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This issue contains the texts of the papers presented by **Michael Amaladoss, SJ, M. Brünhild Teufel, SSND, and Teresa Clements, DMJ** at the 1991 SEDOS Annual Assembly on the theme **Mission Europe**.

There is the text of the Executive Director's Annual Report to the SEDOS Annual Assembly held on December 11 at the Divine Word College.

An edited version of an article by Mac Chapin on **Contemporary Indians and the Quincentenary** is in the series we are publishing as background to the arrival of Columbus in the Americas.

Mission Moments come from Guatemala, Chile, Czechoslovakia and Poland.

To all of our members and readers we wish a very blessed Christmas.

May the New Year be a time when the reality of peace may more truly dwell among us and in our world.

Buon Natale — — — — —
— — — — — Happy Christmas
Joyeux Noël — — — — —
— — — — — Feliz Navidad
Frohe Weihnachten — — — — —
— — — — — Nollaig faoi shonas
Zalig Kerstfeest — — — — — God Jul
— — — — — Manuia le Kerisimasi
Glückliches Neues Jahr — — — — —
— — — — — Heureuse Nouvelle Année
Prospero Año Nuevo — — — — —
— — — — — Blian faoi mhaise
Gelukkig Nieuwjaar — — — — —
— — — — — Happy New Year
Hamamas bilong Nupela Yia — — — — —
Born Natal — Felice Anno Nuovo



MISSION AS PROPHECY

Michael Amaladoss, S.J.

Michael Amaladoss, S.J. Member of the Jesuit General Council from India. Former Editor of Vidyajoti. Theologian and liturgist. Fr. Amaladoss gave the keynote address at the 25th Anniversary of SEDOS, "Mission From Vatican II Into the Coming Decade", and elaborated that presentation further in a special chapter of TRENDS IN MISSION - TOWARDS THE THIRD MILLENNIUM (Orbis Books, 1991). He presents now some current challenges to Mission in Europe today from an Asian perspective.

The special Synod on Europe is now in session. We could certainly speak about a moment of *kairos* in Europe given the liberation of the East European countries, the movement towards unity of some West European countries, the ethnic and ecumenical tensions, and the problem of the migrants. The context of the few reflections that I am going to share with you would be the understanding of mission as prophecy which always focuses the light of the Word on a particular historical situation in the context of the covenant.

I. READING THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

The phenomenon of secularization would be an obvious sign. Its primary manifestation is a reduction in religious practice and an attitude of practical indifference to religion. An aggressive atheism, represented by Marxism, has evidently collapsed. Consumerism would be another sign. It tends to practical materialism, encouraging the desire to have. A certain competitive individualism and selfishness seem normal. Traditional morality is questioned. Modernity, in the form of instrumentalization of people and the world. The rapidity and the global outreach of the media of communications seem to be geared primarily to commerce, propaganda and evasive entertainment. While people keep away from institutional religion, there is a vague religiosity shown in adherence to New Religious Movements. At the same time there are also various movements of renewal in the Church. The signs are clear enough.

The problem is how they are to be interpreted.

One way is to see it as a conflict between good and evil, light and darkness, truth and falsehood, black and white. Marxism has collapsed; but we still have to confront liberal capitalism and consumerism. One speaks of a Christian Europe which is under the attack of atheistic ideologies. This approach, of course, excuses us from looking into ourselves and our own deficiencies. It may blind us to the positive values of some of these ideologies.

A thirst for justice, equality and community and a commitment to defend the poor and the worker were not absent in many who saw in Marxism a way of promoting these values. Science and technology could be used to promote development and to produce goods that can be shared. Communications can promote community. What are crucial are not ideologies and faith-systems, including Christianity, but people who believe in them and who let them guide their conduct. And the people are in many shades of gray.

Secularisation

Recent surveys show that secularization seems to be advancing. Fewer and fewer people seem to practise their religion and they are less informed about it. But how are these facts interpreted? Why is it that in the United States of America religious practice does not seem to have decreased? Why is it that in Asia modernity has not led to secularization? May be there are special factors that favour secularization in Europe!

Anti-Religious

Europe has an anti-religious, even atheistic, philosophical tradition. It would be interesting to go into the reasons for this. Some even claim to find the roots of secularization in the creation story of the Bible. I think it is a cultural crisis that has its roots in Greek philosophy which dichotomized matter and spirit and saw the world as an autonomous machine with inbuilt laws of functioning.

Popular Religiosity

European Christianity has a popular religious base, centered around the mystery of death, psycho-physical needs, rites of passage, seasonal festivals, etc. Modernity of course attacks this popular religiosity. Christian leaders and theologians have been more busy dialoguing with the elite intellectual currents of the universities and have not paid attention to the need of people for experience and assurance. No wonder that the religiosity of the people seeks its own paths and solutions in New Religious Movements.

Church-State Tension

Europe has a long history of Church-State tension. The legitimating aspect of the Church may often be predominating over the prophetic one. There has not been much space for freedom. People had to fight for their liberties and rights, even sometimes against the Church. Anti-clericalism is very much a European tradition and religious indifference may often be anti-Church-institution rather than anti-God.

Culture and People

Anthropologists have a saying: "People make culture and culture makes people". Has modernity, besides being the source of consumer values and secularization, also shaped a new type of human being? Human nature does not change fundamentally, but is shaped effectively by culture. I have not time for an elaborate analysis and shall be satisfied with a few brief indications.

Is not a modern person more informed, if not better informed, because of the media? Does one not face more possibilities? Is there not greater mobility and greater anonymity? Is there not a greater sense and assertion of freedom? Does one not search for self-fulfilment, refusing to resign oneself

to circumstances? Does a spirit of experimentation tend to test everything? Can one say that there is a desire for a more personal and experiential religion as a contrast to the dull routine of the workplace? Is it not true that the 'faith' is not simply 'inherited' from the parents, family or community, but that each one has to be persuaded? Is there not a search for meaning, with the constant question "Why?"

Dominant Structures

But at the same time one feels strongly the dominance and power of economic, political and commercial structures. One feels powerless before them. One tends to conform to them, seeking a space for freedom at personal and religious levels. A strong movement of protest is not absent: the violence and visibility of the late sixties may have gone, but it may have been internalized as non-conformity and drugs. A more constructive reaction finds its manifestation in the practice of yoga or zen or in the movements promoting justice, peace and integrity of creation.

II. INCULTURATING THE CHURCH

If inculturation of the Christian life is an ongoing process because culture is constantly changing, it seems particularly urgent in the face of the radical cultural change brought about by modernity. Are we Christians aware of our limitations and inadequacies and do we feel the urge to change ourselves and our symbols and structures? Are we ready to recognize the values that others may have and that challenge us to change and grow? Does a sense of triumphalism hinder our capacity to grow? If we are open to inculturation in Europe and do not see it merely as a problem in 'mission' countries, then one can indicate three areas for change and growth.

1) At the level of reflection one tends to be abstract, philosophical, systematic, academic. One starts from the doctrine or truth to be established and explained. Pastoral conclusions are drawn logically from systematic theoretical positions. Third world theology offers us another model of theologizing. It is from below, leading to praxis. One starts with people, their needs

and problems and one considers them in the light of faith. The human and the social sciences seem more helpful than philosophy to understand and analyse reality and life. Reflection is oriented, not only to understanding, but to action. I have heard this dismissed as practical theology, not sufficiently systematic. Of course, it is not theology for theology's sake, but for life and for people.

2) Such a theology will lead us to become a Church for the people, not primarily institutional and hierarchical, but oriented to community and service. We would be a dialoguing Church that listens to people, their needs and problems before speaking to them the relevant word of God. We would be having a communion, in which free participation and collaboration will be valued, prized and promoted. Would this lead us to rethink the pastoral structures of Church organization? We have many movements in Europe that tend to be elitist. Could one speak of basic communities, if they can be de-linked for the moment from their, sometimes exclusive, accent on poverty and justice? What sort of service structures will we have to develop so that these become a mass movement of the people and not another elite group? When will we be able to develop fully the liturgical and ritual reforms launched by the Second Vatican Council, so that, rather than explaining the symbols, we can make them alive, integrating life into the paschal mystery?

3) The third element of inculturation I would like to suggest is that of spirituality. I think that we need to promote a holistic integration of body and spirit, the human and the divine, person and community, contemplation and action. The great saints and mystics have always achieved such integration, but somehow have not been able to radically influence a rational tradition. The perspectives are already changing under the impact of the Orient. But it benefits only the elite and sometimes the marginal. It is only a personal integration that can withstand the impact of modernity and help to humanize a

technological world.

III. EUROPE OPEN TO THE WORLD

Though Christ was an Asian, the Church, because of its history, tends to be euro-centric. The euro-centric attitude was further strengthened during the colonial period. There is a possibility that the coming European economic and political union, though it involves at the moment only 12 European nations, strengthens this euro-centrism, not only economically, but also culturally. One often speaks of the economic consequences to the Third World of the coming union of the European Economic Community and its possible preferential treatment of the rest of Europe. I am equally worried about the cultural and the religious consequences. Do the Europeans sometimes think that they may have something to learn from Asian, African and American cultures? Are they really open to dialogue with other great and popular religions, whether among themselves or elsewhere?

Ecumenism with the Eastern Orthodox tradition is emerging as a serious problem. It is not just a theological problem. It is a question of different ideas of being Church, of relating to culture and society and of different historical developments. It has political overtones too. The response last week of the Roman Catholic Church to the report of the joint Anglican and Roman Catholic International Commission does not raise much hope in that direction either. Apart from being a challenge to pursue ecumenical efforts, this report is also a challenge to explore the possibility of collaboration in common witness to Jesus and his Good News here and now.

CONCLUSION

What are the challenges that this situation of mission in Europe poses to us as religious who are called to be prophets in community, both in life and in apostolic involvement?

The Mission of the Church in East Europe

Major Ethnic Groups in 5 Eastern European Countries

<u>Country</u>	<u>Popul.</u>	<u>Ethnic Groups</u>	<u>Religions</u>
Czechoslovakia	15 Mill	Czechs Slovaks Hungarians Polish	Catholic Protestant Lutheran
Hungary	10 Mill	Hungarians	Catholic Protestant Lutheran Orthodox
Poland	37 Mill	Polish Germans Ukrainians White Russians	Catholic Orthodox Protestant
Romania	23 Mill	Romanians Hungarians Germans Gypsies	Orthodox Catholic Protestant Jewish Moslem
Yugoslavia	24 Mill	Serbians Croatians Slovenians Macedonians Montenegrians Albanians Hungarians Turks Slovaks Romanians Bulgarians Italians	Orthodox Catholic Moslem Protestant

MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN EASTERN EUROPE

Maria Brünhild Teufel, S.S.N.D.

Maria Brünhild Teufel, S.S.N.D. Vicar General of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, a Congregation with over 600 members in Eastern European countries. Sister Brünhild, who is from Germany, was a teacher of German and English in secondary schools for 20 years. She is presently in her 9th year as a General Councilor of her Congregation here in Rome. She has travelled extensively in recent years in Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary, Poland, and Yugoslavia. She reflects on the situation in these countries with particular reference to the opportunities and problems of religious congregations in the post-Communist era.

Before I share a few reflections on the mission of the Church in East Europe I would like to make some initial remarks. The term East Europe will be used although I am aware of the ongoing discussions and different feelings about it. It simply summarizes those countries that were under the communistic regime of the Soviet Union or of Tito. When I use the word Yugoslavia - although some people say Yugoslavia does not exist any more - I refer to the six republics that have made up Yugoslavia.

The following reflections are mainly based on my congregations's experience in the countries of the former German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia. While we know that each of these countries has its specific situation, I believe that there are also commonalities.

Some of what I will say could be true also for other countries; but the topic now is East Europe.

I am aware that my approach is that of a West European. Someone from East Europe might have a different viewpoint, and if we had the full picture of the current bishops' synod, the picture might differ again.

In our recent trips to these different countries we felt, already at the border, the changed attitude towards church people. When we now go to Romania we no longer need to be dressed and equipped as tourists. Entering Hungary no official asks at the border why our passports do not say that we are on the

general council. In Czechoslovakia we are no longer registered by the State Caritas whenever we enter or leave our sisters' place. These are only a few examples of what it means that the wall and the Iron Curtain have disappeared, that the communist flag is no longer hoisted, that the church is free. This makes us ask the question: What is the mission of the Church in East Europe's situation today?

I would like to focus on three characteristics of East Europe and on the mission of the Church in response to them.

FOSTERING UNITY

There is a great variety of ethnic groups in East Europe: the mission of the Church is to foster unity among them.

To give us an overview I listed the major ethnic groups in the five countries, where we have provinces. We see the range goes from 1 to 12. The interesting fact is that while most countries of West Europe are striving to move towards a united Europe, many ethnic groups in the Eastern countries are claiming their independence and are seeking to establish this independence in a separate, independent country. Is this because history, until today, has not been too sensitive towards those peoples? The three maps in the appendix below give an idea of how much the map has changed in our century alone. An updated map would look different.

States have come and gone; State borders have been moved; people have been shifted from one state to another. Their human rights, cultural values and family bondings have been neglected and even violated. Many wounds are still sore and break open anew as oppression and attacks spread fear, mistrust, hatred and death. Human relationships had not been fostered by the earlier political system. We hear now that mistrust and fear are fed by the underground work of former communists.

Whatever the reason for the present situation (and we realize that the ethnic question is an issue not only in East Europe) - it is a matter of fact that there is war in Yugoslavia, that the Czechs, Slovaks and Hungarians have serious relationship problems, that the Germans still emigrate from Romania. Statements such as: the Serbians lie; the Romanians are lazy; the Germans are neo-Nazis, or similar generalizations can be heard not too infrequently.

It is in this situation that the Church as a universal community of love and unity is first of all missioned to love and to call to love. This love finds expression in understanding and compassion. We heard in several countries about the bishops' unity in this endeavour. We also heard of the many people who are outstanding in their readiness to share what they have with those in need, the sick, the wounded, the refugees... But the call to unity also includes a sensitive and forgiving spirit towards other ethnic groups, whether the minority group is in the country or even on the enemy's side. International congregations can make invaluable contributions to this work for unity. Hopefully, how our sisters, brothers and priests of various ethnic backgrounds live together accepting and respecting each other's culture gives a positive witness of how to bridge borders, to establish bonds of acceptance and love. St. Paul's word to the Galatians (3:28) should apply to us, too: "There does not exist among you Jew or Greek, slave or free person". And we add, Polish or Slovenian or Hungarian, East or West. "Let them be one", is Jesus' prayer in John's gospel.

If the Church fulfills her mission to foster unity through her appreciation of diversity

she probably participates in the most effective way in the endeavour of the nations not only to build the European house, but to also live in it together peacefully.

THE NEW FREEDOM

The East European countries have just regained freedom; the mission of the Church is to work with this gift. The word freedom in this context means what we usually call external freedom. Many people have never given up their internal freedom during the time of persecution.

It was in October 1989 just at the time when the political scene began to change, that the Polish bishop Nossol talked with us about the need of a new pastoral approach to help the people to deal with their regained freedom. Until then, people to a great extent had been told what to do; now they were being called to make choices among new possibilities in the area of education, profession, economy, in their lives as citizens and as church members. After an initial phase of euphoria about the new freedom, many people experienced disillusionment and an unfilled gap.

At this time the Church should offer ways, values and attitudes that can help to see the true picture, to make choices, to improve human life. Lying and censorship in the public scene of the past, for example, need to be replaced by true information and authentic dialogue. The values of full human living take priority over material products. There are needs regarding justice and peace. Importing a western lifestyle is not enough to fill these needs. While the common people in general still struggle for the necessities of life, we already hear about the danger that East Europe is moving "from communism to consumerism" or "from communism to capitalism". The endeavor to prevent this certainly touches the areas of education and communication.

A Romanian bishop said, "It is necessary to continue to promote a systematic moral education in family and in school to build a new Romania and to bring forth authentic and lasting justice and freedom." Recent Church documents on social issues can be guidelines. Many questions are discussed

regarding HOW TO DO IT. Is it the young people that should be focused on because it is they who will shape the future? Or the parents' generation - educated with communist doctrine? Which values are most needed as one learns to live freely?

It was interesting that a Romanian bishop named reconciliation and patience as the two most necessary attitudes at this time. Reconciliation, with the former Securitate member (or Stasi cooperator) next door, with all the sufferings and hurts of the past, with the other ethnic groups in the country; patience not to expect everything in a short period. The events of 1989 removed the atheistic dictatorship but did not eliminate fear from the people's life. Take the people where they are. It is through patient collaboration that the blessings of freedom can be realized.

Collaboration calls for dialogue. This is not easy anywhere, but it is especially important in countries where the exercise of political power for decades threatened the expression of any contrary opinion. And it is difficult to learn. Dialogue needs to be learned and exercised too within the religious institutions and within the Church herself. In some of our East European provinces, for example, we could not have elections of leadership because of political reasons; provincial councils had to be appointed by the general superior. Now the sisters have to meet the challenge of an election which in our Congregation is preceded by an intensive dialogic process. This example, simple as it is, calls for a different perception of hierarchical structure and a new understanding of co-responsibility, and matters of conscience.

There are other areas of great need for dialogue between the hierarchical church, religious congregations and the laity. Vatican II calls the laity to have an "active share in the life and ministry of the Church" (*Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, 10). This active share begins with talking things over and discerning together relevant issues such as Church ministries and pastoral approaches. According to our experience dialogue is at different stages in different countries. We should not wait until the predicted radical decrease of vocations to religious life and priesthood forces us to

enter into dialogue about critical issues.

The bishops' Synod has shown with an alarming clarity the growing need for dialogue between the Catholic and Orthodox churches. If Pope Paul VI's word is still true: "Dialogue is the new name of love", we must be very concerned about the news regarding the breakdown of the dialogue between Rome and the Orthodox Church we can only hope that the "critical point in the relationship" can be worked through and that the ecumenical endeavours of the past can be continued soon.

RE-EVANGELISE

East European countries are in the state of 'after-communism', when the mission of the Church is to re-evangelize. I realize that working for peace, for unity, for true values is part of evangelization. However I would like to use the word here specifically in the sense of bringing Christ to the people, of helping that faith become live again - in contradiction to what communism did: erase faith.

The present situation has two sides:

1) Many people have forgotten about God. Maybe the most drastic example comes from Dr. Koehler in a renowned institute for research of public opinion in Germany. He stated in March: "The socialistic regime of the former German Democratic Republic was most successful in its endeavour to alienate people from religion." In fact only every fourth person in the former German Democratic Republic belongs to a church, and the word "God" was literally something children from East Germany had neither known nor heard before they came to the West. The church - with the exception of Poland - had largely disappeared from the public scene. She was Enemy Number 1 to communism and was at first fiercely persecuted and later oppressed in a more subtle way. Many people stopped practicing their faith, stopped even believing. To a great extent both young people and their parent's generation stayed absent from Church activities.

2) But there is also the other side - the outstanding fidelity and unique creativity of the

Church during the time of persecution. She found ways to remain faithful and to survive. While it was generally known that the USSR had a strong underground church, many, even knowledgeable persons were surprised to hear, after the breakdown of communism, not only of inhuman sufferings the church had gone through, but also about the many secret vocations, about the intensity of faith and religious life developed during the time of persecution, not only in the USSR but also in other countries. The early Church often spoke of *Sanguis martyrum semen Christianorum*. The fidelity of a "little flock", its flexibility and ability to react to given situations gives much hope now that the Church will respond to the signs of the present time in an appropriate manner.

Many issues need to be addressed. No doubt the Church is already doing much in reorganizing her inner structure. Part of this is the revitalisation of religious life which is coming back to these countries. In 1985, for example, Hungary had 3 men's and 1 women's congregations with a total of 400 members; by 1990 the numbers had grown to 21 men's and 46 women's congregations with a total of 3,620 religious. In connection with this the Church must decide what best serves her mission: Which are the most life-giving ways? Should religious congregations engage in the same apostolic ministries, often allied to big institutions, which they had 50 years ago? Are there other more pressing pastoral needs? What is the most

adequate interpretation of charism for our time? How can religious learn from each other? Should community life continue where it was stopped 40 years ago or would it be better to elaborate new accents? Should congregations ask for or take back all confiscated property no matter how it has been used or will be used? It is not an easy task to put new wine in old or new wineskins (Mt. 9:17).

The Synod clearly said that re-evangelization is more than addressing justice and peace issues. Faith must become live again. Recent experiences such as the encounter of the youth with the Holy Father in Czestochowa in Poland affirm that new life is emerging among the young people. Many of them look for meaning in life. That is partly the reason why sects and the New Age Movement evoke great interest in some countries. The Church can offer Jesus, the Way, the Truth and the Life. Its final mission in East Europe as well as in the West is to make him a choice for his people, to give him a chance in public life and to bring all to oneness with the Father.

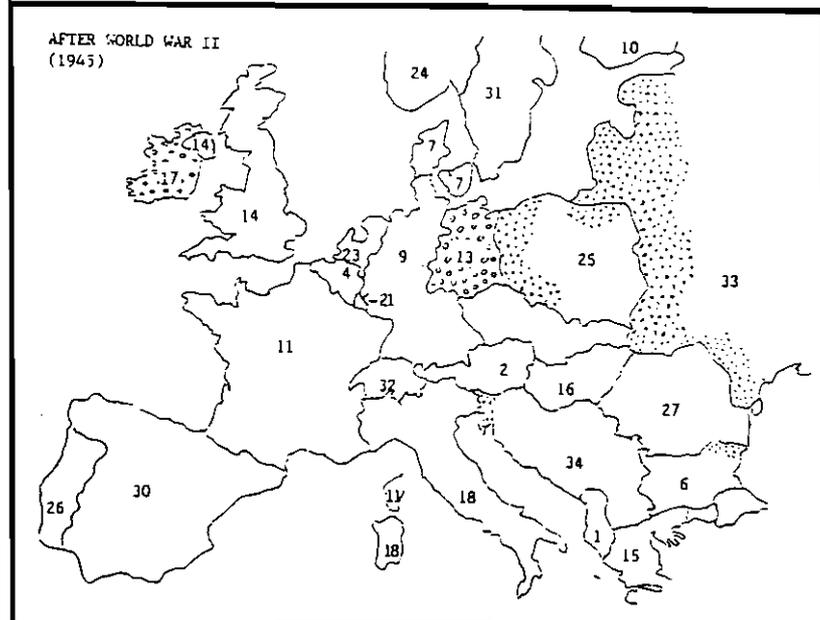
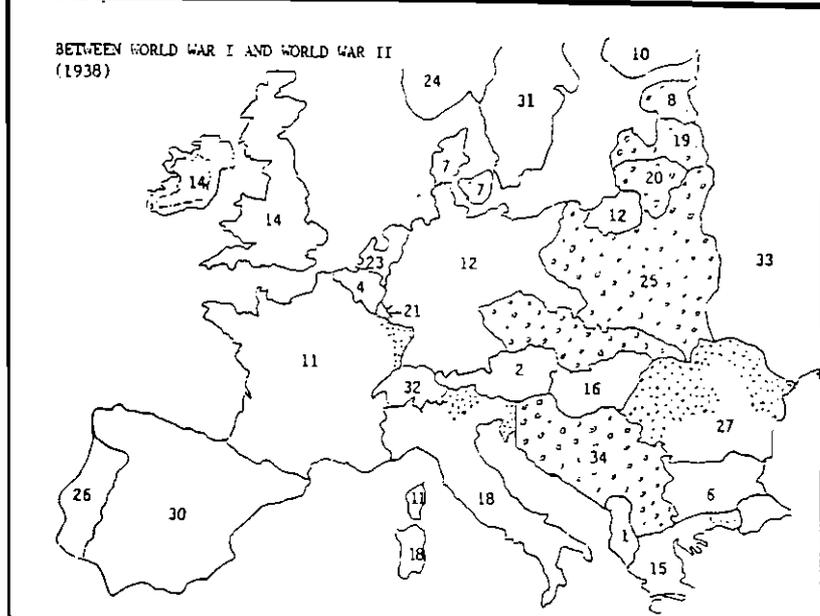
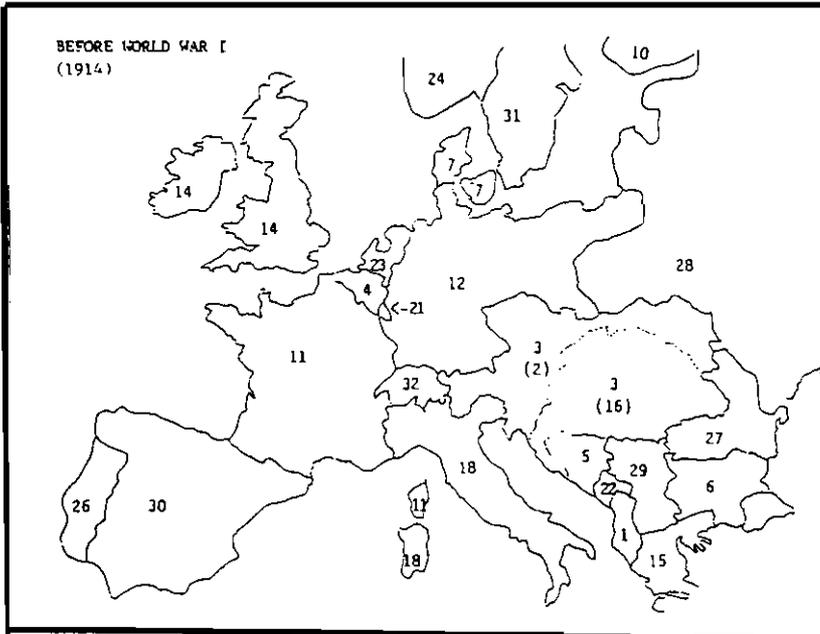
St. Luke's gospel describes Jesus' mission, which is the mission of the Church, thus: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, recovery of sight to the blind and release to prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the Lord." (Lk 4:18-19)

SEDOS SEMINAR

5th CENTENARY : A NEW AGENDA

Speakers: Maria Clara Lucchetti Bingemer
Gustavo Gutiérrez

19-23 May 1992 at Villa Cavalletti



EUROPE

1. Albania
2. Austria
3. Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy
4. Belgium
5. Bosnia-Herzegovina
6. Bulgaria
7. Denmark
8. Estonia
9. Federal Republic of Germany
10. Finland
11. France
12. Germany
13. German Democratic Republic
14. Great Britain
15. Greece
16. Hungary
17. Ireland
18. Italy
19. Latvia
20. Lithuania
21. Luxemburg
22. Montenegro
23. Netherlands
24. Norway
25. Poland
26. Portugal
27. Romania
28. Russian Empire
29. Serbia
30. Spain
31. Sweden
32. Switzerland
33. USSR
34. Yugoslavia

... new territory
 ○○○ newly formed states

Source: Putzger,
 HISTORISCHER WELTATLAS

MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN WESTERN EUROPE

Teresa Clements, D.M.J.

Teresa Clements, D.M.J. Vicar General of the Congregation of the Daughters of Mary and Joseph. Having worked in Uganda and briefly in Ghana for fifteen years, she did post-graduate studies in spiritual theology at the Gregorian University, Rome and also lectured in the Regina Mundi Institute in Rome. She later lectured in the post-graduate spiritual theology programme at the Milltown Institute of Theology and Philosophy, Dublin, and taught in both the inter-congregational novitiate programme as well as the Carysfort programme for novice formators. Throughout this time she lived in Tallaght, a very underprivileged suburb of Dublin. In 1987, under the auspices of the Irish Missionary Union, she published "Missionary Spirituality". She reflects on the challenges to missionary societies in the evolving pluralistic society of Western Europe.

In recent times there has been a mountain of paper used in the attempt to reflect on the situation of Europe, both East and West. This explosion of material is true in the political sphere, in the relationships between countries within the EEC, in questions related to Eastern Europe with its positive signs as well as problems, and it is true of the Church. Confronted with all this material, I find myself consistently asking the question "and where do we go from here?" It is one thing to theorise, it is another to live in any one of our large cities, and try to tackle this question while face to face with the problems of homeless people, the unemployed, large numbers of hopeless-looking immigrants. This paper mountain does not seem to help very much the more than 70% of unemployed people in the sprawling housing estates of Tallaght, outside Dublin, where I lived for several years, the estates which were for many a vast symbol of failure.

It is perhaps even more challenging when the same question is faced from the perspective and experience of the grinding, hopeless poverty of the countries of the 'South', that many of us here in SEDOS have known and known first hand. Europe is so rich in comparison, but that comparison is not helpful, either, to the homeless on the streets of London or Rome, or any other of our cities¹.

In this brief presentation, I would like to outline what I see as some of the important

issues facing Western Europe, and to note some of the implications². My hope is that throughout later sharing of experience and the quality of our listening together, we may be helped to further discern what the Spirit is saying to the churches today (see Rev.2:7) that is, to ourselves.

Perhaps the most striking emotion evident in Europe at present is fear, particularly as it is manifested in the recent, increasingly strong efforts to keep 'others' out! Immigration is being severely curtailed; there is a sense of closing the shutters. Strenuously limiting the number of immigrants, however, may equally well indicate increased selfishness, a reluctance to share with others, as much as it reflects fear. Rome, well known for its graffiti, gives ample evidence of this trend. Each time I go into town on the bus I see a wide sampling. One such reads *immigrazione = discriminazione. Lavoro agli Italiani*. Perhaps there is not only racial discrimination being expressed here, but also the pain of unemployment. Even so, it does seem true to say that the barricades are going up around Europe; it is becoming closed in on itself and hence it would seem, more and more selfish and locked in fear.

Related to the issue of fear is the ability of some political movements to capitalize on people's pain. So for example, the neo-nazism, or the fascism of some political groups, such as the National Front in Britain, the Vlaams Blok in Belgium or the

extreme right attitudes expressed by Le Pen in France, play directly on the fears and suffering of people. A significant problem for us religious, it seems to me, is that we may at times hear people within our own communities expressing the same sentiments, although usually one can say that "they know not what they do"! These attitudes are surely frightening in their consequences.

Ethnic conflict is another characteristic of Western Europe today. Various groups of people are expressing their long-suppressed rights and individuality, but the resultant conflicts and killings that we are witnessing are surely not Christian. The pain of war in what was Yugoslavia is surely in all our hearts.

The gap between the rich and the poor people of the world is widening. This past week, in the USA, a baseball player was given a change of salary, which would mean that in 5 years he would personally have gained more than the annual national income of many developing countries. Surely this is immoral and yet we know that the same trends are true in Europe.

A further issue in many countries of Western Europe, particularly the 'richer' ones, is the increasing average age and tiredness of people. There are fewer children around. In addition, lives have become more and more pressurised and there is a general air of weariness in our cities.

There are numerous other issues evident in Europe today; to name but a few: the abuse of substances, e.g. drugs and alcohol; the abuse of people-children especially; broken marriages and in some countries more than others, questions related to women and their rights in society; health issues, systems no longer able to provide adequate health care; problems related to AIDS and the resultant marginalisation of sufferers. Mentioning these various issues only touches the tip of the iceberg. I am not a sociologist. I am simply sharing with you some of my observations. For example, I am struck by the frequency with which political and economic statements and at times, Church documents as well, seem to ignore these problems and situations, as though they did not exist.

There seems to be a constant skirting of the pain and suffering in our streets, as we walk past on the other side.

In 1989, Michael Amaladoss³ made many of us uncomfortable, or perhaps I should more honestly say, he made me uncomfortable, when, talking of the need of mutuality of mission, and commenting on global challenges, he stated the First World with its consumerist culture and its economic and political structures urgently needs a prophetic voice. The how of that prophetic voice is for me both the challenge and the question.

Confronted by these vast areas of problem in Europe today, perhaps we might ask ourselves as Christians and as religious, do we really accept the Gospel that we have taught others for so long? We have presented the model of Christ crucified, Christ accepting the human condition, Christ vulnerable and weak (Phil.2:7) But frequently, it seems to me, we have been teaching from a standpoint of strength, of having firm support systems and traditions behind us. The Church in Western Europe until very recently experienced itself as successful.

It is true that since Vatican II our liturgies have been trimmed of triumphalistic excesses, but have our hearts and attitudes been trimmed of these same excesses? In many parts of Western Europe, with some few exceptions, the Church is becoming almost irrelevant, except to itself and therefore fails to challenge. One can attend, as I have done, a beautiful Sunday liturgy in the heart of Paris, or Brussels, all but perfect in its catechesis, in its liturgical setting, but the Church is practically empty apart from a small group of elderly people, some few accompanied by their grandchildren. The middle-aged group and the young adults and adolescents are missing⁴. The celebration becomes apparently even more irrelevant on leaving the church as one meets the homeless and hopeless on the streets. Peter Hebblethwaite, in an article on the present Synod on Europe, remarks rather strikingly, that "you would never in a life time of vox pops come up with the answer of the preparatory Synod text as to 'what is the problem of Europe'"⁵.

There have been several attempts in recent

months to reflect more deeply on various aspects of these and other issues. SEDOS, for example, sponsors a group that reflects together on the role of Missionary Institutes in relation to Europe. The results of the first meeting are to be found in *Spiritus*⁶, where François Nicolas presents the material discussed as well as some of the proposals that were made. In the same edition of *Spiritus*, there are other excellent articles on the same topic, each in its own way thought-provoking. *Vie Consacrée* recently published two articles, concerning religious and Europe⁷, again thought-provoking. In addition, there is some very helpful material available from the World Council of Churches⁸. Of special note is their document concerning refugees and proposals for possible action by the Churches.

There are several factors that I have found especially striking when studying the available material. I note particularly eight points:

- (1) We are no longer speaking about great movements of missionaries from one country to another, but we are primarily speaking of evangelisation within a country by the people of the country⁹. This does not exclude the possibility of international communities and of some people being called to mission in a country other than their own.
- (2) Hence the importance of transcultural communities, as a witness to the unity and universality of the Church¹⁰.
- (3) Some Missionary Institutes, (eg. the Scheutists) are considering European countries as mission areas just as much as countries in Africa or Asia¹¹.
- (4) Over many years in relation to mission in Africa, Asia and elsewhere the need for inculturation¹² has been studied in depth. The experience may profitably be applied to mission in Europe. It is no longer enough for 'returning missionaries' to bring to their home countries the experience and the ideas they had in other continents. Missionaries need to be as deeply rooted within the cultural experience of European countries as they have tried to be in other places. For the truth of the matter seems to be that the Church is as alien in Europe as it was in the past, for example, in Africa. Missionaries, because they have had to be aware of differences among people, have had to make the attempt to become inculturated in their country of mission. They bring this gift to the European church¹³.
- (5) There are already religious, both women and men, who are working within extremely poor situations, responding directly to the needs, for example, of refugees, immigrants, drug addicts, those suffering from AIDS etc.¹⁴. The sharing of these experiences is very important both for the support of the religious concerned as well as for others in ministry in Europe.
- (6) The collaboration of laity and religious in all forms of apostolate and at many different levels is vital to the life of the Church. There is a particular place here for the new forms of Associate membership that are emerging in many Congregations¹⁵. Where Associate members may not work directly in ministry with the religious, (this seems rarely to be the case.), this type of membership has great potential for the on-going formation of lay people, especially in the area of social justice.
- (7) Working with other Christian churches is essential. Many working documents have been produced recently by other Churches and they are invaluable¹⁶. Collaboration is happening in many countries on various levels, but the rift between the various Christian traditions is extremely deep in some places in Western Europe. Cooperation, as well as trust in the other, is needed on a wider scale if we are truly to realise our Christian potential.
- (8) Inter-faith dialogue is equally essential, especially in relation to Islam, if we are to grow in an understanding of our Muslim sisters and brothers who are part of the fabric of life in many European countries¹⁷. Again, much is happening, but for the average religious in our congregations working in Europe, one may ask how much they are even aware of the need of such a dialogue.

These reflections are not new. They are

simply an attempt to draw together some current thinking on mission in Western Europe. One hopes that some practical proposals may result from these reflections, in the light of the wide experience of religious actively involved in this mission. But I would like to conclude by noting just a few of the implications that have occurred to me while I have been preparing this paper.

The situation in which Europe finds itself today challenges us in a new way:

- to truly live the Gospel of Christ that we have taught and talked about for so long, to examine our models of living, of witnessing to Christ's values, rather than our way of speaking of them;
- to become sufficiently inculturated within

the European setting that we will be able to live the Gospel from within this specific context;

- to retain at the same time, a global vision of the vast issues that confront the world, and to challenge the setting up of barricades around our European society;

- to put on the mind of Christ, who 'was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross' (Phil.2:5-11).

It is now almost two thousand years since Europe first heard the message of the truth and the gospel of our salvation. Now is the time for that message to be proclaimed in the new Europe that we experience, for the freedom of the people whom God has taken for his own, for the praise of his glory (Eph.1:14).

¹ An interesting editorial on this topic appears in *Flourish*, Nov. 1991. (Monthly journal of the Archdiocese of Glasgow, Scotland).

² A 'New Europe in the Making', (Brussels: Pax Christi International, Dutch Section, 1990).

³ See Michael Amaladoss, SJ, 'Mission: From Vatican II into the Coming Decade', *Sedos General Assembly*, 1989, in *Sedos Bulletin*, 21 (1989), 353-361 (at 361). See also an extended article: M. Amaladoss, 'The Challenges of Mission Today' in W. Jenkinson and H. O'Sullivan, eds., *Trends in Mission, Toward the Third Millennium* (New York: Orbis Books, 1991) 359-397 at 395.

⁴ Under the auspices of Pax Christi International, a most interesting lecture was given recently (3.12.1991), here in Rome, in relation to the Synod of Europe, by Prof. Jan Kerkhofs, SJ, of the University of Leuven, Belgium. He presented the results of the considerable sociological research he has carried out in recent years in the various European countries, concerning developing a value system. He showed the problem of the irrelevance of the Church for many people as a serious question related to the future of Europe.

⁵ P. Hebblethwaite, 'Thinking European', *The Tablet*, 245(1991), 1400-1402. See also Hebblethwaite, 'A Tale of Two Texts', *The Tablet*, 245 (1991) 1434-1436.

⁶ F. Nicolas, 'Instituts Missionnaires "t Europe', *Spiritus* 124 (1991) 304-314.

⁷ G. Cabra, 'Vie religieuse et nouvelle Europe',

Vie Consecrée 5(1991) 277-290, and A. Louf, 'Les moines dans l'Europe de demain' 291-297.

⁸ See various articles in *International Review of Mission* 80(1991). See also 'Refugees and Asylum Seekers in a Common European House', *Oikoumene*, August, 1991.

⁹ See for example, M. Amaladoss 'Defis missionnaires à l'Europe, dans ce continent et par rapport au monde', *Spiritus* 124(1991) 240-251 at 251.

¹⁰ F. Nicolas, op.cit., 312.

¹¹ Ibid. 310-311.

¹² Prof. Kerkhofs noted the difficulty he has with the word 'inculturation'. I share his difficulty, but it is hard to find another.

¹³ Amaladoss, *Spiritus*, 246-247.

¹⁴ For example, Maria Goretti, 'Mission à l'Indienne en Belgique', *Spiritus* 124(1991), 277-284.

¹⁵ Nicolas, op.cit. 313. There is a developing bibliography on this topic, e.g. D. Gottemoeller, 'Looking at Associate Membership Today,' *Review for Religious* 50(1991) 390-397.

¹⁶ See fn. 8 above. In addition, for example, "Called to be Old" a report prepared by the Faith in Elderly People Project, Bradford and Leeds Metropolitan Districts, England.

¹⁷ M. Fitzgerald, 'Mission in Canberra', *International Review of Mission* 80(1991) 315-326 at 320-323. See also J.-M. Gaudeul, *Appelles*, (Paris: Cerf, 1991); Faith, Dialogue, Reconciliation, (Brussels: Pax Christi International, 1991).

MISSION IN EUROPE

DISCUSSION POINTS

The seminar topic at the very well attended 1991 SEDOS Annual Assembly was Mission-Europe.

Three major themes emerged with their corresponding challenges in the lively and informative discussion following the presentations made by Michael Amaladoss, SJ, M. Brühild Teufel, SSND; and Teresa Clements, DMJ. They were:

1. Members of religious and missionary societies living "in community" after 40 years of suppression - problems and opportunities.
2. Christian Europe - myth or reality?
3. Inculturation - in which Europe?

1. Missionary - Religious Societies Living in Common

Members of these societies have been unable to live in community for 40 years. During those years they merged as individuals into the local society, sometimes underground, sometimes persecuted, suspect, hidden, befriended or shunned, almost always surviving as individuals. What, if any kind of common living is possible or appropriate for them today? Some desire to return to pre-1948 forms of community living. Is this an idealized form which is no longer possible or feasible. Others dread the challenge of returning to community living after 40 years of surviving as individuals.

In these situations questions emerge: Why is it necessary to form communities? What is the purpose of community? Do communities close in on themselves or look beyond themselves to the local society, to insertion into

that society - to collaboration with the laity?

2. Christian Europe - Myth or Reality?

The term 'Christian Europe' is easily used, but has Europe ever been really Christianised? Would it be more accurate to say there were places and times when the Christian message was really lived? How do we explain the holocaust, the Croatian-Serbian hatreds, the wars and schisms? Were political factors so intermingled with the religious ones as to make the "Christian Europe" label largely meaningless - a myth?

Christians have always been a little flock - where the gospel message was truly heard and lived, where kingdom values were cherished. Was this not the real situation of Christianity in the past in Europe and may not this be a more realistic model of Christianity in Europe today?

3. Inculturation to which Europe?

Missionaries intending to go to Eastern European countries face the challenge of inculturation in a society radically different from Western Europe. Christ is already present in each culture and each culture has areas that are in need of finding Christ. Missionaries are called to inculturation and to be counter-cultural and this applies to both Western and Eastern Europe.

Celtic missionaries went out to the peoples of Europe: to France, Italy, Switzerland, Poland, the Ukraine - not so much to bring Christ as to search for Christ among those peoples. The centres of Christianity which they founded among those and other peoples throughout Europe could be models for Mission-Europe today.

RELIGIONS IN EUROPE

ONE CONTINENT - MANY FAITHS

These figures are taken from the well known Di Agostini calendar for Western Europe. Figures for Eastern Europe are estimates. They show the plurality of religions in the "Old Continent".

ALBANIA

Cattolici 4% Ortodossi 5%
Protestanti - Musulmani 31%

AUSTRIA

Cattolici 84% Ortodossi -
Protestanti 5,5% Musulmani -

BELGIO ***

Cattolici 90% Ortodossi -
Protestanti 0,5% Musulmani 6%

BULGARIA

Cattolici 0,8% Ortodossi 63,2%
Protestanti 0,4% Musulmani 10%

CECOSLOVACCHIA

Cattolici 65,6% Protestanti 5,8%

DANIMARCA

Cattolici 0,5% Protestanti 90%

ESTONIA

Popolazione in maggioranza protestante

FINLANDIA

Cattolici - Ortodossi 1%
Protestanti 89% Musulmani -

FRANCIA ***

Cattolici 93% Ortodossi -
Protestanti 1,5% Musulmani 4%

GERMANIA

Cattolici 35% Ortodossi 0,5%
Protestanti 43% Musulmani 2%

GRAN BRETAGNA ***

Cattolici 9,5% Ortodossi -
Protestanti 88% Musulmani 1,5%

GRECIA

Cattolici 0,5% Ortodossi 98%
Protestanti - Musulmani 1%

IRLANDA

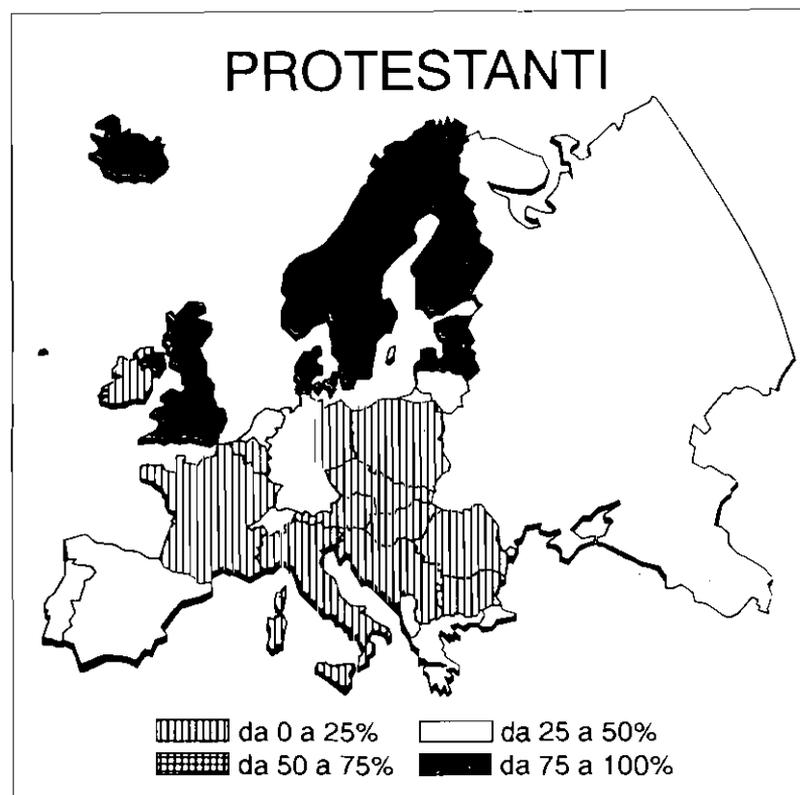
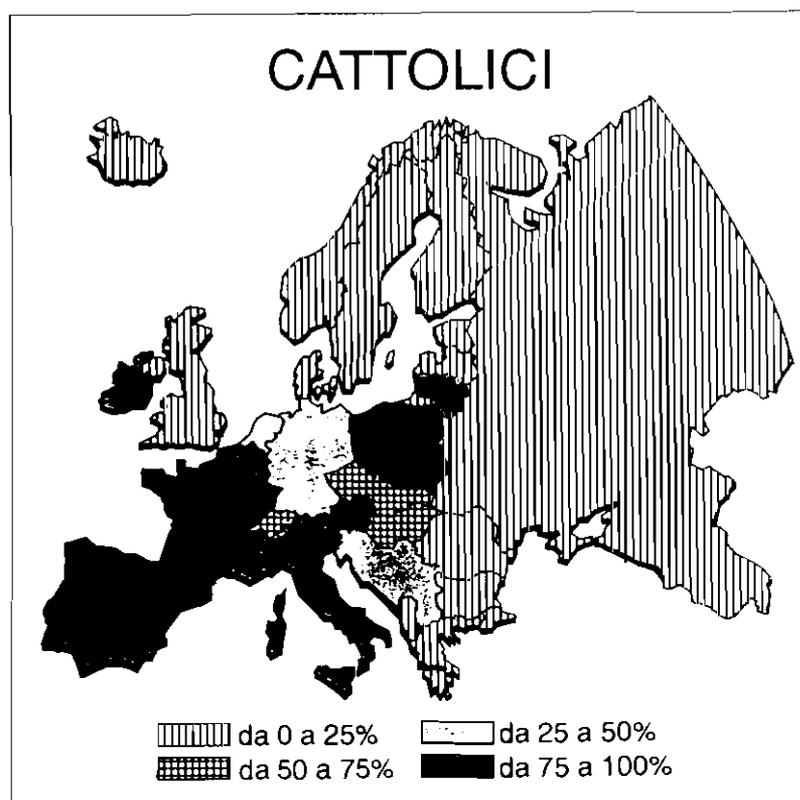
Cattolici 93% Ortodossi -
Protestanti 3% Musulmani -

ISLANDA

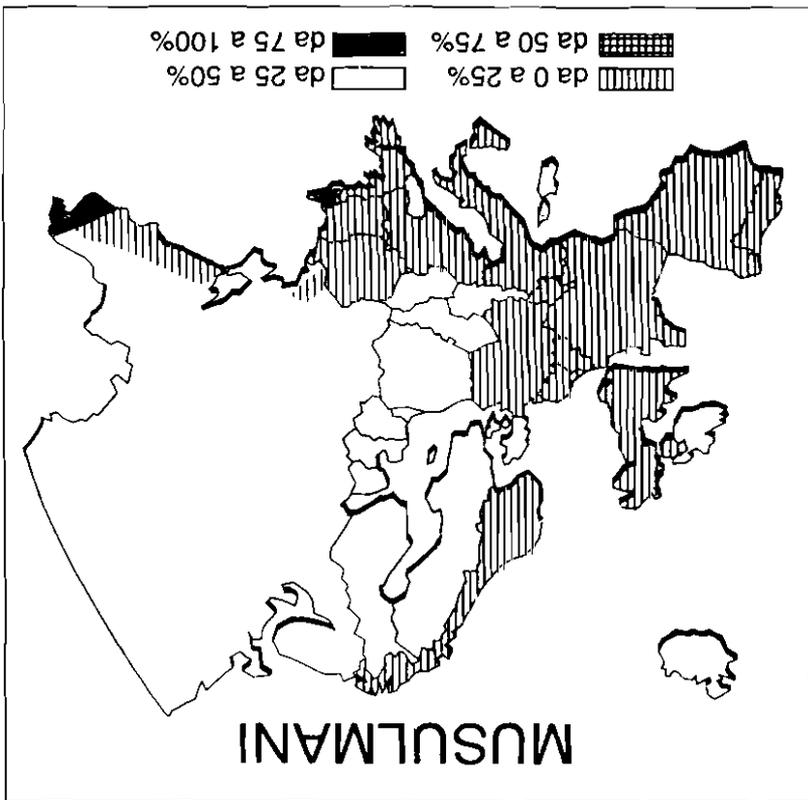
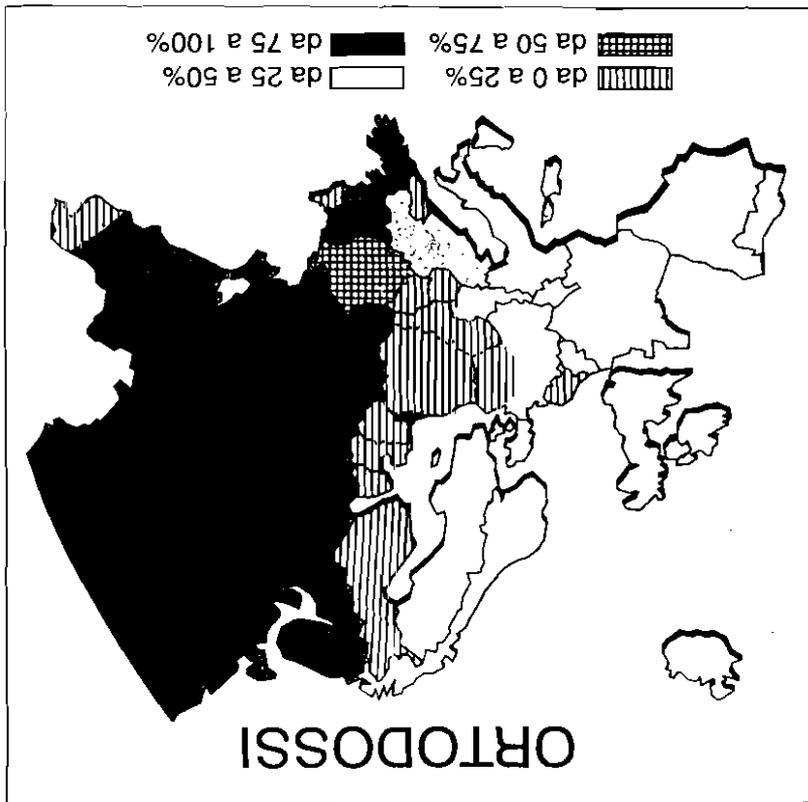
Cattolici 1% Ortodossi -
Protestanti 97% Musulmani -

ITALIA ***

Cattolici 98% Ortodossi -
Protestanti 0,5% Musulmani 0,5%



RELIGIONS IN EUROPE



Paese	Religione	Percentuale
JUGOSLAVIA	Cattolici	41%
	Protestanti	1%
LETTONIA	Cattolici	25%
	Protestanti	70%
LITUANIA	Cattolici	70%
	Protestanti	25%
LUSSEMBURGO	Cattolici	97%
	Protestanti	1%
MALTA	Cattolici	99%
	Protestanti	0,5%
NORVEGIA	Cattolici	97%
	Protestanti	0,5%
PAESI BASSI	Cattolici	36%
	Protestanti	27%
POLONIA	Cattolici	94%
	Protestanti	1%
PORTOGALLO	Cattolici	97%
	Protestanti	0,5%
ROMANIA	Cattolici	62,7%
	Protestanti	4,9%
SPAGNA	Cattolici	95%
	Protestanti	0,5%
SVEZIA	Cattolici	1%
	Protestanti	91%
SVIZZERA ***	Cattolici	48%
	Protestanti	44%
UNGHERIA ***	Cattolici	53,9%
	Protestanti	21,6%
ARMENIA	Cattolici	5%
	Protestanti	50%
AZERBAJDZAN	Cattolici	78%
	Protestanti	25%
BIELORUSSIA	Cattolici	70%
	Protestanti	25%
GEORGIA	Cattolici	70%
	Protestanti	25%
MOLDAVIA	Cattolici	70%
	Protestanti	25%
REP. FED. RUSSA (Russia europea)	Cattolici	10,8%
	Protestanti	10,8%
UCRAINA	Cattolici	10,8%
	Protestanti	10,8%

*** Presenza di significative comunità ebraiche.

CONTEMPORARY INDIANS AND THE QUINCENTENARY

Mac Chapin

Spread across my desk is a selection of magazines, newsletters, fliers announcing symposia and exhibitions, and books that have sprung up around the Quincentennial celebration. Quite a few of these publications are elegantly produced and pleasing to the eye, an indication that considerable money is behind the collective effort. And much more is promised, - posters, commemorative coins and medals, postage stamps, cookbooks, collections of music, and exhibitions of art and photography.

What I don't see are articles written by Indians, or anything that approaches the range of questions brought to light by the Quincentenary from the perspective of contemporary Indians (as opposed to the historical Indian, who is amply represented). If indeed the arrival of Columbus was an "encounter of two worlds", it seems only fair that we should have a few words from the Indian World - or as an Indian friend phrases it, "the view from the shore".

A LONG-STANDING QUESTION

The following question therefore arises. Do Indians see the Quincentenary of the arrival of Columbus as an occasion that they would like to commemorate? Put simply, most do not - or would not, if they had any notion that a commemorative ceremony was in the air. For the fact remains that whatever euphemisms we might choose to describe the historic landing, what happened was decidedly a conquest, one that was both swift and devastating. Within the short span of a few decades, large segments of the native population were overwhelmed and placed under the yoke of the foreign invaders. Those who escaped subjugation either lived in inaccessible places when the intruders appeared or were able to flee to remote,

generally inhospitable places where they could not be found. What occurred in the areas of contact during the first years was utter havoc.

ENCOUNTER OF TWO WORLDS

Although the brutality of the conquistadors was clearly a contributing factor to early death tolls, the most implacable enemies of the natives appeared in the form of epidemics. Indians everywhere were decimated by smallpox, chickenpox, measles, tuberculosis, malaria, and yellow fever - diseases that were relatively benign in Europe, but lethal among the Indians who lacked immunity to them. The core area of the Mexica (Aztec) empire in the Valley of Mexico was reduced from between 1.5 and 3 million inhabitants to an estimated 70,000 by the end of the seventeenth century. Some stretches of Central America were swept clean of people by the invisible scourge that followed the Spaniards as they made their way down the isthmus, and everywhere there was a pattern of death and destruction. With the exception of minuscule enclaves in Dominica and Cuba, the indigenous people of the Caribbean have vanished. During the first hundred years after the "encounter of two worlds", the ragged remnants of the indigenous population of the new world were broken.

Most of this story has been well documented by historians, and the occasion of the Quincentenary will give it full play. From their side, Indian activists from various corners of the hemisphere have already begun to raise their collective voice in protest and to cry out for redress. While all of this is appropriate and even important, however, what concerns me is the apparent lack of interest in the present-day situation of the

Indians, the living descendants of the original native populations.

THE UNKNOWN INDIAN OF LATIN AMERICA

In Latin America alone there are an estimated 40 million people who identify themselves as Indians and after centuries of decline, their numbers have been growing steadily over the last few decades. In some countries, such as Guatemala, Peru, and Bolivia, they number as much as half of the total population. At the other extreme, less than one percent of the population of Costa Rica is considered to be Indian. Yet everywhere in the region, whether Indians are found in large groups or tiny minorities, they tend to lead quiet, unobtrusive, and often isolated lives. They keep to themselves, and even out of the urban landscape, are seldom noticed. They are unknown and unperceived, although they are often physically present in large numbers. Even those Indians who are visually striking - the painted dwellers of the Amazon forest and the exotically dressed women of the Guatemalan highlands - seldom register on us as more than surface images. We don't see them, we know virtually nothing about the way they live, and we have no access to their thoughts. The original inhabitants of the Americas have become invisible, phantoms in their own land.

Many Indians in Latin America have chosen, for one reason or another, to avoid "civilization" altogether. They have exiled themselves voluntarily or have been pushed into the rural backlands by hostile forces. These groups are generally found in areas aptly termed "regions of refuge" by the Mexican anthropologist Gonzalo Aguirre Beltran. The "regions of refuge" offer sanctuary to small groups whose communities hug desolate mountain slopes, or are dispersed across rugged, trackless deserts, or are tucked away in the folds of thick tropical rainforests. Subsistence in these environments is difficult and niggardly; hardship and deprivation are the rule. The people who inhabit these regions are physically and culturally isolated and live where there are frequently no roads, no schools and no electricity. Even those

Indians who have migrated to urban areas in recent years in search of employment tend to remain isolated. They often squat along the periphery of populated areas, where they eke out a tenuous existence through occasional labour.

CENTRAL AMERICA'S INDIGENOUS POPULATION

Central America is a case in point. The entire region was largely unknown to the outside world until 1979, when the Sandinistas overthrew Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua and a coup in EL Salvador initiated what now appears to be an endless march toward chaos. Since then, events in all of the countries of Central America have been featured repeatedly on television screens around the world and Central American political and military leaders have become familiar faces. Numerous books have appeared and much has been written in newspapers and magazines. Our understanding of the region has increased exponentially. Yet at the same time, very few North Americans would be able to say much about Central America's indigenous peoples.

A recent map of the Indian population of Central America done by geographers Melanie Counce and William Davidson lists 43 distinct indigenous groups with a total population of close to 3 million people. Other knowledgeable estimates put the total as high as 5 million. Whatever the true figure might be, two complementary facts stand out. First, out of a total population of around 25 million, Indians constitute between 12 and 20 percent of the population. Second, the absolute number of Indians has been growing over the last few decades in almost every country. The map also shows that the majority of Central America's Indians are living in two discrete and difficult-to-reach areas - the jagged volcanic highlands of Guatemala and the heavily forested Caribbean coast, which stretches from Belize through Panama to the Colombian border. The Indians fled into these refuge areas in colonial times to maintain their autonomy and their own way of life. Over the centuries, they were gradually pushed back and displaced, into ever tighter circles across the densely populated highland

areas of Guatemala, or still deeper into the humid jungles of the Caribbean littoral. Until the last few decades of this century, these "hideouts" had remained inviolate to the incursions of outsiders. It is only recently that capitalist development, utilizing new technologies, has begun to destroy the region's remaining natural resources. In this way, the last remaining stands of tropical rain forest, with Indians living inside them, are falling before the advances of loggers, cattle ranchers, and swarms of landless peasants.

The largest bloc of indigenous people in Central America is concentrated in the highlands and along the northern lowland strip of Guatemala, where between 2.5 and 4 million Indians are divided among 22 different Mayan language groups. They are culturally diverse, and they have been studied extensively by anthropologists, geographers, historians, biologists, and other researchers. Tourists in search of colourful weaving have also been frequent visitors to highland markets over the years. Moreover, accounts of the violence and brutal massacres visited upon the Indians in recent years have been widely portrayed in books, articles, and documentary films. Sadly enough, it must be said that we know something about these people and their struggles.

But what is to be said of the remaining Indian groups of Central America? Even within their own countries, most of them are not well known. With the exception of the Miskito, who have recently gained notoriety through their skirmishes with the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, and the Kuna of Panama, who have long been studied by anthropologists and photographed by tourists for their colorful native dress, the Indians of Central America generally draw a blank. The Rama, the Sumu, the Garifuna, and the Matagalpa are other, little-known indigenous groups in Nicaragua, in Panama, the Kuna are simply the most prosperous and well-organized tribe among five others: the Guaymi, the Teribe (Terraba), the Bribri, the Embera, and the Wounan.

It is common for Salvadoreans to deny categorically that any Indians still exist among them, despite the fact as many as

500,000 people who call themselves Indians live in that country. Once the sole lords of the region, El Salvador's *naturales*, as they are called, have been stripped of virtually everything over the centuries. They have lost their native language, much of their native culture, their autonomy, and even their sense of self worth. They have also lost their lands. Most of them earn a meager living from seasonal wage labor on coffee or sugarcane estates and rent tiny parcels of land to farm subsistence crops. The only vestige of the old pattern of communal landholding is a single plot of approximately fifteen acres held by the Indian population of the town of Santo Domingo de Guzman in the western end of the country. Two years ago, community authorities divided this plot among the 125 farmers judged to be the most needy in town.

Costa Rica's diverse indigenous population of slightly over 20,000 is dispersed about the countryside in small pockets into which they have been inexorably driven over the centuries. They receive limited protection in twenty-one circumscribed *reservas indigenas*, and several government institutions maintain small, underfunded programs for them. Yet the Indians are largely ignored by Costa Rican society at large. In school textbooks, for example, they make a cameo appearance as pre-Hispanic savages, and then they drop out of sight altogether. The Kekchi and the Mopan, two Mayan groups in Belize, live in semi-isolation in the southernmost district of Toledo. The Garifuna, a racial and cultural fusion of Carib Indians and escaped African slaves who speak an Arawak Indian language, live in a string of fishing villages along the coast in the southern half of the country. The Garifuna, in fact, are found all along the coast of Central America, stretching from Belize, through Guatemala and Honduras, as far as Nicaragua. The largest group of Garifuna, approximately 70,000 strong, resides along the northern coast of Honduras.

Most of these groups are chronically impoverished and lack such basic social services as health and education. Illiteracy is widespread and even where schools exist, the level of teaching and material support is generally dismal. In Costa Rica, which leads

the region with a national literacy rate of over 80 percent, the Indian population has an estimated functional literacy rate of just over 20 percent. Many Indians in Central America now speak Spanish as their mother tongue, but they frequently speak it haltingly. And a surprising number of them are limited to their own tongue and consequently seldom leave the radius of their remote communities.

INDIAN ORGANIZATIONS

These difficult conditions notwithstanding, the Indian peoples of Central America have persisted. And they have done more than simply persist. As part of a larger trend affecting the entire hemisphere since about 1980, a number of the Central American groups have begun organizing themselves to take a more aggressive stand before the world. Significantly, this incipient movement has been gaining impetus from grassroots activity. In Belize, the Garifuna have formed the National Garifuna Council, and the Kekchi and Mopan Maya have set up the Toledo Maya Cultural Council. These organizations are now part of the Caribbean Organization of Indigenous peoples (COIP), which also includes newly formed groups from Dominica, St. Vincent, and Guyana. The Cabecar and Bribri peoples of Costa Rica are reviving the tradition of councils of elders (*consejos de awapa*) as a means of building cohesion in their communities and defending their rights in collective fashion. The Kauna of Panama, who enjoy a long tradition of strong political organization, have been serving as advisors to the Embera, the Wounan, and the Guaymi in their attempt to build organizational strength. Even in Honduras and El Salvador, faint murmurings have been heard from the long-dormant indigenous populations. In El Salvador, Indians went underground in 1932 in the aftermath of a savage massacre of as many as 30,000 people in the western department of Sonsonate where, within the space of a few days, soldiers rounded up and shot all those they could find with "Indian" racial features and dress, including women and children.

It is only recently that the National Salvadorean Indigenous Association (ANIS) has emerged in the midst of that country's civil

war, and Indian promoters in rural communities of Sonsonate have begun to work, albeit cautiously, with small-scale development projects.

Guatemala presents a far more complex and tragic picture. After tens of thousands of Indians lost their lives in the violence that gripped the country from the late 1970s through the early 1980s, community leadership in the highlands was either eliminated or forced into exile. The level of violence moderated temporarily, only to escalate with renewed vigor. Regrettably, many areas of the highlands are still heavily militarized. In this continuing environment of bristling tension and uncertainty, the organization of indigenous people around social or political issues has been severely curtailed.

LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

While the needs of the region's indigenous people are numerous, one issue stands out as primary and immediate - protection of their land and natural resources, both of which are disappearing at an alarming rate. All Indians have seen their territories shrink over the centuries in the face of white and mestizo expansion, and the demographic explosion of the past fifty years has made their situation critical. Landless colonists everywhere are pushing into Indian lands, carving out farms and cattle ranches. As the colonists push from the outside, population pressures from within the Indian territories fuel a growing concern to establish, stake out, and gain collective legal title to their own homelands. Coupled with the tenure issue is the recognized need to explore alternative, sustainable agricultural systems.

The Indians of El Salvador have been campaigning with partial success, for communal lands at the community level, working through the country's agrarian reform program. In Honduras, the Miskito, Sumo, Garifuna, and Pesch peoples have banded together in an organization called MOPAWI (an acronym derived from Miskito words meaning "Development of Mosquitia", the region where they live) to secure legal title to their lands before they are overrun by colonists. The Mopan and Kekchi Maya of Belize are petitioning the government to

establish a Maya homeland of 500,000 acres in the heart of the territory they inhabit.

In Panama, the three major tribal groups - the Kuna, the Choco (Embera and Wounan), and the Guaymi - have had relative success negotiating with the government to gain semi-autonomous homelands under federal jurisdiction, called *comarcas*. The Kuna received legal rights to their homeland, the Comarca de San Blas, in the 1930s, yet over the past decade have found it necessary to carry out formal surveys and patrol their territory's borders against incursions from cattle ranchers and peasant subsistence farmers. The Embera and the Wounan were granted a joint territory of more than 4000 square kilometers in the Darien region in 1983, and they are now working to consolidate their political control of the region. The Guaymi have not fared so well. They live in remote settlements dispersed throughout the hills and valleys of north-western Panama and are politically fragmented. Their efforts to secure a legally recognized homeland have thus far been blocked by private and government forces with economic interests in the area.

INDIAN PEOPLES AND THE QUINCENTENARY

As the activities of the Quincentenary unfold, there is considerable talk of the richness and diversity of native American culture. This is indeed true. The aboriginal cultures have contributed more to the variegated patchwork of national and regional identities found in the Americas than many of us realize. The surviving Indian cultures continue to provide variety and richness to humankind as a whole, as well as security, beauty, and meaning to the individ-

ual groups that possess them. Yet many of these cultures are as fragile as a bird's egg before the advance of the modern world.

In recent years, scientists have been telling us about the necessity of maintaining the planet's biological diversity. Cultural diversity is no less important. As it diminishes, the lives of all of us become more impoverished. As the forests disappear across the tropics, so do the cultural groups that reside within them. We are thus losing both biologically and culturally.

The occasion of the Quincentenary brings with it the opportunity to reflect on the present condition of the Indian people who have tenaciously endured five hundred years of colonization. The first step in the reflection process should be consideration of the long overdue task of discovering who these people are and what they think about this world we inhabit together. They need to be given both a voice and a vote. They need support in their efforts to organize and protect their lands and their resources. They need to be given the freedom to determine the course of their own lives and to maintain their own cultural configurations. Above all, they need to be accorded the status of equals.

It will only be when some of these things come to pass that the Indian peoples of the Americas will perhaps be able to view the "encounter of two worlds" in a less tragic light.

First appeared:
Encounters - A Quincentenary Review, Summer, 1990
Latin American Institute
801 Yale Blvd. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87131.



ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE SEDOS 1991 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This report is for the period December 1st, 1990 to November 30th 1991.

I. STRUCTURE

1. General Assembly

Two new missionary societies joined SEDOS during the year 1991. They are:

1) Congregation of the Missionaries of Marianhill. Superior General: Yves La Fontaine, CMM. Address: Via S. Giovanni Eudes 91, 00163 Rome.

2) Bethlehem Mission Society. Superior General: Josef Elsener, BMS. Address: 6405 Immensee, Swizerland. This brings the membership of SEDOS to 76 societies, 36 of women, 40 of men.

2. Executive Committee

The membership of your Committee during the past year has been as follows:

President: Francesco Pierli, Superior General of the Comboni Missionaries (MCCJ). Elected Dec. 1985.

Vice-President: Mary Slaven, Superior General of the Holy Family of Bordeaux Sisters (SFB). Elected Dec. 1988.

Treasurer: Seán Fagan, Secretary General of the Society of Mary (SM). Elected Dec. 1988.

Maria Teresa Andant, Sisters of the Holy Union (SUSC). Elected Dec. 1989.

L. Kasanda Lumembu, Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (CICM). Elected Dec. 1989.

Carlos Pape, Society of the Divine Word (SVD). Reelected Dec. 1989.

Patricia Stowers, Missionary Marist Sisters (SMSM). Elected Dec. 1988.

Executive Director: Bill Jenkinson, Congregation of the Holy Spirit (CSSp). Appointed July 1980.

Associate Executive Director: Maureen O'Brien, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (SND). Appointed September 1991.

This year's Assembly will elect a President and Vice-President and a member of the Committee to replace:

- Francesco Pierli, MCCJ, outgoing President who has completed 6 years on the Committee, three as President;
- Mary Slaven, SFB, who is completing three years as Vice-President. Sr. Mary's Congregation will hold its General Chapter in 1993;

- Maria Teresa Andant, SUSC, who has regretfully tendered her resignation. Due to her Congregation's renewal programme she has been absent from Rome almost continually and has been unable to attend a meeting of the Executive for this year. She foresees further long absences.

Fr. Seán Fagan, SM, treasurer and Sr. Patricia Stowers, SMSM, were elected in 1988 and have completed three years. Both are available for reelection.

According to SEDOS Constitutions, if the President is a member of a men's Society the Vice-President must be a member of a women's Society and vice versa. Both must be Superiors General or hold a similar position in their societies. It would be appropriate that the incoming President should be from a women's society and the incoming Vice President from a men's society. Your Executive Committee is at present asking for nominations for these three positions.

3. Secretariat - Staff

The Executive Committee has extended a warm welcome to Sr. Maureen O'Brien who joined SEDOS as Associate Executive Director in September 1991. Sister Maureen has asked for an experimental year.

Ms. Patricia Cosgrave continues as Secretary. Patricia is, at this time, recovering from surgery but hopes to be back at the Secretariat in the near future. We send her our best wishes for a full recovery. We miss her and thank her for her dedicated commitment to SEDOS.

Ms. Antigone Lloyd completed her eight years of service in SEDOS in January 1991. We express our gratitude to her and our appreciation of her faithful service during those years.

Mr. Paul Gilfillan came as a temporary assistant from January to July 1991. He fitted in very well. We wish him well on his return to Scotland.

Ms. Philippa Wooldrige continues her long association with SEDOS. She comes usually once a week and is always helpful and generous in giving of her time. One of Philippa's paintings adorns the landing outside the Secretariat office.

We are very grateful to our voluntary helpers: Sr. Cristel Daun, SSpS; Sr. Margaret Byrnes, RSCJ, and Sr. Catherine Ruff, OSM. They come to help for a morning on one day each week. Without their generous help it would be very difficult to maintain the Secretariat services.

II. SEMINARS/CONFERENCES

1. Missionary Outreach of the African Churches.

We begin with a look back to last year's General Assembly held on December 12, 1990. It was the best attended Annual Meeting to-date. The morning conference was given by Leonard Kasanda, CICM. It was one in a series of conferences on the missionary outreach of the churches in the different continents. Michael Amaladoss, SJ, had begun the series in his keynote address to the General Assembly in December 1989. During the course of 1990 other conferences treated of the missionary outreach of Latin American, Asian and Oceanian Churches.

Four main topics emerged in Fr. Kasanda's presentation:

- a realistic analysis of some characteristics of past mission in Africa;
- new ways of being in mission and the demands these are making on African churches;
- the peculiar challenges which confront African missionaries when they cross cultural and racial boundaries in their own continent and even more so when they enter rich "Western" societies;
- how missionary institutes can be catalysts in the missionary growth of African Churches today.

2. South African Update (February 11th.)

Fr. Casimir Paulsen, CMM, gave a personal eye witness account of recent developments in South Africa. His approach was very balanced. His low-key unemotional expression of his suspicions about the involvement of the South African police in fomenting riots proved accurate.

3. Historical Background to and Religious Implications of the Gulf War (February 21st).

A large attendance of SEDOS members appreciated very much the excellent presentation of Tom Micnel, SJ, which clarified many aspects of this critical period.

4. Missionary Outreach of the Oceanian Churches

(February 26th). Sr. Patricia Stowers, Superior General of the Marist Missionary Sisters, facilitated the presentation by a panel of speakers on this theme. Members of the panel: Trevor Murray, Maori diocesan priest from New Zealand; Ms. Anastasia Sai, lay woman from Papua New Guinea; Sr. Moya Byrne, Australian member of the Missionary Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception and Fr. Francis Grossin of the Society of Mary (Marists), a French Canadian who did his studies and has lived all his life as a missionary in Oceania. A fascinating insight into a little known part of the missionary world.

5. Struggle in Islam: Understanding Jihad

(March 21th). The speaker, Fr. Justo Baldo Lacunza of the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies dispelled many of our simplistic and erroneous ideas about Jihad, a very nuanced and subtle

term often misunderstood outside (and even inside) Islam.

6. Missionary Outreach of the Asian Churches

(April 10th). This conference presented two areas of Asia: India and Vietnam. Sr. Cecily Paul, FMM, spoke from her personal experiences in India and later in the USA. Fr. Din Duc Dhao, a diocesan priest from Vietnam and Director of the Pontifical Institute for Missionary Animation, alerted us to the great difficulties of being Christian and missionary in Vietnam in recent years and of the extraordinary movements of conversion which are taking place in some parts of the country today.

7. Prophetic Mission in a Changing World,

May 17 - 21, at Villa Cavalletti. Fr. J. Bryan Hehir, a diocesan priest from the USA and Edwina Gateley, an Englishwoman who has spent many years on mission in the USA, complemented each other in their presentations on the situation of the Church in a "first-world" country today - the U.S. The Seminar was unanimously assessed as excellent by the participants.

8. Primary Health Care II (May 29th).

This was a follow-up to the 1989 seminar given by two members of the Medical Mission Sisters. Once again it was two Sisters professionally trained in medical service who gave this seminar: Sr. Rose Sumah, OLA, and Sr. Emily Mullen, SND. Practical experience enriched their presentations which are published in the September SEDOS Bulletin of this year.

9. China Update (June 3rd).

Jérôme Heyndrickx, CICM, facilitated this session. Angelo Lazzarotto, PIME, gave the main address. Edward Malatesta, SJ, Bishop Chang of Macao and Fr. John Tong, of the Holy Spirit Center, Hong-Kong, joined him to provide a most interesting analysis of the situation in China today. All have excellent contacts in China and are frequent visitors there, the bishop of Macao being himself Chinese.

10. Rerum Novarum to Centesimus Annus: Implications for Mission (Nov. 7th).

Peter Hebblethwaite was the speaker. Written in totally different circumstances, the encyclicals reflect the constraints of historical, political and social realities. Catholic social teaching preceded both encyclicals. The circumstances of their appearance and the process of their writing relativises and humanises them. Participants would have liked a more experiential reference to the missionary implications of the encyclicals, but this was seen to be the work of the groups, which shared, in their membership, an extraordinary wealth of experience.

III. SPECIAL GROUPS/COMMISSIONS

1. Haiti Group. This Group met regularly during the year, ably facilitated by Jan Hanssens,

CICM. The special meeting following the coup which expelled Fr. Aristide was particularly significant. The group sent a letter of support to the Conference of Religious in Haiti which had issued a strong statement of support for the ousted President immediately after the coup.

2. Christian - Muslim Dialogue Commission. Due to pressure of time, the falling off of interest following the end of the Gulf War and the frequency of other meetings we postponed the meetings scheduled to be held in October. The Commission will meet shortly to rearrange its programme.

3. Mission-Europe. Francois Nicolas, CSSp, facilitated two meetings of this group. An account of the first meeting, *Mission in Europe: Why and by Whom?*, appeared in the 1991 September Issue of SPIRITUS (text in French). This complete Issue deals with various viewpoints on Mission-Europe today. Both of the group meetings gave rise to lively discussions.

4. Womens' Concerns. The group was initiated at the Villa Cavalletti Seminar in May 1991. It has met regularly since then though still small in numbers.

5. Working Group on Eastern Europe. This group did not meet. As the USG/UISG were sponsoring meetings on this issue your Executive Committee decided to avoid possible duplication of efforts and to watch how these meetings would develop. They felt that the specifically missionary dimension of the new opportunities in Eastern Europe needed to be monitored carefully and sensitively.

IV. SEDOS BULLETIN

It is now being printed at the Salesian Printing School in Via Tuscolana. Brother Hugo Kipp SVD printed it on an off-set machine in the Collegio Verbiti for some years past, always meticulous and patient in his care for the accuracy and quality of the final text. His health has disimproved and he has returned to Germany for medical treatment. We wish him a good convalescence and thank him for his generous help, given freely, the only cost to SEDOS being the materials used.

There is, as usual, a modest increase in requests for the Bulletin and we receive frequent messages of appreciation of it. The number of SEDOS members sending it to their Regional Superiors is also increasing.

V. DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

"The shelves are clear!", Sister Margaret announced cheerfully last week. It was the first time for many months that the backlog of entries to the computer programme had been cleared. The Centre runs smoothly, the programme is efficient, custom-designed for this

Centre. We would like to see more people avail of the information available there.

VI. COLLABORATING / NETWORKING

The Secretariate continued to collaborate with many organisations interested in mission. Among these were: The Pontifical Commissions VI and XVIII; the Pontifical Councils for Promoting Christian Unity, for Inter-religious Dialogue, for Dialogue with Non-Believers and for Culture; the Unions of Major Superiors of Men, and of Women; the United States Catholic Mission Association; Lay Missionary Societies, the Commission for World Mission and Evangelization (CWME) of the World Council of Churches, and many others.

VII. COMMITMENT TO ACTION

"Where do we go from here?" This is a question asked by SEDOS members at various SEDOS meetings. "What do we do with all the information?" "We have a worldwide membership; what impact do we have?" Our outgoing President, speaking from the floor during the open forum at this year's Cavalletti seminar, drew attention to his conviction, only arrived at over the previous three years: that there was a real challenge to SEDOS members to collaborate more in decision making. At this 1991 Annual Assembly there will be an opportunity to review progress on the four Commitments which the 1990 Assembly agreed to make and an opportunity to look to the future.

VIII. VARIOUS

The Secretariate responds to many queries and requests for information and even advice. It has also a ministry of hospitality. Visitors are always welcome.

There is a FAX machine now in the office. It is attached to the telephone and has the same number, 5741350. Thereby hangs a tale! The SVD kindly agreed to allow us to use their FAX number some months ago but messages from and to SEDOS increased alarmingly as the weeks passed. The "penny dropped" for us one day when a gentle messenger from the SVD Generalate told us that they had offered to buy us a FAX machine! If we made an appeal for funds to pay for it at the next General Assembly they would gladly accept any gifts we received to defray their expenses. But even if we received nothing they would still buy it for us! When we passed the word on to Fr. Seán Fagan, our treasurer, he dipped into our funds and bought us a Fax.

Thank you Michael for your gentle and long standing patience with us! (Fr. Michael Blume is the SVD General Secretary).

We owe a great debt of gratitude to the Divine Word Society. They help us in so many ways, always generously and discreetly. And they provide us with the splendid office space which they have made available

free to SEDOS almost from its foundation. No wonder that your Executive Director is still often mistaken for 'being an SVD', an undeserved compliment which he constantly, but apparently unsuccessfully, tries to explain away!

IX. TRENDS IN MISSION

TRENDS IN MISSION. TOWARDS THE THIRD MILLENNIUM. Edited by William Jenkinson, CSSp, and Helene O'Sullivan, MM, was published by ORBIS BOOKS in October 1991. It was planned as one of the events to celebrate the 25th anniversary of SEDOS. The attractive cover was the work of Carlos Pape, SVD, a member of your Executive Committee.

The Editors express their deep gratitude to all those who encouraged them in this undertaking and who helped and collaborated with them at every stage of the work. They acknowledge with special gratitude the patient dedication of Ms. Sulogini who typed the final text with great accuracy.

Orbis Books inform us that the book has been well received and pre-publication purchases have ensured a 45% discount on the published price for all SEDOS members. They also assure us that this discount price will be continued for SEDOS members, because of the considerable pre-publication sales. When you order copies of the book from ORBIS, indicate that you are a member of SEDOS. Inquiries have been made about an Italian translation.

X. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

1. Signs of the Times. Some significant events and trends in mission during the coming year come easily to mind: Santo Domingo; the Synod of Bishops for Africa; the reception of Centesimus Annus and Redemptoris Missio; the Spread of Fundamentalism - Islamic and Christian; "The Long March" of immigrants and refugees; events in African countries - Zambia, Zaire, Somalia, Kenya; dialogue in the FABC, and many more.

2. Signs of Hope. And there are some signs of hope that might exercise a significant influence on SEDOS activities in the coming years:

Justice. The whole world speaks of it. It is now seen as an essential part of the Christian message on a par with sacraments and scripture. There is an increasing awareness of, and revulsion at the international debt and there are increasing calls for rescheduling, or cancelling it. It is recognised that injustice leading to poverty is not accidental but structured at the social, economic, political and cultural levels.

Kingdom Values. They are increasingly recognised and sought after. This is seen in inter-religious dialogue;

Kingdom values in the mega-religions are acknowledged. It is seen also in dialogue with primal, traditional religions. This dialogical approach influences the theological discourse of the whole Church.

The Poor. The whole world is aware of and talks about the poor. It is among them that the greatest number of conversions occurs. Their courage and perseverance inspire us as they question their status; they no longer see it as "God's will". The success of liberation theology has influenced the theological thinking of the whole Church. Latin American poor, native Indians and tribal groups claim their land and their rights in spite of years of oppression.

The South. Where is the centre of the Church in 1992? The centre of growth, of numbers, of new theologies, of new understandings of the Gospel message, of new insertions of the Gospel in diverse cultures seems to be in the Southern hemisphere. The signs of hope are often there. The institutional centre, where we or most of us still are, needs to allow itself to be questioned by the South. Challenges from the signs, symbols, languages, religious customs, traditions, cultures of the South often make our attempts at inculturation of the Gospel appear to be merely first faltering steps.

Eastern Europe. The collapse of Marxist-communism leads to a new opening to dialogue with our Orthodox sisters and brothers; a new realisation of the appalling disrespect for human rights and for the environment; a new search for a third way based on solidarity as much as on a free market-economy.

Community. As with justice and kingdom values the whole world talks about community today. And sees it not only as a value, but a necessity in the global village. It is manifested in the mass meetings of youth; in the interest taken in TV coverage of events at the "ends" of the world; in the growth of lay commitment to the "two-thirds" world - often through lay missionaries. In part it also explains the phenomenal growth of sects, and of independent churches.

Women. The women's movement, once thought to be an American passing fad, is now an issue in all the Continents. This is a sign of hope for a better world - and a more Christian one - in which women in mission give leadership. Many see it as a sign of hope that the Conference of the U.S. Bishops decided not to continue their efforts to publish a pastoral letter on women.

There are of course other signs, perhaps more significant for SEDOS. But these can be seen as signs of hope in the world where SEDOS will try to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ during the coming year. We pledge ourselves to try to be faithful to Him, the sure sign of our hope, and without whom all our efforts are in vain.

WILLIAM JENKINSON, CSSp.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEDOS



mission moments

Sister Ortiz, OSU An Investigation at last (Guatemala)

Sister Dianna Ortiz was kidnapped and brutally tortured in Guatemala over a year and a half ago. The Guatemalan army and the National Police were directly involved and responsible for the surveillance, abduction and torture of Sister Dianna. For this reason, the government chose not to carry out a complete investigation.

In July of 1991, the Ursuline Sisters sent their fourth delegation to Guatemala to pursue justice in this case. Sr. Fran Wilhelm, OSU, headed the delegation, which included Sr. Eleanor Granger, OSF, representing the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), and co-counsels Ms. Shawn Roberts and Mr. Paul Soreff. Ms. Susan Casey of the Carter Center of Emory University (founded by President Jimmy Carter) was a special observer to the delegation.

Developments in the case

Ex-President Cerezo acknowledged that government security forces were involved in the surveillance, abduction, torture, rape of St. Dianna Ortiz and the cover up that followed. This was reported in the Sunday edition of the Guatemalan newspaper, *Siglo Veintiuno* on July 21, 1991.

President Serrano has responded to requests to investigate this case and through the office of the Attorney General has named a special prosecutor, Mr. Fernando Linares, to ensure that the investigation moves forward promptly and thoroughly. He will have the authority of the Attorney General but will be entirely independent. Mr. Linares' appointment is a significant demonstration of the political will of the Attorney General's office and the Serrano government to bring a just resolution to this case. Finally, almost two years after this heinous crime took place, the new government of Guatemala appears to be moving forward with a thorough investigation.

In December 1990, an Ursuline delegation met with Judge Antonio Mosquera Estrada, who was in charge of the case at the time, at the court of the First Instance in Antigua. When presented with the medical reports that documented over 100 burns on Sr. Dianna's back, he said that he did not believe she was burned and that if she had been, it must have occurred after she left Guatemala. Given this surprisingly honest disclosure of personal opinion, it was clear that he could not be a fair and impartial judge on this case. He is no longer serving as the judge in this matter.

Earlier this month, at the request of the Attorney General, the case was transferred from the court

in Antigua to a court in Guatemala City. Ms. Maria Eugenia de Sierra, adjunct ombudsman to Mr. DeLeon Carpio, apologized for their office's delay in pursuing this case and offered to do anything she could to help move the case forward, including travelling to the United States to interview Sr. Dianna. She also informed the delegation that they had been able to confirm independently some parts of Dianna's statement.

Attorneys from the OSSAG (the Archdiocesan Human Rights Office) will be entering a formal appearance in the case and with the assistance of attorneys from CONFREGUA (the Conference of Religious in Guatemala) will oversee the case within Guatemala.

The Ursulines are especially appreciative for the continued unshakable support of Archbishop Penados, CONFREGUA, and the religious in Guatemala. The risks they take in working on this case are far greater than those facing lawyers and religious in the U.S. The religious in Guatemala continue to be a special target of persecution. The delegation was consistently praised for pursuing this matter and told that the Ursuline Community and Sr. Dianna's pursuit of this case in Guatemala and through the U.S. lawsuit against General Gramajo gives voice to those thousands of persons whose cries have been silenced in death, or who,

because of fear of retaliation, dare not reveal the human rights violations committed against them and their families.

Conclusion

After more than a year and a half, it now appears that a serious investigation may finally be under way in Guatemala regarding Sister Dianna's case. The appointment of a Special Prosecutor, the change of courts, the information from the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman and the recent disclosures by past President Cerezo are all positive developments.

SOURCE: Leadership Conference of Women Religious (U.S.A.)

SEEING WITH THE HEART (Chile)

When I came to Chile in January 1988, everything was newness, confusion, adaptation, challenge - and gradual insight. My life was literally turned upside down. I felt frustrated because I could not express myself adequately in Spanish, appalled at the violation of human rights under a dictatorship and sick because I was unaccustomed to the water and food of another culture.

I began my work in La Bandera in the southern part of the capital city of Santiago. The parish, called Jesus the Lord of Life, has four large chapels as well as the main church. Divided into four sectors, La Bandera has 100,000 people. I worked with two other Maryknollers, Father John Remmele and Lay Missioner Linda McCloskey.

In 1989 I went to work in La

Pincaya in the northern sector of Santiago. The parish, Nuestra Señora de los Pobres has 12 chapels and over 85,000 people. I worked with married couples responsible for four chapels.

In Pincaya I met Noelia Ortiz and her family. An active member of the Christian Community in our Catholic chapel called "El Rodeo", Noelia directs and organizes the senior citizens' group. On September, 23, 1973, soldiers arrested her husband, Juan, at the factory where he worked and he was never seen again. Noelia searched everywhere for him. She went to the soccer stadiums where prisoners were taken after the coup, to hospitals, to the place where he worked, to the morgue. It was all to no avail. She was then 22 years of age, married just a year, and had a three-month-old baby.

On August 23, 1991, Noelia received a telegram asking her to go to the office of the Vicariate of Solidarity along with other family members of the detained and disappeared. She asked me to accompany her. Three social workers and a lawyer told them that their family members were probably buried in a clandestine grave with about 105 bodies in the general cemetery of Santiago. It was a terribly painful moment for Noelia and the others to accept the harsh facts explained to them. Noelia believes she will find the body of her husband and finally give him the proper Christian burial he deserves.

Despite what has happened here in Chile, hope is blooming at this time. Obstacles and vestiges of the dictatorship remain. Political prisoners, for example, are still not free. But gradually the new democratic government is making changes. In his classic

book, *The Little Prince St. Exupery* tells us: "It is only with the heart that one sees rightly." The way Chileans share from the heart has helped me to "see rightly" their life and its challenges.

Fr. Michael Bassano
Maryknoll Associate

THE LONG ROAD TO FREEDOM (Czechoslovakia)

Thanks be to God, after 40 years of Communist rule, we are now free and can express ourselves freely without fear of possible reprisals, a constant threat before. We took part in several General Assemblies of the Community before, but always for a limited time and with a lot of complications and harassment, even danger. We had to show the Ministry of Culture all the documents brought to or from Rome.

At the end of 1989, our "Velvet Revolution" in Czechoslovakia happened. It really was like a miracle from heaven, because the self-styled "eternal" regime suddenly crumbled. It was just when St. Agnes of Prague was being canonized in Rome, (and we believe that this miracle came about through the intercession of our new Saint), a very likeable person, the King's daughter and a friend of St. Clare of Assisi. It is certain that prayer, suffering, and sacrifices played a significant part in this great political change in Central and Eastern Europe. Our gratitude goes to the Lord, and to Our Lady of Sorrows who is the primary patron of our country.

In 1918, after the First World War, the Republic of Czechoslovakia took up little space on the geographical map right in the heart of Europe. This Republic of 15 million inhabitants is a combination of two nations: Czech and Slovak. Recently there has been a lot of tension between the groups. While we do not want to speak of politics here, it is always closely bound up with the life of the Church and conditions our service of the poor, as recent history has proved often enough.

The Daughters of Charity have been established in our country since the 19th Century. Our Province of Czechoslovakia, an offshoot of Austria and Hungary, became autonomous in 1922 when the sisters of the United States helped us to buy an old residence. In the years that followed, the province expanded beautifully. In 1950 when the Communists took power, there were already 1,200 sisters, 62 houses and 50 novices. The works were the traditional ones: hospitals, schools, service for old people, orphans, prisoners, etc.

In 1950, almost overnight, every religious congregation was attacked, houses confiscated and members transported to different places. Most were sent to concentration camps for work in factories, fields and forests.

These camps, surnamed "Charitas" (Houses of Charity), were watched by the police, who followed us everywhere. At first it took a lot of energy to make these "Houses of Charity" habitable because most of them were old abandoned castles, cold and damp. The entire village of Bila-Voda on the northern border of Sudete was a "reserve" (con-

centration camp) for 400 religious women of 15 congregations. At the present time, elderly sisters are still there, because although there is freedom, there are no other houses for them to go to.

During the Stalinist period there were lawsuits in the courts; public trials against bishops, priests, religious, and others classed as enemies of the people, traitors and spies. There was open persecution and it was a time of fear. Marxist-Leninist ideology was presented and propagated like a new religion by every means possible: in schools, factories, press, radio, and television. The State founded an organization, "Pacem in Terris", for priests, forcing them, under threat, to be members. In fact its real aim was to divide the Church and sow mistrust among the Christians and priests, and hence, to bring about the self-destruction of the Church.

Recruitment of religious vocations was strictly forbidden. Formation took place in secret. The first sisters made their vows in 1957, just at the time when our Provincial was coming out of prison after five years detention. She was set free because of a serious illness. She died two years later, and so escaped a second condemnation.

In 1968, the "Springtime of Prague", when a little glimmer of freedom appeared, the novitiate was re-opened. But it only lasted a short time, and again we had to resort to secret formation. In forty years, 150 sisters were formed in this way.

During these years, the number of our sisters in prison rose to about forty. But for what reason? It had mainly to do with

paragraph 79 in the State manual, "Subversion Against the Republic." You only needed to receive from or send a letter to a capitalist country. Some other reasons were copying and distributing religious texts, or having contact with young people. Almost anything could become a "Corpus Delicti," for instance, possessing a typewriter, having religious books, listening to Vatican Radio or not voting.

Recently, the return of religious properties was approved by Parliament, but this is a very complicated matter. For example, our big Provincial House is completely devastated. There is no way (financially or physically) we can commit ourselves to repairing it, and moreover, it is currently occupied by 300 young apprentices with slight mental handicaps. How can we insist on putting them out if there is no possibility of placing them elsewhere?

Last summer, Madame Havel, the President's wife, asked us to care for a group of 60 children from Chernobyl who were welcomed to Czechoslovakia for 3 months. Our sisters joyfully devoted themselves to the children.

We do catechesis in State Institutions for abandoned children and also for young offenders. Two years ago, it would have been almost a crime even to go into a school, and have contact with young people. Today, Christian schools are opening in some towns, and we are invited to teach in them.

Lately we have set up some small communities for social, catechetical, and parish work. Everywhere we are welcomed with open arms.

A few months ago, a group of 12 sisters was installed in the hospital of a town where, 40 years ago, 150 sisters nursed the sick. The administrator of the hospital, a former communist, welcomed them with great formality and insisted on having more sisters.

A community of 10 sisters is established in the service of physically handicapped children. Until now, we only had permission to look after mentally handicapped children.

The future "offers many possibilities for apostolates in parishes, state institutions and "Houses of Charity" for elderly and sick priests.

Source: Leadership Conference of Women Religious, Occasional Papers, Fall, 1991 (U.S.A).

AGAINST ALL ODDS (Poland)

The 20th century has witnessed totalitarian systems of government unknown in human history. These forms of social coexistence and political structures have affected culture and therefore have jeopardized not only democracy as such, but also humankind itself. "People create culture and culture creates people." said John Paul II in a speech before UNESCO in Paris on June 2, 1980. Communism crushed social life in barracks and bottled up culture in prison. Though pretending to have but a political face, its goal was to attack the very core of culture, which is the human spirit.

Such a system ruled in Poland

from the year 1945 until 1989. We "lived under communism" for almost half a century. Communism penetrated all the spheres and corners of our lives; it sank into minds and hearts. All the political, social, economic and cultural structures were geared to educate a positive citizen of the People's Republic of Poland, to shape the mentality of a true "homo sovieticus".

All the available means to achieve this were used: the manipulative mass media based on lies, reflecting the propaganda of the state; the educational programs, starting from the play school to the university reflected one Marxist vision of the world; the gradual restriction of the activity of the Catholic Church; the censorship of all the manifestations of culture as well as the constraints on scholars and artists. These methods had two aims in mind. Communism wanted to create communist elites blindly loyal to the ruling ideology, as well as "educate" vast social circles, thoughtless and passive, reduced to the level of robots. It turns out, however, that the human spirit and mind cannot be crushed that easily.

In Poland, Communism encountered a nation conscious of its identity and a Church whose leader, Cardinal Wyszynski, always had the courage to defend the people and the believer.

The apogee of the Stalinist era can be seen in the imprisonment of Primate Wyszynski who spent three years in custody. In order to confuse world opinion and to split the Polish Catholics and clergy, a very perfidious trick was played, namely, a state Academy of Catholic Theology was opened, nine secondary

schools conducted by nuns were left open and a daily newspaper as well as the Association PAX editorial house were allowed to operate. A current joke in Poland had it that the few Catholic schools were preserved only for the members of the Communist party and their daughters. Our school, the Sacré Coeur Lyceum, was one of the nine schools, and as a matter of fact, occasionally had among its students daughters of some Communist officials. In general, such a policy caused total confusion, and in individual cases it resulted in a true conflict of conscience.

In 1955, already as a Sacré Coeur nun, I started teaching language and Polish literature in our Lyceum. The school was obliged to carry out the official state education program and was strictly controlled. Literature was interpreted with sociological categories; Stalin was the major linguist. Every single school subject bore testimony to the Marxist vision of the world.

The school where I taught was limited as to the number of students we were allowed to enroll. Moreover the school never received any financial support from the State. The teachers were not granted, like teachers in State schools, access to the National Health Service and the reduction of railway fares. The sisters as teachers were obliged to follow the Marxist educational program. So the youth were to master the "official" information, but at the same time they should be provided with the knowledge to judge the "official" version and should know the truth and the accepted vision of the world. On the one hand they had to deal with dialectical materialism, and on the other with Christian

realism and personalism. Such tasks were tremendous.

The Church was allowed to act openly and officially, yet its activity was permanently limited. In the streets priests and nuns wore their soutanes and cowls, yet when I was to present my doctoral dissertation I was told to show up in lay clothes. And for 12 years, censorship did not allow the publication of the thesis, since its very title was offensive to the State, "The Bible in Norwid's Poetry". (Norwid was the greatest Polish religious poet of the romantic period

1821-1883). The book was only published under the rule of *Solidarity*.

The Church on the one hand and the great wave of social discontent on the other, gradually led to the creation of open opposition and an alternative culture, and finally to *Solidarity*. It seems that the major role in this process was played by the very fact of the election of a pope of Polish origin and the first pilgrimage of John Paul II to his homeland.

Today we sadly observe that the worst heritage of the People's Republic of Poland is not the

disastrous economic situation that everyone in the world knows about, but the unknown educational situation. In the course of the last five decades Polish education was "murdered" with premeditation. People lost the habit of thinking and the habit of truth. Those who did not surrender, slowly and gradually worked to establish the Third Republic of Poland.

Alina Merdas, RSCJ, Poland.
Source: LCWR Occasional Papers.

RERUM NOVARUM TO CENTESIMUS ANNUS

Discussion with Dr. Peter Hebblethwaite

Peter Hebblethwaite's public lecture, *Rerum Novarum to Centesimus Annus: Implications for Mission*, to SEDOS members at the November seminar gave rise to lively discussion. The formal and informal groups interacting with the speaker elicited a number of clarifications around the theme of the seminar. We consider it worth sharing these with our readers.

- Many participants referred to the process of arriving at final texts of the two encyclicals. A similar process could be identified in the final texts of other encyclicals. *Mystici Corporis Christi*, *Mysterium Fidei* and *Redemptoris Missio* were cited as typical examples. Perhaps the magisterium should not have a capital 'M' in *Centesimus Annus*. Understanding the process relativises and humanises the text.

- Catholic social teaching obviously did not begin with *Rerum Novarum*. There is a tendency to confuse Catholic social teaching with papal social teaching; the latter follows rather than precedes the former. The Pope sums up what is the thinking of the faithful, elucidates it, defines it.

- John Paul II is the first Pope ever to write in an encyclical that the social teaching of the Church is an essential part of the Christian message, having parity with sacred scripture and sacraments.

- The reception of the encyclical depends on many intermediate groups between the top and the grass roots, on how they hear it and put it into practice. Some people merely string together quotations from the encyclicals without any reference to their origins or their language. Dioceses, groups of religious, lay people, priests, families, ethnic groups, missionary societies are all examples of these intermediate groups.

- The speaker responded to a question about the place of the missionary societies. You are intermediaries, he said; here in Rome you can be a bridge from the "inside" to those at the "periphery", between Rome and the marginalized, and vice versa. There is a danger in this use of "marginalised", however. Those who use it put themselves at the centre. But where is the centre?

- Ghost writers are a necessary part of the

process of writing an encyclical. In the case of *Centesimus Annus* the speaker identified them.

- Untypically, the encyclical began with an analysis of one momentous year, 1989, a year significant for Europe. Significant years could be similarly chosen for other occasions or continents. A possible occasion would be 1992 for the Americas. And a possible ghost writer? Gustavo Gutiérrez.

- The encyclical was of special significance for the laity, but the language was not. This elicited the information that a ten-page summary of the encyclical had been written by Fr. Donders, M.Afr., and was available through the Washington Theological Union.

- Reception of the encyclical filtered through cultures. The speaker mentioned some exceptional examples of recent efforts at inculturation by Church leaders. In Canada, fully robed bishops walked with Canadian Indians into the waters of a lake in a penitential ritual; in Brazil 46 bishops made a communal act of confession to a gathering of base communities. You cannot build the new society called for by the Pope in his encyclical without repentance. (There is a total absence of any statement of repentance by Gorbachev. One can make the same observation of many of today's leaders).

- What are the characteristics of the new society? The Pope, it is said, did not propose a third way, between capitalism and communism, but this is true only in the sense that he did not present a fully worked out model of the new society. Leonardo Boff in a recent visit to East Germany expressed his astonishment that no one spoke any more about socialism. In Utrecht at a recent Pax Christi conference representatives from the Philippines and Brazil still spoke of socialism and were astonished that Eastern Europe embraced capitalism so readily. What kind of capitalism were they embracing? Did it embody the provisos and restraints pointed out by the Pope? There is a tendency, a temptation to refer to the "Christian West". Is it Christian?

- Is liberation theology a thing of the past?

It was never tied to Marxism. Perhaps it has been so successful that it is no longer as necessary as it has been. Latin American bishops still see it as essential for Latin America, but its contribution has been so great that it has become central to the teaching of the whole Church. Everybody sees the significance of justice. *Centesimus Annus* sees it as essential.

- Democracy is not possible without political parties through which interest groups organise themselves. Democracy is not a fixed stable society. It depends upon initiatives of the people, on interest groups, and the adhesion of these groups. This can lead to bizarre situations, as witness the last election in Poland.

- The speaker reminded us that the inspiration for the political party "Christian Democracy" came in the late 30's in Italy when *il dopo fascismo* could not be even imagined by the people. It was "*l'humanisme intégrale*" of Jacques Maritain that provided the philosophical basis and it was De Gasparri who came up with the formula "We need a party of Christian inspiration".

- Christian democracy has developed through cultures and time; it is very conservative in France and America, for example, and clearly not the third way of the encyclical.

- "The Church is not a democracy", but the Pope favours democracy clearly in *Centesimus Annus*. One may ask whether it would not be advisable to allow some separation of power to happen in the Church, where the executive, legislative and judicial are still concentrated in one man. The conference emphasised justice. But the speaker suggested a *caveat* in our considerations: do not oppose justice and charity; it is a false dichotomy. The horizon of justice is charity, he said, and if we pursue justice alone "none of us will escape a whipping". He also had reservations about "a theology for the rich", preferring to avoid such categories and proposing instead "a spirituality of the rich", exemplified, for example, in the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises now more than ever available to the laity.

COMING EVENTS IN SEDOS

HAITI GROUP MEETING

January 27, 3.30 p.m. at SEDOS

WOMEN'S CONCERNS: WOMEN BELIEVING

Theological reflection group

January 28, 3,30 p.m. at SEDOS

ZAIRE GROUP MEETING

February 3, 3.30 p.m. at SEDOS

5th CENTENARY: A NEW AGENDA

Speakers: Maria Clara Lucchetti Bingemer,
Gustavo Guttièrez

19-23 May 1992 at Villa Cavalletti