
SPECIAL ISSUE
REPORT OF THE 1985
GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND SEMINAR

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NUMERO SPECIAL

Ce Numéro Spécial du Bulletin contient le compte-rendu annuel de SEDOS pour 1985, ainsi que le résultat des élections des membres du Comité Exécutif pour les trois années à venir. Soeur HÉLÈN McLAUGHLIN, supérieure générale des Religieuses du Sacré-Coeur est la première femme présidente de SEDOS.

Nous sommes au regret de devoir annoncer le décès du P. MONDÉ, le dernier survivant des cinq Supérieurs Généraux fondateurs de SEDOS en 1964, en grande partie comme un résultat de Vatican II. Puisse-t-il reposer en paix!

Ce numéro contient aussi les discours prononcés par les 4 orateurs lors du court Séminaire de SEDOS sur le récent Synode Extraordinaire. Ce Synode a confirmé le Concile de Vatican II et l'a approfondi. Il n'a donc pas été simplement une relance du Concile, mais un pas en avant, et cela pour une bonne part parce que le Synode a publié lui-même son compte rendu avec, bien sûr, l'aimable approbation du Pape, rendant ainsi une certaine crédibilité à la procédure synodale.

L'idée de l'Eglise comme "Communion" a une importance particulière pour la mission. Deux des conférenciers du Séminaire de SEDOS ont insisté sur ce point. Pour de nombreuses cultures africaines, ce concept est étroitement lié avec celui de la "famille". Il est plein de signification dans le domaine de l'oecuménisme entre Eglises chrétiennes. Il est important pour l'ecclésiologie des Eglises Orientales; il est spécialement riche en implications si on le relie au besoin de l'inculturation dans l'Eglise mondiale de l'époque d'après Vatican II.

 SEDOS ANNUAL REPORT - 1985

"SEDOS is an organisation through which institutes of men and women combine their resources in order to serve the Church more effectively in her missionary activity. It aims to enable members to exchange ideas and experiences about mission, to seek practical guidelines to action by means of information, documentation, studies and seminars, to stimulate thought and action in the service of mission and evangelization". (From the SEDOS Statement of aims).

In the following section of the Report we share with you some of our efforts of the past year in pursuit of this aim. The Report is for the period December 1, 1984 to November 30, 1985.

1. SEMINARS

i) Urbanisation and Mission: The phenomenal growth of cities presents hitherto unknown problems, but also new possibilities for mission. The recent earthquake in Mexico city focused world attention on one of these supercities. In the year 2000 it will have a population of 30 million at the present rate of population increase.

Marie Cloutier, White Sister, Andrew Edele, White Father and Pierre Delooz of Pro Mundi Vita called attention to these problems and opportunities at the 1984 Annual Assembly's Seminar attended by 90 members. Sedos Bulletin 1985/Nos. 1 & 2 gives the text of their talks, the main points of the discussion, and some pastoral/missionary proposals for action.

ii) Justice and Evangelisation: Various aspects of the relationship between justice and the work of evangelisation were studied at the residential Seminar held at Villa Cavalletti in March 1985, attended by 85 members. Julienne de Wolf, Immaculate Heart Sister from USA, Heloisa Da Cunha, Sacred Heart Sister from Brazil, Henry Volken, a Jesuit from India and Archbishop Bakole wa Ilunga from Zaire shared their experiences of this relationship.

Michael Schultheis a Jesuit economist, Jacques Van Nieuwenhove, a theologian from the White Fathers and Dominic Coyle, an Assistant Editor of the London Financial Times and Editor of the European and US Editions reflected on these experiences.

Solidarity with the poor emerged as a key issue and the poor as being themselves evangelizers and the subject of their own liberation. Different degrees of solidarity characterize our own involvement with the poor. Remaining neutral, avoiding political involvement, not "taking sides", become less and less acceptable. "Physician heal thyself" is addressed to all members of SEDOS. We are challenged to make clear choices; admit prejudices; re-assess our institutional wealth, our own involvement in structures of power, our identity as missionaries.

We need to be clear about our message, our own need for internal dialogue, for dialogue with the world, for communicating.

The Seminar asked some searching questions of members: Is it possible to remain within the present structures of religious missionary life and still be in total solidarity with the poor? Can our communities support and accompany the "innovators" who share this total solidarity? What are the consequences for formation? What kind of

"spirituality for violence" is needed? Few of us foresaw the direction this Seminar would take.

(SEDOS Bulletin 1985/Nos. 7 & 8 contains the full report).

iii) Bible & Mission: Puebla described Sacred Scripture as the "Soul of evangelization". That was the theme of the third SEDOS Seminar of the year attended by 50 members. Fr. Ludger Feldkämper, a Divine Word Missionary and Piet Rijks, a Spiritan, spoke to the Seminar. Their talks traced the growth in knowledge of and love for the Bible resulting from the Second Vatican Council, the extraordinary diversity of languages in which the Bible is published and the increasing importance of the Bible in Mission. Missionaries are committed to ecumenical co-operation as never before. They gave examples of how the liberating effect of the scriptures can bring people into conflict with political, social and economic power structures and lead to persecution, violence and martyrdom. The World Federation of the Catholic Biblical Apostolate from which both speakers came traces its origins to Cardinal Bea. Its present patron is Cardinal Willebrands. They proposed associate membership in the Federation to SEDOS members. (See SEDOS Bulletin 1985/No.16, December 1985 for the Report).

Sedos has now organised four major residential Seminars and ten one-day Seminars on current mission issues following the Research Seminar on the Future of Mission held in 1981.

2. ECUMENISM

i) CWME: A delegation from the Commission for World Mission and Evangelization (CWME) of the World Council of Churches, Geneva was received by an extended Executive Committee of SEDOS in April, 1985. Gene Stockwell, the Director of CWME was accompanied by Jean Stromberg, Associate editor of the International Review of Mission, Ion Bria of the Orthodox Church and Raymond Fung. Sr. Joan Delaney, MM., of the Vatican Secretariate for Christian Unity also accompanied the group.

Vivien Rowman, RSCJ, Claire Himbault, RNDM, Irene Mathias, FMM, and Fr. Pape, SVD; joined the members of the Executive Committee for the meeting. The group exchanged their main concerns on Mission to-day and agreed to examine how they could meet more often in an informal manner. CWME members will be invited to attend Seminars organised by SEDOS and SEDOS will collaborate with the CWME consultation scheduled to be held in 1988.

ii) Aarhus University: A group of 45 professors and students from the combined departments of Theology and History at Aarhus met with a representative group from SEDOS on the occasion of their visit to Rome in May. They were interested in information on the challenges and difficulties implied in the international character of the Roman Catholic Church in contrast to the Danish Lutheran Church which is closely allied to the Danish nation and culture; the demands of inculturation; the tensions between basic communities, local Churches and the structures of the universal Church; difficulties with Protestant proselytism; the place of the Orders and religious Societies in the Church and its mission; the martyrs; how the Church comes to grips with sharing in the sufferings of the least of its members.

3. "UP DATE" MEETINGS

Two such meetings, one on the situation in the Sudan to have been addressed by Giuseppina Tresoldi, SMC, and another on the International Association of Mission Studies 1985 meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe to have been addressed by the Executive Secretary did not in fact take place.

4. SEDOS BULLETIN

An evaluation of the SEDOS Bulletin was carried out at the beginning of the year.

We received 52 completed assessment forms, not a considerable number, but coming from places as far away as Nepal, Sri Lanka, Brazil, Trinidad, India, Canada, Papua New Guinea, Guyana, Zaire, Peru, Ireland, Portugal, Switzerland and Rome. 90% of respondents assessed the Bulletin as "excellent" or "very good" as regards general assessment and choice of articles. Here are a few of the comments we received.

"At this remove, we use SEDOS principally as a source of articles to be copied for members for reflection...We would prefer to pay more and have a Portuguese edition" (Guyana).

"Though I find current articles almost always interesting there are two areas it rarely touches: a) Oceania gets almost no mention b) We never see mission/Church from the viewpoint of the recipient of mission..." (Papua-New Guinea).

"The Bulletin I find very stimulating. The more we hear of experiences on any aspect of mission to-day the better. It's one Bulletin I never fail to read - others are passed over so that speaks for itself" (Ireland).

"The Bulletin is excellent, the best thing that comes out of Rome, keep it up each two weeks. It gives us articles which most of us would otherwise never see and generally they are well chosen..." (Rome).

"D'autres éditions? j'aimerais bien voir une édition dans une langue latine - ou le français, ou l'italien...ou le portugais!" (Lisbon).

"I find the Bulletin interesting, with a good variety, challenging and thought provoking for to-day's world, integrating faith-justice, local-universal, useful not only immediately but also later on. It helps me personally in my ministry, retreats etc. I have sometimes circulated articles or extracts..." (India).

"Continue, please, to help us put our finger on the significant developments in Mission by the Third World, (Manila'78) - the whole movement of solidarity, exchange, common ventures between Churches in the Southern Hemisphere".

"You are doing a very good and necessary job. Keep it up and keep your identity" (Switzerland).

"I take this opportunity to thank you for sending the Sedos Bulletin regularly. I read every line and appreciate everything. I must say I find it difficult to make a kind of quantitative assessment and I thought I would make the following suggestions:

- 1) More factual information; things that Religious and Missionary Institutes actually do; new ventures, new ministries, ... will theological missiological reflection either by the reporters themselves or by the SEDOS staff.
- 2) The format could be more pleasant and presentable - something like PMV Bulletin on New Ministries - if it is economically possible.
- 3) Something on Spirituality for to-day; there is a hunger for a spirituality that makes "faith-justice" dimensions meet at one focal point - Christ. Therefore a search for a Christological basis for such a spirituality is essential if the "uneasiness" of some religious with regard to contemporary forms of apostolate has to be allayed. Nolan's piece belongs to that category and I am sure many religious would appreciate it:
These are three 'additional' concerns I wish you attend to, and I want to assure you that the Bulletin is excellent as it is and I always look forward to reading it. It is encouraging for most of us in the periphery to know that at the Centre there is an OASIS of fresh thinking.

"We sometimes find articles that are published in other bulletins... this may be inevitable" (Italy).

"Non soltanto Inglese!" (Roma).

"The SEDOS Bulletins are greatly appreciated for they are the fruit of a "Study-research" on mission to-day. It helps when each Bulletin centres on a particular theme..." (Rome).

Respondents were about equally divided on the question of whether SEDOS Bulletin should be published twice or once monthly. In general overseas respondents preferred twice monthly.

New arrangements: A number of decisions were taken this year regarding the administrative side of the Bulletin. These were taken as a result of the recommendations made at the 1984 A.G.M. about possible savings. As of September 1985:

- The Bulletin is issued once instead of twice a month;
- Complimentary copies to member societies are fixed at three;
- All bulletins are delivered by mail;
- Additional Bulletins to member Societies are paid for at a low cost.

We are now printing about 100 Bulletins less as a result of these measures.

We send a considerable number of Bulletins directly overseas to Regional Superiors and others at the request of SEDOS members. This is a service which is increasingly availed of.

5. FINANCES

Incomes - 1985

Membership Fees	ITL	74,274,060
Bank Interest		6,378,537
Royalties		219,175
Bulletin		5,836,335
Sundry		149,210
	Total:	<u>86,857,317</u>

Expenses

Operating Expenses	21.945.107
Bulletin	11.955.670
Personnel	<u>53.855.766</u>
Total	<u><u>87.756.543</u></u>
Deficit	899.226
Loss on Exchange rate	<u>1.544.146</u>
	<u><u>2.433.372</u></u>

SEDOS is financed entirely from the membership fees. Following a period of three years without any increase, the fees were raised for this year to ITL 1.612.500 for members whose Generalates are in Rome and ITL 806.250 for overseas Generalates. In practice this was 1.500.000 and 750.000 for the 11 month period of the present financial year.

Although the increase was approved at last year's meeting some expressed dissatisfaction at the lack of prior notice. It was decided to close SEDOS Financial year in future on November 30 in order to facilitate the circulation of the Financial Report before the AGM. This has been done.

In order to achieve a balanced budget in 1986 our Treasurer is proposing that fees will be raised to ITL 1.650.000 for Members with Generalates in Rome and to ITL 825.000 for Overseas members - an increase of less than 3%.

A look back at SEDOS fees is revealing. In 1976 the fee was ITL 500.000, which according to the statistics of ISTAT is the equivalent of ITL 1.634.850 in 1984! (ISTAT reckons the coefficient "costo della vita" at 3.2697).

We feel sure that members will readily pay the additional fee and we count on their generosity to agree to a more generous increase if services are to be expanded.

6. DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

We reorganised the staffing of the Documentation Centre as of September this year - again in an effort to reduce costs. Sr. Arnetta has retired to the US after sixteen years of collaboration with SEDOS and the services of Ms. Ingrid Besch have been dispensed with. Part-time staff has been increased and the Sacred Heart Sisters have very kindly seconded Sr. Agnes Hoormann to come once a week.

SEDOS appeals urgently to its Members for two people each of whom would staff the Centre on a morning each week. A fair knowledge of languages (Italian French, English) and some experience of library or documentation work is necessary and experience of Mission would help.

Missio Munich and WCC Geneva have been in contact with SEDOS about possible co-operation between their documentation centres and ours. This will be pursued during the coming year. Staffing is the great problem here. We are reluctant to do much publicity about the resources available until the staffing problem is solved. Meanwhile the installation of a computer is being studied.

7. COLLABORATION

The Spirit of collaboration between members of the SEDOS Assembly, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat is one of the vital characteristics of SEDOS.

We have been involved during the year in collaboration with many organisations. Among them:

- The Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples and Commission "18";
 - Commission "6" of the USG/UISG;
 - The Vatican Secretariate for Christian Unity;
 - The Vatican Secretariate for Non-Christian Religions;
 - The Unions of Superior Generals of Women & Men.
- The Justice & Peace Office of USG/UISG with whom SEDOS co-sponsored the Seminar "Women & Men in Ministry" in April of this year. This office helped SEDOS in the preliminary consultations which were held in preparation for our Seminar on Justice and Evangelization. We thank Srs. Patricia Frost of Justice & Peace and Laura Jean Spaeth, SND; also Srs. Dorothy Bujold and Betty Ann Maheu of UISG all of whom have returned to the US. They were always generous with their assistance and collaboration.
- The World Council of churches and their Commission on World Mission and Evangelisation;
- Missio-Aachen, Misereor, Missio-Munchen, Pro Mundi Vita and Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham with all of whom we have relations or are in the process of building them;
- The United States Catholic Mission Association (USCMA) of which SEDOS is a member. Sr. Helene O'Sullivan attended their Annual General meeting at Washington in November as a "Pre-Representative" of SEDOS.

8. FAITH AND CULTURE

The Executive Secretary attended a five day Seminar on this topic at the Centre for World Concerns at Duquesne University in May. The papers and Seminar Report will be published shortly. They are of a very high standard and are available in the Documentation Centre. Among the speakers were Michael Amaladoss SJ, member of our Executive Committee, Donald Senior C.P., Virgil Elizondo, Tshishiku Tshibangu, Auxiliary Bishop of Kinshasa, Joseph Francis SVD, Auxiliary Bishop of Newark, Robert Schreiter C.P.P.S. and many others.

9. PEOPLE AT SEDOS

- i) There are at present 57 member Societies, 22 of women, 35 of men.

The Society of the Child Jesus (SHCJ) renewed their membership of SEDOS. (Executive Committee decision, April 29, 1985). The Superior General is Sr. Elizabeth Mary Strub and the SEDOS Delegate, Sr. Caroline Conway. Address: Via della Maglianella 375, 00166 Roma; Tel. 69.61.902.

The Ordo Sacrae Crucis (OSC-Crosiers) is another new member. (Executive Committee decision, October 23rd, 1985). Their Superior General is Fr. Lambert Graus, and the Delegate, James Remmerswaal.

Address: Via del Velabro 19, 00186 Roma. Tel. 67.93.335

Welcome to both!

The Marianhill Missionaries suspended membership pending their General Chapter and the Brothers of San Gabriele have withdrawn.

ii) The Executive Committee. The Committee is as follows.

	(Elected)
<u>President</u>	: Fr. Henry Heekeren, SVD Dec.1982
<u>Vice President</u>	: Sr. Helen McLaughlin, RSCJ Dec.1984
<u>Treasurer</u>	: Fr. Leo Paul Nobert, OMI Dec.1982 (2nd Term) Fr. Michael Fitzgerald, FA Dec.1984 (2nd Term) Sr. Margaret Loftus, SNDM Dec.1984 Sr. Giuseppina Tresoldi, Dec.1982
<u>Executive</u>	(Appointed)
<u>Secretary</u>	: Fr. Willie Jenkinson, CSSp. July 1983 (2nd Term)

The President Fr. Heekeren, the Treasurer, Fr. Leo Paul Nobert, OMI and Sr. Giuseppina Tresoldi, SMC are completing their terms of office in December, 1985.

The Committee met on December 19, 1984 and in 1985 on January 30, April 29, June 6, July 2, September 10, October 23 and November 20. Meetings take place from 15.30 to 18.00 hrs. at the Secretariat, Verbiti 1. Average attendance was 80% at the meetings.

iii) The Secretariate

Jacintha Alagiah is responsible for Secretarial work and the typing and setting of the Bulletin.

Antigone Lloyd is responsible for printing and dispatching the Bulletin and assists in the Documentation Centre.

Philippa Wooldridge, Kathleen England, Ursuline Sister; and Sr. Agnes Hoormann, Sacred Heart Sister, work part-time in the Documentation Centre. Following Sr. Agnetta's departure for the U.S. after sixteen years with SEDOS, Philippa and Kathleen are the link with the past. They know where everything is - or should be! Sr. Agnes is a newcomer - we welcome her sincerely and thank her and the Sacred Heart Sisters for this service which is offered voluntarily.

Willie Jenkinson, Spiritan is Executive Secretary.

10) 1984 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Finally a look back to last year's 1984 General Assembly assessed by the Executive Committee to have been a real improvement on the 1983 meeting. Attendance was improved, there was more participation - particularly in the discussion on fees! and several good proposals were tabled. Not all of these have been followed up: it is difficult to assess to what extent the SEDOS Statistics have been exploited by members: no progress has been made on a Spanish edition of the Bulletin; we have not succeeded in arranging informal meetings to share experiences of inculturation; we have had practically no 'up-dating' informal meetings on current mission situations; and we have scarcely moved towards implementing last year's proposal on facilitating members' study and reflection on theologies of liberation.

Publishing SEDOS Bulletin once a month has relieved pressure on the Secretariat staff. It has achieved only a modest reduction in costs.

We have answered a number of queries on Refugees but have not succeeded in accompanying Bro. Joe Jansen in any formal way with his Refugee programme. Individual members have followed his request for co-operation and this is much appreciated.

LOOKING AHEAD

After this rather gloomy recital of things not done we look ahead to the coming months and year. Here are some of the activities foreseen for 1986 in addition to the every-day work of the Secretariat the Documentation Centre and the Bulletin.

1. There will be the Annual Residential Seminar at Villa Cavalletti which will be held this year from May 6th to 10th, a change from the usual March date. The Seminar will deal with an important topic:

THIRD WORLD THEOLOGIES

IN RELATION TO THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

"The aim of this Seminar will be to become aware of the principal thrusts of theological reflection in Asia, Africa and Latin America and to reflect on how these could qualify the concrete goals, tasks and priorities of mission in each area". The topic for the October and December Seminars will be finalised following the Annual Assembly.

2. In response to a widely expressed request at the March 1985 Seminar in Villa Cavalletti the Executive Committee has begun to examine what could be done to respond to situations of danger when missionaries, or people associated with them, are arrested, imprisoned, tortured or killed. Such crises have affected many members in the past year (PIME, Combonis, Redemptorists, Spiritans, Jesuits, White Fathers etc.). There is little doubt that solidarity and collaborative action helped to obtain the release of the "Negros Nine" - three priests and six lay people in 1984. They had been imprisoned in the Philippines for the alleged murder of a local city mayor. An outline of SOLIDARITY IN CRISIS is being tabled at the Assembly and we will pursue this during the months ahead.

3. The continuing debate about attitudes to THEOLOGIES OF LIBERATION concerns many SEDOS members. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is to publish a more positive document about them but no date is yet indicated. In the meantime those who live in situations of mission where theologies of liberation are not just a matter for discussion and theory but possibly of life and death, ask for guidance and support. We had hoped to deal with this during 1984. We have already made arrangements for early in 1985.

4. Another proposal emerging at the Villa Cavalletti Seminar concerned what SEDOS members could do to follow the CHALLENGE TO THEIR INSTITUTES arising from the Seminar's findings on justice and solidarity with the poor. The Annual Assembly will be asked to consider these challenges.

5. Brother Joe Jansen's Newsletter tells us that the number of REFUGEES IN ROME continues unabated and their living conditions and general situation has not improved. Can SEDOS members increase their efforts to deal with this problem on their doorstep in the months ahead?
6. Should SEDOS consider the increasing importance of "LAITY IN MISSION" in preparation for the 1987 synod on the Laity?
7. There is also the other unfinished business of 1984 to be taken-up or abandoned:
 - OTHER LANGUAGE EDITIONS or partial editions of the SEDOS Bulletin;
 - INCULTURATION - sharing of practical experiences;
 - "UP-DATING"/INFORMAL MEETINGS - there are so many experiences of Mission situations that could be shared to the great advantage of other SEDOS members by those returning from visits to situations of mission.

STAFF 1986

There is good news. After many unsuccessful attempts to fill the post of Assistant Executive Secretary, we are glad to announce that Helene O'Sullivan of the Maryknoll Sisters has been appointed to this post as from January 1986. Sr. Helene worked for a number of years in Hongkong and for the last five years has headed the Office of Social Concerns of the Maryknoll Sisters at their New York Headquarters. We thank the Maryknoll sisters for seconding Sister Helene to this post and extend to her a hearty welcome.

AND A LOOK BACK

Twenty one years ago, in June 1964, seven people met to collaborate in facing together the challenge of the mission of that day. The group was made up of a representative from the following: Scheutists, Sacred Heart Fathers, Capuchins, Oblates, Society of African Missions, Society of the Divine Word and White Fathers. It was at that meeting SEDOS was founded with Fr. Schutte, SVD as the first President.

Five years later when SEDOS numbered thirty missionary institutes of men and women it held a four-day Symposium on the theme: Mission Theology for Our Times. The participants heard Fr. Mondé, Superior General of the Society of African Mission and the then President of SEDOS, explain frankly and clearly why the Symposium had been arranged.

It must be said, without equivocation, that the missionary institutes are preoccupied, worried and uncertain about the future of missions. This is not to indulge in pessimism. In a changing world which daily poses new problems, it is perfectly normal that the missionary world also should ask questions about its own function in this rapid and often radical evolution.

John Power SMA elaborates on that statement in his MISSION THEOLOGY TODAY (Logos Books, 1970) from which the above quote is taken:

That March evening was the culmination and fruit of two years of hoping and planning by the SEDOS institutes. SEDOS is a co-operative

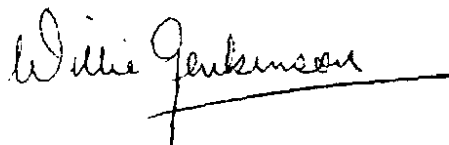
venture on the part of a number of missionary institutes, through which they aim at closer and more efficient collaboration in practical apostolic activity. Its ultimate purpose is to ensure that different institutes in the same mission territory will be able to work together directly on common projects and problems, and thus make more effective use of their combined resources of manpower and means. In mission countries several institutes work side by side. But much of the time they work quite independently, with little or no exchange of information between them. To improve this situation is precisely the aim of SEDOS.

On this, the 21 Anniversary, we salute that first-group of founders and their foresight and invite you to examine whether SEDOS responds to the challenges of different times and circumstances to-day. One significant challenge to the missionary institutes' understanding of mission is the steady growth of local Churches and their burgeoning missionary vocations. Now, missionaries go from, and to, all continents. A new style of missionary activity is emerging. The group, meeting in 1964, saw clearly the need to collaborate and to combine their resources in order to make an authentic proclamation of the gospel in their time with all that that entailed. SEDOS needs to face the same challenge twenty-one years later.

SEDOS IS, ABOVE ALL, PEOPLE. The number of people working regularly in the Secretariat is very small. SEDOS is enhanced by their dedicated service and by the help of those who come to work in the Documentation Centre.

The network of people however, goes well beyond the Secretariat it extends to the Executive Committee, to the many who respond to a request for help on special occasions, and indeed to all the members, - people who "collaborate and combine their resources", as the current SEDOS aim, quoted at the beginning of this Report, puts it - "to serve the Church more effectively in its missionary activity".

We in the Secretariat thank you sincerely for your support and co-operation.



Willie Jenkinson, CSSp.
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
SEDOS

NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Annual General Assembly elected new officers to the Executive Committee for the three year period 1986-1988:

- President: Sr. Helen McLaughlin, Superior General of the Religious Sisters of the Sacred Heart.
- Vice President: Fr. Francesco Pierli, Superior General of the Comboniani.
- The Treasurer: Fr. Leo Paul Nobert of the Oblates re-elected for a third term of office.
- Committee Member: Sr. Giuseppina Tresoldi of the Comboni Sisters re-elected for a second term.

All were elected on a first ballot. Sr. Helen is the first woman President of SEDOS. In accordance with SEDOS statutes the Vice President is then a Superior General of a men's Institute and vice versa. The full Committee is now constituted as follows:

- President: Helen McLaughlin, RSCJ
 Vice President: Francesco Pierli, MCCJ
 Treasurer: Leo Paul Nobert, OMI
 Members: Michael Amaladoss, SJ
 Michael Fitzgerald, PA
 Margaret Loftus, SNDM
 Giuseppina Tresoldi, SCM
 Exec. Secretary: Willie Jenkinson, CSSp.

FATHER HENRY MONDE, SMA

Fr. Mondé, the last surviving member of the small group that founded SEDOS died peacefully at the age of 76 on December 26th last in the SMA Generalate (Via Nocetta 111, 00164 Roma). At the Annual General Assembly on 10th December, 1985 we had just drawn attention to the fact that Fr. Mondé was one of the founders of SEDOS and that the first SEDOS Symposium was held under his Presidency in 1969.

Fr. Mondé had been in failing health and his death was not unexpected yet we mourn his passing and give thanks for the example of his life. We reflect again on what he said at the opening of the 1969 Symposium:

"In a changing world which daily poses new problems, it is perfectly normal that the missionary world also should ask questions about its own function in this rapid and often radical evolution."

SEDOS continues to ask questions and, hopefully, to suggest directions for action in the everchanging trends in Mission to-day. We feel that is what Fr. Mondé and the other members of the original group would want us to do. May he rest in peace with the Lord.

ASSESSING THE EXTRAORDINARY SYNOD OF BISHOPS
SEDOS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, DECEMBER 1985

(There were four speakers: Mr. Anselme Titianma Sanon; Mr. Raphael Ndingi Muxma'a Nzeki; Fr. Jacques Dupuis SJ; and Abbot Dammertz Viktor, OSB. The following is an account of the individual speakers' short talks in the order of their presentation and of the general discussion which followed).

MGR. ANSELME TITIANMA SANON is Bishop of Bobo Dioulasso and President of the Conference of Bishops of Upper Volta and Niger.

I was at Lomé when I heard about the Synod and I was astonished and wondered what the purpose of the Synod would be. I was surprised to be asked to make an evaluation of the 20 years after Vatican II as I only received the questionnaire on the 6th of June and the evaluation had to be in Rome by June 24th.

Our distances are very great but we did do a synthesis. Our response of 19 pages reflected our vision of the Church as the Family of God and our efforts to evangelize while respecting the demands of inculturation. Foreign press reports had made us anxious and perplexed. There were many rumours that the Synod would reverse the Council but the recent visit of the Pope to Africa had reassured us. Still we did not know what to expect.

The opening report of Cardinal Danneels reassured us. The Synod would be a celebration of the Council...the Church placing herself in the light of the Word of God, celebrating the mysteries of Christ, continuing its mission in the world today.

At the end of these two weeks what do I have to bring back to Africa? These are some of my reflections.

1. As Synod Fathers, we experienced communion in the Assembly Hall, listening, praying, sharing. We lived Church as an experience and not as an institution.
2. The purpose of the Synod became clear - to continue Vatican II as a living tradition.
3. Errors were noted following the Council but this did not stifle our hope nor the dynamism in our groups. Rather we must correct the mistakes in fidelity to the Council itself. Another thing that we achieved was the call to a new reading of the Council texts - a global reading or total reading of these texts.

4. ~~We experienced~~ the Church as a sign of communion and reconciliation in the world;
 - dependent on the Word of God;
 - a Church which saves itself by evangelizing;
 - at the service of God in prayer, adoration, worship;
 - at the service of the world through on-going dialogue. (We had wondered if dialogue was to be stopped but it was affirmed; There is to be dialogue with all-including non Christians, Muslims etc.);
- Some points from which there would be no going back were reaffirmed - among them the Episcopal Conferences.

I also have some personal convictions after this Synod.

1. During the Vatican II Council I was a student. Now I am a legitimate heir to the Council. This Extraordinary Synod is in itself, a part of the ongoing Synodal process, - a development from the Council,
2. Vatican II is a treasure to be exploited and used. It is not a museum.
3. Collegiality must be developed - both affective and effective. Local bishops must see themselves and their priests as brothers. The Church must become Communion.
4. This Synod must be completed by the Synod on the Laity - which will deal with the people of God in general.
5. Young Churches, young Conferences of Bishops found themselves in complete unanimity-like at the first Pentecost. We felt that we were confirmed, that our contribution was positive, that the message of the Gospel would no longer be confined to the model of the Western Church.
6. Inculturation concerns the whole Church - not just Third World churches - as she recognizes herself in each particular Church.

There were some omissions that I noted:

1. There was not one word on children - on young people, yes, - but this was a big lack for in my country children are full partners in the home and also in our pastoral plan.
2. There was very little about laity/women.
3. The challenges of the world today were just mentioned in passing.
4. The Mission of evangelization was given very little emphasis.
5. Relations between particular Churches and the Curia were not developed enough, - nor were relations with the mass media.
6. The place of dialogue, in evangelization was not emphasized nor was dialogue between leaders of the Church and the rest of the Church v.g. the theologians.
7. There was no mention of creativity.

Two final comments:

1. The proposed "catechism"/"compendium" was not understood by all in the same way. Some of us thought it would be compendium in the light of Vatican teachings but some feel it should be a real catechism such as that which followed the council of Trent. This may well create difficulties for the process of inculturation.

2. Leaving the Synod I still have a question:

Do you in Europe and North America recognize us in Africa as particular Churches? Do you really recognize us as authentic Church, as Family of God? Can we bring our Bourkina Faso Church experience to the whole family of the Church? Can we take our part in evangelizing the world? This is the question I bring back to my people. For we also are real heirs to Vatican Council II.

FR. JACQUES DUPUIS, SJ., teaches at the Gregorian University, Rome.

This is not a post-mortem in spite of the many apprehensions and fears before the Synod.

I was a translator at the Synod and so had little time to react personally but I would emphasize the positive character of the whole Synod bearing in mind the fears of the preceeding months. I see in this Synod a clear affirmation of the Vatican Council and of the positive elements of the post-conciliar period.

There were problems after the Council but they were due to the rapid evolution of society in general and/or to some biased interpretations given to the Council. They cannot be attributed to the Council itself. This is made clear in the final document.

The Synod was a clear call to further study of Vatican II and to applying this call to life in the Church. It was a call to go beyond what Vatican II said. "Gaudium et Spes" could not give adequate answers to the signs of the times of today, v.g. the threat of nuclear war today. We are called to believe in and to go beyond Vatican II.

I would like to make some remarks about the dynamics of the Synod. I was also at the Synods of 1974, and 1982 and I can share some points of comparison with the present one.

1. There was much greater freedom of speech and openness.
2. The attitude of the Bishops was very courageous and out-spoken, saying in plain words things not pleasant to hear, v.g. regarding relations with the Curia, the need for more co-responsibility and collegiality, more de-centralization of power, more autonomy.
 - The Oriental/Orthodox Bishops took the lead in speaking openly and clearly.
 - The African Bishops, almost all 34 of them, spoke clearly in the Assembly Hall and made a great impression.
 - The Asian Bishops made a very impressive contribution.

Due to the composition of the group of Bishops from Latin America, their contribution as a group was less strong. There was one very good intervention concerning human liberation. Surprisingly, the term liberation theology was not heard once in the Assembly.

The first week was very dynamic. Then there seemed to be a falling back. The contributions of the 130 speakers was rich and positive. The group contributions were tame compared to the individual interventions, although French-speaking Group B and English-speaking Group B were very courageous and outspoken.

While the first 'relatio' of Cardinal Danneels was very good, the second was poor, even unsatisfactory. Many elements had fallen by the wayside: v.g. the requests from the Oriental Churches; the need for inter-religious dialogue; the Church 'ad extra' envisaged in *Gaudium et spes* was poorly presented. The small groups did help to re-draft the final document through various stages so that the end product was better than that proposed at the beginning of the week. However it is still lacking in my respects.

Thus there remain defects of procedure in the way the Synod works even though the dynamics were partly improved.

In the final document some of the contents are note-worthy. Strong emphasis is given to:

1. a new commitment to ecumenism
2. the idea of the Church as Communion - the basic idea being that the Church is the Sacrament of Salvation. "People of God" is there - but subdued. Some Latin American Bishops have misgivings about this term which tends to become politicised. There is fear of the terms - "Popular Church", "Church of the People". Perhaps this was one reason why Communion was preferred.

But the main point about the final document is that it was published immediately. This has not happened since 1971, the last Synod to speak in its own name with the approbation of the Holy Father. The publication was not foreseen at this Synod. It was insisted upon by the bishops as an expression of collegiality and graciously granted by the Pope. The Synod thus recovered some of its credibility.

This does not mean that the document is satisfactory. One of the Fathers pointed out that it was not possible to present "modi" or amendments before voting on the final document. True, it does not go back on any of the important thrusts of Vatican II - but it does not express them all satisfactorily. Pastorally it is open, theologically not very elaborate, in general somewhat cautious. One could sum-up saying that it does have some positive areas though not as positive as might be desired.

Some examples:

- The supreme expression of collegiality was found in Vatican Council II. There is a partial realization of this in the Synod's attitude towards episcopal conferences, but the status of these conferences is to be further studied - especially their teaching authority.
- Participation of the laity is recognised and the coming Synod will continue this theme.
- Since the Church was seen as "a Mystery", the principle of subsidiarity was discussed as a possibility rather than strongly affirmed. This seems strange to say the least as the Church is also a visible institution. Does not the relationship between bishops and priests already imply considerable application of the principle of subsidiarity?

- Inculturation is there but not forcibly and liturgical experimentation is in fact contradicted by the proposed universal catechism or manual of doctrines.
- The missionary thrust of the Church does not stand out.
- Inter-religious dialogue is poorly expressed "dialogus missioni non est opponendum"! But just last year the Vatican Secretariate for Non-Christian Religions published a much more positive statement about inter-religious dialogue.
- Promotion of justice: A suggestion was made to repeat the text of the 1971 Synod - 'justice as constitutive of mission', but it was not taken up and does not appear in the document.
- The greater autonomy and less dependence of local Churches is not mentioned.
- Regarding religious life - its contribution in the vanguard of the Church's mission is there - but there is no mention of the prophetic role of religious.
- The universal call to holiness is seen as a return to interiority whereas conversion was seen as a process of interiorisation by the Council.
- 'Option for the poor': again its meaning "is to be studied".

The Asian Participation: The Bishops from Asia met in Rome for a two and a half day pre-synodal reflection. This enabled them to distribute topics for intervention among themselves. Thus many spoke in the name of the Asian bishops present at the Synod. This made the Asian participation more effective on topics of special relevance for Churches in Asia - local Church, dialogue, inculturation, promotion of justice.....

Third World Representaion: 110 of the 165 Synodal Fathers came from the so called Third World but only 3 of the 12 Synodal experts. The special Secretaries were all European. There was thus, a real imbalance between the pastoral and theological contribution from the Third World. There is a difficulty in that the theological approach to problems still does not do justice to the reality of the Third World.

Conclusion: In spite of its shortcomings about which I have been very open, the Synod was positive - a step forward in comparison with the past.

There was more collegiality in practice, more openness and frankness.

The Assembly had greater autonomy; v.g. It voted to prolong the present membership of the Council of the Synod until the next Synod in 1987 and this was ratified by the Pope as was also the vote to publish the final document.

There was an atmosphere of optimism; Credibility in the Synodal institution was experienced again and a feeling of the Synodal process taking on new life.

I saw in this Synod a re-launching of the new Pentecost which Vatican Council II had called for in the life of the Church.

MGR. NDINGI MWANA'A NZEKI is Bishop of Nakuru and President of the Conference of Bishops of Kenya.

I was happy to hear the remarks of our previous speaker about the courageous report of the English-speaking Group B. I was a member of that group! One proposal from the Kenyan Bishops submission for the Synod suggested that if no document was ready at the conclusion of the Synod some of the Fathers should stay behind to draft one. And in one of our interventions, seeing that among the invited observers there was practically nobody from Africa, we requested that special consideration be given to invitations for Africans at the Synod on the Laity in 1987. God is there where the laity is most involved in the Church and this is true in Africa more than in the so called developed countries.

The Synod definitely and positively reaffirmed the teachings and decrees of Vatican II. I was pleased to hear the Holy Father speak of this. I think the principles of collegiality and of subsidiarity concerning the universal and individual churches were affirmed. We apply these pretty well in Kenya but oftentimes, the difficulty is not with the Holy Father, or the Curia but among ourselves. Sometimes I feel it is better for me to wait for my brother rather than force him to agree to a proposal for it may then take 10 years to implement. By waiting and giving him 3 years to see, and to disappoint me! - we may arrive at our common aim in five years!

National Episcopal conferences were stressed at the Synod. I personally heard this emphasis for the first time. Some people wanted more clarity about what is meant by the teaching authority of National Conferences. Bishops were encouraged to work together on national issues in developing countries where there are so many national issues that affect us. Some issues may appear to be localized, yet their effect is felt throughout the country.

Many people were interested in inculturation and I believe it does appear in the final document. The Synod was very clear. It encouraged and supported the Christianization of cultures and equally the inculturation of Christianity, so that Christians in a given nation and at a given time can be authentic Christians and authentic natives of their land.

At the moment, in some African countries where non-Christians are the majority, Christians are regarded as foreigners because somehow they act and behave as though they were not natives of the country. This is due to a kind of dichotomy between their lives and their beliefs. Up to 1965, Muslims in Kenya regarded themselves as more Kenyan than the Christians. This was and is an outrage. So the need for inculturation was put very strongly in our group.

Someone commented to me that I cannot speak of an African culture in Kenya because there are so many tribes. But it is not numbers that make you feel an identity. It is something inward, regardless of numbers, that gives you your identity. I am not too sure what it is that unites our peoples of Africa but I believe that it is possible to identify an African culture just as you can identify European culture. There is an African culture having elements common to black Africa with all its languages and traditions and tribes. At the Synod

there was encouragement and support for our efforts to make Christianity "be at home" in every culture.

Another problem is language. The documents of Vatican II have not even been translated into our African languages. In the whole of East Africa-Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, only a part of the documents has been translated into Swahili. How can we expect our people to know the documents when we can't even read them in our languages?

Other problems are sociological. People are used to certain ways of worshipping and living as Christians and they resist changes. In our case it is better to move with the people rather than force things on them. In 1982 I called a Synod - the first diocesan Synod ever - and to the surprise of many it was attended very well by priests, brothers, sisters and many lay people. One priest had written me a letter saying "The synod you have called is a waste of time. I do not intend to come". I wrote back and said, "Thank you. You have your freedom of expression. I respect it. I do hope that our decisions and recommendations at the Synod when they are communicated, will be put into practice. Sincerely etc." A year later I went to his parish and after 2 days he called me aside and said he realized that the Synod had been "a wonderful opportunity." His conversion had begun... The Synod was clear in insisting on diocesan Synods.

The Synod was a great encouragement to me and I feel as I go back that we in Kenya can now take many initiatives in putting the documents of Vatican II into practice. If we do not, we cannot claim that our hands have been tied by the Curia. The Holy Father's own words in Africa were, "Be authentic Christians and authentic Africans", and we are going to be that.

VIKTOR DAMMERTZ, OSB is Abbot Primate of the Order of St. Benedict.

I would like to stress the process of listening and learning at the Synod. When we came together nobody knew what would happen, what the result would be, whether there would be a document, what type of document, etc? Step by step things became clearer as the Spirit spoke through the individual churches. Yet, even at the beginning of the second week no one suspected the kind of report that would be issued at the end.

There are shortcomings in the final report but don't forget it was finally composed in one night! I personally was very much impressed by the experience of the universal Church. I had lived some of this at the Synod of 1983 but this time there were even more bishops from the "young" churches. At previous Synods bishops were invited in relation to the size of their conferences. Thus Europe had 44 delegates in the past (4 or 5 from each country) whereas this Synod had only one representative from each conference.

The representation thus was:

- 24... Europe (15 from Western and 9 from Eastern Europe)
- 34... Africa
- 17... Asia
- 4... Oceania
- 22... Mexico and South America
- 2... North America (U.S. & Canada)

Thus approximately 3/4 came from the "Third World". An important moment was the Ecumenical celebration of the Liturgy of the Word when 3 of the 10 representatives came from the joint Commissions which are in dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church. Never before had they been invited to a Synod. The Anglican representative read the first reading, the Methodist the second, an Orthodox Bishop read the Gospel and the Holy Father gave the Homily. This took place in the Assembly Hall and I believe it represents a step forward, an indication of what Vatican II wanted us to do, to share the word of God, to listen and to pray together.

I want to underline the Synod's strong affirmation of Vatican II, - the "Magna Carta" of the Church for the future. There was a kind of rediscovery of the Council itself among the bishops. Some admitted they had been hesitant about implementing the Council. Others felt that perhaps there had been more a changing of structures, of norms rather than a real interior conversion for which the Council had called. We need to read the texts again to discover their richness in the context of the whole Council. For example, the concept 'people of God' was a true discovery of the Council but at the same time other ways of presenting Church emerged - "Eccly of Christ", "Family of God", "Spouse of the Holy Spirit". Taken together these give a fuller picture of the Church.

In general the Synod assessed the post-conciliar period positively. The errors that had crept in were not seen to be a result of the Council. Few interventions dwelt on the mistakes, failures or confusions since the Council. No one denied them, but all went on to stress the good in the Church since and because of Vatican II. The reasons for failures were seen to stem from the rapid changes in society itself. The problems of to-day are much more serious and complicated than those of 20 years ago when *Gaudium et Spes* was proclaimed.

So there was a call for the interiorization of the Council and of the mystery of the Church. The final report touches on the mystery of communion, on how we celebrate the word of God and our universal call to holiness. The missionary dimension of the Church sadly, was inserted only in the final draft. The one document since Vatican II that was quoted several times in the final report was *Evangelii Nuntiandi* of Paul VI.

Whether people were happy or disappointed at the results depended largely on their expectations. The Pope replying to Cardinal Landazurri at the dinner which followed the Synod said that he thought some would be disappointed - 'all those who had hoped that the Council would be condemned, or that there would be a pulling back, but the Holy Spirit and the People of God would not be disappointed'.

 OPEN FORUM

Question: You spoke of the openness of this Synod, yet on the other hand the texts sent in by the Episcopal Conferences were not allowed to be published as they were for Vatican II. Where then is this openness?

Response: My comparison was not between Vatican II and the Synod but between the last Synod and this one. None of the texts of the Episcopal Conferences were published before the last Synod. This time some did go ahead and publish them. (Dupuis).

Q: The final Document says that Option for the Poor "has to be studied". You also mentioned that very little reference was made to the Document of 1971 on Justice in the World—and again that apart from two bishops from Latin America very little was said of liberation theology. Could you enlarge on this? Was there much reference to or discussion about the whole ministry for social justice and peace?

R. To the first question it is not a matter of studying the Option for the Poor in itself, but rather what does the Option for the Poor mean for the Church. Concerning the 1971 statement some delegates would have liked to see the final Synod Document strengthened by quoting the passage which states that the promotion of justice is a constitutive element of the mission of the Church. This was a very strong statement. At the 1971 Synod itself, some tried to tone it down by substituting "integral" for "constitutive" yet the words "constitutive element" were retained to lend strength to this concept. Unfortunately this statement does not appear in the final Document.

For your third question; I would certainly not like to say that the Report pulls back on the thrust for the promotion of justice as a part of the mission of the Church, yet I cannot at the same time say that it comes out as strongly as it could have done. (Dupuis)

Q. Could someone comment on why the emphasis on the Church as "mystery" in contrast to the Church as "people of God?" Is this insistence on mystery linked to the danger of secularism? Is there explicitly or implicitly the intention of emphasizing what is sacred. Did the stand of European Council of Bishops on secularity, which is rather positive, have any bearing on the discussion in the Synod about this problem of secularization/secularism?

R. There is a counterbalance to certain interpretations of the Church as People of God. There is a feeling that this and "popular church" has become a politicized statement rather than a theological one. The value of the Church as People of God is not denied but the idea of mystery may give a fuller meaning together with all the other images of Church given in Lumen Gentium.

You will find the distinction between secularism/secularization in the final Document where it says that secularization in the true sense means the proper value of creation, of human values as is said in Gaudium et Spes. Secularization helps us to value creation and humanness as opposed to secularism which does not acknowledge any place for God. (Dammertz)

Regarding "people of God" it is true that the idea of the Church as Communion is in a sense, even theologically more rich and satisfying. In all ecumenical agreements it is the notion of the Church as communion which is the basic ecclesiology. This goes beyond the Latin-American interpretation of People of God. In Asia theologians reject the concept just one people of God - all peoples are children of God.

At the same time, I see a certain danger in insisting on the Church as "Mystery" overlooking the fact that the Church is a human institution. It is not possible to avoid dealing with some problems arising from this under the pretext of the Church as mystery. Does it make sense to question whether the principle of subsidiarity is applicable to the Church?! The reason given is that the Church is 'mystery' and not just simply a human institution. But it is also a human institution and it seems to me evident that the principle of subsidiarity applies also to it. I regret that in the Final Report this is put as a question to be studied: can the principle of subsidiarity be applied to the Church as the Church is a mystery? If one takes into account that the Church while being a mystery is also a human institution then it is evident that the principle of subsidiarity can be applied to the Church also. (Dupuis)

No.3 of the final Document points out that we should avoid a unilateral understanding of the Church seeing it for example as either a hierarchical institution or as a sociological entity. But we must be careful to avoid dualisms. In my country there is a danger of creating dualisms, opposition between evangelization and development, between catechesis and evangelization, between well celebrated liturgies and simple work "in bush". We do not like these. It is a question of methodology of one's approach to the mystery of the Church. It is not the Church of Rome, or the Church of the West. It is a mystery of reconciliation and Communion received from God. It is important to avoid dualities, and divisions and separations because the mystery is received and lived at different levels in the reality of our everyday lives (Sanon).

Q. It would seem that the Synod insisted on ecumenism. What would be the practical consequences for the mission of evangelization in the Church today?

R. We need to consider the question of the Church as family. It is in fact one way of understanding communion in the light of Lumen Gentium. With respect to Ecumenism, in a family if everyone is a father - nothing will happen, there is no family! You need father, mother, grandparents, children, older and younger brothers and sisters and some others too! And you need solidarity, mutual communication, mutual respect, for the thinking of others.

In my country (Bourkina Faso) ecumenism, between Christian Churches and the wider ecumenism is vital for us. We ourselves have been brought to understand its importance through evangelisation.

Muslims and followers of ancestral religions see us as the "family of Jesus". They and we are part of the extended family, like cousins. They would be very surprised if we rejected this reality. We are all like brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, cousins of

a family. The Church as family is a rich concept for us - but we Christians are not the exclusive family or people of God.

Again No.7 of the final Document points out that the theology of communion is the fundamental basis of ecumenism. We must practise ecumenism if we are to live the life of the Church as communion - as truly family. Jesus did not want his family to be divided. Our internal divisions are a real scandal for the family of Jesus Christ is at present not a real family - it is divided. So I work with my brothers and sisters of the Reform tradition (Sanon).

Q. The call of the Synod for justice and the Option for the Poor appears to be rather weak. I fear for the church of the poor in Latin America. My concern now is to know what can we do so that the prophetic course opened by Vatican II will be maintained and even emphasized for the world today. How can we concretize it, intensify it?

R. I have the same question. The text denies none of the great ideas and so it is satisfactory from the theological point of view but it lacks a certain strength from the pastoral point of view. There is no direct reference in the text to those who have given their lives as martyrs in order to promote justice as in Latin America. It would have been welcome.

We feared that ecclesial basic communities would disappear from the text because of a very negative intervention from South American bishops who said that in fact basic communities were politicized and worked against the Church. They were opposed to the optimistic tone of the draft version. Happily, in spite of this intervention, the text is rather good as it is. It says that as long as basic communities are united to the Church and hierarchy they are our hope for the future. It does not say however that they are a powerful agent for evangelization and promotion of justice in society. So it could have been more positive.

There was so little time that it was not possible to consider further all these burning issues. The general tone is positive. In spite of the weaknesses there is no explicit intention to go back on anything at all, although as I said the words "liberation theology" are not mentioned in spite of Cardinal Lorscheider's very strong intervention in writing on this subject. One bishop did express opposition to the condemnation of Leonardo Boff, and the manner of his condemnation. The Church must be prophetic yet one bishop asked for the words "prophetic modo" to be erased from the text. (Dupuis)

Q. What do you see as the consequences of this Synod? Will there be a new step forward with respect to Vatican II?

R. Don't think that it was only a re-launching of Vatican II. It was a step forward. Since the Council is not able to answer the problems of today there must be an updating as was said several times in the Assembly so it's not simply a matter of re-launching - but a real step forward. The problems of today are not the same as those of the '60s. The signs of the times today are not the same either. The Synod saw this clearly. (Dupuis)

- 1) I also (Bishop Sanon) would like to speak on this question. Most of our Churches and Episcopal Conferences are contemporaries of the Council. We are asking that we be recognised as such. For us this Synod was important. It was a confirmation. Peter was asked to confirm his brothers in faith, - this extraordinary Synod was extraordinary because it gave Peter's successor an opportunity to confirm our Churches and Conferences of Bishops in our faith. "To confirm our faith this is the meaning of the infallibility of the Pope. This Synod was unique and in this sense the document is unique.
- 2) What was just said in a reply about liberation theology applies also to inculturation. We were not pleased with the treatment of inculturation. We see it as important for the whole Church not just for the Churches of the Third World and this is not in the final document. But at least the Bishops at the Synod have been made aware of the importance we attach to it and I do feel a real step forward has been taken. Besides - it is not for the Synod to do theological research but it can and did encourage others to continue their searching and their experiences. In this sense again the document is unique.
- 3) After the Vatican Council there were many documents on various subjects but one had the impression that each bishop could use them or not as he pleased. Now this Synod is saying - "you must apply them" - each bishop in his own diocese. In the document you will see there are suggestions for implementation following on each section. One of these says, the People of God must be formed. Another that Diocesan Synods have to be convened. Between now and the 25th anniversary of the Council in 5 years time I believe all dioceses in the world will have convened their synods. (Sanon)

Our brothers from the Eastern Churches contributed a great deal to the Synod - they may have studied the Vatican Council more. I think that if we want to continue this Conciliar spirit the bishop must go home with his conscience awakened, thinking about what he is going to do so that his diocese may live in a "state of Synod", in the spirit of Vatican II, and in the presence of the Holy Spirit who is in the Church. (Dammertz)

In the context of this meeting perhaps it would be useful to share a general impression of the Brazilian theologians. Fr. Libanio gave us a talk following the Synod in which he summed up his impressions thus.

1. *The Synod was more an evaluation of the 20 years since Vatican II and so there was a lack of openness to the future, to the prophetic voice of the Church. The results of the synod can thus be characterised a look backwards. The only prophetic voice of the Church of the future, the Church of the poor, was the intervention by Cardinal Lorscheider who spoke of this Church.*
2. *The psychology of the Synod could be described as focused on reaction against secularism in the Churches of the 1st world, and against an over-sociological politicized interpretation of the Churches in Latin America. So the Church was described as "mystery" thus distancing itself from a too horizontal involvement,*

from too much involvement in the things of this world.

3. *The numerical presence of the third world churches was higher, but their influence was not in proportion. Evaluation of the past was more on avoiding of conflicts, a call for peace, and a call for solutions from the center v.g. the discussion about a "universal catechism". Creativity was not apparent. It was an historic moment, a legitimate moment, but at this point if one were to judge between "nova" or "vetera" it was the old rather than the new that emerged at the Synod. Have you any comments on this assessment?*

R. True - there was more analysis of the past than prophetic looking to the future but we did examine new signs of the times, and we did look at new problems in a more acute way than during Vatican II. It is also true that the emphasis on the Church as mystery was a reaction against secularism in the first world, and politization in the "Third World", especially Latin America. But this is not the whole story. There was a very strong idea of the Church as Sacrament in the world, for all people and this included the idea of freedom, promotion of justice, etc. (Dammertz)

I don't agree with the statement that the synod of 1974 was a success, was prophetic, and that the synod of 1984 was not. There is a certain danger in idealizing the evangelization Synod, and even the document, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* which followed it. I was in the Aula for the 1974 Synod and I experienced the same process of enthusiasm during the first part and the drawing back of the second part. In this Synod it was just the same. The interventions of the first part were very open, very positive; but the group reports which followed are disappointing. In this Synod the 1st relatio, after the individual interventions was not satisfactory. In each discussion group the more progressive participants were hindered by the less progressive ones. So there followed a time of trying to recuperate, to get back to the clarity and openness of the beginning.

True, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* of the 1974 Synod was a beautiful document but it too has its weaknesses and we must recognize them. The Synod of 1971 says, "Promotion of justice is a constitutive element of the Church". *Evangelii Nuntiandi* says, "promoting justice is not of itself the mission of the Church". This is an **enormous** difference and we must not forget it.

On interreligious dialogue and the theology of religions, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* did not represent the thinking of the Synod of 1974. The Synod had spoken of the positive intervention of God in the history of the nations preparing his final manifestation in Jesus Christ. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* stated that the traditional religions in the history of humanity are natural religions but the only divine intervention in the world is Jesus Christ and only the Christian religion is capable of initiating a vital relationship between God and man. With respect to the religions of Asia it was almost disastrous! So while recognizing *Evangelii Nuntiandi* as a beautiful text, especially Nos. 18 to 20, we must also acknowledge its weaknesses.

The text of this present Synod has weaknesses too. We must recognize and acknowledge them. But the great advantage of this text is that it is from the Synod itself in union with the Holy Father. As I assess it this will be seen as what is most positive about this Synod. (Dupuis):

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

<u>Cong.</u>	<u>Name:</u>	<u>Cong.</u>	<u>Name:</u>
CP	Vincenzo Carletti	SA	Suzanne Le Gal
CSSp.	Tom Farrelly		Pierette Conde
	Bruno Trächtler		Maria Haller
	Tony Geoghegan	SCMM	Sarah Summers
FMM	Margarita Perasa		Mary Pawath
FSC	Pedro M. Arramoide		Denise Elliot
	Maurice Richit		Godelieve Prové
ICM	Marilou Vanderstraeten	SDB	Anthony Smit
	Armandine de Meyer		Luke Van Looy
IMC	Lorenzo Gobatti	SCJ	Steffen Jacques
MC	Teresa Agostino		Perroux André
	Luis Serracci		Rorst Adrian
MCCJ	Francesco Pierli		Antonio Pantechini
	Joseph Uhl		Klingler John
	Venatio Milani	SFB	Madeleine Blaif
MFP	Jean Batiste Itçaina		Pushpam Gnanapragasam
MM	Joe O'Neill	SJ	Michael Amaladoss
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