en même temps on est prêt à recevoir.)

I am a guest in a strange house,
but it is my brother's house.

And so I may feel safe here
and enjoy a certain "family" freedom
to make use of the things my brother possesses
and places at my disposal.

I shall always be a stranger to this house.
There are so many unexpected passages
leading to so many unsuspected treasures.
I had not anticipated such variety.

In some way, too,
I shall always be a stranger to my brother.
Other remains other in this life, and must.
Even the child keeps its secret from its mother.
With time and application
I shall perhaps become less a stranger,
but a stranger I shall remain nevertheless
until I die.

Is that so bad?
I have noticed in my brother's house
treasures that from long acquaintance
or lack of comparison
he no longer seems to see.
And in the garden
I have found a Judas tree.
When in passing I point them out,
he smiles, almost shyly, in transparent pleasure
to see the joy he gives me.
And then unlocks yet more for me to see.

Once we were merely brothers,
bound together by ancient and eternal
ties of blood and water.
Now we are friends,
fused in a deeper way by fire,
freed to accept our need for one another.

I came here at my brother's call -
 "Come, help us" - intending much,
 a pocketful of plans.
 I did not know he needed me far less to do
 than just to be.
 I worked beside him while he wished it,
 then withdrew, my usefulness once through,
 when he politely would not ask it.

In all this I have learned
 that though giving calls forth giving,
 if the gift contains the giver
 and does not make the proffered hospitality
 weigh lighter in the balance, still
 we can only give to others
 what in fact they would receive
 and in the way they would receive it.

It is enough to live in readiness to give
 if we likewise live in openness to receive.

Ref. CATALYSTS: Rene Dionne, Michael Fitzgerald.
Dublin: White Fathers of Africa. Pp. 304,306.

- end -

OUR DIVISIONS ARE A SCANDAL

Ignatius IV of Antioch

"...I believe that when one has ceased to consider oneself a witness - a martyr - one has ceased loving. In the societies where love is lacking, we must express it, no matter the cost. Nobody needs permission to love. One loves and that is all. It is like water that comes from its spring without wondering where it is going when it flows.

Let us leave aside the dogmatic, institutional and authoritarian aspects. The state of division shows that there is something amiss. There must be something wrong either in religion itself or else in the faith of Christians. It gives rise to a doubt. With regard to those among whom we live in the Middle East, we must know that our divisions are a scandal - probably the greatest. A good part of the theology of the Christian Churches has tried to justify - after the event - the behaviour and decisions which harmed love among Christians.

I affirm absolutely that a common witness is the most important thing for everyone. It is here that we must begin. Our division is a serious evil: we must end it."

Ref: *Hello Frascati* - January 1984. Via Frascati, 49.

NICARAGUA UN 'TEST-CASE'
POUR L'EGLISE ET POUR LE MONDE

Jan Van Cauwelaert
President C.I.M.

(Monsignor Van Cauwelaert regrets that the Episcopal Conference of Nicaragua is unable to give now, the undivided leadership which it gave in November of 1979. Then it was able to quote John Paul II and the Episcopal Conference of Puebla in support of its stand. Local Churches and the Universal Church have a serious responsibility to help Nicaragua. In this connection the efforts of the Christian churches in the USA are impressive.)

La révolution au Nicaragua ne touche qu'un tout petit pays de l'Amérique Centrale, ne comptant à peine que deux millions et demi d'habitants, mais elle est pour le monde entier, et tout spécialement pour l'Eglise un 'test-case', un revirement possible de l'histoire.

Sa réussite ou son échec pourra être décisif pour l'affrontement des deux grands blocs qui divisent le monde, ou bien vers une détente ou bien vers une radicalisation de leurs oppositions. Pour l'Eglise ce sera la pierre de touche de sa force libératrice ou la manifestation de sa faiblesse, de n'être plus qu'une relique d'un monde définitivement révolu.

La réussite du processus révolutionnaire en cours sera la preuve, peut-être pour la première fois, qu'un peuple peut vraiment s'organiser à partir de la base et prendre en main son propre projet de société au service des besoins de la masse, sans dépendre d'une élite qui décide de son sort et sans s'allier à une superpuissance dont il doit suivre la politique.

L'Eglise grâce à cette réussite pourra démontrer que loin d'être l'opium pour le peuple, une force aliénante, elle est au contraire l'espoir des pauvres et des opprimés et qu'en son sein l'Evangile n'a pas perdu son dynamisme subversif contre tout pouvoir qui abuse des pauvres au profit des riches, comme le chantait la Vierge, son modèle: "Il a jeté les puissants à bas de leurs trônes et il a élevé les humbles; les affamés il les a comblés de biens et les riches il les a renvoyés les mains vides.

Mais l'échec du processus révolutionnaire renforcera aussi bien l'impérialisme de gauche que de droit.

L'impérialisme de gauche y trouvera la confirmation qu'une révolution au profit des pauvres ne peut s'établir que grâce à une purge violente de toutes les forces réactionnaires inconvertissables à l'établissement de la dictature du prolétariat aux mains d'un parti centralisé et totalitaire et ne pourra se manifester qu'avec l'appui du prolétariat mondial représenté par la super-puissance soviétique avec ses alliés.

L'impérialisme de droit y trouvera la confirmation que toute transformation de la société, qui s'écarte de son modèle libéral et capitaliste, ne peut se réaliser sans l'abolition de toute liberté

individuelle et sans constituer une menace pour le monde soi-disant libre et démocratique et que le seul remède est de s'y opposer avec toutes les forces même militaires avant qu'il ne soit trop tard.

L'Eglise y perdrait toute sa crédibilité auprès des masses majoritaires des pauvres. Elle serait considérée par eux comme l'alliée des puissants et des riches, le garant de leurs privilèges, que la révolution devra extirper pour pouvoir réussir.

En ce moment ni la réussite ni l'échec est décidé. Les tensions de l'intérieur et l'agression de l'extérieur peuvent la faire échouer. Mais le dialogue de toutes les forces vives de la société, tout en se situant à l'intérieur de la révolution, et l'arrêt de toute agression aussi bien économique que militaire peuvent encore la faire réussir.

L'attitude de l'Eglise locale et universelle pourra y jouer un rôle décisif. Si elle s'oppose à la révolution et ne condamne pas avec toute son autorité l'agression, elle contribuera beaucoup à son échec. Ou bien elle renforcera par son opposition les éléments radicaux présents dans le régime et affaiblira l'ouverture démocratique encore majoritaire par l'éloignement des chrétiens militants dans les organisations de la base. Ou bien elle contribuera à la chute du régime tout en soutenant ainsi la réinstallation d'un régime totalitaire de droit, seul capable de prendre la relève contre les forces révolutionnaires de l'opposition.

Mais si elle appelle tous les fidèles, comme elle l'avait fait en novembre 1979, à participer loyalement au processus révolutionnaire sandiniste et à accepter généreusement les sacrifices inévitables si on veut relever la masse des pauvres de leur situation misérable, elle pourra tout en appuyant la révolution, prévenir qu'elle ne tourne vers une dictature totalitaire. La présence massive des chrétiens dans les organisations de la base lui donnera la possibilité d'accompagner le processus d'une manière sympathique et en même temps critique à la lumière de l'Evangile.

L'Eglise universelle et toutes nos Eglises locales pourront exhorter les fidèles à s'opposer à la politique agressive de leurs gouvernements, comme la hiérarchie de l'Eglise des Etats Unis nous en a donné l'exemple. De plus elles mettront en signe de solidarité à la disposition du peuple Nicaraguen toutes les ressources en personnel et en équipement de nos milieux chrétiens dont ils ont besoin. Ainsi le régime ne sera pas acculé à dépendre unilatéralement, et à en subir l'influence, de l'appui des dictatures de l'est.

Nicaragua pourra alors devenir un lieu de rencontre des deux blocs idéologiquement opposés. L'Eglise peut y trouver une ouverture pour évangéliser le mouvement révolutionnaire mondial, et pour convertir nos démocraties soi-disantes libres à une solidarité efficiente avec les pays pauvres, qu'elles n'ont que trop souvent exploités et privés de leurs libertés.

L'Eglise répondrait ainsi à sa vocation d'annoncer le Royaume de Dieu, comme l'écrivaient les Evêques de Nicaragua en novembre 1979: "Nous vivons aujourd'hui dans notre pays une occasion exceptionnelle de témoigner du Royaume de Dieu et de l'annoncer. Ce serait une grave infidélité à l'Evangile que de laisser passer, pour des motifs de crainte et de soupçon, à cause de l'insécurité que fait naître en certains le processus radical de changement social, à cause de la défense des petits et de grands intérêts individuels, l'exigence actuelle de concrétiser cette priorité pour les pauvres que réclament de nous aussi bien Jean Paul II que la Conférence épiscopale de Puebla."

On ne peut que regretter que la Conférence épiscopale de Nicaragua ne rappelle pas plus souvent dans la situation tendue actuelle ces paroles prophétiques plus vraies que jamais, et que devant les difficultés qu'elle avait prévues et annoncées elle n'opte pas plus pour le dialogue au lieu de donner l'impression de s'allier avec l'opposition. Cette opposition ne peut présenter aucune autre alternative que le retour à la dictature de droit, seule capable de renverser un régime encore soutenu par les masses et de mater la résistance populaire qui en suivrait, une alternative tout opposée à ce que la hiérarchie prétend défendre au nom de l'Evangile.

- fin -

MARIANELLA GARCIA:
SORELLA DEGLI OPPRESSI

(Il nome di Marianella Garcia sarà ormai per sempre legato a quello dell'arcivescovo Oscar A. Romero. Due autentici cristiani che hanno fatto una scelta di campo: i poveri; una scelta che è costata loro la vita. Due "convertiti" che hanno saputo vivere ed essere "con" gli ultimi proprio come Gesù di Nazareth.

Rientrò nel suo paese per l'ultima volta nel gennaio dello scorso anno per ottenere le prove sull'uso di armi al fosforo contro le popolazioni inermi. Passava di villaggio in villaggio accolta con profonda ammirazione dalla gente, la stessa che nutriva per Romero. Il 13 marzo venne catturata dai soldati: per 14 ore rimase nelle loro mani. Venne oltraggiata, torturata, violentata e poi uccisa. "Non ci importa - aveva detto Marianella nel suo ultimo articolo apparso sul giornale spagnolo El País - che ci chiamino sovversivi, traditori della patria; non ci importano gli arresti e le vessazioni che abbiamo patito per difendere i prigionieri politici...Continuiamo a lottare con la voce e con la penna e con il pensiero certo angosciante che possa arrivare la morte".)

Ref. Nigrizia: Gennaio 1984. Vicolo Pozzo, 1; 37129 Verona.

EXPERIENCES AND RESULTS WITH
BASE ECCLESIAL COMMUNITIES IN BURUNDI

(La développement des communautés ecclésiales de base varie selon les continents, les pays et les Eglises locales. Celles d'Afrique ne sont pas les mêmes qu'en Amérique latine. - Cependant, Mgr BURURI nous indique une caractéristique commune: les communautés de base ne sont pas une structure proposée par la hiérarchie, mais plutôt des communautés naturelles ouvertes au Christ.)

The Bishop of Bururi, the Most Reverend B. Bududira, recently presented a summary of the eight years' experience with local base ecclesial communities, which are, he states, communities of faith at the base of the human community. The report was given in the diocesan bulletin, "Exchanges", published for the exchange of pastoral experiences.

Bishop Bududira states that such base ecclesial communities in Africa are not a structure proposed by the hierarchy, but natural communities open to Christ. The pastoral ministry must take the African community context into consideration. "In our villages", said the Bishop, "on the mountain slopes and on the summits, everyone knows one another. Interpersonal relations are characterized by spontaneity; they are not studies or conventional; it is a natural spontaneity.

"The relations among the members of the community are characterized by mutual assistance in the cases of accidents, of sickness or of other misfortunes. The solidarity that can be witnessed on the occasions of marriages, births, funerals, etc., in sharing expenses, demonstrates that this reality is still present.

"Having become Christian, our natural communities will be centres of charity without social or claudish barriers. . . they will be supported by hope, by the promotion and integral development of the human person.

These communities, and only these, can be evangelized, homes and hearths capable of diffusing the faith (EN 58).

"But the assimilation of the values of the human family (in the communitarian sense) on the part of the family of God, cannot be brought to a successful conclusion without pedagogy. Therefore, from the very outset of the pastoral ministry to base ecclesial communities, it was considered necessary to make a choice of a method.

Method: "Since 1975, a concrete method has been adopted both at the level of human situations as well as those of the faith. The pastoral plan has followed these lines of action:

- a. Analysis of the lived situation of each community on the human level in all its dimensions.
- b. Initiation of a critical awareness and commitment for the transformation of the conditions that are judged to be less human or less in conformity to the exigencies of the Gospel.
- c. Education for openness to the material and spiritual needs of others, both individuals and/or groups.
- d. Concrete invitation to commitment to social or ecclesial community projects at the level of the base ecclesial community, the parish, the local Church (diocesan) or the Universal Church".

SOME RESULTS

Among the results achieved--some visible, and others perhaps more important but less palpable, Bishop Bududira speaks of the life of faith, the announcement of the Word of God, openness to spiritual necessities in general, to effective charity and to human promotion.

"Reading of the Word of God and meditation on it are practiced by many Christian families. Reflections on the Word of God made at base community meetings or at the specialized movements of the apostolate of the laity are frequently taken to their homes for further consideration and discussion.

"Self evangelization of the base ecclesial community has also produced other fruits: an increase in the number of catechumens, both young people and adults; return to the Christian life of many couples in certain communities, celebration of the Word, accompanied by prayers in the homes on the occasions of feasts, weddings, births, vigils at the bedside of the sick, at funerals or during periods of mourning, etc.

Eucharist: "All the members of our communities feel the need to gather around the Eucharist. Unfortunately, they cannot do this very often because of the small number of priests. Thus, some communities have selected as a priority, the making of greater efforts to arouse priestly vocations. The seminarians are supported by prayers and also by economic contributions. During the 1981/82 academic year, Christians donated some five tons of dried foods to the Minor Seminary. And this year, the communities of seven of the thirteen parishes have sent three tons of dried foods, 400 liters of palm oil and 25,000 francs worth of other materials to the seminary.

The fact that the communities are aware of their own spiritual needs does not close the community in upon itself. They know that they belong to a great family that extends beyond national boundaries. And all celebrate World Mission Day with the contribution of prayer and material assistance. The collection this year brought in the sum of 344,904 francs, that is, 1.8 francs per Christian.

Periphery: "The communities of the periphery regions, where there is a great influx of immigrants, organize a system for receiving these immigrants in order to help integrate them into the community.

They assist them in constructing houses and in cultivating the fields, so that they can have a harvest after one year.

"In addition to assistance to the aged or to the sick, to help them to remain self sufficient, the collection of food stuffs annually amounts to a value of about 1,265,840 francs. This is destined to pay for the education of young people whose parents have no means, for court costs of poor persons who have to go to law to get back their cows or goats that have been stolen; also, for obtaining construction materials for building small houses for the sick or the indigent; to pay for transportation costs or medical assistance to the sick and the poor, and for costs for the return of prisoners etc.

"The concern to identify the obstacles to spiritual and material progress, the efforts to find means in order to improve the situation of life, to correct mistakes or fill in voids keep our communities in a situation of growing vitality".

Ref: Fides, June 18, 1983.

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AFRICAN CHAPTER OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE
ON RELIGION AND PEACE

The Super Powers should stop feeding Africa with arms: African churches and religious leaders have also started to challenge their governments spending on armaments. An African chapter of the World Conference on Religion and Peace was recently formed when 150 delegates, including Christians, Jews, Jains, Buddhists, Confucianists, Muslims, Hindus, Shintoists and Sikhs met in Nairobi for 5 days. They said the churches could no longer confine themselves to pastoral activities but must face the political, social and economic issues reflected in problems of poverty, refugees, tribalism, corruption, arms importation and militarism, malnutrition and the violation of human rights.

They noted that 22 of the world's 36 poorest countries are in Africa, and that 6 out of every 10 African children went to bed hungry every night. The delegates strongly criticized increased military spending, which forced people to go without basic needs, and said that greed and ambition among some African politicians has resulted in their failure to serve the people who put them in office. The 4th Assembly of the WCRP will be held in Nairobi in August, 1984.

Ref: Mission Intercom. No.128, Oct. '83. 1233 Lawrence St., N.E
Washington, D.C.

THE SCOPE OF MISSION

David J. Bosch

(La Mission, aujourd'hui, se fonde-t-elle sur le grand commandement de Mt. 28, 19 ou a-t-elle été complétée par un autre passage de l'Ecriture, Lc. 4. 18-19.? En conséquence, sommes-nous en présence de deux positions réductionnistes, l'une interprétant la mission de L'Eglise en catégories strictement évangéliques, l'autres faisant appel à des catégories de libération. Le Séminaire de Recherche de SEDOS a essayé d'éviter ce dilemme. Il nous semble que la déclaration du CWME sur la mission et l'évangélisation en a fait de même. Le Dr. BOSCH est rédacteur en chef de la revue "Missionalia" et professeur de Missiologie à l'Université d'Afrique du Sud, à Pretoria.)

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of
the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them
to observe everything I have commanded you. And
surely, I will be with you always, to the very end
of the age. "

Matthew 28: 19,20.

Ever since William Carey published his *Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens* in 1792, Protestants in particular have tended to regard the Great Commission, especially in the Matthean version, as the *Magna Carta* of missions. To many Protestants, and more particularly to evangelicals, the centrality of the Great Commission appears to be self-evident. It is even at times cited as the sole scriptural foundation for mission.

The Great Commission: We need to remember, however, that it is mainly in Anglo-Saxon Protestant missionary history that we find this consistent appeal to *Matthew* 28:19. In continental missionary circles the appeal to the Great Commission has never occupied so central a position. This can, perhaps, be attributed in part to the fact that in the two major early appeals for a missionary involvement published on the European continent during the 17th century, the Great Commission played a very minor role.

I am here referring, respectively, to Justus Heurnius of Holland who, in 1648, wrote his *Delegationē evangelica ad Indos capessenda admonitio* ("An exhortation, worthy of consideration, to embark upon a Protestant mission to (East) Indians"), and to the German Justinian von Welz who, in the year 1664, published a pamphlet in which he urged the founding of a Lutheran missionary society. Both these publications pre-dated Carey's *Enquiry*; the one by 174 years, the other by 138.

Both set the call to mission in a much wider biblical context than did Carey, for whom the entire biblical argument centred on the question of whether the commission given by the risen Lord to his disciples was still binding on Christians of his day. Carey was, of course, responding to the arguments of others who denied that the Great Commission was still of force. As such, his polemical and one-sided appeal to the Great Commission was understandable.

Biblical Foundation for Mission? Subsequent generations of Anglo-Saxon missionaries and missionary spokesmen have, however, tended to miss the point that Carey had invoked the Great Commission in the context of *polemics*. To them, the Great Commission constituted the major biblical *foundation* for mission. This is true, even today, of many conservative evangelicals, particularly in the United States where they tend to respond to all questions about the justification of mission with a single answer: "The risen Lord has commanded it!" Their scriptural reference, time and again, is *Matthew* 28:19.

Among exponents of church growth, and particularly in the writings of that doyen of the movement, Donald McGavran, *Matthew* 28:19 provides not only the major biblical *foundation* for mission, but also significant guidelines as to the missionary *methods* which should be adopted. Such guidelines are said to be laid down in *two* respects in particular.

First, says McGavran, the Great Commission distinguishes between "discipling" which means leading people to a first commitment to Christ, and "perfecting", which means "teaching them to observe everything (Jesus has) commanded (them)."

Secondly, the Great Commission clearly indicates that we ought to approach people as different homogeneous units, since this is what the phrase *panta ta ethne* ("all the nations") means. I shall return to McGavran's first point later.

It is, for the present, important to note that, outside the circles of evangelicalism, the Great Commission is beginning to lose much of its pivotal significance. As a matter of fact, it may even be said that, in some places, the Great Commission has been supplemented by another scriptural passage, *Luke* 4:18-19. To many people, particularly those touched by liberation theology, this passage constitutes the summation of the church's mission, in much the same way as the Great Commission does for evangelicals. We are thus confronted with two reductionist positions; the one interpreting the church's mission exclusively in narrow evangelistic categories, the other in liberationist categories.

Granted that, one might be excused for assuming that my choice of the Great Commission rather than Jesus' words in the Nazareth synagogue as the text for this sermon places me fairly and squarely in the camp of those who define mission exclusively as evangelism.² Whether such an assumption is correct, will, I hope, become clear in due course.

Contextualization: In his regular Sunday sermon, the preacher is normally not able nor supposed to take his listeners into his "workshop" and reveal to them, in detail, how he has planed and fitted together the many "raw materials" in preparation for his sermon. His listeners hear only the finished product lucid, eloquent and persuasive, or perhaps more customarily, illogical, dull and unconvincing. They evaluate only the final product, not the process by which it came to completion. The listeners - on the whole - simply accept (or refuse to accept!) that the preacher has been faithful in his handling of his "raw materials."

This occasion, however, differs in several respects from that of a regular Sunday service. It is therefore perhaps justifiable to allow

you a glimpse into my workshop, or, to dispense with the metaphor, to admit my presuppositions.

Presuppositions: I accept, together with most scholars, that the *Gospel of Matthew* was written by a Jew, some time after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD. This was a period of dramatic change in Judaism, a change from which the Jewish Christian community could scarcely have enjoyed immunity. From then on the Jewish faith would be without geographical centre; indeed, all Judaism would be of the Dispersion. In Jamnia, in western Palestine, the Sanhedrin was reconstituted on a purely spiritual basis. In the course of time, probably in the eighties of the first century, the Jewish prayer known as the Eighteen Benedictions was expanded to include an extra section in which Christians ("Nazarenes") and heretics (*minim*) were anathematized. From that moment Jewish Christians, many of whom had continued their participation in the Jewish synagogue worship, were irrevocably excluded from it.

In these crucial years, Jewish Christianity - which up to that time had in many respects resembled one of the several Jewish sects - was driven to redefine its identity. Would its future lie with Judaism? This, in the long run, would mean accepting, as the Ebionites did in subsequent decades, that Jesus was little more than a remarkable prophet or a new Moses. Would its future lie with gentile Christianity? This would, in the course of time, entail the sacrifice of Jewish identity.

These were also the issues Matthew's community faced - a church that probably lived somewhere in Syria, in a predominantly gentile environment. It was a precarious existence on the frontier between increasingly hostile Jews and as yet alien gentiles. Here Matthew set about writing his gospel, with the clear intention of offering guidance to his hard-pressed flock. His method was to rewrite the story of Jesus, with consistent utilization of written and oral traditions. While remaining true to what had been delivered to him, he nevertheless composed his gospel in such a way as to make it resonate for his own community.

Today we would say that Matthew "contextualised" the story of Jesus of Nazareth. And if we take the incarnation seriously, this is the most logical thing he could have done! A gospel, which is a *verbatim* transcript of what Jesus said and did more than a generation earlier, would be a docetic, not an incarnational gospel. Matthew's gospel therefore discloses to us not only Jesus, but also Matthew and his community. In speaking of the conditions and activities of those who accompanied Jesus on his way to the cross, the evangelist is speaking to the church of his own time. Paul Minear is correct when he states "that in the early Church the stories of the disciples were normally understood as archetypes of the dilemmas and opportunities that later Christians experienced. Each Gospel pericope became a paradigm with a message for the Church, because each Christian had inherited a relationship to Jesus similar to that of James and John and the others."³

Naturally, if this was true of the early church, it is equally true of us. We have, of course, to transpose ourselves to Matthew's first century community and read those stories as he intended them to

be understood by his first readers. We then have to reinterpret the stories for our own context as well. The history of Jesus with his disciples is foundational and paradigmatic, and as such it nourishes and challenges us in the present. Faith, said Kierkegaard, is realized in *contemporaneity*, which means that there is, in the final analysis, no absolute discontinuity between the history of Jesus and the life of the church.

A PARADIGM FOR MISSION

In light of this, let us now turn to the Great Commission in *Matthew*. I am aware that it would be illegitimate to erect the entire edifice of the New Testament witness concerning the church's mission on this one passage. I am also aware of the danger of handling the material too self-confidently and resting the whole mystery of God's revelation on one text. And yet I must confess that, for me, there emerges from these final words of Matthew's gospel something of a paradigm for mission today.

This is, I believe, how the evangelist himself intended it for his own day. There can be little doubt that the entire gospel was written from the theological vantage point of this final pericope. Scholars today are agreed upon the pivotal character of these verses, which are to be regarded as the key to understanding the entire book. In a way they sum up everything Matthew wrote in his gospel. All the threads woven into the entire fabric of the gospel, from chapter 1 onward, draw together here.

It is, therefore, futile to ask whether or not the evangelist reports the *ipsissima verba*, the very words, of Jesus in chapter 28:18-20. Matthew's way of being faithful to the tradition handed down to him is to report the words of the risen Christ in such a way that they become meaningful to his own readers. He is not an *amanuensis* reproducing a transcript of Jesus' *ipsissima verba*. He is a witness trying to be faithful to Jesus' *ipsissima intentio*, his true intention.

We should therefore not be disturbed to discover that the Great Commission - more than any other Matthean pericope - is shot through with words and expressions that are strongly characteristic of the evangelist. For example almost all the *verbs* in this passage - "worship", "doubt", "go", "make disciples", "keep" (or "observe"), and "command", as well as the expression "the end of the age", were most probably expressions that were current in Matthew's community; they would therefore immediately arrest the attention of his readers.

There can be little doubt that the imperative, "make disciples!", is the principal verb in the entire passage. The two modal participles, "baptizing" and "teaching", are clearly subordinated to "make disciples", they describe the *form* the disciple-making is to take, but are not independent actions, each with its own "weight."

MINISTRY AND THE LOCAL CHURCH

Dionisio Borobio

(Le premier point de référence pour les ministères, ordonnés ou non, doit être l'Eglise locale. Ainsi seulement est-il possible d'articuler une réponse adéquate, par exemple, aux besoins des communautés n'ayant pas de ministres ordonnés.)

What we mean by *ministry* depends not only on the meaning of church but also on our understanding of the local community. In both theory and practice, church, community, ministry must always be linked together.

The new Testament uses the one term *ekklēsia* for both (local) "community" and (universal) "church". But *ekklēsia* more often means the local Christian community, for here Christ's mission in history is concretely lived and realized.

"What makes the community to be community also makes the church to be church" (E. Walter). From this *basic* identity of church and community, we conclude to the church's community character and the community's church character. Vatican II says as much: "This Church of Christ is truly present in all legitimate local congregations of the faithful" (LG, 26).

More specifically, the local community *is* the church when it:

- 1) Maintains a sacramental tension between the divine and human dimensions of the Christian mystery;
- 2) confesses the church's faith in Christ-Savior who calls us to build up the whole church through Word and sacrament (esp. the eucharist) in faith, hope, and love;
- 3) accepts its Christian apostolic mission as the pilgrim church in history (awaiting its end-time fulfillment);
- 4) takes up its historical responsibility for proclamation (*martyria*), worship (*leitourgia*) and service (*diakonia*) both as community and in special ministries;
- 5) maintains fraternal union with other Christian communities by accepting the ordained ministers who symbolize this unity between communities and with Christ.

The hard part is applying this church/community identity to dioceses, parishes, religious communities and other smaller groups. Some practical implications for ministry are the following:

- 1) If the church *is* its local communities, then the core of church life is not its central administration or structure but the vitality

of the local community invested with various ministries.

2) If what is said of the church must be said of the community, then ministry is as much part of the local community as of the universal church and its mission.

3) If the threefold basic mission (proclamation, worship, service) is to be realized in the local community, it must have the ministries to carry them out.

4) If the local community is to be a true "sacrament of salvation" at *its* level, then its members must accept responsibility for their Christian mission both within and without the church.

5) If the church *is* a communion of communities and if the communities realize this communion in ordained ministers, then every local community should have an ordained ministry if it is to express this communion with the rest of the church and with Christ.

MINISTRY AND COMMUNITY

Since the very nature of the church makes it a ministry or service to the world, it can only exist "ministerially": the whole church and all its members must be a ministry. But the church has to break this down into specific jobs. The NT, e.g., sees fraternal correction as everyone's responsibility (Mt 18:15-17), yet certain members are specially charged with this duty (Gal 6:1). This fruitful dialectic between charism and office belongs to the church's essence.

The church has not always kept this balance between ministry and community—witness the classical Roman Catholic and Protestant exaggerations of ministry's place over against community.

The typical Catholic view of church has emphasized its institution by Christ, apostolic succession, hierarchical structure, the sacred power of ordained ministers, the clergy/laity distinction and thus gave priority to ministry over community. It saw the priest as a sacred person, a "super-Christian" who alone exercised official responsibility, who stood apart from and above the community and its needs.

The typical Protestant conception of church has emphasized community, the apostolicity of all God's people (rather than apostolic succession of ministers) and the universal priesthood of the faithful. Ministry is an aspect of the whole community, and specific ministers derive from the community (under the guidance of the Spirit) as the needs of a given time demand. Ministry's christological meaning, its sacramental symbolism and its specifically priestly role were obscured. This view has at times posed problems for unity.

Vatican II and recent ecumenical discussions have brought these opposed tendencies into a synthesis. Sociology teaches that the church must have some leadership. Biblically and theologically, every ministry depends on God's initiative and Christ's mission, continued through the gift of his Spirit working in the church.

The ultimate origin of ministries is in Christ and his Spirit who grant this mission and charism to

the community. But every ministry, ordained or not, must be understood within the community it serves. Ministry does not precede community -nor the reverse. From its inception the community exists "ministerially," and ministry exists "communiterially." Specialized ministry is not a secondary feature, but a constitutive dimension of the church willed by Christ. Ministry, Congar explains does not totally create the community from above or outside, but neither does it merely emanate from within the community. And yet there is a sense in which ministries are constituted by the church and personify and represent it for the community.

Catholic and Protestant ecclesiologies are thus integrated into a more pneumatological understanding of the church that neither divorces ministry from community nor forgets its basically christological origin.

THE COMMUNITY PROVIDES ITSELF WITH MINISTRIES

Ministry derives ultimately from Christ and the gift of his Spirit; but ministry also comes in some way from the church community. The church both receives ministry from God *and* determines its own ministries. A contradiction?

Paul's letters contain many references to ministries but (beyond stressing their nature as gifts of the Spirit) no explanation of just how they were conferred. These ministers are clearly in communion with Paul and have a close bond with the local community. In Acts and the Pastorals, the role of the institutional church is clearer. Here, ministers' *invisible* investiture by the gift of the Spirit goes hand-in-hand with community and apostolic *social* and *ritual* investiture. As is clear from the story of the first deacons (Acts 6:1-6) the church both *discerns* its ministers and *receives* them. NT ministry has two complementary referents: the Spirit's gift and the community.

Early Christian writings witness to this NT tradition with its emphasis on the community dimension of ministry. Ordination presupposed the bishop's imposition of hands and the gift of the Spirit and the community's designation and acceptance. Later, this community aspect was lost and is only today being revived-though more in theory than practice. The problem is finding ways to implement this community participation in selecting its ministers.

What is the theological justification for this?

1. Without denying that Christ entrusted a special mission to the apostles, the whole church community, we say, is apostolic-and-ministerial. Apostolicity is inherent to the church. To fulfill its apostolic mission, the church must provide itself with ministries. Apostolicity is thus source of the unity-and-diversity of ministries. Concretely, this happens only when a local community can furnish itself with the ministries it needs to fulfill its mission and so realize as itself as a Christian community.
2. Ministry's *first* referent must be the local community. True, ministry has a tie with the church universal; but ministry is

always exercised in and for a particular community. The local community is ministry's immediate, concrete, direct referent.

These principles don't solve all problems, but they do indicate the direction the church should take. Ministry gets a new dimension of meaning. "The community servant should make the existence of community life effective and not be its primary obstacle" (J.Comblin).

MINISTRIES GIVEN FOR THE COMMUNITY

Ministries are Christ's service (in the Spirit) to the community and the community's service to Christ in fulfilling his mission. Ministries are also the community's service to itself and to the world. Ministries make sense only if focused on the local Christian community.

The early church was quite clear about this. Chalcedon (451) ruled: "No one may be ordained in an 'absolute' way, neither priest nor deacon." (Absolute" meant without reference to a specific community.) Ordination contrary to this rule was "null and void," and the one so ordained "could exercise no official function" in the church. Ordination meant incorporating one of the faithful into a specific community that called and accepted him for its ministry.

This rule remained in force until well into the Middle Ages when a change in theology of ministry fostered "absolute" ordinations. When priests were understood solely in terms of worship and when imposition of hands was seen primarily as conferring a sacred power for celebrating the eucharist, ordination for a specific community became unnecessary.

Since Vatican II a return to the older tradition has begun. Contemporary theology maintains:

1. Both ordained and non-ordained ministries must serve the common good and the growth of the Christian community, as well as evangelizing the world. This mission comes from Christ and is animated by the Spirit. Ministries are not ends-in-themselves but means for realizing the concrete needs of specific communities.
2. Ordained ministry has the task of directing, correcting, reconciling, uniting, challenging a specific Christian community as well as the church generally. The first criterion of fitness for ordained ministry is the ability to promote unity, build community, and faithfully represent Christ and the church in and to a concrete Christian community. Ministry come from the community, forms part of the community, exists for the community, and stands before the community not to dominate but to serve as a living sign of Christ-Servant.

(The short concluding section of this article will appear in the next issue of SEDOS Bulletin).

Ref: Theology Digest: Vol.30, number 2/Summer 1982.