

acknowledges the call of the desert for a life of prayer and contemplation but believes the biblical God is a God of the city and the truly sacred place of the biblical world is the urban place. Placed side by side with the two telling charts of world urbanization his article is important for an understanding of where formation for mission should take place today.

There are items of news and coming events which we draw to your attention.

NEWS

COMMITMENT TO ACTION

In accordance with the commitment made at the recent RESEARCH SEMINAR ON MISSION held at Villa Cavalletti on March 20-24 SEDOS Secretariat has mailed Italian, French, and Spanish translations of the conferences given at the SEMINAR to all SEDOS members who have requested them. We are very grateful to the member societies of SEDOS who made this possible and especially to the translators:

SR. CLAIRE BELANGER of the MISSIONARY SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF AFRICA for translations into French;

FR. LINO MOROSINOTTO of the COMBONI MISSIONARIES for translations into Italian;

Sisters MERCEDES MENDIGUCHIA and MARIA TERESA DEL AMO of the SISTERS OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF BORDEAUX for translations into Spanish.

SEDOS MEMBERS' GENERAL CHAPTERS. The following members are holding General Chapters during the coming months:

SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR; FRANCISCAN MISSIONARIES OF MARY; MARYKNOLL SISTERS; MARYKNOLL FATHERS AND BROTHERS; RELIGIOUS OF THE SACRED HEART OF MARY. We send them our good wishes and prayers.

HAITI UP-DATE MEETING was held at SEDOS Secretariat on Monday, May 14. FR. ANTOINE PAULO, OMI, President of the Haitian Conference of Major Superiors brought us up to date on the present situation in Haiti.

COMING EVENTS

HEALTH IN A SEARCH FOR WHOLENESS. This one day seminar will be held on Wednesday, June 13, 1990. Registration forms have been mailed to all members. Please return these as soon as convenient, if possible by May 31.

THE FIFTH CENTENARY OF LATIN AMERICA

Carlos Pape, SVD

There is no doubt that the Fifth Centenary is an event which interests all the countries of Latin America. In a different way it also concerns Europe, especially Spain, Portugal and Italy, Christopher Columbus' country of origin. This event is significant also for many countries of the so called "Third World". Like Latin America they are still affected by the problems caused by foreign conquest, subordination and a colonial past. For these reasons, the five hundred years since the 'discovery' and evangelization of Latin America are of interest not only to the Church, but also to those seeking a historical and politico-cultural understanding of the event.

In Italy the project "1992: Five Hundred Years Since the Conquest" was launched in 1987 by the International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples. Its aim is to make a critical evaluation of these five hundred years of history. There are similar projects in Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, France and Spain.

Different Perspectives

The event is difficult to interpret because it involves complex historical, cultural, religious and political aspects. Any interpretation of this event will generally be conditioned by the speaker and the angle from which the problem is studied. It may be seen from the perspective of:

- the Iberian peninsula of Spain and Portugal or from the perspective of the Latin American Republics;
- the Third World or the First World;
- the conqueror who 'discovers' and takes possession of a territory belonging to others and calls it

new, or from below, from the standpoint of the conquered and subdued Indigenous peoples;

- the different views about evangelization etc.

Official Statements:

a. Pope John Paul II

Already in 1983, from the Diocese of Puerto Principe in Haiti, the Pope invited us to celebrate this Fifth Centenary. He called for "a new evangelization, new in its enthusiasm, in its forms and expression" (Statement at the XIX Assembly of CELAM).

In Santo Domingo, the following year, the Pope inaugurated a preparatory 'novena' to give impetus to this new evangelization. He wanted to imbue the whole continent through the novena with "an intensive spirituality". On that occasion the Pope looked to the past and adopted the statement which Pope Leo XIII made concluding the celebrations of the fourth centenary of Columbus' arrival in South America. He spoke of the designs of Divine Providence that guided the "event that was *per se* the greatest and most marvelous among human deeds", (Letter of 15 July 1892; Osservatore Romano, English Edition, 19 Nov, 1984, p.5). He exhorted that the past be re-read as a past both of "sin and grace". He referred to "a certain legend" which for some time marked not a few historical studies and which concentrated primarily on aspects of violence and exploitation which occurred in civil society during the period which followed the discovery. He added that political, ideological, and even religious prejudices had presented the history of the Church

on this continent negatively."

Considering this past, Pope John Paul II reiterated that "the Church wishes to approach the celebration of this centenary with the humility of truth; without triumphalism or false modesty; looking only at the truth in order to give thanks to God for successes and to learn from mistakes in order to be renewed in its approach to the future. The Church does not wish to ignore the interdependence that existed between the cross and the sword... but neither does it wish to forget that the spread of Iberian Christianity brought to the new people the gift of the Christian faith inherent in the origins and development of Europe" - (Osservatore Romano, English Edition, 19 November 1984, pp. 5-6).

b. PUEBLA

The Bishops at Puebla wished the Centenary celebrations to be "free of triumphalism and not without modesty".

"The birth of peoples and cultures is always dramatic, a mixture of light and shade. Evangelization too, in its human dimensions is subject to the vicissitudes of history. The evangelization that went into the making of Latin America is one of the key chapters in the history of the Church." It was spurred on by all the contradictions and lacerations of those founding epochs and immersed in a gigantic process of domination and cultural growth that has not even yet come to an end. (*Puebla and Beyond*, Orbis Books, 1979, p.124).

Puebla goes on to point out that in its work of evangelization the Church had to bear the weight of its mistakes, its acts of complicity with earthly powers, its incomplete pastoral vision and the destructive force of sin. We must recognize however that evangelization, which has made Latin America a "continent of hope", more than outweighs the

dark shadows that unfortunately accompanied it in the context of the times in which it took place.

c. CELAM

In their message of the 22nd Ordinary Assembly of CELAM, March 1988 the Bishops stated: "In this preparatory phase of the Fifth Centenary of the Evangelization of America we perceive the need to be realistic and to look objectively and steadily at the different events which have set their seal on the present. If, on the one hand we must remain detached from a sort of triumphalism which suffocates pastoral forces, on the other we feel we must not succumb to inertia and fearful pessimism".

In this spirit the bishops took stock of the most urgent current problems, - violence, social injustice, the proliferation of sects, the foreign debt, - and asked that the Church be a united witness, praying, evangelizing, supportive, reconciling and united to the Pope. Keeping in mind that America is a continent of young and poor people, the bishops conclude by saying: "Let us look forward with hope to the forthcoming celebration of 500 years of the evangelization of America which urges us to renew our faith and to redouble our commitment to the People of God".

The Perspective of Latin American Religious

In its much discussed *WORD and LIFE* Project, CLAR invites the heads of the religious congregations which arrived in Latin America 500 years ago bringing both the cross and the Bible, to participate in the celebrations for the Fifth Centenary of the evangelization of Latin America. The proclamation of the Gospel message was subordinated then to powerful interests, they say. Alliances were made which subjugated entire peoples by the might of the sword although some were loyal to the gospel impulses.

CLAR identifies itself with a celebration of "repentance and atonement" for these 500 years. To make this more effective, in June 1989 it published a book entitled: "Nueva Evangelización: Formación". Substantiating its position CLAR believes that it is impossible to remain neutral in the face of historical facts which have important consequences. The context of these events is interpreted differently depending on how one approaches the facts. These are ideologically conditioned and interwoven whether consciously or not. The same will apply today to the celebration of the 500 years of Christian presence on American soil. The context may be read to favour triumphalistic celebrations reaffirming the continuity and coherence of an effective historical process of evangelization or it may be read to support a critical and repentant attitude towards a past seen to contain not only highlights but also shadows. CLAR, in adopting this critical approach, has met with opposition and difficulty.

A Praxis for Liberation in the XVI Century

Las Casas had elaborated a praxis for liberation in the XVI Century. One cannot speak of the 500 years since the discovery, conquest, and evangelization of America, without recalling his testimony. In 1552 he published his famous "Bravisima Relación de la Destrucción de las Indias", a book which certainly contributed to make the "leyenda negra" remembered. He wrote:

"God in his goodness chose me ... to go among those peoples whom we call Indios, the owners of those lands and Kingdoms and to concern myself with the abuses, the evils and the deprivations - the like of which have never been heard or seen, - which they have suffered from us Spaniards, contrary to all reason and justice, and to lead them back to the primitive freedom of which they have been unjustly stripped, to

liberate them from the violent destruction which they still suffer today".

Las Casas never doubted the Pope's authority to grant America to the King of Spain, - in fact no one doubted the Pope's supreme power to do this. He was convinced, however, that this concession was conditional on the Indios' conversion to Christianity. In practice, this process took two forms. The 'requerimiento', by which the Indios were invited to recognize both the King and the Pope as their sovereigns; and the 'encomienda', by which, when the Indios failed to accept the 'requerimiento', the conquerors maintained they had no choice but to enforce it by subjugating the indigenous population. This "encomienda" was invented to prevent the Indios from fleeing and to subject them to the 'encomendero' who was responsible for their conversion to Christianity.

Las Casas maintained that the Indios should be won over only by persuasion, not by force. This constituted the originality of his thought at that time. He rejected recourse to arms and thereby provoked the famous controversy about the human rights of the aboriginal peoples. In his famous disputation with Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in 1550-51, Bartolomeo actually defended insights which have only recently been included in missionary methodology.

"Neither anthropophagy nor the sacrifice of human victims to the Gods are offences which justify war, firstly because the number of cases is rare, secondly because such anthropophagy and immolation constitute an essential part of their religious rites Change of religion, even if it be conversion to the true one, is something that must not be taken lightly nor should it be imposed by force..."

In his opinion, the abuses committed during the conquest annulled

the validity of the Pontifical concession.

A Praxis for Liberation Today

Gustavo Gutiérrez examines the prophetic demands of yesterday and today taking Bartolomeo de las Casas' praxis as his starting point, he demonstrates the topicality of the major themes which emerged at the very beginning of evangelization in Latin America. The Dominican's great intuition consisted in "having seen the Indio to be the poor person of the Gospel". This constitutes the "force of his prophecy" and through it, las Casas found a way to understand current events in the Bible and in the perspective of the prophets. Las Casas speaks of the indigenous population in terms of "the flagellated Christs of the Indies". From this stems his insistence on the 'idolatry' of the Christians, meaning the 'idolatrous worship of wealth'. Las Casas responded to the theologian Ginés de Sepúlveda that he would express himself otherwise if he were indigenous! Authentic evangelization consists in seeing the Good News with the eyes of those who receive it.

The major themes of that XVI century, Gutiérrez observes, are still significant today. The poor of this continent continue to die young as the first missionaries had noted. We have much to learn both from the positive results and the errors of that century. The cry which comes from the people in their difficult situation as well as from the Gospel impels us to undertake a new evangelization today centered on that cry.

Europe's Collective Sin

Systematic accusation of the Spaniards for the crimes committed during the invasion and conquest of America has been a recurrent theme in recent history. Was Spain an exception? No. Colonization of the Third World is a collective sin for which the whole of Europe is respon-

sible. The well known 'leyenda negra' should not allow us to forget this. According to **Roberto Fernández Retamar**, the Cuban poet and essayist "the 'leyenda negra' sprang from an understandable rejection of the atrocities perpetrated by the Spanish conquerors in this continent. But anybody with a minimum regard for historical integrity would see the fallacy in this. That there were crimes, and heinous ones, is incontrovertible. When observed in an historical perspective however, they do not seem worse than those committed by the western powers who followed Spain with alacrity in these traumatic developments sowing death and destruction on all continents.

If anything distinguishes the Spanish conquest it is not so much the number of atrocities but rather the intensity of remorse. The conquests of other countries are not lacking in slaughter and destruction; but they lacked men like Bartolomeo de las Casas and the internal disputes which inflamed the Dominicans about the legitimacy of the conquest and of Spanish power. Such men, always a minority, were not able to impose their criteria. They succeeded however, in defending their criteria before the highest authorities; they were heard and in some measure they were followed.

1992: Europe's Indebtedness to Latin America

Europe has an appointment with history in 1992, the year which will mark the birth of the European Common Market. There is no doubt that America's 1492 is closely related to Europe's 1992. The wealth which flowed from America was responsible for the sociological development of Europe's "age of discovery" and marked the beginning of the colonial expansion of the different European nations. Behind this wealth and expansion lie the forced labour, the oppression and the slavery of millions of indigenous peoples and Black Americans. It has been estimated that

8 million Indians died in the Potosí mines of Bolivia in a century and a half. It is not a coincidence that slavery came to an end at the time of the industrial revolution, when machinery took the place of the manpower supplied by slaves. Only then did one become aware of the inhumanity of the "slave trade" which up to that time was considered to be legitimate. Slaves were the fuel which fed the productive machinery of European colonization.

In the chapter on "The Significance of the Latin American Conquest for Europe" in his *Cinque secoli di Evangelizzazione in America Latina*. E. Balducci describes how the cities of the empire grew rich, particularly the cities of Italy, Southern Germany and the Netherlands. Antwerp became a central network of the mercantile economy of the epoch and gave rise to a kind of fertile crescent similar to that of the Middle East where civilization had its origins. The fertile crescent of Europe has masked or eradicated the memory of its source in the extermination of Latin America but it evolved from that crime which was condoned and legitimized. The author stresses: "It must be remembered, not for the mere exercise of critical history, but because otherwise we shall not be able to re-evaluate Europe today" (p. 16). In this re-evaluation the author considers the following elements to be significant:

- Europe and the export of secularized modernity;
- Europe and its ideologies;
- Affluent Europe, arbitrator of the indebted Third World;
- Europe challenged by thousands of extra-community immigrants;
- Europe centre of the colonial Church of the past.

Colonial Domination Today and the Task of Liberation

Ignacio Ellacuría, the recently assassinated Rector of the Jesuit University of El Salvador, left us

some notes of an article he was writing on the 500th Anniversary. He writes: "We are aiming to collect the evidence of what happened to show to North Americans and to Europeans too, - in as much as they belong to the same civilization of western-Christianity - that their attitude to Latin America and the Third World in general, has not changed much with regard to what happened five centuries ago".

According to Ellacuría, North Americans and Europeans "disguise" reality. Their attitude is basically one of domination and oppression with a fine ideological veneer which is little else than a pure facade. In Latin America today other countries are doing what Spain did at that time. This should be exposed. "What has been happening over the past five centuries and continues today is a phenomenon of domination by some peoples, some cultures, some languages, some religions, over others. If we wish to be consistent, it is obligatory in our opinion, to make this Fifth Centenary Celebration (and all those to follow) one of liberation".

The real significance of the "Discovery" was that Spain discovered itself for what it really was - a conquering power. The rest was "covered up" - concealing the violation of the peoples of Latin America including their cultures, religions and languages.

Spain, in fact went to America to dominate and conquer, to expand its power and find new sources of wealth. Spain carried along its ideological framework and an ideologized version of the Church of Rome peculiar to that time. Just as every human endeavor has light and shadow so too this "collective and national" aim allowed ample scope for people whose intentions and actions differed from the main dynamics of the invasion process. But they too, were subordinated to the global objective of the conquest.

Even today, Ellacuría writes, "Powerful nations come and say they will make these countries 'rich' and 'democratic' ... but there is a concealed political and economic policy which is very different. It is not so evident when one looks within the frontiers of the dominant nations; one must look beyond their frontiers to see the effects of their policies of domination. We believe, therefore, that if the prophet, - in this case the Third World, - does not speak the truth to the First World, the First World will not be able to discern and discover its own true identity. On the contrary, it will continue to tell the Third World what it should do".

America Was Not Discovered but Invaded

This is the thesis developed by **Enrique Dussel**, the well-known Argentinian historian. "The structural oppression which still weighs on the people at the close of the 20th century is linked to the 'glorious conquest', - evangelization included. The original inhabitants of that time had a clear perception of what followed the "Discovery" - a foreign world of oppression, invasion, discord, slavery and the death of our American identity. The same event has had and still has two meanings and two opposing results".

"The Indios were free lords in this land. They were invaded, stripped of their possessions, oppressed and reduced to poverty. Nevertheless, they received the 'message', very often despite the missionaries. The crucified Christ, depicted bleeding in the Spanish baroque and still more copiously in the latin-american baroque, revealed to the Indios their affinity with the sacrificed Son.

"They experienced physically in their extreme poverty and total nudity - poor in the fullest sense of the word - the Cross which the Mis-

sionaries preached. The Christian 'doctrine' they learned by rote was no passive lesson but a creative reception of the Gospel from 'below' by the vanquished. Can the Fifth Centennial of such an Evangelization be celebrated? What ought to be done in 1992 is the recognition of the American Indio in history. I think that the great protagonist, absent from these preparations for the commemoration of that 12th October 1492 are the Indios themselves". *Descubrimiento o invasión de América in Concilium*, no. 220, Nov. 1988).

The Indigenous Cultures were not Evangelized

Another aspect which has aroused much feeling and discussion on the occasion of the fifth Centenary is the question of indigenous cultures. I quote the Bolivian historian **José M. Barnadas**: "For the most part the American Church has put into practice the missionary theory whereby conversion to the Christian God is valid only if all the other cultural elements which make up the pagan religious practices are left behind The autochthonous pagan culture must be replaced by the colonising Christian culture The statement that Christianity cannot be grafted onto the genuine Indian soul will scandalise all those who do not subscribe to this colonial context. One thing is certain: Indian Christianity has not succeeded in redefining the complex world of its culture starting from the Christian vision of the cosmos. Some individuals may have been evangelized but the majority merely adopted some of the Christian symbols while a minority opposed it vehemently; the culture of the group as a whole has not been Christianized Many see that the "Catholic colony and religion" have destroyed the ethnic coherence of the Indios ... The Church in Bolivia cannot discreetly avoid a public admission of its part in this literal genocide" (*La Iglesia Católica en Bolivia*. La Paz, 1976).

"The New Idolatry"

In recent years there has been an increasing number of statements and initiatives by Indigenous Indians and Afro-Americans condemning the "new idolatry" of celebrating the 500th Anniversary. We draw attention here to some significant extracts taken from the **Declaration of Santo Domingo** on 12 October 1989. This meeting took place where the Fourth General Assembly of the Latinamerican Episcopate will be held.

"For us the historical meaning of the Fifth Centenary is traced back to concrete identities and recognizable faces. We see the millions of faces of so many indigenous peoples invaded by Europe and turned into strangers on their own soil. And we see the faces of millions of Africans transplanted, exiled and brought to our land through the will of Europeans ... For 500 years these peoples have been rejected and marginalized, their identity always conflictual, yet they have continued to grow, to mature, to get in our way, to provoke us and to form part of us.

"Victims of the so-called 'spiritual conquest', we have lived through 500 years of a violent and deceitful evangelization which was bound to the colonial and neo-colonial powers. The Indios and African peoples were obliged to become Christian. They were overwhelmed by a theology of death and a spirituality oppressive of the body. Up to this day, the dominant system multiplies these idols of death: Today fraud, commerce, consumerism and sex, are the idols which suffocate life and culture.

"Fortunately, this type of evangelization has been unmasked by a liberating evangelization of our people. The oppressed but never vanquished, discovered the presence of the Gospel despite the harshness of Governments and Churches. They recog-

nized God as the One who listens to the cry of the oppressed".

What Kind of Celebration?

It is worth quoting **Mons. Leonidas Proaño**, Bishop of the Indios in Riobamba, Ecuador: "For the Indios the commemoration of the so-called 'discovery' cannot be either a motive for rejoicing or feasting. Rather, for them it represents a centuries long tragedy, a serfdom which has already lasted for 500 years, a continual undermining of their life, their values and their culture, a consciousness of being continually marginalized and humiliated. It may be summarized thus: while the Whites celebrate, the Indios mourn over the ethnocide, the destruction of their people. For this reason any enthusiastic celebration on account of Columbus' jubilee should be rejected. Any celebration at all will be a lie which will exacerbate the suffering of the oppressed Indios".

When asked for his opinion regarding these 500 years, **Mons. Tomas Balduino**, Bishop of Goiás, Brazil, stated: "Everyone sees in these 500 years something that should not be passed over and forgotten completely. However, there is a wide difference between those who want a triumphalistic commemoration and those who propose to use this opportunity to recognize the misdeeds that were committed in order to prevent such abuses from recurring in the future" (*Revista Solidaridad*, Oct. 1989, p. 34).

Another Latinamerican Bishop states: "This celebration should have a deeply critical character in order to revise history radically and to prepare the way for understanding the Church's new position, especially regarding the cultural values of the poor. Care should be taken that the quincentenary does not turn into a celebration that confirms the historical errors committed by the Church in the past".

CONCLUSION

As 1992 draws near, Latin America is fast becoming the focal point of world attention. The world fair which Spain is planning to hold in Seville in the centenary year is one of the many manifestations whereby Europe will commemorate this event. But, primarily it is the Catholic Church which is called upon to give a special dynamism to this celebration. Puebla, in article no. 412, affirmed unhesitatingly that the evangelization of Latin America "was deep enough for the faith to become a constitutive part of Latin America's life and identity. It provided Latin America with a spiritual unity that still persists". This is the spirit in which the Church should live its dual role during the forthcoming celebration, conscious of its past history and open to the future.

Considering the various reactions set out here, and which in my opinion represent the most important present trends concerning the Fifth Centenary, there is no doubt that the Church played a fundamental part in the 'conquest'. Even if it did not initiate it, it certainly legitimised it and ameliorated it in many ways. It fought the domination process through many of its pastors and missionaries who placed service to the Cross before service to the Crown and the cause of the Indigenous people before the interests of dominion.

The Church was not responsible for the policies of colonization which stemmed from economic and political interests but the Empire used the Church to legitimise the process. Herein lay the permanent temptation; to identify itself with power and to bend to political or financial pressure, to give precedence to 'the establishment', the 'institution' instead of to the 'mission', to limit evangelization to an abstract proclamation of the faith, to close in on itself without looking beyond to its mission. This

has given rise to many topical questions today. In what does integral evangelization consist? How does the Church understand and promote its prophetic dimension? How far can or should the Church run counter to civil power? When is it safe to raise its voice in the interests of those without a voice?

The Church in its efforts to renew itself today can learn many lessons from the work of some missionaries at the time of that early evangelization. So too, today many lessons can be learned, for example, from the different liberation movements on that same continent, from the campesinos' struggle for their land rights and from the painful experience of living under military dictatorships.

Above all, the Fifth Centenary directs the attention of society and the Church towards settling the as yet outstanding account with the Indigenous peoples and the Afro-American population. An authentic option for the poor should be made in favour of these people who are historically the flagellated Christs of this continent. They represent that hidden world which must be discovered in its whole potentiality so that a truly new society may come into being in Latin America, a unique and whole New World. The Puebla Conference already drew attention to the social periphery of this continent. The General Assembly of the Episcopate due to meet in the centenary year in Santo Domingo, will orient its work in this direction. Thus may the new evangelization - "new in its enthusiasm, in its forms and expression" which John Paul II called for, re-establish the original identity of that New World.

(Carlos Pape, SVD, who was born in Chile, is Mission Secretary of the Society of the Divine Word. He is a member of the SEDOS Executive Committee).

**NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE:
ONE SEDOS INSTITUTE MOVES AHEAD**

Daniel Corijn, OMI

**STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION
THROUGH SOLIDARITY**

The first Oblate North-South dialogue was held in Chaclacayo, outside Lima, Peru in March 1985. The second such event took place at the University of Montreal, Canada, May 8-15, 1989. Both of these events sought to take advantage of the rich and courageous history of missionary activity for justice throughout the hemisphere.

In Peru, 28 members from Canada, U.S.A. and Latin America gathered to explore and analyze the causes of poverty in each of the three Regions, and to search for common avenues by which they could be addressed. In 1985 an overall consensus emerged that the international character of the congregation, especially in the Americas, should be mined more deeply so as to develop and to improve our solidarity with the poor and the marginalized in the hemisphere. Subsequently, local, provincial, regional, and inter-regional justice and peace committees worked to improve communications, to awaken awareness and to explore avenues for greater collaboration.

While many initiatives emerged from the dialogue in Peru, the Institute's Inter-American Justice and Peace Commission realized that:

1. more persons had to be introduced into the conversation;
2. the life stories of members and those with whom they work needed to be lifted up and heard;
3. specific lines of common action needed to be identified and pursued.

The event in Montreal, entitled

"Structural Transformation Through Solidarity", was proposed and planned with these objectives in mind. Nearly 100 people, 64 members and 28 co-workers, people in positions of leadership in the Institute and those working at the base were invited to participate. Participants were invited to reflect on the Introduction and Chapter 1 of the 1986 General Chapter documents and on the encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*. They would then come prepared to talk about the experience of structures (ecclesial, political, social, economic, and cultural), both positive and negative, in their own lives and communities. Through a process which emphasized storytelling, listening, feedback, analysis and theological reflection, some orientations and strategies for common action emerged.

We hope that this report will allow you to experience the spirit and energy of this dialogue and will stimulate some new images and avenues for solidarity with those who are oppressed by unjust structures.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION:
NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE**

I. U.S. REGION

The members of the United States Region and their co-workers present at the North-South meeting "Structural Transformation Through Solidarity", present the following recommendations for action to the Provincials of the Institute in the United States. We further recommend that the Provincials review the recommendations and present procedures and methods for the

implementation of these recommendations. This should be done at the next Justice and Peace Commission meeting.

1. On the Provincial level, a common method of social analysis and pastoral practice (cf. Center of Concern, Carlos Mesters, etc.) will be promoted through workshops for members and their co-workers within the next 12 months. Additionally each province will identify several situations in which to use this method. After use, the method will be evaluated by the groups on a provincial level within 18 months.

One area to be included in this analysis will be the role of women in society and in the Church. One pastoral action will be the identification of inclusive language lectionaries, as well as a process to encourage their use and evaluation.

A goal of this process will be to develop a common vision of reality with both the Regions of Latin America and Canada.

2. The members of the Region, either with the Latin American Region or on their own, will study the issues raised by the plebiscite in Puerto Rico to determine what action, if any, is appropriate.
3. Inter-regionally, the members will support or be a catalyst for a congress of indigenous peoples to reflect critically on and to analyze the reality of the last 500 years from the perspective of Native Peoples.
4. Inter-regionally, the members will concentrate for the next three years on the World Debt issue. We will also focus our corporate responsibility work on issues raised by North South considerations.
5. The members of this Region will

use a tool to evaluate their present ministries in light of the following considerations:

- a. Do they dismantle oppressive structures or are we comforting the afflicted within oppressive structures?
 - b. Are we empowering people or are we deciding for them?
6. The members will develop procedures to permit and to encourage members in initial formation to experience the Latin American and Canadian situations. We will also invite members from the other Regions, both in initial formation and ministry, to experience the U.S. reality.
 7. The members in the US will examine their formation programs in terms of location and of process. The examination will include an awareness of the new vision of ministry and religious life required in a commitment of solidarity and transformation.
 8. The members will:
 - a. Develop targets and a timeline for the amount of financial resources committed to alternative investments.
 - b. These investments will favour co-operative projects for the poor in the First world and in the Third World.
 - c. This suggestion will also be communicated to the other religious through the Conference of Major Superiors.
 - d. Study our labour policies especially as they relate to our employees in terms of justice.
 - e. We will continue to review present banking and investment practices and their effect on the life of the poor.
 9. The members will invite their lay co-workers and associates to experience the Latin American reality and the Canadian reality.
 10. The members will

encourage the General Administration to study methods to take greater advantage of the international character of the congregation, especially in the promotion of solidarity through the transformation of structures. One practical step may be to sponsor a conference on the New International Economic Order (N.I.E.O.) in order to highlight its credibility and give it additional visibility.

11. The members will encourage and increase the participation of the poor at our gatherings.
12. The members will identify groups both regionally and inter-regionally with whom to network.
13. The members will suggest methods to improve the communication network between the Regions, especially to improve the effectiveness of our efforts in solidarity for the transformation of structures.

II. CANADIAN REGION

Regional Possibilities

Introduction

We, Canadian members and co-workers gathered in Montreal, affirm the desire and willingness to work towards structural transformation. We recognize that our history reveals advances in this direction that have been made by ourselves and by others. We also acknowledge that we, both personally and collectively, have often resisted structural transformation and have thereby contributed to the creation of obstacles to the building up of God's Reign.

Areas of Action

1. the rights of aboriginal peoples
2. the right to work
3. the preservation of our natural resources

Work Method

We choose a four-step method which will help us to be effective in our work. These four steps are an on-going and continuous process.

1. **Social Insertion.** We begin by a commitment to be with and to listen to the poor in our milieu.

2. **Social Analysis.** With the tools of the social sciences we commit ourselves to work at understanding the dynamics in that particular situation. We will encourage the use of social analysis in our communities.

3. **Theological Reflection.** This is an integral step in our method, using scripture and a theology that is committed to the poor. We will develop forums across Canada, to foster the links between faith and the social order, toward the development of a new spirituality.

4. **Local Action with International Links.** We re-commit ourselves to our local work with a deeper understanding and in concert with similar national and international efforts.

Specific Implications

1. We choose as priority groups with whom to work:
 - a. aboriginal peoples
 - b. grassroots groups
 - c. refugees

With these groups and others with whom we work, we will practice "positive discrimination" toward women.

2. We want to encourage further education in this area, in our formation, initial and on-going. We will also take steps to foster the development of more formation programs for the laity with whom we work.

3. We will seek creative means to further our goals. Examples are: the development of forums for social ethics and "twinning" (sponsoring) between our communities and missionaries.
4. We will review and help remake the structures of the Institute. Example: challenging parish structures or developing structural links with lay co-workers (especially considering their financial and other needs).
5. We encourage the continuation of public statements supporting the concerns which are priorities for us.

The Justice and Peace Commission of the Canadian Region is to initiate this follow-up to the North-South Dialogue.

INTER-REGIONAL POSSIBILITIES

1. That a statement be issued from this conference, stating what this group is committed to.
2. That the three Regions work on a common vision, method of social analysis, mission project, and sharing of personnel.
3. Possible common projects to consider are:
 - a. with the aboriginal peoples
 - b. dealing with the international debt
 - c. refugees
 - d. the ecology and the environment.
4. For 1992 (the 500th anniversary of Columbus' invasion) we propose collaboration with the aboriginal peoples in a project.

III. LATIN AMERICAN REGION

Short Term

1. In our ministries, we will

facilitate workshops on the topics of: analysis of our reality, liberation theology, pastoral approaches within the world of working people that use a popular pedagogy. We will establish contacts with persons and organizations that are specialized in these themes.

2. To translate into Spanish and Portuguese the document "Church Proxy Resolutions" and to publish it. To identify those who most oppress Latin America.
3. To integrate into the justice and peace ministry a concern for the particular situations in each of our countries, and to identify the powers which cause the most oppression.

Medium-Term

1. To foster Base Ecclesial Communities (CEB) and other committed groups by financing the specialization of laity and our members, so that we can have a higher degree of effectiveness in our work with popular movements.
2. To express our support and our gratitude for the solidarity manifested by the justice and peace commissions of the United States and Canada with Latin America.
3. We ask our sisters and brothers of the United States and Canada to indicate to us the ways in which we can most effectively be in solidarity with them.
4. (For the Inter-American Justice and Peace Commission): To promote a communications network to facilitate analysis. We see this as very important in light of all we have seen and heard during this gathering.
5. To encourage a better understanding of the international debt problematic.

6. To review initial and ongoing formation programs in order to prepare members better to integrate a committed social analysis into their lives and ministries.
3. To exchange formators and those in formation, between Latin America and North America.

Permanent Actions

1. To reflect on the structures of the Congregation in order progressively to favour the poor.
 2. To support the Base Ecclesial Communities and the Theology of Liberation.
 4. To review our lives, testimonies, and works to see if these support the historical project of the poor.
 5. To identify the investments we have and if necessary to invest in new portfolios, that promote the transformation of existing structures.
-

CONTEXTUALIZATION: A MISSIOLOGICAL IMPERATIVE FOR THE CHURCH IN AFRICA IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

Emefie Ikenga-Metuh

Introduction

This essay will argue that in the third millennium, the emphasis of evangelization in Africa will shift from "primary evangelization" or "extensive evangelization" to "pastoral evangelization" or intensive evangelization i.e. deepening and nourishing the faith of those who have accepted Christ. In that situation the role of contextual theology becomes indispensable. This paper will outline the signs of the times in Africa in the third millennium, and the areas of cooperation between missiology and contextual theology to meet its challenges.

CONTEXTUALIZATION AND INCARNATION

There may have been some terminological confusion among contextual theologians about the most adequate designation for their tasks but there is a fair amount of agreement on the concept and necessity for contextualization. Among the terms which are in use in the general field are: Adaptation, Accommodation, Indigenization, Inculturation, Contextualization and Incarnation. Though all these terms overlap to a considerable extent in their pragmatic usage they are neither fully synonymous in conceptual content nor compatible in their theological/ideological implications. The term indigenization has been criticized as being too backward looking for an African situation engulfed as it is by rapid social, cultural and political changes. Adaptation, critics say, suggests a cosmetic change of working out indigenous African equivalents for patterns of Christian beliefs and

practices experienced in non-African contexts. Inculturation with its anthropological roots seems to suggest that only culture and cultural situations can inspire a contextual theology. Situations of hunger, poverty, disease, political and economic oppression are contexts fertile enough for contextual theology. One would even say that these later situations call more urgently for contextual theology. For, surely, the Christ who so identified with the sick, oppressed and the poor, would have a lot to say to them about their situation. Hence some South African writers like Buthelezi and Boesak have questioned the relevance of that African "theologising which puts so much emphasis on culture, while leaving out of account the realities of oppression".

Missionary Evangelization, or First Evangelization or Kerygma, is the first announcing or proclamation of Christ and his Gospel to Non-Christians whose faith is thus awakened and enkindled while "Pastoral Evangelization" is "all the activities connected with nourishing and fostering a living faith among the people of God". This includes catechetics, homiletics, theology, pastoral, and all the other sacred sciences and the sacred ministry aimed at building and deepening Christian Communities. Every evangelization must be evangelic (evangelica) i.e. must conform to the basic truth of the Gospel.

How could evangelization be both evangelic and be adapted to the circumstances of place, time, culture and context of the evangelized? This is the role of Contextual Theology.

The call by the Report of the African Bishops to the 1974 synod on Evangelization for the necessity "to foster the particular incarnation of Christianity in each country, in accordance with the genius and the talents of each culture", not only introduced a new terminology, but added a completely new dimension to the African theology of contextualization as well as to the theology of evangelization. African culture is no more seen as a product of demonic forces or even of neutral forces. They are produced by human genius alright, but under the guidance of God who "did not leave the Divine Presence without witness", (Acts 14:17) God has always been incarnate in human cultures. For "at various times in the past, and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets, but in our own time, the last days God has spoken to us through his son" (Heb. 1:1-2). Divine revelation reached its climax in Christ. Thus, historically, Christ the word of God incarnated himself in the Judeo-Hellenic culture, and he illuminated, judged and elevated it. Hence, African Incarnation theology seeks to incarnate the word of God in the African culture. When incarnation is fully and effectively accomplished the light of the gospel would radically transform different levels of African life, laws, customs values and world-views.

By incarnation, the Bishops meant, "the movement, by which what is considered essential in the message of Christ, penetrates and takes flesh in a culture". What is incarnated is not just exegeted teachings from the bible but also the teaching and believing traditions of the People of God.

Contextualization necessarily involves two poles - the eternal, non-negotiable, universal divine aspect which is the word of God on the one hand, and the temporal, contextual, contingent reality which is

the context on the other hand. Or, simply put, it involves the divine / universal and the human / local. These two realities, says Pobee, are in dynamic relationship and creative tension. In fact, every theology, not just contextual theology consists of a dialectic of these two important poles - one "faith" and its "expression" which must be diverse, determined as it is by differing contexts.

AFRICAN INCARNATION THEOLOGY

African Incarnation or Contextual Theology, says Uzukwu, "works towards the encounter of African world-view and the heart of the gospel message. This results in an incarnation of the Christian message in the heart of the African culture so that the Christian way becomes a principle that animates, directs and unifies African life, transforming and remaking it so as to bring about a new creation. African theology, according to Kwesi Dickson is necessarily contextual theology which he describes as a radical rethinking of faith in Christ, having in mind the African's religio-cultural, socio-economic and political circumstances. Thus the aim and objective of contextual theology is missiological - to enable the gospel message to enter the bloodstream of the people. This is what we had described as intensive Christian commitment in individuals and communities. An intensively Christianized community would witness to a radical transformation of different levels of its life, laws, customs, the scale of moral values, and its world-view in the light of the gospel. In fact, African contextual theologians justify the urgent need for contextualization from the need to correct past errors. Kwesi Dickson writes:

"The God proclaimed by the Christian preachers and teachers seemed unconcerned with the totality of the African's life - God was to be

encountered only in particular situations. This means that African Christians were unable, by and large, to see their new faith in relation to various life situations of oppression and cultural double-mindedness".

Differences Between Missiology and Contextual Theology

Contextual theology is a theology which, in clarifying faith, is very sensitive to the situation of the people to whom the faith is addressed. It is not content with an abstract and intellectually satisfying systematic presentation of the faith. Rather its aims are primarily to bring the Gospel as a truly Good News to the people in their concrete situation. In a sense it is not a perennial theology addressed to all peoples, in all situations and for all time. Rather it is faith presented to a particular people, living in a concrete situation, at a particular time. This perhaps makes Contextual Theology more missiological than conventional theology.

Missiology, on the other hand, is much broader in scope than contextual theology. It includes much more than the clarification or articulation of the faith. It includes besides theology:

- 1) the study of methods, strategies and experiences of missionaries in different historical and cultural situations in order to learn from their successes and failures;
- 2) study of the response to the missionary efforts. Special attention is given to factors which determine cases of positive and negative responses like social, cultural, psychological and historical factors;
- 3) what may be called missiography - charting the spread of the church geographically and demographically, and the depth of Christianization of various areas.

THE AFRICAN CONTEXT IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

The context of evangelization in Africa in the coming millennium will not be exactly the same as the present day African context. A futurological vision of the African context in the third millennium will do no more than identify elements of continuity and aspects which might change and may also indicate the direction of the change.

Analysis of the African context in the third millennium could be conveniently classified into three spheres: socio-political, religio-cultural, and ecclesiastical. We shall first discuss changes in these three areas in the third millennium and then show how these changes will affect both evangelization and contextual theology.

Socio-Political Sphere

The socio-political signs of the times is the bitter struggle against colonialism and neocolonialism. Since independence there has been a crisis of leadership and instability of governments. The symptoms show themselves in incessant military coups and changes of leadership. There is of course the special case of Southern Africa, where the system of Apartheid, a compound of racism, economic oppression and social oppression has stirred the conscience of the world. This experience has generated the Black African Theology which will be discussed further on.

Most parts of Africa are plagued by economic under-development. They form part of the Third World characterized by its inability to cope with problems of hunger, disease, populations increases, lower prices for its products in the world market and huge national debts.

The growth in the demand for formal education has spiraled in the past four decades but a large proportion of the population is still

illiterate. This ambivalent situation is likely to continue. Similarly, the rapid expansion of urban areas will continue, creating more opportunities for the growing middle class as well as creating problems of slums, pockets of ethnic minorities and marginalized recent immigrants plagued by problems of unemployment, poverty and disease.

Religious Sphere

In the religious sphere the picture is more hopeful but calls for an urgent action. The traditional African world-views are religious. Religion permeates every aspect of African life, The African person is deeply religious. This characteristic has survived the impact of change. However, one of the signs of the times in the religious sphere which will continue into the third millennium is the massive drift from Traditional Religions into Christianity and Islam. The report presented by the African Bishops to the 1974 Synod in Rome notes that every year about 7 million people join the different Christian Communities in Africa. Along with this is another interesting phenomenon: an equally unprecedented mushrooming of indigenous African Churches. According to Barret, there are, in Africa, about 8000 such Afro-Christian Churches which between them have about 14 million members. The drift from Traditional Religions to Christianity and Islam, according to Trimmingham is due to the collapse of the structures of traditional societies and the inadequacy of the traditional world-views to cope with the sophisticated changes of modern life. On the other hand the proliferation of Afro-Christian Churches is due to the intolerance of the missionaries of the African converts' tendency to introduce elements of their traditional religious beliefs and practices into Christianity.

In terms of numbers this development has brought big gains to

Christianity. Christians now constitute the articulate and educated majority while Traditional Religion is now the preserve of the aging minority usually restricted to the rural areas.

Ecclesiastical Sphere

A reflection on this pattern of the growth of the Church in Africa clearly indicates that the deepening of the faith or intensive evangelization should be the focus of the Church in the third millennium. The spiraling growth of the Church is due to two factors which have left the faith of the converts at a shallow level.

The Christian Churches themselves could be viewed as a context for evangelization and contextualization in the third millennium. This is necessary because evangelization and contextualization will be undertaken by the Churches and in the Churches using the structures, personnel, and policies of the Churches. Africa was colonized and evangelized by Western European nations and America. So the churches in Africa still bear a very strong Western cultural stamp. In most cases, the African church is just a transplant of its European or American models: its structure, doctrines, liturgy, theology, personnel and even its name. John Pobee describes this as "the North Atlantic captivity of the church" so that to many Africans the church is a foreign institution. Even those who claim that it is not so cannot defend the claim truthfully and honestly.

Another disturbing aspect of the Church in Africa as a context for contextualization in the third millennium is inter-denominational rivalry. Competition to make more converts, to own more schools and hospitals has led to bitter inter-denominational rivalries. Ecumenism rings hollow for many Africans in spite of progressive developments at the international levels.

CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGY IN THE AFRICAN CHURCH IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

Identity of the African Church

The Gospel has been proclaimed in Africa and Africa has listened to the Gospel for about one hundred years. Millions have decided to follow Christ perhaps not because of who he is but perhaps because of what he and his preachers promise. The faith has been taught and learnt in imported concepts. The liturgy, the Church structure, discipline, church life and spirituality are all transplanted from their European roots. The church which emerged from this transplant is as yet far from acquiring an African identity. Whether the African roots will accept or reject the transplant or develop a completely new stem will show in the third millennium. In either case, the African Church must answer for itself the question of "who is the Christ"? It is only when the African Church can say like the Samaritans said to their country woman: "it is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the saviour of the world" (Jn. 4:42), that it can lay claim to an African identity. To acquire its Christian identity, the African Church must freely and consciously and with full awareness of its cultural heritage encounter Christ, the Divine Word as revealed in the Bible. Thus central to African faith experience and African theology are the Bible and African cultural traditions.

1. The Bible

The Bible played a major but an ambivalent role in the spread of Christianity in Africa during the first era of evangelization. On the one hand, the translation and distribution of the Bible enabled African evangelists, catechists and preachers to take the initiative in spreading the Gospel to the remotest villages among their own people. On

the other hand, the translation of the Bible in the vernacular has been linked with the proliferation of independent churches and its associated syncretist beliefs.

Any viable African theology must have as its base very sound biblical studies. African converts may have found the biblical stories, myths and accounts of the wonderful works of God fascinating but they need to get beyond and behind these to discover the Christ. Theological education, says Pobee "should be concerned with identifying scientifically the unchanging good news of God's self-revelation in Jesus". This does not mean, he observes, that Bible study which is devotional does not yield deep understanding of the truth. But any authentic theological enterprise should be based on a scientific study of the Bible: exegesis, hermeneutics, genuine vernacular translations and continuous reflection on biblical theology. This will, on the one hand avoid a fundamentalist approach to the Bible which negates all contextualization and in fact all theological reflections. On the other hand it will correct the folkloristic approach to the Bible which tends to syncretize African and Christian beliefs because of the similarities observed between African and biblical beliefs and practices. An adequate scientific biblical study should lead to the encounter between the eternal Word of God, the Christ and his message, and African culture and African context. It is only then that Africans could answer with all seriousness the question: "who is the Christ"?

Much more than scientific biblical exegesis is needed to encounter the Christ who is now found wrapped in the swaddling clothes of Western European Christianity. There is need for African Theology. The battle is not against the Word of God or its proclamation, the "Kerygma", rather it is against Western accretions which are now turned into dogma. Says the Association of African Christian

Churches Assembly at Lusaka:

"If indeed Theology is reflection, in African Theology we attempt to break the seal of Western thought - forms and culture so that we can come face to face with Christ and in Him see ourselves.. and others".

As we move into the third millennium and a new era of evangelization (intensive evangelization), there is need for an African theology based on a scientific study of the Bible to cope with the demand of a fast growing literate and educated African population to receive the Word of God in the concepts, language and symbols they can understand.

Dialogue with African Traditional Religions

So, much of African theology in the foreseeable future will focus on decoding the divine message, divine worship and Christian morality from the Judeo-Western cultural forms in which they are encapsulated, and encoding them in African cultural forms. In view of this, dialogue with African Traditional Religions becomes central to theology of inculturation in Africa's experience of the quest for and relationship with God. In no history is God absent. In fact God never left any people without evidence of the Divine Presence. (Acts. 14:15)

Thus African religions come within the scope of general revelation and contain elements which could mirror the Gospel message and therefore facilitate its propagation, acceptance and expression. African Traditional Religions are thus seen, not only as a sort of "Praeparatio Evangelica" but as a prerequisite for African Theology.

More recent African theological thought however would rather speak of incarnating Christianity in African culture and African world-views. The Report of the African Bishops to the 1974 Synod in Rome affirms that:

"It is then necessary to foster the particular incarnation of Christianity in each country, in accordance with the genius and the talents of each culture so that a thousand flowers may blossom in God's garden".

Incarnating Christianity in African world-views therefore, is based on a solid theology of continuity between the general revelation as it is grasped and expressed in African traditional religions and the special revelation made by God in the Bible which reached its climax in Christ the visible image of the invisible God. This is one of the major tasks of African contextual theology into the third millennium.

AFRICAN LIBERATION THEOLOGIES

African cultural and religious traditions are not the only dimensions essential for contextual theology in Africa in the third millennium. The experiences of the modern situation will constitute a continuing source of contextual theology. In fact, the Gospel as "Good News" addressed to all peoples, of all times, in all places and in every condition, should bring satisfying answers to the intractable problems which continue to torment peoples in different parts of the African continent.

Situations arising from the modern socio-political developments have given rise to two trends in African Theology. In *"African Theology Now: A Profile"*, Justin Ukpong identifies these as South African Black Theology and African Theology of Liberation. He distinguishes these two from what he calls "The Theology of Inculturation" or simply "African Theology" which seeks to incarnate Christianity in the traditional African cultures.

South African Black Theology

South African Black Theology is a theological off-shoot of the Black

Consciousness Movement which in essence, according to Steve Biko, is "the realisation by the Black people of the need to rally together with their brothers and sisters... and to operate as a group in order to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude". The Black Consciousness Movement claims that there is a deliberateness in God's plan to create Black people black. So Blacks should be proud of their colour, culture, religion and outlook on life. Apartheid, white Racism in South Africa is man-made, so Blacks must not accept their oppression as an unavoidable fate.

Taking a cue from American Black Theology, South African theologians demanded that traditional theology break its silence on the apartheid system. Through seminars and writings in the early seventies they began to search for a Christ-like response to it. The liberation episodes in the Bible portray God as the Supreme Liberator. Christ as Liberator in the Gospel is always on the side of the poor and oppressed. The universal fatherhood of God and the brotherhood and sisterhood of all in Christ show up the lie of Apartheid and would thus liberate the Bible from the captivity in which the white oppressors have kept it.

Apartheid may be with us into the third millennium. Even if it is not, there are at the present time in Africa different types of socio-political and economic oppressions and discriminations which make Black Theology of continuing relevance. Totalitarian and dictatorial regimes thrive in some independent African countries. The neocolonialist grip on African countries continues. Black Theology should be developed and broadened to cope with this pan-African incidence of politico-economic oppression, Black or White. If that is the case, Black Theology should change both its name and its scope. Its essence is that it preaches Christ as liberator of the oppressed, black or white. If it

wishes to lay claim to being all-African Theology and not just South African Theology, it should preach Christ the liberator of all oppressed peoples. Here I think it merges with liberation theology.

African Theology of Liberation

The modern socio-economic system has bred a trend in African Theology - Liberation Theology. Liberation theology seeks to free people not just from racial prejudices and oppression but also from every dehumanising condition, hunger, disease, ignorance, wars and instability.

Theology of Community Development?

To these trends in African theology, Salvoldi and Sesana add another which they call "Theology of Community Development". This they claim is a theology which "provides the theoretical basis for personal action in the basic communities and conscientization of development". The sphere covered by the theology of Community Development so overlaps the other trends in African theology, especially liberation theology, that one wonders whether its claim to be an independent trend in African theology could be sustained. However, it makes the important contribution of trying to balance the exclusive focus of both Black and African theology and will make an invaluable contribution to Africa's development efforts in the third millennium.

ECUMENISM

African Christianity has to carry over into the third millennium the legacy of divided Christianity bequeathed to it by Christendom. Africa itself has inflicted its own bruises on the battered image of Christ and the Church by adding the Independent churches to the ever increasing number of Christian denominations. So African theologies should espouse the cause of

ecumenism. The African sense of the extended family which holds various units in a mutually dependent unity should be shown as a model for the unity to which ecumenism aspires. African religious traditions do not emphasise immutable dogmatic positions which after all are human and therefore imperfect statements of the divine message. They are very accommodating of other peoples view-points and sensibilities. Rather than arrive at hasty decisions they strive for a consensus through dialogue or 'palaver' as it is known in West Africa. This is equally applicable to inter-faith relationships between Traditional Religions and Islam, and Islam and Christianity. If "Oikoumene" means "together in one house", literally speaking, Traditionalists, Muslims and Christians in Africa have lived together amicably in the same family and extended families for centuries. The absolute claims to truth of different faith traditions is new to Africa. Africa can pass on to the world religious community its experience of accommodating and living together with peoples of other faiths.

Conclusion

The link between evangelization and contextual theology takes its roots from both theology and evangelization. Like St. Paul both have to be "all things to all men" in order to win some. Every true missionary, like St. Paul, must become a Greek if necessary in order to win the Greek. In other words, they must tune their Gospel message to the wavelength of the listeners in order to hold their audience and gain their assent. So, too, theologians must win their audience and the conviction of their readers through the use of language, concepts, imagery, and analogies familiar to the people, and through addressing issues relevant to their lives.

When theology is defined as "faith seeking clarification", it is

often assumed that the clarification is made and perceived by only a philosophical mind. There is often undue emphasis on the systematic and philosophical aspect of theology to the detriment of its aim and objective which is "that they may believe". Herein perhaps lies a more fundamental link between evangelization and theology. Both are geared to wither, evoking faith or deepening faith. In fact, every theology should be evangelistic, but every evangelization is not theology. Evangelization involves much more than theology.

Contextual theology is a type of theology which takes the evangelistic aspect of theology seriously. Like every theology it seeks for the clarification of the received faith. But the clarification it seeks is one that will benefit those to whom it is addressed. It may want to be philosophical but it uses the language and concepts of the people it addresses. It is a theology which tries to theologize in a particular context. It addresses issues and tries to find answers to the problems of people who live in that particular context.

The gospel has now been preached in many parts of Africa for about a hundred years. In Africa the second era of evangelization is beginning. The Church in Africa has come of age and has to answer for itself the question: "who is the Christ.?" Africa must answer the question for itself, with its own resources and in its own context if the answer is to be meaningful. It has already begun to make tentative answers in the emerging African theologies - Inculturation Theology, Black Theology and Liberation Theology.

(Ref. Mission Studies, Vol. VI-2, 1989. Mittelweg 143, D-2000, Hamburg 13, West Germany).

URBAN - BASED FORMATION

Donald Senior, CP

I am grateful to have the opportunity to reflect very briefly with you on my perception of theological education and its mission of preparing men and women for ministry in the church.

Cardinal Leo Joseph Suenens, the primate of Belgium and one of the early heroes of the Second Vatican Council, gave a speech twenty years ago on the 'Future of Theological Education in the Post-Conciliar Era.' He cited three qualities he considered faithful to the spirit of the council and crucial for theological education: that the seminaries and formation centers be:

- 1) urban based;
- 2) ecumenical in spirit;
- 3) near a great university center.

Of the three qualities cited by Cardinal Suenens - urban based, ecumenical, university context - the one most expressive of my experience and perhaps most instructive for the future of mission is that of being urban based....

Catholic seminaries and formation centers prior to the advent of the Vatican Council were by and large a phenomenon of the countryside. In some cases, what started as the country became the suburbs as the cities marched on. But the idea was firm. seminaries and formation centers were not usually planted in the midst of the city. This was not because most of the Catholic population was located in rural areas or that seminaries and formation centers were training people for rural ministry. It was, instead, a quest for isolation, solitude and a contemplative atmosphere considered most conducive

for preparation for priesthood and religious life.

But in 1968, with the impact of the Vatican Council fresh and forceful, the radical changes that were sweeping through the Roman Catholic Church (as they also were through most of the Western political and social world) could be symbolized in that single step: the move to the city from the relatively tranquil countryside - to the turbulent urban atmosphere of the city.

The city: intersection of peoples and cultures and social classes; breeder of hope and breaker of dreams; parade ground of urban planning and show case of human problems. It is here that one could find the best environment to prepare Christians to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

As my training is in the biblical field please indulge me if I place this move to the city and its implications against the backdrop of the biblical drama.

Biblical Roots of the City

The flight from the city and the seeking of strength in an atmosphere of tranquillity and solitude have, one must admit, strong biblical roots. The desert haunted Israel as its place of origin and its place of refuge. In the wilderness Israel itself had been formed and tested. The very environment of the desert spoke of purity and simplicity. Not a romantic nature refuge, but a stark place without corruption, without sophistication, without distraction. A place, in fact, unlike the city.

Catholic seminary training and religious formation like Catholic spirituality itself - had long been, and still is, dominated by the lure of the desert. But there is another, less exploited biblical tradition that also should inform our spirituality - one, in fact, more fundamental than the symbolism of the desert, and that is the Bible's claim that the final resting place of the sacred is not in the desert but in the city. The deep current of Israel's story - and of the biblical vision created by it - is a movement from the desert to the city.

God's presence is not confined to a whisper at the mouth of the cave nor the mysterious guiding pillar of cloud in the wilderness plains nor a voice from a mountaintop storm. The biblical God is also in the city and the city is therefore a sacred place. The temple would ultimately be planted in the midst of the brawling city. And the God-implanted yearning of the people was, in fact, to leave the desert for the promised land, with its organization, its government, its inevitable human interaction.

And so, for both testaments, Jerusalem becomes the ultimate symbol of the sacred place where God dwells with the people. For the Hebrews, hope focused on the historical Jerusalem - the city of temple and monarch; for the followers of Jesus, hopes expressed in the symbol of a new and transcendent Jerusalem - that convergence of redeemed humanity with God. Jesus had drawn on the contemplative strength of the desert, and his ministry was ignited by a desert prophet; but when the climax of his mission was upon him, he set his face inevitably for the city, Jerusalem.

The lure of Jerusalem as sacred place reminds us as readers of the Scriptures that the God of Israel, the God of Jesus, is not ultimately a God of solitude - not an isolated, autonomous God, but a God of people,

of human solidarity, a God committed to justice, a God of diversity. Fidelity to this God would not be measured ultimately by the intensity of one's contemplation, but by the fidelity to widow, orphan and sojourner that must issue from true contemplation. The widow, the orphan, the sojourner converge on the city - then as now.

The Biblical God of the City

The lure of the desert - an authentic Christian impulse - can only be indulged when it is seen as a sojourn. For the biblical God is a God of the city; and the truly sacred place of the biblical world is the urban place.

It was precisely this vision of the city as sacred place that must draw mission institutes to leave the countryside and come to the city. Here we can hope to find the convergence of peoples and resources, the visibility of human hope and human plight, the mix of race and culture and economic status that reminds us of the Gospel and provides the best environment to train people to proclaim it in a credible way.

But the Bible refrains from idealizing the city, just as one should hesitate to idealize the desert solitude. In the desert Israel had failed and complained and shattered its covenant with God. The desert was the abode of demons as well as the camp ground of angels and prophets.

The Book of Revelation hymns the new and heavenly Jerusalem, the city of light coming down from above. But for most of its chapters it roundly indicts the cruelty and injustice that reigned in the city; and the author labels as a demonic beast that great urban power, Rome itself....

So the city can not be sought as a dreamland or a place of escape. It was a genuine community of human beings, charged with hope and God's

beauty, broken by sin and violence. A place of exciting diversity, but laced with tension, prejudice and conflict. For these very reasons, the city remains the best place for theological education and training for mission and the symbol of the city still best explains our mission.

To be true to our mission and faithful to our rich heritage, seminaries and formation centers must be:

- at home in the city not just located there, but part of it.
- Open to human contact; aware of the economic and social structures that make human community tick; compassionate for people's very struggle to exist; not aloof, by choice or lifestyle or latent attitude, from the pain of people without hope or resources; committed to building community not as a trend, but as fundamental response to the Gospel.
- In the city, finding God in the diversity of human culture and race, in the pluralism of custom and language, in the noise and sweat of the marketplace; not wedded to an ideal church or an ideal liturgy or an ideal theology, but rooted in a living, local church and tolerant of different pieties and different theologies, and respectful of the religious experience of every believer whether theologically literate or not.

The Biblical Desert

While being at home in the city is our heritage, at the same time we cannot ignore the ancient wisdoms. On the biblical wall map the desert always stretches beyond the city's edge. And the traditional placement of formation centers and seminaries in the desert zone was not without its cogency. No minister of the Gospel in the city will long survive the temptation to cynicism or withdrawal or outright despair unless he or she has developed a genuine contemplative spirit. Only the vision

of God planted deep within the soul, sustained by vigorous faith and nourished with a habit of prayer can give a minister of the Gospel the strength to stay the course.

That is what the 'desert' came to mean for the biblical peoples. That is why great spirits from Moses and Elijah and Amos to Jesus himself went to the desert and found spiritual nourishment in that place of contemplation. But contemplation, we know, is not reserved to a place, desert or city; it is a habit of the heart and the soul and the mind. To be truly contemplative is to see reality deeply and without illusion. It is to see the world - both its beauty and its sin - with the eye of God. To be true to our heritage, our formation centers and seminaries must bring the desert to the city.

Theological education for the church is not merely about data and methodologies and pastoral skills. It is also about character and virtue and public witness based on faith. It demands a sense of church rooted in one's own authentic religious experience and the living tradition of the Catholic community.

In the years that unfold before us, let us be faithful to our heritage. As we continue to live in the city and learn from it and dedicate ourselves to it, let us stir up our faith and fill our souls with the vision of the Scriptures: the city of the Lamb where there are no tears, no mourning, a city illuminated by the light of the Lord, the new Jerusalem, the city of God.

WORLD URBANISATION

The following charts serve as a commentary on Donald Senior's thesis: "The biblical God is a God of the city; and the truly sacred place of the biblical world is the urban place."

THE WORLD'S GREATEST CITIES
(in millions of inhabitants)

1975		1985		Project 2010	
1 New York	19.7	Tokyo	21.8	Mexico	32.1
2 Tokyo	17.7	Mexico	18.4	Shanghai	31.0
3 Shanghai	12.4	New York	18.3	Pékin (Beijing)	27.3
4 Mexico	11.9	Shanghai	17.5	Sao Paulo	24.9
5 Los Angeles	10.8	Sao Paulo	15.0	Tokyo	23.0
6 Sao Paulo	10.7	Pékin (Beijing)	14.6	Bombay	21.0
7 London	10.3	Los Angeles	10.9	Calcutta	20.5
8 Pekin	9.3	Buenos Aires	10.8	New York	19.9
9 Rhin-Ruhr	9.3	Rio de Janeiro	10.4	Djakarta	18.3
10 Buenos Aires	9.3	Séoul	10.2	Rio de Janeiro	16.5
11 Paris	9.2	Calcutta	10.1	Madras	15.9
12 Rio de Janeiro	8.9	Paris	10.1	Cairo	15.9
13 Okasa	8.7	Okasa	10.1	Dacca	15.3
14 Chicago	8.1	Bombay	10.1	Karachi	15.2
15 Calcutta	7.8	London	9.8	Séoul	14.8
16 Moscou	7.4	Rhin-Ruhr	9.1	Delhi	14.5
17 Bombay	7.0	Moscou	8.7	Bangkok	13.9
18 Séoul	6.8	Djakarta	8.6	Téhéran	13.7
19 Cairo	6.3	Cairo	8.5	Bagdad	13.5
20 Milan	6.2	Chicago	7.4	Manila	13.0
21 Djakarta	5.7	Milan	7.1	Istanbul	12.5
22 Philadelphia	4.8	Madras	7.0	Buenos Aires	12.5
23 Detroit	4.8	Téhéran	6.7	Los Angeles	12.5
24 Téhéran	4.5	Delhi	6.6	Lagos	12.1
25 Delhi	4.1	Istanbul	6.6	Kinshasa	11.5

**URBANISATION
IN THE WORLD**

PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL POPULATION

Region	1950	1970	1985	2000	2025
Group 1					
North America	63.9	73.8	74.3	78.0	85.8
Europe	59.9	66.2	73.3	79.0	85.9
Japan	50.3	71.2	76.5	79.3	86.4
Australia-N.Zealand	74.7	84.4	86.3	88.6	92.5
URSS	39.3	56.7	66.3	74.3	83.4
Group 2					
Africa	14.8	22.9	32.1	42.2	58.3
Latin America	41.8	57.4	68.8	76.6	84.2
China	12.2	19.3	21.0	26.6	45.6
Far East-less China	28.6	47.4	66.9	78.7	86.2
Oceania	7.4	18.0	23.9	30.1	45.4
Total	29.4	37.0	41.6	48.2	62.25