

The gospel of the PROSPERITY MESSAGE seems to have had its origins in the US. - from whence it passed rapidly to South Africa. It has been referred to as the "Prosperity Cults". Abraham was extremely rich and it was God who made him so prosperous, is only one of the many scriptural origins of the Prosperity Message. The extract we reprint from the group of Southern African Evangelical Ministers is some indication of how far the message has gone and how African evangelicals are reacting. Although this piece was written in 1987 we are informed that the "Message" or "Cults" are still expanding and the South African Government is using religion as one of its main propaganda ploys today.

There are some important announcements in COMING EVENTS.

COMING EVENTS

HAITI UP-DATE

SEDOS SECRETARIAT - TUESDAY MAY 2, 1989; 3.00 p.m. - 5.00 p.m.

NEW FORMS OF LAY MEMBERSHIP IN MISSIONARY INSTITUTES

SEDOS SECRETARIAT - TUESDAY, MAY 2, 1989; 5.15 p.m. - 7.00 p.m.

PHILLIPINE UPDATE

FR. BEN MORALED A CSsR. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
NATIONAL ECUMENICAL FORUM OF THE PHILIPPINES

TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 1989
9.30 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.
SANT'ALFONSO, REDENTORISTI
VIA MERULANA, 31, ROMA

LA CHIESA E I DIRITTI UMANI

IN ORDER TO COMMEMORATE
THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

HIS EXCELLENCY, ARCHBISHOP RENATO R. MARTINO
PERMANENT OBSERVER OF THE HOLY SEE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

APRIL 28, 1989 AT 5.00 p.m.
ALPHONSIAN ACADEMY, VIA MERULANA, 31

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**FORMATION FOR MISSION:
AN ASIAN PERSPECTIVE
A PROGRAM FOR WOMEN**

Kathleen Coyle SSC

INTRODUCTION

(Kathleen Coyle is a Columban Sister missioned in the Philippines. She teaches theology at the Sister Formation Institute and the East Asian Pastoral Institute, Manila. Her article has been proposed as a working paper to delegates at the forthcoming Columban Sisters' International Formation Forum, Hong Kong, March 5-10, 1989. We are grateful to Sister Kathleen for offering her suggested programme for publication in SEDOS Bulletin. Written from a mission perspective we believe it will be of interest to our readers engaged in drawing up formation programmes - and not only in "third world" countries. Ed.)

The following program is concerned with the formation of young people for mission today and with supporting them as they strive to develop an integrated spirituality for missionary life. This requires the integration of five key elements:

1. Exposure to and experience in ministry from entrance and continuously throughout the formation programme.
2. Scriptural and theological studies.
3. Psycho-spiritual direction.
4. Experience of Community living.
5. Professional preparation.

This program places great emphasis on **continuous exposure to and experience in our creative ministries** throughout the initial formation program. In the suffering of the starving poor our young people will see and hear, touch and smell the reality of the hunger in the lives of the poor. In the wasted faces of their children they will come to appreciate the church's option for the poor, to which the poor themselves are desperately trying to call us at this time.

Special attention too will be given here to the importance of scriptural and theological preparation for spirituality, because historically, these studies have been deplorably neglected in the formation of women. It is hoped that the foundation provided will prepare our young women so that after initial formation they will continue to deepen their life of prayer, on-going critical reflection and study while emersed in their various ministries and mission assignments throughout the third world.

The program suggested below (with modifications and depending on the length of projected missionary commitment) will also serve to prepare our lay associates for working with us as partners in mission, both here and in our other third world missions.

THE FOCUS OF THE PROGRAM

The focus of the program is on the relationship between our growing vision and awareness of the needs of the church's mission and the challenges of this vision for commitment and praxis. The development of an integrated spirituality depends on the interaction of these two. But first let us define our terms:

Spirituality: It encompasses all of life. It is not an appendix to religious life, neither can it be quantified in exercises. It is our "unique and personal response to all that calls us to integrity and transcendence" (Sandra Schneiders). It refers to our on-going effort to bring our lives, and the lives of those we minister to, to wholeness and integrity within the horizon of God's love, offered to us in Christ and poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. It cannot be developed in a vacuum for it involves the interaction and integration of our **vision** and **praxis**, theology and prayer, ministry and lifestyle.

Vision: Our vision depends on the framework of ideas and symbols through which we perceive the world. Developing our vision demands an on-going transformation of our awareness, understanding and ability to perceive and interpret reality. This requires a constant critiquing of our awareness and it is here that revelation happens. One definition of revelation defines it as "an expanding awareness in community guided by the Holy Spirit" (Monika Hellwig). It is not so much a matter of additional information as a **breakthrough** in the manner and depth by which we know, comprehend and grasp reality.

Praxis: Our praxis is our energized response to our vision. It includes our immersion in ministry and the interpretation of that experience. It includes action-reflection-action, an active involvement in ministry and our contemplative presence to that involvement. Critical analysis is an important moment within praxis for it helps us to see reality as it really is. Praxis is needed to critique ideas. Our praxis in turn is supported by the vision that guides it and our vision too is challenged by our praxis and our critical analysis of that praxis.

The scriptures challenge us to be faithful both to the vision (memory) and to the praxis (living) [Acts 2:42].

Evangelization: At the heart of evangelization is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the giver of life. The first condition for evangelization is that our deep union with our God impels us to share our joy with all of humanity. Evangelization demands that we experience what we proclaim: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands . . . we proclaim also to you so that you may have fellowship with us" (1 Jn 1:3). This is the source of our missionary dynamism. For us, evangelization will mean the sharing of our Christian experience as women. And so, we need to ask, what is the experience that we have to share?

THE CONTEXT OF THE FORMATION PROGRAM
MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN THE 1990s

ISSUES:

Interfaith dialogue.
 Commitment to the poor and the marginalized.
 Commitment to the cause of women, especially, third world women.
 Frontier missions.
 The formation of basic Christian communities.
 Sponsoring and facilitating of laity in mission.
 Ecological concerns.
 Networking with church sponsored and other human rights' organizations.
 The challenge of fundamentalism.
 The challenge of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and Transnational Corporations to the economies of poor nations.

GUIDED BY:

Evangelii Nuntiandi #18, #19, #20.
 Congregation's Mission Statement.
 Statement of Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (amended 1988).
 Statement of Philippine Formators, 1980.
 Asian Major Religious Superiors' (AMOR VII) Mission Statement, Seoul, Korea, 1985.
 Experience and Formation Programs of other missionary Congregations with a similar thrust.

**THE INTEGRATION OF FIVE
KEY ELEMENTS**

1.

EXPOSURE TO AND EXPERIENCE IN MINISTRY

PURPOSE:

1. To experience the suffering of the poor and the victims of society, - malnutrition, illiteracy etc. and to appreciate why our commitment to them is given priority in our Mission Statement.
2. To understand that the prophets and Jesus taught us that compassion for and solidarity with the "non-persons" of our society are central to the spiritual life.
3. To translate our Mission Statement into a practical formation program for there is a socio-political content to our prophetic proclamation.
4. To help our young members understand the socio-political and economic causes of the poverty of so many people especially in the third world. This requires a global analysis of the politico-economic world system, of global cultural domination and of the role of religions in supporting these oppressive structures of domination. (Tissa Balasuriya's **Planetary Theology** is an excellent reference here).

At the end of this century, 4 out of every 5 human beings will be living in the Third World. This means that the majority of humanity lives and will be living in the underdeveloped and poor parts of the world. And this world is literally threatened with death by the centers of power in the North. Actually there are 500 million persons who suffer from hunger and extreme poverty, and this figure will rise to 1.3 billion in the year 2000.

Pablo Richard, "Theology of Solidarity".

It is necessary to call by name every social injustice, discrimination and violence inflicted on man (and woman) against his body, against his spirit, against his conscience and against his convictions.

Pope John Paul II, General Audience "On Liberation Theology", March 8, 1987.

Focus:

1. To realize that the mission of the church in this coming decade is calling us to radical change, not just to cosmetic alterations of our present ministries.
2. At every level of initial formation, at different degrees of involvement or immersion, our young members should have the opportunity to:
 - a) experience congregational ministries and other new ministries with the poor and marginalized, including women's groups and tribal ministries.
 - b) get to know and have the opportunity of working with human rights' groups, justice and peace organizations and ecological groups especially where our own sisters are involved with such groups.

The extent of involvement in (a) and (b) will depend on the amount of involvement in ministry at each level of formation. However, the members should be in touch with the raw experiences of the realities of people's lives at each stage of formation.

3. The supervision of exposure programs and the processing of experiences at the end of each exposure experience.

My heart is moved by all I cannot save: so much has been destroyed

I have to cast my lot with those who age after age, perversely,

with no extraordinary power, reconstitute the world.

Adrienne Rich, "Natural Resources", in The Dream of a Common Language.

What are we offering people in formation? A haven from the real world? In our documents we have the right words in the right order. But look at the raw unedited experiences of the realities of life for the people we mission among!

Seamus Farrell, Annual General Meeting, Irish Missionary Union, Dublin 1987.

(a) SCRIPTURAL AND THEOLOGICAL PREPARATION

Purpose:

1. To steep our new members in the gospel message of Jesus from entrance onward and to gradually help them to deepen their understanding of the mystery they worship.
2. To lead them to reflect theologically on their experiences, the situation of their people and to respond in the light of the gospel and with the aid of social analysis to the "signs of the times".
3. To direct them to commune with God in study as well as in prayer, ministry and liturgy.
4. To help them appreciate critical study as an act of worship and prayer. This is "divine" thinking!
5. To guide them to think clearly, imaginatively, precisely, logically, effectively, so that they can deepen their spirituality and discuss it.
6. To help them understand the church's rich tradition from which they have come. This will also help them to understand the tension they experience between the past and the present.
7. To guide them to recognize naive views, fundamentalist attitudes etc. and to be able to reflect theologically on oppressive ideologies and oppressive regimes.
8. To enable them to realize that there is theological pluralism in the church and to be able to access critically its values and limitations.
9. To help them understand that new insights are necessary if they are to test their own prejudices and to help them overcome their blindspots and fears. New insights demand deeper commitments.
10. To lead them to appreciate that a good scriptural and theological background is essential for ministry, and especially team ministry.
11. To prepare them to live in multi-cultural communities it is important to have at least a basic theological background for community discussion and sharing. (The Congregation too will eventually be enriched by each sister's insights and contribution to mission).
12. To prepare them for life after profession in small frontier communities, so that they may not only continue to read critically but also that they may continue to draw nourishment both for their quiet reflection and critical thinking. (See "Study as Prayer in Ministerial Formation", Review for Religious, Mattias Neuman, OSB., July-August, 1987).

Focus:

1. That courses contain the church's best scholarship and explain the message of the Gospel for the needs of the church and the world today.
2. That the faculty be competent and committed to the church's concerns for the poor and the marginalized.
3. That courses be taken in sequence.
4. That one member of the formation team with a theological background be directress of studies.
5. That those in formation choose their own courses with the guidance of the formator.
6. That regular integration sessions be held to help candidates in-

tegrate praxis and theory and appreciate the importance of theological studies for the overall formation program.

7. That training in good study and communication skills be stressed throughout the initial formation program.

Excursus:

All theology was spiritual theology until the fourteenth century. In the early centuries every theology took the form of what we call today a spirituality, i.e. a reflection carried on in the process of following Christ. This integrated approach inspired the work of Thomas Aquinas.

In the fourteenth century a divorce took place between theology and spirituality that was to be harmful to both. The energy of theological thought depends precisely on the spiritual experience that supports it, for one theologizes out of one's spirituality and one's spirituality in turn is nourished by one's theological insight. Theology is not heartless and prayer and praxis are not mindless! Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure and the great scholastics knew that theology could not be divorced from the experiential knowledge of God.

With the coming of the Enlightenment it was thought that absolute certainty could be found through science. This resulted in a split between thought and feeling, mind and heart. The radical surgery is reflected in the split between Christian thought (theology) and Christian living (spirituality). That split still continues to plague us. What earlier generations knew as a single way to God is now divided into two parts:

Knowledge/thought/theory
itinerarium mentis

love/prayer/action
itinerarium cordis

(b) INTEGRATION OF THEOLOGY AND SPIRITUALITY FOR FORMATION

Today, more than ever, we need a mystical theology, a contemplative wondering, articulated with a critical analysis of reality. Without theology there is little growth in insight, and without insight it is very difficult to be critical and reflective, to be present to mystery. Since our reflection is always personal it must be mediated through theology. In fact contemporary theology is speaking the same language as spirituality, a language of mystery, conversion and passing from death to life. A word of caution! Bad religion is infinitely worse than no religion, and bad spirituality is infinitely worse than none!

A serious commitment to planetary theology widens the scope of mission, moves us outside a Christian preoccupation and into a Kingdom vision.

Maura Dillon, SSC. Coordinator, Sisters for Justice, Dublin.

If we sit in a cocoon that is not available to the world at large, then what are we witnessing to - the insulating advantages of celibacy? The opportunity to spin more threads round the cocoon

with courses that are about introspection rather than about facing ourselves and readying ourselves to face the pain of the world?
 Seamus Farrell, "Annual General Address", Irish Mission Union, 1987.

3.

PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Purpose:

1. To direct our young women through the various stages of discernment so that they can make a free decision in faith on their future commitment.
2. To support them in their personal growth and as they progress in their ability to articulate their experience to God.
3. To help them give a profound unity to their prayer, thought and ministry so that they can gradually learn to harmonize their presence in the world with their presence of God.
4. To direct them to engage in a new and revelational encounter with the divine in and through women's experiences.
5. To guide them to create space for solitude in their lives.
6. To help them understand that faith is a gift that is never bestowed in finished form and that maturity in faith is dependent on, or strongly conditioned by the individual's overall personal and psychological development.
7. To facilitate their ability to come to terms with the adult challenges of psychological growth which are the result of a long process.
8. To help them understand that pluralism calls for the ability to live with ambiguity.

Focus:

1. To avail of Clinical Pastoral Education programs, psycho-spiritual workshops and psycho-sexual development seminars.
2. To contextualize retreats, days of recollection and to offer a long desert experience to sisters after prolonged immersion in ministry among the poor.
3. To ensure that liturgies, community prayers, and spiritual direction take place, not in a social vacuum but in the context of the reality of the lives of the poor and marginalized.
4. That vowed life be presented as a prophetic witness against the chief perversion of the basic energies of possession, affectivity and power. Concretely this demands responsible stewardship, responsible intimacy and commitment to freedom and justice for all.

Growth, development, deepening, seeking meaning, espousing values, choosing directions for life, moving toward self-transcending love . . . are always located within a network of influences, some of them conscious, many of them buried in the unconscious or in a historical past of which we have little or no memory. . . At times, real reconciliation within the personal story is necessary before a person can handle the newness of the corporate story.

Poets, Prophets and Pragmatists: A New Challenge to Religious Life, Evelyn Woodward, pp. 178-179

4.
COMMUNITY LIVING

Purpose:

1. To experience the sharing and caring of community members and to support others in community.
2. To come to the gradual realization that community is process, the process of becoming united through the common experience of a core vision, for community is constituted by the compound of common experience, common understanding, common judgment and common commitment.
3. To realize that community life is at the service of mission.
4. To appreciate the fact that religious life evangelizes by itself. It is a life, (J. Metz). Its concern is to bring about the kingdom.

Focus:

1. To understand our communion of life as needing a common vision rather than being an emotional unity.
2. To provide flexible community structures so that we do not impose uniformity of lifestyle, daily mass and prayer schedules, dress etc. on our young women from the time of entrance for unity is about unity in variety.
3. Not to confuse the essence of community with the structures that sustain it.
4. To become aware of placing so much emphasis on being in community that we neglect the ministry which is our energized response to our vision.
5. To recognize the defense mechanisms and obstacles that hinder the creation of a communion of life.

5.
PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION

Purpose:

1. To prepare our young women professionally for the challenges of mission today: interfaith dialogue: frontier missions; facilitating lay people in mission; networking with church-sponsored and other human rights' groups; commitment to the cause of women; concern for ecology; the rapid increase of fundamentalism and the economic exploitation of the third world.
2. To provide them with skills for planning, programming, organizing etc. which are necessary for the functioning of groups, such as basic Christian communities, community based health programs, women's assertiveness training programs etc.
3. Since most of our candidates are coming from third world countries at present we need to prepare them for assuming leadership roles in the Congregation in the future.

Focus:

The following courses should be included on our curriculum: Anthropology, Sociology, Critical Theory, Liberation Theology, World Religions, Feminist Studies.

Good will, though admirable and necessary is not sufficient; mission is a serious undertaking to challenge and interfere with the lives of others, and it must be undertaken with caution and empathy. A serious study of secular as well as sacred sciences, especially anthropology, psychology and linguistics is fundamental preparation for anyone intending to spend prolonged periods in someone else's culture. And an understanding of social change is basic for anyone presuming to operate as an agent of such change.

Anthony Gitting CSSP, SEDOS, June, 1987.

The great intellectual adventure of Christianity in this century has been its exposure to the critical currents of Western thinking (including Marxism). Its next adventure will be a full-scale confrontation with the traditions and mentalities of the East.

Beyond Metaphysics, Joe O'Leary, 1987, p.207

A SUGGESTED PROGRAM FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF INITIAL FORMATION

POSTULANCY

Discernment of vocation does not take place in a vacuum. It needs frequent exposure to the pain and problems of the poor, as well as the on-going study of and reflection on the scriptures and the church's tradition. The needs and expectations of candidates should be considered in the selection of courses.

- June - October:**
1. Ministry: Weekly exposure to and involvement in ministry among the poor and marginalized.
 2. Courses: Introductory courses: History of Philosophy, Introduction to the Old Testament. Introduction to Theology, Sociology (11 units).
- October - December:** Clinical Pastoral Education Program.
- January - May:**
1. Prolonged, supervised immersion in ministry.
 2. Analysis of immersion experience, reflection, retreat.

FIRST YEAR NOVITIATE

- June - October:**
1. Ministry; Weekly supervised involvement in ministry. Since we are now moving out of institutionalized ministries in the Philippines, experience in creative ministries should also be provided.

2. Courses: Introduction to the New Testament, Psalms, Ecclesiology, Religious Psychology. (11 units)

November - March: 1. Ministry: Weekly supervised ministry continues.

2. Courses: Johannine Literature, Christology, Missiology. (8 units).

March - May: Reflection, retreat, vacation.

SECOND YEAR NOVITIATE

June - October: 1. Ministry: Exposure to human rights' organizations women's groups, ecology groups etc. to experience the importance of networking. This experience will help our young women appreciate that through pooling our energies in the church, more creativity is generated than could ever result in our separate efforts.

2. Courses: Church History, Sacraments, Prophets. (9 units).

November - March: 1. Ministry: Weekly exposure to the above organizations continue.

2. Courses: Liturgy, Systematic Theology, Moral Theology. (9 units).

March - May: A brief immersion program followed by a long period of solitude and immediate preparation for first profession.

Notes:

(1) On-going, periodic evaluation of all aspects of the formation program by the Formation team and those in formation is needed. The flexibility of the program at all levels depends on the availability of the experience of ministry, course offerings and the individual needs of the members.

(2) This program is drawn up for the Philippine region, keeping in mind the Philippine school calendar, the availability of courses and the opportunities for experience in ministry. It therefore needs to be adapted to other settings.

"DOING THEOLOGY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT"

Albert Nolan, OP.

(We are grateful to Willi Van Frankenhuijsen, SMA. and David Regan, CSSp. for their notes of Albert Nolan's talk given to a packed audience on March 8, 1989 at the Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, Rome. (see SEDOS Bulletin Vol. 21, No.3, March '89, p.107).

Introduction

People sometimes ask me: "What do you do in South Africa?" and my answer is: "I do theology". They ask again: "But what do you do about Apartheid?" My answer is again: "I do theology". When they insist: "Yes but what do you do to get into prison?" My answer remains: "I do theology."

I do my theology in the Institute of Contextual Theology in Johannesburg. The I.C.T. was founded in 1980 to develop a truly South African Theology, a theology not imported either from Europe or the USA or Latin America, a theology which starts from our situation of oppression and conflict. The Institute is independent of any particular Church tradition, yet it is Christian. This gives us the freedom to explore whatever we want and in whatever direction we want and it is this freedom which made the KAIROS Document possible. The I.C.T. was created to allow people to say what they really believe.

The I.C.T. is not a teaching institute. It is an office with an office staff. Its members go out to people and groups of all kinds - theologians, priests and ministers, youth, women, trade unionists, development workers, and others, helping them to do their own theology. We do not come forward with a theology based on a set of doctrines which we then teach with a precise methodology. The kind of theology that emerges is of various kinds: Black Theology, Feminist Theology, Youth Theology, a Workers' Theology made by the workers themselves, a Theology of ministering in crisis situations, a Prophetic Theology, the KAIROS Theology ...

WHAT IS CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGY?

In its origin all theology is contextual, as are the various theologies of the Bible. Historical circumstances gave rise to different faith questions and the answers to these questions produced the different theologies of the Bible. Biblical studies began to use textual criticism and to become aware of cultural elements in the Bible. Various contexts in biblical times produced various theologies, - Wisdom literature, Priestly, Prophetic, Court or Monarchical thinking. Different contexts produced and were seen to have produced different theologies, - Johannine, Pauline, Marcan. The contexts were not just local communities but placed the bible texts in life contexts which included social, political and economic backgrounds. I shall give you some examples of the contextual origin of various theologies.

Patristic Theology The context, particularly that of the Greek Fathers, was monasticism. It started from the theological questions of monks, celibate men. Even if afterwards they became bishops and faced the problems of rich and poor people, they still looked at these from the point of view of a monastery, not from being themselves inserted in 'The World'.

Augustine was preoccupied with the situation created by the fall of the Roman Empire into the hands of the "barbarians". His theology is permeated by this context. (The City of God).

Scholastic Theology arose within the context of the Medieval University which faced the problem of accommodation to the philosophy of Aristotle. The questions which this problem posed are not our questions anymore.

The Theology of the Manuals (Neo Scholasticism) had as its context 19th century seminaries and the questions that for clerics called forth by the Tridentine seminary system of clerical education. The manuals tried to equip the future priest with all he would need in terms of dogma for preaching and catechising and all the (casuistic) moral theology he would need for the confessional. It was a theology centred largely on the sacraments.

European and North American Theology starts from the question "How to live in a secularized society?" This is not the question I grapple with in South Africa. Ours is "How to live in a racist society?"

These few examples illustrate the point that all theology is contextual in its origin. Unfortunately, not all theology is aware of this. Hence problems arise when we take a theology which arose in one context, and teach it in another. Students are given answers to questions they did not ask while the questions which they do ask in their own context are largely ignored. If we make the transfer at all, we should explain what the original question was, otherwise we may fail to see how brilliant was the answer! So we try to do in our context of South Africa what other theologies tried to do in theirs.

UNIVERSAL THEOLOGY?

If we lose the awareness that all theology is contextual in its origin we develop the illusion that a particular theology is universal. Let me give some examples.

Black Theology is contextual because it is conscious of the fact that it is an attempt to do theology from a context of a black experience of oppression. Most other theology is "white", starting from a white experience, but it has the illusion of being universal.

Feminist Theology is contextual, starting from the experience of women in a world dominated by men. All other theology is in fact masculine, constructed by men, answering questions posed by men, from a perspective of men, in the context of a world of men. But men are oblivious of this fact and think that their theology is universal, applicable equally to women and men alike. They would not dream of calling

their theology a "Masculine Theology".

African Theology, arising from a context of African experiences, faces the problem that Western Theology is oblivious of the fact that it is Western and assumes that it is the only possible way of doing theology.

Contextual theology is one in which the theologian is fully aware that he or she is facing faith-questions out of a particular context. Those who do theology or have ever done it without being aware of the context which conditions or conditioned their thinking, always imagine that they were engaged on a universal theology.

Syncretism? To what extent is contextual theology syncretistic - mixing local ("pagan"?) cultural elements in with the Gospel message received?

The word "Syncretism" is loaded and Western. It presupposes that it is possible to have the "pure Gospel" without any cultural elements. The problem is that our Western cultural faith cannot mix with African or other cultures. We have so identified the faith with our Graeco-Roman packaging that we cannot see how it can accept elements of another culture on equal footing, and of course, as long as we present the question in those terms and as long as we identify "Catholic Faith" with our culturally determined theological package, it is indeed impossible.

Independent African Churches are accused of syncretism by Western theologians, but are they aware of how much syncretism exists within the Western Churches?

Is not Western theology Syncretistic? Are there no "pagan" cultural elements from a pre-Christian past mixed in with the Gospel received? The illusion is that I can deal with Christian ideas which drop out of the sky free of any context, "revealed". All ideas originate in some cultural context and all words to express ideas, are similarly products of a culture which determines their meaning.

HOW DO WE TEACH CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGY?

We start from life instead of from ideas, from practice instead of from theory, from a context instead of from abstractions.

We try to teach the skills to do one's own theology. We help people in their own context to ask faith questions and to grapple with them. Our method does not consist of teaching theology as if we were giving a kind of "bank deposit". It does not mean that this theology involves less study, research and reading. Rather it demands more. The student must study in the Bible how the Prophets, Jesus and the Apostles, and in Tradition how the Fathers of the Church and theologians theologised.

One need not be an academic to do theology. All that is required is faith and a mind. We must convince people that they can do their own theology, that they are not constrained to ask professors for questions and answers. As they go on they may well need to get resources, to consult experts.

Priests and ministers can only do their pastoral work effectively if they can do practical theology. I shall illustrate the process with

just two examples.

Sacrament of Penance How do I teach this Sacrament of Reconciliation contextually? We begin by asking what exactly happened with regard to Confession after Vatican II? Why people stopped going to confession? What kinds of sin do people confess and what kind do they never think of confessing? Why people feel the need to go to confession? The experience which most people had of confession was of something terrifying - what ought it to be?

The next step is to go back to the origin of confession. In what context did auricular confession originate? Is the Irish monastic context of the emergence of auricular "private" confession well known?

Then come the practical questions: What do people need? What can we do to meet those needs?

Sin How do we do theology around the topic of sin? The first step is to ask the questions. What do people understand by sin today? Why do people not use the term "sin" to speak of evils that they feel strongly about such as sexism, authoritarianism, injustice and oppression? Why on the other hand has sin become almost synonymous with sex as is clear from expressions like "living in sin" and "loss of virtue"? Why is it enough to mention the word "sin" to bring conversation about any topic to an end?

The next step is to go back to the original meaning of sin in the Bible and in early theology and find out how sin came to be connected almost exclusively with sex, murder and telling lies.

Then comes the question: How can we use it today in a way that makes us aware of what God has always wanted to tell us?

Doing Theology Our aim is to help the student do theology rather than simply learn theology, that is to learn the theology that someone else did in a context different from that of the student himself or herself.

What I must do is help people to acquire the skills needed for doing theology. One good starting point is to learn from the way in which others before us did their theology in their own contexts: The Prophets, Jesus, Paul, Mark, etc.

The pre-requisite for doing theology is to have faith and to have an average mind. Theology is within the reach of ordinary Catholics and they should be taught how to do it, how to think theologically about the new questions which arise, and the old questions which arise from our special situation of apartheid.

- end -

I

**YOUR WILL BE DONE
MISSION IN CHRIST'S WAY**

WORLD CONFERENCE ON MISSION AND EVANGELISM, CONVENED BY
THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES ON THE CAMPUS OF
TRINITY UNIVERSITY, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS, USA.
MAY, 1989.

Frederick R. Wilson

Once every decade the churches related to the World Council of Churches are invited to meet under the discipline of the Word of God to discern God's will for their mission in the years ahead. The San Antonio Conference stands in a line of world mission conferences that began in 1910.

(1) The Edinburgh Conference (1910), associated with the watchword "the evangelization of the world in this generation," is regarded as the starting point of the modern ecumenical movement. It was the first time that official representatives of the Protestant missionary societies had met together on such a large scale internationally and interdenominationally; the delegates, however, were mainly from the western world and were still largely influenced by a worldview formed in the nineteenth century. Mission was the announcement of the gospel to non-Christians, to the unbaptized.

This Conference led to the establishment in 1921 of the International Missionary Council, (I.M.C.).

(2) Jerusalem Conference (1928) The 1914-1918 war had destroyed the illusion of any identity between Christian faith and western civilization when the second missionary conference met near Jerusalem (1928). Growing secularization and the importance attached to the non-Christian religions, confronted the missionary movement with what seemed to be difficult choices: that the relationship between Christianity and other faiths is total discontinuity or that the other religions contained much of value which Christ fulfilled; to see the message of the kingdom as an invitation to attempt to realize the kingdom of God on earth or to see as primary its eschatological transcendent character.

(3) Tamparam (1938) The participants, more than half of whom were from the "younger churches," confronted a vastly different world. Militant paganism, in the shape of national socialism or fascism formed the background for the rediscovery of the church's identity as bearer of the gospel message. The relation of Christians, to persons of other faiths was a major debate.

(The provisional committee of the World Council of Churches was born in this period, and the IMC established contact with it).

(4) The Whitby Conference (1947), the first to be held following World War II, confronted the need to reconstruct the world on the ruins left behind by the conflict. The Whitby Conference spoke of "partners in obedience" rather than "mother

churches" and "younger churches", and regarded the missionary as an "agent of the universal Church".

(In 1952, 190 people met in Willingen. Missionaries had been expelled from China; Christians increasingly felt themselves to be in the minority. The ecclesio-centrism of Tambaram and Whitby was again called in question. It was no longer a matter of "our" mission but of God's.

At the IMC conference in Achimota (Ghana) 1957-8, the decision was made to integrate the International Missionary Council with the World Council of Churches. The formal integration was completed in 1961 at the New Delhi WCC Assembly. The IMC became the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) of the World Council of Churches.)

(5) The Mexico City Conference (1963), was the first CWME conference.

The theme "Mission on Six Continents," affirmed that every church, wherever situated, is in mission and raised the question of how to formulate the message of salvation for humankind today. At this conference there were Roman Catholic observers, and the Orthodox churches participated officially for the first time in a mission conference.

(6) The Bangkok Conference (1972-3), coming at the end of a period characterized by wars of liberation, by student revolt, by a certain optimism about the possibility of changing the status quo, gave expression to the theological theme of liberation, affirming the right of every Christian and every church to cultural identity. The theological imperialism of the west was sharply attacked, especially by the Africans, and the indissoluble connection between individual and social aspects of salvation was affirmed: to respond to Christ and his missionary call means being involved in the struggle for social justice, peace and a fully human life. The question of the structure of missionary relationships which would reflect genuine equality between partners was discussed and proposals made, ranging from a temporary "moratorium" to new forms of cooperation between churches.

(7) The Melbourne Conference (1980), convened under the theme, "Your Kingdom Come", produced important statements on the nature of the church.

Much attention was given to biblical study as to how boundaries are drawn within God's economy and how the "centre" is distinguished from what the world calls the "periphery." The conference declared in passionate terms that it was good news to the poor, that there is no periphery in God's reign. In Jesus of Nazareth the poor are promised the kingdom, the sinners are forgiven, women become part of the community, children are placed at the centre, the sick are healed. The extent to which this is equally good news for those who are materially rich was vigorously debated.

Christ's refusal to impose God's kingdom by his deliberate choice to give up equality with God, to become a Jew, a Galilean, to live among the poor and disenfranchised and to die a criminal's death -- all this raised major questions, which were only partially addressed, concerning the nature of power and how it may be used redemptively by Christ's disciples in their attempts to witness and serve the world.

(8) The San Antonio Conference will gather out of this history under the theme: "Your Will Be Done: Mission in Christ's Way". The setting for the San Antonio Conference is

exceptional. The United States of America in general and Texas in particular have come to symbolize to many precisely the definitions of power and success that are most directly confronted by the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

San Antonio is the largest city in the United States whose majority population is Spanish speaking. Located not far from the USA-Mexico border, the San Antonio community shares much of the stressful dynamism of the emerging "third culture" which distinguishes the border. The quality of ecumenism in the city is unique. This is well illustrated by two facts:

- (1) the moderator of the regional hosting committee for this conference is the ecumenical officer of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of San Antonio;
- (2) the opening public witness and celebration will be held on 22 May in the Trinity Southern Baptist Church, near the campus.

(Frederick Wilson is administrator, WCC Conference on Mission and Evangelism. He attended the SEDOS Seminar in April, 1988 where he spoke about the San Antonio meeting. The text is abbreviated due to pressure of space. Ed.)

II

THE CATHOLIC CONTRIBUTION

John Mutiso-Mbinda

NATURE OF CATHOLIC COLLABORATION

Catholic collaboration in the CWME World Mission Conference 1989 has to be seen within the wider framework of collaboration between the Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches which began in 1965 when the Holy See and the WCC established a Joint Working Group to coordinate cooperation between the two bodies.

An Historical Note. One could trace the beginnings of this collaboration to the period during the Second Vatican Council, 1960 - 1965, when the old walls of distance between the Catholic Church and the Protestant World were broken through the work of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (SPCU). After careful consultations, the SPCU, in June 1962 sent out invitations to the Christian World Communions e.g. Lambeth Conference of Bishops - Anglican, World Methodist Council, Lutheran World Federation, etc. and to the Eastern Orthodox and other separated Eastern Churches. In addition representatives of the WCC were also invited to the Council.

These contacts initiated relations that soon led to the active presence of the SPCU delegated observers at confessional and interconfessional gatherings. The present on-going collaboration with the World Council of Churches can be traced to these humble beginnings. Even before the end of the Vatican Council, the WCC was organizing its third Assembly in New Delhi in 1961 and its first CWME Mission Conference in Mexico in 1963. The Catholic Church sent official delegated observers to both events. Moreover, Vatican II's Decree on Missionary Activity

(Ad Gentes) provided more openings for discussion and collaboration in the missionary field.

Present Collaboration Relations through CWME have grown progressively through the years with the involvement of both women's and men's missionary communities in consultative relationship with CWME, and in 1984 the appointment of Sister Joan Delaney, MM to the CWME staff in Geneva. In coordinating these relations, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity has worked in close collaboration with the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. During his visit to the WCC headquarters in Geneva, June 12, 1984, Pope John Paul II pointed out that, "the engagement of the Catholic Church in the ecumenical movement is irreversible" and that "the search for unity was one of its pastoral priorities" (Information Service, N.55, 1984/II-III, p.39). This kind of engagement, as described by the Holy Father, has indeed coloured Catholic collaboration with the WCC particularly in the area of mission and unity because this is one area in which we share quite a lot in common, yet at the same time have much diversity both in theological understanding and approaches to mission.

Signals for Further Collaboration The Catholic approach to these relations and collaboration has therefore been quite positive, and for this reason the RC contribution in general has been very much appreciated. RC participation at the 1980 CWME Mission Conference in Melbourne is perhaps the best example of this positive contribution. The 15 member RC delegation made a substantial contribution to the Conference in both the theological input as well as the personal involvement of the individual members of the delegation. The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (which has replaced the old "Secretariat" in the recent Curial administrative changes) continues to take this collaboration seriously and hopefully this in turn gives signals to other collaborators in the Catholic Church including mission sending communities. This collaboration could become a good mirror, at times, showing our own mission styles and attitudes that need to be challenged in the light of our Church's commitment to the promotion of Christian Unity. That is why we have taken the theme of this CWME World Mission Conference, "Your will be Done: Mission in Christ's Way", not just like any WCC theme, but seriously as a theme that affects us too.

III

ROMAN CATHOLIC PREPARATIONS

These included events in SEDOS, the Conference of Major Superiors of Men in Rome (USG), Angelicum University, US. Roman Catholic Bishops, United States Catholic Mission Assoc. (USCMA), Vatican Radio, German Religious Broadcasting Service, Poster competition and Essay readings, Catholic Women's Club Geneva. These were articles in various RC. reviews and magazines, a very wide distribution of the Study Material and Biblical Reflection Booklet of the CWME, major meetings at the SPCU, USCMA, Study sessions on "My Neighbours Faith and Mine" (SEDOS) etc. etc.

FINAL PREPARATORY SESSION IN ROME

We ask members of SEDOS to join in a final preparatory session on the theme of the Conference at:

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL,
VIA NAZIONALE, 5, ROME, 5 - 7.30 p.m.
ON MAY 16, (SEE SEDOS BULLETIN, MARCH 1989, P.107).

And we ask all our members and the readers of SEDOS Bulletin to keep the San Antonio Conference in their prayers.

AFTER THE CONFERENCE

A follow-up Seminar will be held in Rome towards the end of June to hear from the Roman Catholic delegates at the Conference and to reflect together on what the Conference has meant. Details of date and place will be communicated to you in May '89.

(Fr. John Mutiso-Mbinda is on the staff of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Co. Secretary of the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches the body responsible for the Preparation of the World Council of Churches World Convocation on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation in SEOUL, 1990).

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EVANGELIZATION IN ASIA

KEYNOTE ADDRESS TO BIMA 1988

His Eminence Cardinal Stephen Kim Sou Hwan

(In his keynote address on the occasion of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference on Evangelization, held in Suwon, Korea in August, 1988 Cardinal Kim says he raises questions for Korea and also for the rest of Asia. We would add - and for other Churches too, beyond the boundaries of Asia. The first question is: How can we evangelize Korea in such a way that the Gospel enters hearts and transforms them - theirs and ours? And a second: How to make THE POOR the real option and center of our mission in today's world? He agrees that in their work of evangelizing they have to offer attractive, meaningful and challenging "alternative communities", "alternative ways of living, of relating and of providing service". If we fail in this, he says, "we will not evangelize our culture and society but our culture and society will domesticate us for their own limited purposes and within their frameworks". The Cardinal says that based on the criterion of numbers they are a success but in regard to Christlike living he has reservations. Ed.)

It is with great joy that I welcome all my brothers and sisters in Christ. I feel privileged to present the inaugural address at this Conference on Evangelization in Asia.

The very fact the Korea is hosting this Conference must have a spiritual impact on all of you. Throughout the Christian world, Korea is seen as a 'success story'. The increase in numbers, the growth of churches all over the country, the constant influx of students into our seminaries and the enthusiasm and active involvement of so many lay persons are all signs that contribute to the image of a living and successful Church.

In a sense, the upcoming Olympics could well be the secular symbol of our Korean Church, exemplified by growth, development, dynamism and energy. Perhaps, some of you have already considered the similarities between Church growth and economic progress.

Yet, to be truthful, I wish to share with you my own reflections on how the similarity can be misleading, to warn you about appearances and to explain to you our concerns about a so-called 'successful Church'. Are we really successful? Is the Kingdom of God coming to our people and entering the fabric of their lives and making them disciples? This is the question that I raise with myself and my fellow bishops, priests, religious and laity.

The exterior data of numbers, activities, new buildings and catechetical teams are here to be seen. However, that is the easy part. In all honesty, I am unable to explain why it is all happening. There is nothing so creative, so original or so genuine about our Church that can provide an explanation for the phenomenon of recent growth. Is it the fruit of the past? Is it the blood of the martyrs? Is it the result of our social involvement or the prayers of so many Christians who are

leading lives of dedication and service? Or, finally, is it rather a cultural-historical phenomenon at a particular juncture of history in this country? While leaving these global explanations to God's mysterious plans, we accept with humility our own inability to account for the events around us. Our responsibility lies somewhere else. It consists in perceiving the Word of God and in discerning the action of the Spirit and then applying the fruits of that reflection to our living situations.

Many enter the Catholic Church - true. But many also leave it disappointed or disoriented because we were not able to guide them into deeper waters of prayers and life. Many are baptized and become quite fervent and devout - also true. But is this enough for us? Is this what the Word of God tells us of the Church and its mission, its life and its fellowship with Christ?

I have to confess that there are a few points that disturb me both as a Christian and as a Pastor in the Church. Whenever I read the Gospel I hear again an invitation to BE IN CHRIST, TO GROW IN CHRIST. I perceive there our mission as one of MAKING DISCIPLES who will follow Jesus in his actions, his words and his compassion, with a love that goes even to the Cross. It is a mission of transformation of peoples and communities, not just baptizing and adding to the numbers. And I see Jesus showing us the way of the poor, making them and their joy at hearing the Good News one of the key signs of the coming of his Kingdom.

All this disturbs me somehow, because looking back at our Church. I can see that we are still a long way from making the Word operative in this way. Many of our lapsed Catholics are telling us that much of the good seed is falling on rocky ground where it sprouts quickly with joy but, being shallow, it quickly dies.

It also appears to me that our everyday living does not express the depth and commitment of true Christian faith. We excel at singing in the liturgies, at contributing to any project launched for Church action, at devotions and prayers. But I keep asking myself: How much justice, how much tenderness and compassion do we exchange among ourselves and, by our actions, contribute to injecting these values into our country and its structures? How is 'disciplehood' lived and expressed in our families, work, academic circles, decisions in the public sphere ... even in our own clerical world?

Jesus was always near the poor and the sinners and at his contact they changed. It is not hard for us to be near sinners - the question might be how much our contact helps them really to change. But the poor - where are we in regard to the poor? Most of us personally, as well as most of our institutions and services, are clearly geared to the middle class. My estimate would be that only about two or three per cent of our personnel and resources are dedicated to the poor. It is not infrequent to see Buddhist, Shamanist or Protestant presence in some of the poor urban quarters. But it is rare to see a Catholic presence in such sectors of the city. Albeit, we have some and these are doing excellent work. But I am not worried about the few. I am worried about our Church as a whole.

All this raises important questions for us here in Korea and also for all of you in the rest of Asia. These are questions of

evangelization and ministry, as well as questions of our own identity as the Church of Jesus Christ following in his steps.

1. The first question of HOW to evangelize our Asian peoples in such a way that the Gospel enters their hearts and transforms them - or better still, transforms us. How to facilitate their encounter with the Word of God, with the Spirit living in the Church in such a way that the totality of their lives is being directed by this encounter so that the new being, which St. Paul speaks about, emerges strongly and creatively in our vast continent.

This is an immense problem. It concerns our own depth, our experience of Christ and our ability to bring others to that experience. It touches our reading of the Scriptures and our capacity to surrender to its message. It refers to our readiness to die to ourselves so that the Kingdom of God, free from trappings and superficialities, can reach the core of the persons where feelings, attitudes, cultural values and social behavior move us to act and to commit ourselves.

2. The second question I have is: How to make THE POOR the real option and center of our mission in today's world? And further: How to center our life around the new poor when a whole country and culture are geared to economic success in an unstoppable race with neighboring Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, etc. Expressing it in drama of the present, "How can we truly rejoice with the losers of the Olympics?" Isn't this something that goes against the very grain of the present moment in Korea? Are we, the Church, here and elsewhere, going to be the voice of the poor, of the oppressed, of the losers - when everything around speaks of success, of control, of conquest, of a new wealth that, deceiving as it might be, still seems so near at hand? Here we have, I think, one of the major and most difficult challenges to the Church and its evangelization.

3. And finally the ongoing question: How can we become the living Church of Jesus Christ? How can we become a Church so committed to the ways and the life of the Lord that our very living becomes Evangelization? The more the Church grows, the more I am convinced that we need TO BE EVANGELIZED. Vatican II said it so clearly and stated that an evangelizing Church is one that is continually being evangelized.

When evangelization is founded on witness then the words explain and the gestures celebrate, but it is the radiation of the new life of the witness that makes the Church a focus of fascination and a source of attraction that ends only in God himself. We are never made fully into the Church. We are always in the process of becoming the Body of Christ. That is why we need the Eucharist to form and conform us to the Lord who made his whole life a living sacrifice, a gift for the others, the very personification of Love to the end. Seeing Jesus is seeing the Father. Coming in touch with his deeds and words is experiencing the Kingdom.

The fact that, in 1989, Korea will host the Eucharistic Congress is not only a recognition of the viability of the Korean Church but also provides us with the hope that, throughout our preparation for the Congress, we can instill into the hearts of our people a consciousness of what Christ calls us to be. That is that all of us absorb the contents of the Gospels and try to live as Jesus taught us.

We certainly have the words (to a certain extent, at least) and we have plenty of good gestures. However, we need to deepen our witness to life. We have to offer, in Father Lohfink's terms, attractive, meaningful and challenging 'alternative communities', 'alternative ways of living, of relating and providing service'. If we fail to offer this new creation, this 'alternative and different' way of life, then we will continue to increase in our midst the influence of secularism at the same pace that we grow in numbers. We will not evangelize our culture and society but our culture and society will domesticate us for their own limited purposes and within their frameworks. That is why I have presented the reality of the Church in Korea.

As regards numbers, we are a success, but in regard to Christ-like living I have some reservation. There is a challenge facing the Church in Asia and we have to be aware of the facts otherwise we may end up like the empty churches in the Western world.

It has been a positive opportunity for me to address the members of the Conference and I hope that, through your mutual sharing of experiences, we in the Korean Church may learn from you and you from us and that all of us may face the question which the Lord is presenting to us.

Ref. East Asian Pastoral Review, Vol. XXV, No.4, 1988.

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SOUTH AFRICA:

EVANGELISTIC GROUPS AND MISSION THEOLOGY

(In July 1986 a booklet called *Evangelical Witness in South Africa* appeared. At first sight nothing to catch one's attention really, until you see that it is a critique of evangelism in South Africa by evangelists themselves. Below we reprint a small section of this booklet which was signed by 132 black evangelists.

We call your attention also to another article dealing with this topic: *The Prosperity Message in the Eschatology of Some New Charismatic Churches* by Allan Anderson and *A Response to Allan Anderson* by Takatso Mofokeng, in *Missionalia* - Vol. 15, No. 2, 1987).

One unique thing about evangelicals is that they believe in undertaking mass evangelistic campaigns, in tents, stadiums, etc., and revival services in the churches. They are committed to the "Great Commission" as they call it, to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mark 16: 15). They are committed to making disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all that the Lord commanded them to observe (Matt 28: 18-20). They take the promise of the Lord seriously that when the Holy Spirit has come upon them they shall be His witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Because of this commitment they have formed evangelistic crusades, associations and groups to undertake this mission. One would think of Billy Graham's Evangelistic Association, Jimmy Swaggart's Ministries, Oral Roberts' Ministries, Christ For All Nations, Rhema Ministries, Back to God Crusade, Africa Enterprise, and many others. The various evangelical and Pentecostal Churches and youth groups also have their own evangelistic groups for this purpose.

Although we are also committed to mission and evangelism of the world (albeit in a broader sense) we are concerned about the interests of some of these groups and their motivation to undertake this mission. Whilst we applaud and welcome their outreach drives, and their evangelistic ministry, praising God for the preaching of the gospel, we have, nevertheless some concerns to express about some of them.

MOTIVES FOR PREACHING THE GOSPEL

Although we are committed to preaching the gospel to extend the Kingdom of God we are concerned about the motives of many groups for undertaking evangelistic missions. Many evangelical Churches and evangelistic groups, especially those organized by whites (here or in the USA) preach the gospel to blacks to make them submissive to the oppressive apartheid system of South Africa. Some preach to blacks to make sure they do not steal from their bosses whilst they are responsible for underpaying them. In some cases bosses preach the gospel or invite

evangelists to preach the gospel to their black workers (employees) to make sure that they do not demand their rights as workers particularly as regards just pay. They preach to make workers feel that it is a sin to complain about unequal pay for equal work between whites and blacks.

But what is worse today is that most of these groups undertake these campaigns with the aim of combatting what they call "communism" or "terrorism." They are convinced that the western capitalist culture is a christian culture and that all forms of socialism which they call communist are atheistic and therefore anti-christian. Most American based crusades and American influenced crusades, for instance, see their mission as that of promoting the West against the East. Winning souls to capitalism has become equal to winning souls for Christ: to them the West is equal to the Church and the East the mission field.

For us who are brutalized by white Christians in South Africa, with the western tradition of oppression and exploitation, for us who are oppressed and exploited by white Christians who are supported by the so-called Christian West, for us who have been called 'communists' because we resisted apartheid and oppression, for some of us who have been detained in solitary confinement under the so-called "Terrorism" Act just for raising our voices against apartheid, for us this motive can only be seen to be coming from the devil. For us they must be held with suspicion, to question the particular interests of these groups.

We as "Concerned Evangelicals" have been outraged by the blatant way in which American evangelists like Jimmy Swaggart come here to South Africa in the midst of our pain and suffering, even until death, and pronounce that "apartheid is dead" simply because he addressed a multi-racial audience at Ellis Park Rugby stadium or maybe for a more serious reason of the need to support South Africa because it profits the West at our expense. To prove how Jimmy Swaggart really served the interests of this brutal apartheid system after the declaration of the State of Emergency on June 12, 1986, South African TV replayed his sermon for South Africans to justify the silencing of the oppressed majority in South Africa and declaring a news black-out to be able to kill and detain without being monitored by the international community.

In his sermon he called on South Africans to promote and defend what he called western civilization, western freedoms and democracy. Many black South Africans were outraged by this sermon and the arrogance of a foreigner who comes to tell us that apartheid is dead when we know that it is alive and well, and that it kills.

We are also concerned, in the same way, about the sermons of preachers like Kenneth Hagin and Ray MacCauly which assume the same tone presenting white South Africa as almost the chosen one of God to fight against "communism". One could go on with many others here at home. It is for this reason that young evangelicals in Soweto have protested against some evangelistic missions in Soweto (like that of Ray MacCauly and Rhema) not because they are against the mission, per se, but because of the outrageous motives which hurt blacks in this country.

We are concerned that some of these groups are blatantly capitalistic and materialistic. They preach the gospel of prosperity claiming that this "blessed" capitalism is from God by faith if one believes the Scriptures, confesses them and claims possessions (material). What a

false "God of materialism". This sounds like real idolatry of mammon!

Actually we "the Concerned Evangelicals" feel that these sorts of groups benefit from apartheid! The riches of whites created by apartheid, at the expense of blacks are "blessed" by these groups as gifts from God received by faith. Many of those who claim these blessings of material possessions acquire such at the expense of others, particularly the black exploited worker of South Africa whose exploitation is made possible by apartheid.

THE ORIGINS OF THESE GROUPS ARE SUSPECT

EUROPE AND USA

One thing that has become clear nowadays is the fact that most, if not all of these groups, originate from outside South Africa, that is either from Britain, Europe or the USA. Usually the origins of these evangelistic groups, seem to us, to be suspect regarding their theological basis for mission and evangelization of the world. For instance, their prominent evangelists are often, if not always, whites, who claim they are called by God for Africa, in particular for South African blacks. Some questions arise in our minds. "Are whites the only people who are nearer God, and therefore can easily hear God call them to His ministry, or detect God's call to minister to blacks in Africa?" Are the black people the only sinners on earth, to warrant such a flood of white missionaries and evangelists from America?

White Domination Often these groups are dominated by white Christians. Their committees are unbalanced as to their racial composition. Even if they had a black majority it would be a token one whilst the influence and decision making authority remains with whites. Ideas, structures and policy are determined, both psychologically and practically by white Christians. And because of this domination of whites, who have no understanding of the happenings in the black townships, their evangelistic mission has been disastrous and in some cases aborted in the townships.

SUPPORT FOR APARTHEID

We are distressed when we notice that these groups are ready supporters of apartheid and its apartheid officials. Some Christian (born again) soldiers get involved in South African Defense Force shootings in our townships, and give testimonies of a Christ inspired victory over "communists" during church services. We regret their claim to the same faith as us, their prey! Some even prophecy that God is on the side of white racist South Africa, giving them a message of hope for victory against the blacks in this country.

Almost all of them practice apartheid. They hold separate services, for "different race groups" for mythical claims of language and cultural difference as though all whites speak the same language! Are there no Portuguese, Afrikaners, or French? But the most blatant symbol of support for apartheid South Africa and American values is the two flags which are hoisted at the Rhem Centre in Randburg, Johannesburg. Blacks who tried to go to the Centre have been greeted by the American

and South African flags rather than the flag of the Kingdom of God.

This shows the degree of insensitivity of evangelical groups and their ignorance about the attitudes of most blacks in the townships. It seems that business people will always be ahead of us in terms of marketing skills and techniques and we will always lag behind. The fact of the matter is that the flag of America symbolises "enemy number one" in the minds of most blacks in the townships whilst that of South Africa is an insult to their humanity and dignity. It is for this reason that it is absolutely urgent to bring down those flags to replace them with the flag of the Kingdom of God for the sake of the gospel of the Lord in South Africa.

The tendencies we have referred to have made the preaching of the gospel in our country more difficult for those of us who are called into this situation. These tendencies have reinforced the perceptions of some blacks that God is a God of the white oppressors and that the Church is a western institution used by the western countries to keep blacks in subjugation. ...

Source: Extracted from the booklet *Evangelical Witness in South Africa (A Critique of Evangelical Theology and Practice by Evangelicals Themselves)*, South Africa, July 1986.

Ref. *Idoc Internazionale*, Vol. 19, No.1/88,
via Santa Maria del'Anima, 30, 00186 Roma.

"Your Will Be Done
Mission in Christ's Way"

The theme is a prayer that the will of God may be done on earth. The WCC invites Christians around the world to explore God's will for the reconciliation of all things in Christ.

The theme is a reminder that Jesus Christ fully reveals and does God's will. It calls us with a new urgency to mission and evangelism in Christ's way. We are called to respond in obedient action.

The Conference will bring together, on the campus of Trinity University, some 600 persons, the majority nominated by WCC member churches worldwide.

What Can You Do?

- Pray for the conference.
- Study the suggested biblical texts.
- Form a group to respond to the themes and issues.
- Contact delegates from your area to share your views with them, and to seek their reporting back after the conference.

For study materials and information, write to **World Conference on Mission and Evangelism WCC/CWME**, P.O. Box 66, CH - 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland

World Council of Churches

WORLD CONFERENCE

MISSION AND EVANGELISM

YOUR WILL BE DONE

Mission in Christ's Way

A SEMINAR AND ECUMENICAL PRAYER SERVICE

in preparation for the

SAN ANTONIO CONFERENCE

will be held on

TUESDAY 16 MAY

from 5. to 7.30 p.m.

at the Church of

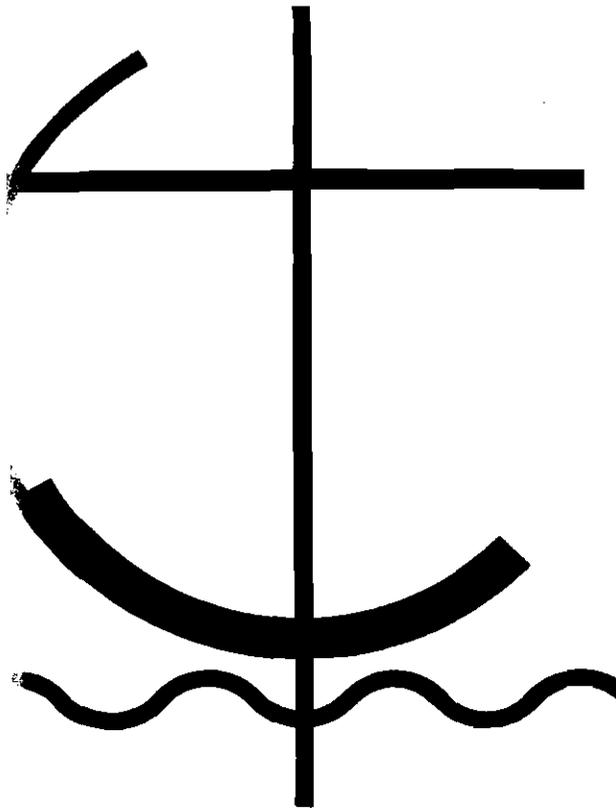
ST. PAUL'S WITHIN THE WALLS,

(Anglican - Episcopal)

Via Nazionale at the corner
of Via Napoli, Rome

The Seminar and Prayer Service is being prepared by Rev. Edward Todd, pastor of St. Paul's and Rev. Luke Dempsey OP of the Angelicum University with the assistance of the Roman Catholic consultants to the Conference, Sedos and other groups in Rome.

Please join us on May 16th.



22nd May - 1st June 1989
San Antonio, Texas, USA