

sedos

Bulletin 2001

Vol. 33, No. 1 - January

Editorial	2
Mission to a Runaway World: Future Citizens of the Kingdom - SEDOS 2000 <i>Timothy Radcliffe, OP</i>	3
Heart of Flesh: a Feminist Spirituality for Women and Men <i>Joan Chittister, OSB</i>	10
Le fondamentalisme islamique <i>John L. Esposito</i>	16
Christologie féministe asiatique <i>Shalini Mulackal, PBVM</i>	22
Church as Servant, Teacher and Prophet in Today's HIV/AIDS Crisis <i>Michael J. Kelly, SJ</i>	26
Books Received at SEDOS	31
Coming Events	32

À l'occasion de l'Assemblée annuelle de SEDOS, tenue le 5 décembre 2000, nous avons demandé au frère Timothy Radcliffe, o.p., Maître de l'Ordre des Dominicains, de nous présenter une conférence sur une spiritualité de la mission pour un monde où la mondialisation est sans cesse grandissante. S'interrogeant sur ce qu'est le contexte actuel où se vit la mission, le frère Radcliffe nous dit où il voit la spécificité de l'annonce chrétienne, ce que représente pour lui le Royaume de Dieu, ce que signifient : présence, épiphanie, proclamation, lorsque nous parlons **mission**. Il nous fait plaisir de présenter dans ce premier numéro de l'année 2001, le texte de la conférence prononcée par le frère Timothy Radcliffe, Maître de l'Ordre des Frères Prêcheurs.

Cette conférence était précédée par celle de soeur Joan Chittister, OSB, sur le thème d'une spiritualité féministe pour les hommes et les femmes. S'interrogeant sur ce qu'ont été les grandes caractéristiques de la spiritualité que nous avons largement connue, soeur Joan se demande de quel type de spiritualité nous avons besoin, serait-il juste d'avoir, pour notre temps ?

John L. Esposito nous dit que l'expression "fondamentalisme islamique" est insuffisante pour exprimer la diversité des gouvernements islamiques, ainsi que leurs interprétations de l'Islam. Il s'interroge notamment sur ce que sont les racines de la renaissance islamique contemporaine, son caractère et son étendue, sur ce que signifie l'activisme islamique. À qui incombe-t-il d'interpréter l'Islam et de le mettre en application? Comment concevoir l'Islam par rapport à la démocratie et au pluralisme?

Shalini Mulackal, pbvm, dans son article Christologie Féministe Asiatique nous montre qu'actuellement les femmes réfléchissent et expriment leur foi à partir de leurs perspectives et expérience propre. Regardant ce qu'est la complexité asiatique et le rôle qui tient la femme, selon les différents pays, elle se demande ce que signifie Jésus pour l'Asiatique et spécialement ce qu'il représente pour la femme asiatique.

Michael J. Kelly, S.J., examine ce qu'est et ce que devrait être le rôle de l'Église, en tant que servante, enseignante, protectrice des valeurs morales et prophète, dans une société en crise en raison de la prolifération du sida.

Bonne lecture!

Bernard East, o.p.
Directeur Exécutif de Sedos

China Group

17 January 2001
hrs 15:00
at SEDOS

Debt Group

25 January 2001
hrs 15:30
at SEDOS

For more on Mission
visit our Home Page
Articles in 3 lan-
g u a g e s
[http.//www.sedos.org](http://www.sedos.org)

Please note
Our E-Mail address:
sedos@pcn.net

Timothy Radcliffe, OP

***Mission to a Runaway World:
Future Citizens of the Kingdom
SEDOS 2000***

I have been asked to reflect upon a spirituality of mission for our globalised world. What does it mean to be a missionary in Disneyland? When I was asked to give this lecture I was delighted, because it is a fascinating topic, but I was also hesitant, because I have never been a missionary in the usual sense of the word. At the elective General Chapter of the Order in Mexico, the brethren identified the criteria for candidates to be Master of the Order. Crucially he should have pastoral experience outside his own country. They then elected me who had only ever been an academic in England. I do not know whether all congregations act so eccentrically, but it shows why I feel rather unfitted to give this lecture.

What is so new about our world, that we must look for a new spirituality of mission? How is it so different from the world to which previous generations of missionaries were sent? We may reply automatically that what is new is globalisation. E-mails stream into our offices from all over the world. Trillions of dollars circulate around the markets of the world every day, though not around the Dominican Order! As it is so often said, we live in a global village. Missionaries are no longer dispatched on ships to unknown countries; almost everywhere is no more than a day's journey away. But I wonder if "globalisation" really identifies the new context for mission. The global village is the fruit of an historical evolution that has been taking place for at least five hundred, if not five thousand, years. Some experts argue that in many ways the world a hundred years ago was just as globalized as today.

Perhaps what is really distinctive about our world is a particular fruit of globalisation, which is that we do not know where the world is going. We do not have a shared sense of the direction of our history. Tony Blair's guru, Anthony Giddens, calls it "the runaway world".¹ History appears to be out of our control, and we do not know where we are heading. It is for this runaway world that we must discover a vision and a spirituality of mission.

The first great missions of the Church outside Europe were linked with the colonialism of the 16th to the 20th centuries.² The Spanish and the Portuguese

brought their mendicant friars with them, just the Dutch and the English took their Protestant missionaries. The missionaries may have supported or criticised the *conquistadors*, but there was a shared sense of where history was going, towards the Western domination of the world. That gave the context of mission. In the second half of this century, mission occurred within a new context, that of conflict between the two great power-blocs of East and West, of communism and capitalism. Some missionaries may have prayed for the triumph of the proletariat, and others for the defeat of godless communism, but this conflict was the context of mission.

Now, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, we do not know where we are going. Are we going towards universal wealth, or is the economic system about to collapse? Will we have the Long Boom or the Big Bang? Will the Americans dominate the world economy for centuries, or are we at the end of a brief history when the West was at the centre of the world? Will the global community expand to include everyone, including the forgotten continent of Africa? Or will the global village shrink, and leave most people outside? Is it global village or global pillage? We do not know.

We do not know because globalisation has reached a new stage, with the introduction of technologies whose consequences we cannot guess. We do not know because, according to Giddens,³ we have invented a new sort of risk. Human beings have always had to cope with risk, the risk of plagues, bad harvests, storms, drought, and the occasional invasions of barbarians. But these were largely external risks, that were out of our control. You never knew when a meteorite might hit the planet, or a flea ridden rat might not arrive with the bubonic plague. But now we are principally at risk from what we ourselves have done, what Giddens calls "manufactured risk": global warming, overpopulation, pollution, unstable markets, the unforeseen consequences of genetic engineering. We do not know the effects of what we are now doing. We live in a runaway world. This produces profound anxiety. We Christians have no special knowledge about the future. We do not know any more than anyone else, whether we are on the way to war or peace, prosperity or poverty.

We too are often haunted by the anxiety of our contemporaries. I happen to be deeply optimistic about the future of humanity, but is this because I have inherited St Thomas' belief in the deep goodness of humanity, or my mother's optimistic genes?

In this runaway world, what Christians offer is not knowledge but wisdom, the wisdom of humanity's ultimate destination, the Kingdom of God. We may have no idea of how the Kingdom will come, but we believe in its triumph. The globalized world is rich in knowledge. Indeed, one of the challenges of living in this cyber world is that we are drowned with information, but there is little wisdom. There is little sense of humanity's ultimate destiny. Indeed such is our anxiety about the future, that it is easier not to think about it at all. Let us grab the present moment. Let us eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we may die. So our missionary spirituality must be sapiential, the wisdom of the end to which we are called, a wisdom which liberates us from anxiety.

In this lecture I wish to suggest that the missionary may be the bearer of this wisdom in three ways, through presence, epiphany and through proclamation. In some places all we can do is to be present, but there is a natural thrust towards making our hope visible and our wisdom explicit. The word has become flesh and now in our mission the flesh becomes word.⁴

Presence

A missionary is sent. That is the meaning of the word. But to whom are missionaries sent in our runaway world? When I was a schoolboy with the Benedictines, missionaries came to visit us from far away places, like Africa and the Amazon. We saved up our money so that children would be baptised with our names. There should be hundreds of middle-aged Timothys around the world. So missionaries were sent from the West to other places. But from where are missionaries sent these days? They used to come especially from Ireland, Spain, Brittany, Belgium and Quebec. But few missionaries are from those countries today. The modern missionary is more likely to come from India or Indonesia. I remember the excitement in the British press when the first missionary arrived in Scotland from Jamaica. So in our globalized village, there is no centre from which missionaries are despatched. In the geography of the world-wide web, there is no centre, at least in theory. In fact we know that there are more telephone lines in Manhattan than in sub-Saharan Africa.

As the beginning of an answer I would suggest that in this new world, missionaries are sent to those who are other than us, who are distant from us because of their culture, faith or history. They are far away but not necessarily physically distant. They are

strangers though they may be our neighbours. The expression "the global village" sounds cosy and intimate, as if we all belong to one big happy human family. But our global world is traversed by splits and fractures, which make us foreign to each other, incomprehensible and even sometimes enemies. The missionary is sent to be in these places. Pierre Claverie, the Dominican Bishop of Oran in Algeria, was assassinated by a bomb in 1996. Just before he died he wrote: "L'Église accomplit sa vocation quand elle est présente aux ruptures qui crucifient l'humanité dans sa chair et son unité. Jésus est mort écartelé entre ciel et terre, bras étendus pour rassembler les enfants de Dieu dispersés par le péché qui les sépare, les isole et les dresse les uns contre les autres et contre Dieu lui-même. Il s'est mis sur les lignes de fracture nées de ce péché. En Algérie, nous sommes sur l'une de ces lignes sismiques qui traversent le monde: Islam/Occident, Nord/Sud, riches/pauvres. Nous y sommes bien à notre place car c'est en ce lieu là que peut s'entrevoir la lumière de la Résurrection".⁵

These lines of fracture do not run just between parts of the world: the north and the south, the developed world and the so-called developing world. These lines traverse every country and every city: New York and Rome, Nairobi and São Paulo, Delhi and Tokyo. They divide those who have clean water and those who do not, those who have access to the Internet and those who do not, the literate and the illiterate; the left and the right, those of different faiths and none, Black and White. The missionary is to be the bearer of a wisdom, of God's "purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth" (Eph 1:9,10). And this wisdom we represent by being present to those who are divided from us by the walls of division.

But we must take a further step. Being a missionary is not what I do; it is who I am. Just as Jesus is the one who is sent (Heb 3:1). Being present to the other, living on the lines of fracture, implies a transformation of who I am. In being with and for that other person I discover a new identity. I think of an old Spanish missionary whom I met in Taiwan, who had worked in China for many years and suffered imprisonment. Now he was old and sick, and his family wished him to return to Spain. But he said, "I cannot go back. I am Chinese. I would be a stranger in Spain". When John XXIII met a group of American Jewish leaders in 1960, he astonished them by walking into the room and saying "I am Joseph, your brother". This is who I am, and I cannot be myself without you. So, being sent implies a dying to who one was. One lets go of a little identity. Chrys McVey, one of my American brethren who lives in Pakistan, was asked how long he would remain there, and he replied, "until I am tired of dying". To be present for and with the other is a

sort of dying to an old identity so as to be a sign of the Kingdom in which we will be one.

Nicholas Boyle wrote that “the only morally defensibly and conceptually consistent answer to the question ‘who are we now?’ is ‘future citizens of the world’”.

⁶ We are not just people who work for a new world order, who try to overcome war and division. Who we are **now** is future citizens of the world. One could adapt Boyle’s words and say that **now** we are the future citizens of the Kingdom. The Kingdom is my country. Now I discover who I am to be by being close to those who are farthest away. It is precisely our Catholicism which pushes us beyond every small and sectarian identity, every narrow little sense of myself, to that which we can barely glimpse now. That is the embodiment of our wisdom.

This is not easy, and above all it requires fidelity. The missionary is not a tourist. The tourist can go to exotic places, take photographs, enjoy the food and the views, and go back home proudly bearing T-shirts. The missionary is only a sign of the Kingdom in staying there. As one of my brethren said, “you do not only unpack your bags, you throw your bags away”.

I do not mean that every missionary must stay until death. There may be many good reasons to leave: a new challenge to be faced elsewhere, illness or exhaustion, and so on. But I am suggesting that mission implies fidelity. It is the fidelity of a Spanish missionary whom I met in the Peruvian Amazon, who just goes on being there year after year, visiting his people, making his way around the little settlements, faithfully remaining even if not much appears to happen. Often the pain of the missionary is discovering that one is not wanted. Maybe the local people, or even the local vocations to one’s Order, wait for him or her to go. It is the stamina to go on being there, sometimes unappreciated. The heroism of the missionary is in daring to discover who I am with and for these others, even if they do not wish to discover who they are with and for me. It is remaining there faithfully, even if it may cost one one’s life, as it did for Pierre Claverie and the Trappist monks in Algeria.

I escaped from Rome just before the World Youth Day. But in my meeting there with some of the young Dominican laity, I was struck by their delight in being with those who are different, who are unlike themselves. Germans and French, Poles and Pakistanis, there is an astonishing openness which reaches across the boundaries of race and culture and generation and faith. This is a gift of the young to the mission of the Church, and a sign of the Kingdom. Perhaps the challenge for the young missionary is learning that stamina, that enduring fidelity to the other, faced with our own fragility and anxiety. Our houses of formation should be schools of fidelity, where we learn to hang in there, stay put, even when we fail, even when there are mis-

understandings, crises in relationship, even when we feel that our brethren or sisters are not faithful to us. The answer is not then to run away, to start again, to join another Order or to get married. We have to unpack our bags and throw them away. Presence is not merely being there. It is staying there. It takes the form of a life lived through history, the shape of a life that points to the Kingdom. The enduring presence of the missionary is indeed a sign of the Real Presence of the Lord who gave his body to us forever.

Epiphany

In many parts of the world, all that the missionary can do is to be there. In some Communist and Islamic countries nothing more is possible, just being an implicit sign of the Kingdom. Sometimes in our inner cities or working with the young or the alienated, the mission must begin anonymously. The worker-priest is simply there in the factory. But our faith yearns to take visible form, to be seen. This year Neil MacGregor, the Director of the National Gallery in London organised an exhibition called “Seeing Salvation”. For most of European history, our faith has been made visible, in glass and painting and sculpture. The celebration of Christ’s birth used to begin with Epiphany, the disclosure of the glory of God among us. When Simeon receives the child Jesus in the Temple he rejoices, “for my eyes have seen thy salvation which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples” (Lk 2:30, 31f). As St John says, we proclaim “that which we have heard, and which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands” (1 Jn 1:1f). Mission pushes beyond presence to epiphany.

Ever since the Iconoclastic Controversy in the ninth century, Christianity has sought to show God’s face. In the Europe in the Middle Ages, people rarely saw the image of any face except those of Christ and the saints, but in our world we are bombarded by faces. We have new icons on our walls: Madonna, Princess Diana, Tiger Woods, the Spice Girls. To be someone important today is to achieve “icon status”! Everywhere there are faces: Politicians, actors, footballers, the rich, people who are famous just for being famous. They smile at us from the billboards in our streets and our television screens. But we believe that all of humanity hungers to see another face, the face of God, the beatific vision. How can we manifest that face?

It would not be enough just to add Christ’s face to the crowd. It would be good but insufficient for Walt Disney to make a cartoon of the Gospels. Putting Jesus’ face on the screen along with Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck would not achieve epiphany. Many Protestant churches in Britain have signs outside their churches with the words of the Gospel competing with

the adverts in the streets. This may be admirable, but I always find it rather embarrassing. I remember our giggles as children when we drove past the sign outside a local church which asked “whether we watched with the wise virgins or slept with the foolish virgins?”

The challenge is this: how can we disclose the glory of God, God’s beauty? In this world filled with images, how can God’s beauty be manifested. Balthasar talks of the “self-evidence” of beauty, “its intrinsic authority”⁷. We recognise in beauty a summons that we cannot easily ignore. C.S. Lewis said that beauty rouses up the desire for “our own far-off country”,⁸ the home for which we long and have never seen. Beauty discloses our ultimate end, that for which we are made, our wisdom. In this runaway world, with its unknown future, the missionary is the bearer of wisdom, the wisdom of humanity’s final destiny. This final destiny is glimpsed in the beauty of God’s face. How can we show it now?

This question is easier to ask than to answer; I hope that you may be able to come up with some more stimulating answers than I have! I would suggest that we need to present images, faces which are different in type from the faces that we see in our streets. In the first place, beauty is disclosed not in the faces of the rich and the famous but the poor and the powerless. And secondly, the images of the global village offer entertainment, distraction, whereas the beauty of God is disclosed in transformation.

The images of the global village show the beauty of power and wealth. It is the beauty of the young and the fit who have everything. It is the beauty of a consumerist society. Now, do not think that I am jealous of the young and fit, however nostalgic I may be, but the Gospels locate beauty elsewhere. The disclosure of the glory of God is the cross, a dying and deserted man. This is such a scandalous idea that it seems to have taken four hundred years for this to be represented. Possibly the first representation of the crucified Christ is on the doors of Santa Sabina, where I live, which were made in 432, after the destruction of Rome by the barbarians. God’s irresistible beauty shines through utter poverty.

This may seem a crazy idea, until one thinks of one of the most attractive and beautiful of all saints, St Francis of Assisi. I made a little pilgrimage to Assisi this summer. The Basilica was filled with crowds, who were drawn by the beauty of his life. The frescoes of Giotto are lovely, but the deeper loveliness is that of *il poverello*. His life is hollowed by a void, a poverty, which can only be filled by God. Cardinal Suhard wrote that to be a missionary “does not consist in engaging in propaganda nor even in stirring people up, but in being a living mystery. It means to live in such a way that one’s life would make no sense if God did not exist”.⁹ We see God’s beauty in Francis, be-

cause his life would make no sense if God is not.

Just as important, Francis found a new image for God’s own poverty (though why I am doing all this advertising for the Franciscans, I cannot imagine!). Neil MacGregor says that it was Francis who invented the crib, the sign of God embracing our poverty. In 1223 he wrote to the Lord of Greccio, “I would like to represent the birth of the Child just as it took place at Bethlehem, so that people should **see with their own eyes** the hardships he suffered as an infant, how he was laid on hay in a manger with the ox and the ass standing by”.¹⁰ In the world of the 13th century Renaissance, with its new frescoes, new exotic consumer goods, its new urban civilisation, its mini-globalisation, Francis revealed the beauty of God with a new image of poverty.

That is our challenge in the global village, to show the beauty of the poor and powerless God. It is especially hard because often our mission is in the places of most terrible poverty, in Africa, Latin America and parts of Asia, where poverty is evidently ugly. Missionaries build schools, universities and hospitals. We run powerful and absolutely vital institutions. We are seen as rich. But in many countries the health and educational system would collapse if it were not for the Church. How then can we show the beauty of the glory of God, visible in poverty? How can we offer these irreplaceable services, and still lead lives which are mysteries, and which make no sense without God?

I now glance quickly at a second way in which we can manifest God’s beauty, and that is through acts of transformation. I begun this lecture by suggesting that what is perhaps unique about our world is not so much that it is global, as that we do not know where it is going. We have no idea what sort of future we are creating for ourselves. Even the north-pole has melted and become a pool of water. What next? This uncertainty provokes a deep anxiety. We even hardly dare to contemplate the future, and so it is easier to live just for now. This is the culture of instant gratification. As Kessler writes, “Most people live today less from great overarching hopes and perspectives than from short-term intentions and tangible goals. ‘Experience your life – now’ is the imperative of the secondary culture which now spans the globe. It is enough to live life like this, in the present – without a goal”.¹¹

When I fly into London, I often see the Millennium wheel, the city’s proud celebration of two thousands years since the birth of Christ. But all it does is to go round and round, and that is on good days! It goes nowhere. It offers us the chance to be spectators, who observe the world without commitment. It entertains us, and enables us momentarily to escape the hectic city. It is a good symbol of how often we seek to survive in this runaway world. We are content to be entertained, to escape a while. And this is what so

many of our images offer, entertainment which lets us forget¹². Computer games, soap operas, films offer us amnesia in the face of an unknown future. Mind you, I am still waiting for one of my nieces to take me on the Millennium wheel!

This escapism is above all expressed in that late “20th century phenomenon, the “happening”. There is even the French word for it, “*Le happening*”. When France celebrated the Millennium with a 1,000 kilometre breakfast, it was “*un uncroyable happening*”! A happening may be a disco, a football match, a concert, a party, a fiesta, the Olympics. A happening is a moment of exuberance, of ecstasy, where we are transported out of our dull, unmalleable world, so that we can forget. When Disneyland built a new town in Florida, in which people could try to escape from the anxieties of modern America, it was named Celebration.

But Christianity finds its centre also in “*un uncroyable happening*”, which is the Resurrection. But it is an utterly different sort of happening. It does not offer escapism, but transformation. It does not invite us to forget tomorrow, but is the future breaking in now. Faced with all our anxiety in this runaway world, not knowing where we are going, Christians cannot respond either with amnesia or with optimistic predications about the future. But we find signs of the Resurrection breaking in with gestures of transformation and liberation. Our celebrations are not an escape but a foretaste of the future. They offer not opium, as Marx thought, but promise.

An English Dominican, called Cornelius Ernst, once wrote that the experience of God is what he calls the “genetic moment”. The genetic moment is transformation, newness, creativity, in which God irrupts into our lives. He wrote: “Every genetic moment is a mystery. It is dawn, discovery, spring, new birth, coming to the light, awakening, transcendence, liberation, ecstasy, bridal consent, gift, forgiveness, reconciliation, revolution, faith, hope, love. It could be said that Christianity is the consecration of the genetic moment, the living centre from which it reviews the indefinitely various and shifting perspectives of human experience in history. That, at least is or ought to be its claim: that it is the power to transform and renew all things: ‘Behold, I make all things new’ (Apoc 21:5)”¹³.

So the challenge for our mission is how to make God visible through gestures of freedom, liberation, transformation, little “happenings” that are signs of the end. We need little irruptions of God’s uncontainable freedom and his victory over death. Strangely enough, I have found it easier to think of rather obvious secular images than religious ones: the small figure in front of the tank in Tienanmen Square, the fall of the Berlin war.

What might be explicitly religious images? Perhaps a community of Dominican nuns in northern

Burundi, Tutsis and Hutus living and praying together in peace in a land of death. The little monastery, surrounded by the greenery of cultivated fields in a countryside that is burnt and barren, is a sign of God, who does not let death have the last word. Another example might be an ecumenical community which I visited in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Catholics and Protestants lived together, and when anyone was killed in the sectarian battles, then a Catholic and a Protestant would go from the community to visit the relatives, and to pray with them. This community was an embodiment of our wisdom, a sign that we are not fated to violence, a little epiphany of the Kingdom. We do not know whether peace is around the corner or whether the violence will get worse, but here was a word made flesh which spoke of God’s ultimate purpose.

Proclamation

We have progressed from mission as presence to mission as epiphany. Our eyes have seen the salvation of the Lord. But we must make one last step, which is to proclamation. Our gospel must come to word. At the end of Matthew’s Gospel, the disciples are sent out to all the nations to make disciples, and to teach all that Jesus has commanded. The Word becomes flesh, but the flesh also becomes word.

Here we encounter what is perhaps the deepest crisis in our mission today. There is a profound suspicion of anyone who claims to teach, unless they come from the East or have some strange New Age doctrine. Missionaries who teach are suspected of indoctrination, of cultural imperialism, of arrogance. Who are we to tell anyone what they should believe? To teach that Jesus is God is seen as indoctrination, whereas to teach that God is a sacred mushroom is part of the rich tapestry of human tradition! Anyway our society is deeply sceptical of any truth claims. We live in Disneyland, in which the truth can be reinvented as we wish. In the virtual age, the truth is what you conjure up on your computer screen. I read of a pilot who took off from an airport in Peru, but all his controls went crazy. When he turned left, the controls said that he was going right, when he went up, they said that he was going down. His last recorded words were “It’s all fiction”. Alas, the mountain he hit was not.

In *Christianity Rediscovered* Vincent Donovan describes how he worked for many years as a missionary with the Maasai, building schools and hospitals, but never proclaiming his faith. He was not encouraged to do so by his superiors. Finally he could restrain himself no longer and he gathered together the people and told them about his belief in Jesus. And then (if I remember correctly since my copy of the book is lost) the elders said, “We always wondered why you were here, and now at last we know. Why did you not

tell us before?”. This is why we are sent, to tell people about our faith. We do not always have the freedom to speak, and we must choose well the moment, but it would ultimately be patronising and condescending not to proclaim what we believe to be true. Indeed it is part of the Good News that human beings are made for the truth and can attain it. As *Fides et Ratio* puts it, “One may define the human being ... as the one who seeks the truth” (n. 28), and that search is not in vain. We have, as the Dominican Constitutions say, a “*propensio ad veritatem*”, (LCO 77.2), an inclination to the truth. Any spirituality of mission has to include a passion for the truth.

At the same time, it is central to traditional Catholic teaching that we stand at the very limits of language, barely glimpsing the edge of the mystery. St Thomas says that the object of faith is not the words we speak, but God whom we cannot see and know. The object of our faith is beyond the grasp and dominion of our words. We do not own the truth or master it. Faced with the beliefs and claims of others we must have a profound humility. As Claverie wrote “*je ne possède pas la vérité, j’ai besoin de la vérité des autres*”, I am a beggar after the truth.

At the heart of a spirituality of mission is surely an understanding of the right relationship between the *confidence* that we have in the revelation of the truth and the *humility* that we have before the mystery. The missionary must seek that right integration between confidence and humility. This is a source of an immense tension within the Church, between the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and some Asian theologians, and indeed within many religious orders. It can be a fruitful tension at the heart of our proclamation of the mystery. I remember a General Chapter of the Dominicans in which a fierce argument broke out between those who staked their whole lives and vocations on the proclamation of the truth, and those who stressed how little Aquinas thought we could know of God. It ended with a seminar in the bar on a text of the *Summa contra Gentiles*, and the consumption of much beer and cognac! To live that tension well, between proclamation and dialogue, I believe that the missionary needs a spirituality of truthfulness and a life of contemplation.

It may appear strange to talk of a spirituality of truthfulness. Obviously the preacher must say only what is true. But I believe that one will only know when to speak and when to be silent, that balance of confidence and humility, if one has been trained in acute discipline of truthfulness. This is a slow and painful asceticism, becoming attentive to one’s use of words, in one’s attention to what others say, in an awareness of all the ways in which we use words to dominate, to subvert, to manipulate rather than to reveal and disclose.

Nicholas Lash wrote, “Commissioned as ministers of God’s redemptive Word, we are required, in politics and in private life, in work and in play, in commerce and scholarship, to practise and foster that philology, that word-caring, that meticulous and conscientious concern for the quality of conversation and the truthfulness of memory, which is the first causality of sin. The Church accordingly is, or should be, a school of philology, an academy of word-care”.¹⁴ The idea of the theologian as a philologist sounds very dry and dusty. How can a missionary have time for that sort of a thing? But to be a preacher is to learn the asceticism of truthfulness in all the words we speak, how we talk about other people, our friends and our enemies, people when they have left the room, the Vatican, ourselves. It is only if we learn this truth in the heart that we will be able to tell the difference between a good confidence in the proclamation of the truth, and the arrogance of those who claim to know more than they can; between humility in the face of the mystery and a wishy-washy relativism which does not dare to speak at all. The discipline is part of our assimilation to the one who is the Truth, and whose word “is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Heb 4:12).

Secondly, we will only be confident and humble preachers if we become contemplative. Chrys McVey said that “mission begins in humility and ends in mystery”. It is only if we learn to rest in God’s silence, that we can discover the right words, words that are neither arrogant nor vacuous, words that are both truthful and humble. It is only if the centre of our lives is God’s own silence that we will know when language ends and when silence begins, when to proclaim and when to be quiet. Rowan Williams wrote that “what we must rediscover is the discipline of silence – not an absolute, unbroken inarticulacy, but the discipline of letting go of our own easy chattering about the Gospel so that our words may come again from a new and different depth or force from something beyond our fantasies”.¹⁵ It is this contemplative dimension that destroys the false images of God that we may be tempted to worship, and which liberates us from the traps of ideology and arrogance.

Future Citizens of the Kingdom

I must now conclude by gathering together the threads. I have suggested that the beginning of all mission is presence; it is being there as a sign of the Kingdom, with those who are most different, separated from us by history, culture or faith. But this is just the beginning. Our mission pushes us towards epiphany and ultimately to proclamation. The Word

becomes flesh, and flesh becomes word. Each stage in the development of our mission asks of the missionary different qualities: fidelity, poverty, freedom, truthfulness and silence. Am I offering a picture of an impossibly saintly missionary, unlike any actual missionary? Does this add up to a coherent “Spirituality of mission”?

I have suggested that at this stage in the history of the Church’s mission, we might best think of the missionary as the future citizen of the Kingdom. Our runaway world is out of control. We do not know where it is going, whether to happiness or misery, to prosperity or poverty. We Christians have no privileged information. But we do believe that ultimately the Kingdom will come. That is our wisdom, and it is a wisdom that missionaries embody in their very lives.

St Paul writes to the Philippians, that “forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil 3:13f). This is a wonderfully dynamic image. St Paul is stretched out, pressed forward like an Olympic athlete in Sidney going for gold! To be a future citizen of the Kingdom is to live by this dynamism. It is to be stretched, reaching out, pressed forward. The missionary endures incompleteness; he or she is half made until the Kingdom, when all will be one. We stretch out to the other, to those most distant, incomplete until we are one with them in the Kingdom. We reach out for a fullness of truth, which now we only glimpse dimly; all that we proclaim is haunted by silence. We are hollowed out by a longing for God, whose beauty may be glimpsed in our poverty. To be a future citizen of the Kingdom is to be dynamically, radiantly, joyfully incomplete.

Eckhart wrote that, “just as much as you go out of all things, just so much, neither more nor less, does God come enter in with all that is His – if indeed you go right out of all that is yours”.¹⁶ The beauty of Eckhart is that the less one knows what he is talking about, the more wonderful it sounds! Perhaps he is inviting us to that radical exodus from ourselves that makes a hollow for God to enter. We stretch out to God in our neighbour, God who is most other, so to discover God in the centre of our being, God as most inward. For God is utterly other and utterly inward. Which is why to love God we must both love our neighbour and ourselves. But that is another lecture!

This love is very risky. Giddens says that in this dangerous world, careering away towards an unknown future, the only solution is to take risks. Risk is the characteristic of a society that looks to the future. He says that “a positive embrace of risk is the very source of that energy which creates wealth in a modern economy.... Risk is the mobilising dynamic of a society bent on change, that wants to determine its own future rather than leaving it to religion, tradition, or

the vagaries of nature”.¹⁷ He clearly sees religion as a refuge from risk, but our mission invites us to a risk beyond his imagining. This is the risk of love. It is the risk of living for the other who might not want me; the risk of living for a fullness of truth, that I cannot capture; the risk of letting myself be hollowed out by yearning for the God whose Kingdom will come. This is most risky and yet most sure.

Notes:

¹ *Runaway World. How Globalisation is Reshaping our Lives.* London, 1999.

² On the first two stages of mission, cf. Robert J. Schreiter, *The New Catholicity. Theology Between the Global and the Local.* New York, 1997.

³ *Runaway World. How Globalisation is Reshaping Our Lives.* London, 1999.

⁴ I am sure that that is a quote from someone, but I cannot remember whom!

⁵ *Lettres et Messages d’Algerie.* Paris, 1996.

⁶ Nicholas Boyle, “Who Are We Now? Christian Humanism and the Global Market from Hegel to Heaney”, Edinburgh, 1998, p. 120.

⁷ Aidan Nichols, OP, *The Word Has Been Abroad.* Edinburgh, 1998, p.1.

⁸ Quoted by R. Harries *Art and the Beauty of God: A Christian Understanding,* London 1993, p. 4.

⁹ Quoted by S. Hauerwas, *Sanctify Them in the Truth,* Edinburgh, 1998, p. 38.

¹⁰ Neil MacGregor, *Seeing Salvation,* BBC London, 2000, p. 49.

¹¹ Hans Kessler, “Fulfilment – Experienced for a Moment Yet Painfully Lacking?”, *Concilium,* September 1999, p. 103.

¹² cf. Alberto Moreira, “The Dangerous Memory of Jesus Christ in a Post-Traditional Society”, and Ferdinand D. Dagmang, “Gratification and Instantaneous Liberation”, both in *Concilium,* September 1999.

¹³ *The Theology of Grace,* Dublin, 1974, p. 74f.

¹⁴ *ibid,* p.166

¹⁵ *Open to Judgment,* London, 1996, p. 268f.

¹⁶ Meister Eckhart, *Sermons and Treatises,* vol. IV, London, p.14.

¹⁷ *Ibid.,* p. 23f.

Ref.. Text from the Author.

Joan Chittister, OSB

Heart of Flesh: A Feminist Spirituality for Women and Men

This presentation is also in honour of two women. I don't know either of them, but I shall never forget them. They are a story in my own life:

The incident took place in Ireland. I was in a church that sits in the middle of a main street in a suburb of Dublin. The locals call it "the Parish Church" but it has all the style of an American Cathedral: massive interior, a circular dome, life-size statues, Persian rugs and a marble baldachin over the deep-set altar.

I found myself looking around the church during lulls in the services, caught by this, fascinated by that.

On the wall there was a series of memorial plaques, not the ornate kind so often found in English churches but impressive nevertheless. They were carved in marble, every major letter gilded. They were meant to be noticed.

Two of them behind the altar rail caught my eye every time I went up to Communion. "What's wrong with this inscription, what's wrong with this plaque?" I could feel myself wondering as I followed the slow line up the aisle to the altar. Finally, one Sunday morning, I stayed after mass to study them more closely. And then I knew what it was that was meant to be noticed, I also knew what it was that had been troubling me.

The first plaque read: "the altar of Christ the king is erected by Canon Fleming, PP, in memory of his mother, pray for them. The second plaque read: "Pray for the soul of James Clarke, in whose memory these stations are erected by his sister, Mrs T. Farrell.

Both plaques, ostensibly, were raised as memorials. But the one in honour of the woman carried the name only of the man who had donated it. The woman in whose honour the gift has been given was honoured with a plaque but not with an identity.

The second plaque, donated by a woman, names the man being honoured first and then, at the end, rather than at the beginning of the memorial, herself.

There it was, carved in stone, embossed in gold: the total invisibility of women even when women were noticed.

How can that happen, I thought what it was saying to us about our Spirituality? And what must we do about it, if we are truly to be a Spiritual People? What does the invisibility of women have to do with our need — our ability — to scale mountains in search of a contemporary Spirituality in a changed world?

Scripture is clear about the answer: Ez 36:26 reads "I will take from you your stony hearts and give you hearts of flesh...".

A world without a soft heart lacks any reason to exist. Otherwise the important things — natural beauty, human bondedness, honour, honesty, suffering, kindness, — will get lost in the shuffle somewhere along the line.

The world will go blind with business, lose sight of the human dimension of the daily, forget that life rides a cycle of gain and loss until all the bria-a-brac of time which we collect as we go along drop away and only the important things are left.

Bank accounts have nothing to do with a person's last hours, let alone the quality of their lives. Power melts between our fingers like sand in an hour glass, worth nothing when we need it most.

And, at the end, reason gives way to feeling with terrible intensity. Then, only the self remains.

Whatever that is. Whatever composes it. Whatever makes a person what they have become — hard or soft, loving or rigid, intolerant or receptive, self-righteous or accepting.

A Spirituality that lacks heart, lacks quality of life. It is the terminal disease of a patriarchal society.

It barter the soul for the system. For America's sweatshop shame, for high tech intimidation, for welfare reform without educational reform, for a sexism that cripples both sexes — and all in the name of God.

The fact is that the world has never known so much poverty, so much violence, so much oppression, so much institutionalized injustice. But we go to church, we go to church and we go to church.

Paul Kennedy, Yale University, professor of History, calls Ecological Ruin the automation of Industry, the Biotechnology of agriculture, the monopolization of resources and the Globalization of Finances, the

Global Timebombs of the 21st Century. There has got to be something drastically wrong with a Spirituality that exists in that kind of World and substitutes ritual for righteousness.

Finally, these reflections come out of the long, low wail that stays in me when I remember again the words of an old Sufi woman who, like us, looked at life and found it wanting: “Old woman”, a young woman asked her, “what is the greatest burden in life?”. And the old woman answered, “Young woman, the greatest burden of all in life is to have no burden to carry at all”.

To refuse, to recognize wisdom wherever it is, is not only to diminish the development of peoples, it is also to despoil Spirituality itself at its roots. A Spirituality that listens only to the Spiritual wisdom of some and not of all, to men but not to women, is no Spirituality at all.

It is simply the Ecclesiastical offshoot of a sinful system. How can a People possibly hope to restore the Spirit of the Nation and renew the Soul of the Church when the insights of half the World are ignored like that? (Between 1000 and 1900, Historian Philip Sheldrake tells us, about 87 per cent of Saints were men. What is more, he notes, in this century, only 25 per cent of those canonized have been women).

Clearly, it is precisely a woman’s experience of God that this world lacks. God the lawgiver, God the judge, God the Omnipotent being has consumed Western Spirituality and, in the end, shrivelled its heart and swallowed its soul. The point is that there is a new question in the Spiritual Life: and it is the Spirituality of the Spiritual Life itself.

Life here and the way we relate to it, rather than life to come and how we guarantee it for ourselves, has become the Spiritual conundrum of the age.

A world on the brink of social breakdown, urban violence, international conflict and global deterioration, demonstrates without doubt that Spirituality-as-usual has not worked.

And no wonder. When traditional Spirituality requires the invisibility of half the human race, the Spiritual resources of the world go bankrupt. When Spirituality means private piety, the public arena is left to develop devoid of the kind of values that give heart to the world at large. When Spirituality does more to undergird a system than to challenge it, the system eventually falls under the weight of its own decay and a counterfeit Spirituality with it.

When young people prefer the Green movement and the Peace movement and the Woman’s movement to the Church, the social signs are clear: something is

missing from Spirituality as we have known it because something is missing from life as we have designed it. Women have been left out of its conceptual development.

Men have been distorted and diminished by its assumptions; the world itself has been threatened by the hierarchical implications of its conclusions.

The question is what kind of Spirituality is needed now — and why?

Like the Jesus who walked through dust from Galilee to Jerusalem listening to the poor, talking to women and contending with the system, we must learn to live deeply involved in the World and consciously immersed in an abiding sense of the God who spoke not from one mountain only, but from two — from Sinai with its emphasis on laws written on stone, and from Horeb with its emphasis on blessings that come from the heart. The first social, the second spiritual, because one without the other is, we see in Jesus, always bogus.

We are asked to see life through the filter of the Commandments, yes, but through the Beatitudes, too; through an ethics of Rights, yes, but through an ethics of care, as well. From a masculine perspective on life, indeed, but from a feminist perspective, as well.

Feminist Spirituality points us towards a Contemporary Spirituality, a new world view: it is a cry for wholeness in a world and a Church intent on division and domination, on power rather than on perspective. Feminist Spirituality asks both men and women to look at life from the bias of the Beatitudes.

With hearts of flesh where hearts of stone once went unchallenged. The values driving Western society the social psychologist, Stanley Rothman, tells us, are profit, personal comfort, exploitation, control, individualism and dominance, all of them a blueprint for disaster, all of them hallmarks of a patriarchal culture where differences lead to dualism, to norming, to measuring, to excluding, when personal comfort ranks first in the human agenda, compassion goes sour.

When exploitation takes hold of a people every relationship becomes a ‘deal’, every deal becomes a scam, every scam becomes deadly. When control seeps into the soul we reduce people to things and the things to cogs in someone else’s wheel. When individualism becomes pathological, life becomes one long series of internecine struggles, good, eventually, for no one.

When dominance replaces equality, society finds itself limited to the abilities of only one part of the group rather than energized by the creative energies in all of it.

What can possibly be missing in a society that would

lead it to take such a self-destructive route in the first place? The answer, I think, lies in the principles of exclusion that underlie patriarchy, no matter how benign.

The ostracism of women as a class from public policy and the long-time elimination of women from the Theological Development of the Western World has limited the vision of the world. It makes discrimination generic. It entombs half the people of the world.

Clearly, it is a Feminist Spirituality — a heart of flesh — that we need.

If the Church is to survive? Oh no, my friend: if the Planet is to survive. There are points in tension, however: first, it is necessary to understand that female and Feminist are not the same things. Feminists are people who believe that the notion of gendering, of defining the sexes by traits and limiting them on physical grounds to separate roles, should be replaced by the notion of Universal Personhood.

Surely God did not make one sex simply for the sake of waiting on the other. Surely God did not give women minds in order to taunt them by not allowing them to use them — an argument which is now losing ground somewhat in the secular community but which is alive and well in the Synods and Seminaries of the Church.

To Feminists, then, a Spirituality that does not release the feminine dimension in both women and men leaves all of humanity half-souled, the Church half-graced and the world half-developed.

Secondly, it is necessary to realize that Feminists come in two genders — Female sometimes, but not always, and Male, often, though too rarely acknowledged, perhaps, either by women or the men themselves. Each of them reflects a different experience, yes, but each is searching for the same thing — a heart of flesh and a soul that is soft. And each of them feels the weight of sexism in both body and spirit — men as well as women.

Men know the price of ignoring the feminine dimension in themselves as well as women know the price of its being obstructed and suppressed in them.

Reason, forbidden to women, has diminished men, by cauterising their hearts and calling the suffering virtue. It denies men feeling and substitutes heart attacks and alcoholism — Hiroshima and the Holocaust— instead.

Power consumes men — literally. They are prodded from little boys to ‘get ahead’, to ‘become something’, to ‘succeed’. Until the seed of dissatisfaction saps all the energy in their souls and makes of every man around them a potential threat to their own achievement. Trained to be aggressive men know the

cost of having to ‘prove’ themselves, over and over again — men know the pain of being taunted and hazed, beaten and sneered at. Of having courage and character confused.

The man who seeks a family life rather than status knows what it is to be disdained by both men and women for whom manliness means wealth, image and public recognition.

Universalism requires that men never fail, are always right, have all the answers, be responsible for everything and everyone, show no doubts — until sick of having to bluster their way through life, weighed down by the pretense of it, they crumble both inside and out — raging as they do. Authoritarianism demands control, sees disloyalty everywhere, requires submission from those who will not, ultimately, submit. Life for men in a patriarchal society becomes one long struggle to stay in charge, whatever the cost.

Feminist men know how it feels to refuse to compete, to be a wimp in the eyes of those around them — friends and family — who see failure to get to the top as failure to be a ‘man’. Men know the ridicule that comes to the man who admits his fear, his compassion, his love. Men know they must be self-sufficient, that little boys are taught not to cry, that being able to kill, maim and destroy without flinching marks their passage to manliness. They know the ridicule and loneliness of it. No doubt about it: patriarchy erases, excises, patronizes and diminishes women but it is killing men! Men work/succeed/get ahead/get money and they literally drop dead from sexism.

And are men the ones who benefit from the system? What must be the costs of the real victims of the system? Feminism is a new World View. Feminism is a Spirituality which the world and the Church ignore to the peril of us all and to itself, as well.

Feminism is not simply about femaleness. It is about another way of looking at life, about another set of values designed to nurture a dying globe and rescue any people too long ground underfoot, too long ignored, unseen, invisible. Feminism is about a new way of thinking for both women and men who are tired of the carnage, sickened by the exploitation of the globe, disillusioned by the power struggles and searching as Ezekiel promises for a heart of flesh in a world of stone.

Feminism is, in other words, not a woman’s question: it is the human question of the century. It is the Spiritual question of all time. It is not about getting what men already have! Not on your life! That is not nearly enough. Feminism is about getting a better world

for everybody!

But time is running out: it is time to ask how it is that we could go for centuries and never question the morality of slavery.

How is it that we could make anti-Semitism a Spiritual act. How is it that we could theologize that the Earth was the center of the Universe — and excommunicate people who thought otherwise — because ‘man’ — they themselves told us — was the centerpiece of Creation.

How is it that we could fight wars of religion and never see the irony of it at all. How is it that we could name women a ‘second sex’ and treat them as a lesser sex? How is it that we do it all still? The problem lies in what we call Holy, what we call Human, what we call Spiritual. We say, ‘Thou shalt not kill’ to pregnant women but we do not say it to nuclearized nations.

We say that all people ‘are made in God’s image’ and then close whole dimensions of life to God’s other image, women. We say “Thou shalt not steal” in the private sector and call Third World wage packages ‘Good Business’.

“Making baseballs for \$.30 each on one side of the border and selling them for over \$13.00 on the other side of the border is not just”, I argued at a Lenten presentation to business people recently. “Exporting our jobs but not our medical benefits, our pension plans, our fair labour standards act or our wage scale is not just”, I said.

“Wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute...”. The business man said to me. “We couldn’t possibly give those people down there the kind of wages that people get up here”.

“And why not?” I asked. “Because it wouldn’t be appropriate to that culture”, he shot back. But since when, I wondered, are food and housing and shoes for a child “inappropriate” to anybody’s culture.

How can we say we are Spiritual People, a “Spiritual” Nation and think like that? And why? And what are the results? The answer is an historical one: we are patriarchal people.

We are in other words, descendants of a system based on Greek Philosophy and a culture based on male supremacy and a Roman Church which built a bad Theology of male superiority on a bad Biology that defined women as the passive incubators of male sperm; a Church who taught that women were inferior by nature, and deficient of soul — the servants of the men and the seducers of civilization.

A Church who learned from the pagan philosopher Aristotle what they then taught as doctrines in Christianity for centuries: that all life is graded from lowest to highest — from inert matter to males — and who interpreted Genesis to demonstrate that unequal-

ity of the sexes rather than the universal equality and humanity that being ‘bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh’, surely, clearly implies.

Spirituality, in other words, is not a purely Spiritual thing. It emerges out of the belief system in which it takes root. And its belief system has been patriarchal — the rule of the Fathers. Obviously, given the philosophy of power for the powerful, patriarchy rests on four interlocking principles: dualism, some things are up, some down, hierarchy, things have value (and therefore rights) in ascending order. Domination — some people are to be over other people and essential inequality —. Some things are simply lesser forms of life than others.

It is a very effective Philosophy. It allows the people on top to rape Nature, to nuke the world, to colonise peoples, and to rape, beat and marginalize women — however so benignly.

These are the touchstones of the Patriarchal World View. And, read the daily newspaper, they do not work. They cannot work, they have never worked. They destroy men as well as women. And they destroy God, too. The ideas that have held women in Spiritual vasalage as well as in social confinement, that have lulled men into arrogant darkness and bogus omniscience paint a picture of humanity that does the idea of God no favour. The very thought that one type of human being has been made for the pleasure and the use of the other makes of God a kind of taunting bully.

The notion that God would create women with brains in order to forbid them to use them paints God as some kind of sadist.

The notion that the God of Mary and Eve, and of Joseph and Adam, their helpmates, trusts more to men than to women in the divine plan for salvation ignores the very place of women in the Christian tradition.

That notion that God is a sexist appalls. Feminism, a different cluster of values, a distinct world view, comes to correct patriarchy’s skewed concepts of who should rule and who ruled, who are weak and who are strong, what is right and what is wrong, what is a man and what is a woman.

Feminism does not come to destroy men. If anything, it comes to save men from imprisonment by a system that cramps the human development of men all the while it purports to give them power. Feminists are not asking men to be less than manly. Feminists are asking women and men not to buy into patriarchal systems that destroy them both. Feminism comes to bring

both men and women to the fullness of life, and wholeness of soul for which we were all made “in the image and likeness of God”.

But if we are to take that Scripture seriously then, clearly, we are all surrounded by the presence of God in one another. And if we are all words of God, then we all have something to say. We are all a message to the rest of the world of the nature and mind of God. We are all expressions of Divine Presence, of Divine Hope of Divine Truth. We are all meant to be word to one another. And Feminism has a word to say.

Feminism speaks from the other mountain, from Horeb, not Sinai, from the mount of compassion over control, from feeling over reason, from the empowerment for all rather than power for the powerful; from a commitment to the patient effectiveness of non-violence over the destructiveness of aggression, from the Freedom that comes with the self-knowledge of humility over the imprisonment of pride.

Like Patriarchy, Feminism, too, is a world view, a way of relating to the rest of the world, a consciousness of the equality of differences.

The difference between Patriarchy and Feminism is that Feminism looks at life from the other side, the underside, the forgotten side. Feminism critiques a culture built on power for some and powerlessness for many. Feminism requires us to stop climbing pyramids and start forming circles. To the Feminist people are not up or down, disposable or valuable, higher or lower than others. When women claim the right to have their experiences heard and responded to, when they insist on being addressed directly in a society that has over 30 words for car and over 50 for its various breeds of dogs but cannot spare two pronouns for the human race, Feminism frees everyone to think broader thoughts.

When minorities refuse to be silent, Feminism flows. When majorities anywhere — the poor, the Indigent, the disenfranchised, the laity, the women — refuse to be the pawns, the footstools, the forgotten ones of a powerful male minority, the Jesus who walked from Galilee to Jerusalem talking to women, curing lepers, listening to children rises again. The Jesus born of woman without the agency of a man makes a point yet to be heard by the world, yet to be modelled by the Church.

Feminism sees otherness as a way to enrich a society. Conference tables, conclaves, Synods, parliaments and bank boards that are all old, all white, all made and all middle class may have power but they lack perspective because they lack complexity.

They lack a sense of what they do not know. They

take on the burdens of the rest of the human race which have no right to consume. They assume unto themselves the wisdom that comes from universal experience but they have not had it and they do not include it in their deliberations.

They name themselves “the Universal Subject”, the ones with the right to speak for everyone else without even asking the rest of the world if that is all right.

But the problem is, as Dr Janet Martin Soskice says, the voice of Truth is many; the voice of error is one.

To the Feminist everyone and everything has rights. Poor people are not here to be exploited by rich people for slave wages. Women are not here to be the play toys of men. Wives are not here to be the servants of husbands.

Men are not here to be discarded in their prime by a corporate world so that more profit can seep to the top, thanks to the exploitation of the people at the bottom. Animals are not here to be disposed of for idle sport.

The globe is not here to be wrung dry by the people with enough guns, enough money, enough power to destroy the rain forests and colonise the moon.

People are not here to stack the socio-economic pyramid so that the people at the top can stand on the backs of those at the bottom.

Feminist Spirituality follows the Jesus who sought out tax collectors and zealots, women and children, Pharisees and paralytics pronounced to be in sin and raised them all to the full height of their souls — and of his. Respect for otherness, equality, mutuality, interdependence and nurturance are basic components of a Feminist World View.

They look, then, for the distribution of resources, the care of the planet, dignity of life for everyone, and an international concern for local needs. They pledge an ethic of care, a commitment to the Beatitudes, a view of life from Mount Horeb as well as from Sinai.

There is no doubt: a Feminist Spirituality would change marriages based on institutionalized patriarchy, change a society victimized by institutionalized patriarchy, change a Church that theologizes institutionalized patriarchy, and in the end, change the very definition of sanctity. Feminists — women and men — call us to the Christianity of a Jesus who preceded the Patriarchal Church, the corporate world and the nuclearized Government.

They call us to listen to the Canaanites in our midst, to include women in our groups, to do away with rigid roles, to open Synods and Seminaries and chanceries everywhere, to see ourselves as part of the whole rather

than its potantates, to go through life as partners rather than as power mongers, to devote ourselves to more than ourselves.

Those concepts would change domestic legislation and foreign policy, theology and corporate life, families and Churches. The world would begin to operate on a Spirituality of feeling as well as reason, of compassion rather than control, of empowerment as well as power, of dialogue rather than authoritarianism, of Community as well as competition, of openness as well as strength, of non-violence rather than aggression, of circles rather than pyramids.

Those concepts would turn the world upside down. They are the Holy-making ideas for our time. In a world exhausted by power plays, dying from power plays, destroying itself by power plays, they are the Spirituality of the 21st century.

If this Church is to be true to itself, if this nation is to prosper, if this world is to survive, Feminism is a moral imperative. Feminism is not a heresy; it is the Spirit of Jesus writ anew.

No wonder it threatens the system so much. The question arises repeatedly: is it possible for a person to be a Feminist and a Christian at the same time? The answer must surely be: how is it possible to be a Christian without being a Feminist? This is not an option; it is the fundamental mandate of Christianity. Or to put it another way: is God inclusive or not?

Women are the missing dimension of the Church. Without them, Spirituality becomes a shell of the possible. The soul sinks at the thought of the imposition of such limitations in the name of God. The Jesus who was born of a woman without the intervention of a man shakes his head in disbelief at such a perversion of Creation.

Feminist Spirituality would bring to the Church a new sense of presence, of vision, of understanding.

Feminist Spirituality brings with it a new image of God to liberate both women and men from the God of the Mediaeval courts and ancient battlefields, the rules and the stopwatch, the transcendently distant and the powerful masculine.

The Feminist image of God derives from the face of God who lives in the icon, Jesus: the Jesus who bowed his head before John and felt sorry for the People standing in the noon-day sun.

The Jesus who refused to be saved by Angels and brought life to those dealing with death both in body and in heart. This dimension of God is humble and feeling, non-violent and empowering.

Jesus, the Feminist image of God, cures and loves, is vulnerable and receptive, laughs and dances at wed-

ding feasts, cries tears and feels pain. Woman is the totally other, other. As long as a woman is required to be less than she should be, a man will be required to be more than he can be — and to the detriment of both of them.

Until the patriarchal system realizes the insufficiency of the principles of power upon which it is based, the disconnectedness of the bias for maleness from the real composition of the world, and its need for a Spirituality that embraces otherness rather than excludes it, it can never become whole.

It will continue to fall under the weight of having to carry a burden for which it is only half prepared. The real tragedy, of course, is that we will all suffer for the loss of it. Moreover, underneath it all, Spirituality itself will lead at best to half the image of God.

Ref.: Text from the Author.

Le Fondamentalisme Islamique

À l'aube du 21^{ème} siècle, le "fondamentalisme islamique" ou l'Islam politique reste une force puissante dans un grand nombre de sociétés musulmanes et une question d'intérêt mondial. Le fondamentalisme islamique, terme couramment employé pour désigner le renouveau islamique contemporain, est un mouvement religieux étendu mais divers, qui se propage depuis plus de deux décennies dans une bonne partie du monde musulman, de l'Afrique du Nord à l'Asie du Sud-Est.

Le paysage du monde musulman aujourd'hui révèle l'émergence de nouvelles républiques islamiques (l'Iran, le Soudan, l'Afghanistan), la prolifération de mouvements islamiques qui jouent un rôle politique et social majeur et parfois l'affrontement politique d'extrémistes radicaux violents. Dans les années 1980, l'Islam politique était simplement assimilé à l'Iran révolutionnaire ou à des groupes clandestins comme le Djihad islamique ou l'Armée de Dieu. Le monde musulman des années 1990, lui, est un monde où les Islamistes participent au processus électoral. On en voit qui sont premier ministre, chef de cabinet, président d'Assemblée nationale, parlementaire ou maire, dans des pays aussi différents que l'Égypte, le Soudan, la Turquie, l'Iran, le Liban, le Koweït, le Yémen, la Jordanie, le Pakistan, le Bangladesh, la Malaisie, l'Indonésie ou Israël/Palestine.

Le "fondamentalisme islamique" : que signifie un nom ?

S'il est d'un usage courant, le terme de "fondamentalisme islamique" n'en est pas moins trompeur. Le mot "fondamentalisme" apporte avec lui le poids de ses origines chrétiennes. Il est chargé de présupposés chrétiens et de clichés occidentaux, comme la lecture littérale de la Bible, le retour à un passé primitif ou l'opposition à l'empirisme (de la science et de la technologie). Ce mot masque la diversité et la complexité des mouvements actuels, leurs éléments aussi bien modérés qu'extrémistes, leur recours à la technologie moderne et implique une menace monolithique. Le mot "fondamentalisme" ne dit pas grand-chose de la diversité des gouvernements islamiques et de leurs interprétations de l'Islam, de la monarchie conservatrice saoudienne au régime révolutionnaire populiste de Libye ou à l'État clérical iranien. Souvent assimilé à l'opposition à l'Occident ou à l'Amérique, le fondamentalisme ne fait aucune distinction entre la Libye, l'Iran, le Soudan et l'Occident, d'une part, le Pakistan et l'Arabie saoudite, d'autre part. Il vaudrait mieux employer les termes de "renaissance islamique" ou

d' "activisme islamique", qui sont moins chargés de connotations et s'enracinent dans une tradition islamique de renouveau et de réforme contenant la notion d'activisme politique et social. Depuis quelques années, on a tendance à parler de l'Islam politique et de l'islamisme.

Les racines de la renaissance islamique contemporaine

La renaissance islamique actuelle se fonde sur un héritage historique considérable de renouveau et de réforme religieuse qui remonte aux premiers siècles de l'Islam. Plus proches de nous, des mouvements islamiques politico-religieux ont surgi aux 18^e et 19^e siècles dans tout le monde musulman, du Mahdi au Soudan au Wahhabi en Arabie saoudite ou au Padri en Indonésie, en réaction au sentiment de fragmentation politique, économique et sociale et de déclin moral éprouvé ici et là. Malgré des différences significatives, ces mouvements avaient tous le souci de purifier l'Islam en supprimant les croyances et pratiques étrangères (non islamiques) et en revenant aux principes fondamentaux de l'Islam, c'est-à-dire au Coran et à la Sunna (l'exemple) de Mahomet et de la communauté musulmane primitive. Plusieurs de ces mouvements de renouveau ont donné naissance à des États modernes comme le Soudan, la Libye et l'Arabie saoudite.

Les mouvements contemporains sont issus de cet héritage et des formations plus récentes comme celle des Frères musulmans en Égypte ou du Jamaat-i-Islami (société islamique) dans le sud de l'Asie, qui sont nées sous l'impulsion de Hasan al-Banna et de Mawlana Mawdudi, respectivement à la fin des années 1930 et au début des années 1940. Ces deux formations sont devenues les prototypes idéologiques et administratifs des mouvements islamiques d'aujourd'hui. Dans la conception du monde qui est la leur, l'Islam est un mode de vie complet, qui se suffit à lui-même et où religion et politique sont imbriquées. Ainsi, l'Islam est mêlé à la vie publique autant qu'à l'observance des préceptes ou des rites religieux. Et les Frères musulmans et le Jamaat ont créé des structures modernes efficaces pour réaliser leur objectif, à savoir l'instauration d'un régime et d'une loi islamiques par la mise en oeuvre d'une action politique et de programmes sociaux.

Le caractère et l'étendue de la renaissance islamique contemporaine

La résurgence de l'Islam affecte aussi bien la vie

personnelle que la vie publique. D'une part, de nombreux musulmans sont devenus plus observants sur le plan religieux (ils attachent plus d'importance à la prière, au jeûne, à la tenue vestimentaire, aux valeurs familiales et au renouveau du mysticisme musulman ou soufisme). D'autre part, l'Islam est réapparu comme une idéologie capable de compenser les faiblesses manifestes des formes plus séculières du nationalisme, du capitalisme et du socialisme. Les symboles, la rhétorique, les acteurs et les organisations islamiques sont devenus les principales sources de légitimité et de mobilisation nourrissant le militantisme politique et social. Les gouvernements (en Arabie saoudite, au Maroc, en Libye, en Égypte, au Pakistan, au Soudan, en Iran, en Afghanistan et en Malaisie) et les mouvements (les Frères musulmans en Égypte, au Soudan et en Jordanie, le Jamaat-i-Islami dans le sud de l'Asie, le parti Refah en Turquie, le Front islamique du salut en Algérie, le al'Nahda de Tunisie, le Hezbollah du Liban, les Frères musulmans, le HAMAS et le Djihad islamique en Palestine, le Gamaa Islamiyya et le Djihad en Égypte, l'ABIM et le PAS en Malaisie) qui, du plus modéré au plus extrémiste, représentent tout l'éventail politique et religieux, ont tous fait appel à l'Islam pour renforcer leur légitimité et s'assurer le soutien du peuple.

Les causes du "fondamentalisme" sont culturo-religieuses, politiques et socio-économiques. Le plus souvent, on trouve mêlées la foi et la politique (et non l'une sans l'autre). Les situations d'injustice politique et sociale (autoritarisme, répression, chômage, logements et services sociaux défectueux, mauvaise répartition de la richesse et corruption) s'ajoutent aux préjugés liés à l'identité et aux valeurs culturo-religieuses. À partir de la fin des années 1960, une succession de crises et d'échecs a discrédité de nombreux régimes et les modèles d'inspiration occidentale consistant à former des élites modernes, ce qui a eu pour effet de déclencher une politique protestataire, réformatrice et révolutionnaire, ainsi qu'une quête d'identité. C'est ainsi qu'est née l'"Alternative islamique", qui transparait dans des slogans tels que "L'Islam est la solution" ou "Ni l'Est ni l'Ouest".

Parmi les "échecs" les plus visibles qui se sont révélés être des catalyseurs, il faut citer:

1) la guerre israélo-arabe de 1967 (guerre des six jours) où Israël a infligé une défaite décisive aux armées coalisées d'Égypte, de Syrie et de Jordanie, et occupé le Sinaï, la Cisjordanie, Gaza et Jérusalem-Est; l'annexion et la création d'une Jérusalem "réunifiée" sous domination israélienne a transformé la libération de Jérusalem et de la Palestine en un problème islamique transnational;

2) les soulèvements malais et chinois de 1969 à Kuala-Lumpur, qui ont révélé les tensions croissantes entre la majorité musulmane malaise et une minorité chinoise assez importante et prospère;

3) la guerre civile de 1971-72 au Pakistan et au Bangladesh, qui a marqué l'échec du nationalisme musulman qui, lors de l'indépendance en 1947, devait forger l'identité

et l'unité nationale pakistanaise;

4) la guerre civile libanaise (1975-1990) qui avait notamment pour cause la répartition inégale du pouvoir économique et politique entre Chrétiens et Musulmans, laquelle a donné naissance aux principaux groupes chiïtes, AMAL et le Hezbollah, inspiré et soutenu par l'Iran;

5) la révolution iranienne de 1978-79, événement crucial dont l'impact s'est étendu à terme sur tout le monde musulman et l'Occident;

6) le conflit israélo-arabe qui a engendré ses propres mouvements islamistes, comme le HAMAS et le Djihad islamique dont l'Intifada a renforcé la vigueur dans les années 1980;

7) le marasme économique qui a sévi à la fin des années 1980 en Tunisie, en Algérie, en Jordanie et en Turquie et qui a été à l'origine du mécontentement social et de l'apparition de mouvements islamiques particuliers.

Les échecs de l'Occident (qu'il s'agisse de son modèle de développement ou de sa fonction d'allié politique dans le conflit israélo-arabe), joints à la peur de la pénétration et de la domination culturelles de l'Occident, ont été des thèmes constants de la renaissance islamique. Nombreux sont ceux qui ont attribué les maux de leur société à l'influence et au pouvoir excessif (politique, économique, militaire et socio-culturel) exercés par l'Occident et, en particulier, par les deux super-puissances, les États-Unis et l'ex-Union soviétique. Dans la mesure où elle procédait à une occidentalisation et une sécularisation progressives, la modernisation a été considérée comme une forme de néocolonialisme exportée par l'Occident et imposée par les élites locales, comme une maladie minant l'identité et les valeurs culturelles et religieuses autochtones et les remplaçant par des valeurs et modèles de développement d'importation. Bien que les mouvements islamiques soient essentiellement à visée locale ou nationale, les problèmes internationaux comme le conflit israélo-arabe et la libération de Jérusalem, l'occupation soviétique de l'Afghanistan, les affrontements en Bosnie, au Cachemire, en Tchétchénie et au Kosovo ont également joué un rôle important dans la politique musulmane. La richesse pétrolière et l'appui de l'Arabie saoudite, des autres États du Golfe et de la Libye ont apporté un soutien international aux programmes d'islamisation de certains gouvernements et aux mouvements islamistes particuliers.

Conception du monde et calendrier

Pour la majorité des militants, la résurgence de l'Islam est une réaffirmation de l'identité culturo-religieuse, du respect officiel des rites religieux, des valeurs familiales et de la morale. Selon eux, l'instauration d'une société islamique exige une transformation personnelle et sociale qui est elle-même nécessaire à l'avènement d'un véritable gouvernement islamique. Pour être efficace, le changement doit venir de la base, par une application de la loi islamique qui transforme peu à peu la société. Une

importante minorité, toutefois, estime que les gouvernements musulmans sont désespérément corrompus et éloignés de l'islam et voit donc dans la révolution violente à la fois un impératif théologique et une nécessité politique. Elle considère ces sociétés et leurs dirigeants comme des infidèles à éliminer. Voilà pourquoi les révolutionnaires islamiques sont persuadés qu'il faut renverser les élites politiques et religieuses officielles (cooptées par les gouvernements) dans les mains desquelles se trouvent concentrés tous les pouvoirs et privilèges, et imposer une nouvelle direction politique engagée au service de l'islam et la loi islamique. Bien qu'ils comptent relativement peu d'adhérents, des groupes tels que le Gamaa Islamiyya en Égypte ou le Jihad islamique en Égypte et en Palestine se sont souvent montrés les agents efficaces (et meurtriers) de l'agitation, des désordres et des assassinats politiques.

De la périphérie au centre: la révolution tranquille

Une bonne partie des années 1980 a été dominée par la peur de l'Ayatollah Khomeini et de la menace de l'Iran d'exporter sa révolution et ses flambées de violence, ses prises d'otages et son terrorisme. Les soulèvements survenus en Arabie saoudite, au Bahreïn et au Koweït, le ferme soutien apporté par l'Iran au Hezbollah au Liban et l'assassinat d'Anouar el Sadate ont alimenté les craintes des dirigeants musulmans et de l'Occident. Pourtant, aucun autre "Iran" n'a surgi. La fin des années 1980 et les années 1990 ont vu se diversifier les mouvements islamiques contemporains et non se préciser l'image d'une menace monolithique. Une minorité d'extrémistes radicaux a continué d'exister et d'agir en bien des régions du monde musulman. Des groupes tels que le Gamaa Islamiyya (groupe islamique) ont combattu le gouvernement égyptien, attaqué et tué des Chrétiens coptes et des touristes étrangers; d'autres extrémistes ont fait sauter le Centre commercial international de New York. Mais, entre-temps, s'était opérée une "révolution tranquille". L'activisme islamique s'est révélé être une force politique et sociale efficace, agissant à l'intérieur du système, dans le cadre des institutions et de la vie sociale en général. Des organisations d'inspiration islamique ont créé des écoles, des cliniques, des hôpitaux, des banques et des maisons d'édition et mis à la disposition du public toute une gamme de services sociaux. C'est ainsi qu'une nouvelle génération d'élites, ayant reçu une éducation moderne mais imprégnée des valeurs islamiques au lieu d'être sécularisée, est aujourd'hui présente dans toutes les professions (médecins, juristes, ingénieurs, enseignants, travailleurs sociaux) et cherche à concrétiser dans la société des solutions ou perspectives empruntées à l'islam.

Parallèlement, l'intensification des appels en faveur de la participation et de la démocratisation politique dans le monde musulman a entraîné dans certains cas une

libéralisation politique, dans d'autres une répression. Là où les gouvernements ont ouvert leur régime politique, des organisations islamiques ont participé aux élections et ont émergé comme la fraction dominante de l'opposition dans des pays comme l'Égypte, la Tunisie et la Jordanie où des candidats islamiques ont non seulement conquis 32 des 80 sièges du Parlement mais aussi accédé à cinq postes ministériels. En Algérie, le Front islamique du salut (FIS) a triomphé aux élections municipales et parlementaires du début des années 1990. Craignant l'accession du FIS au pouvoir, l'armée algérienne est intervenue. Bien des gouvernements du monde musulman et de l'Occident ont été stupéfaits de constater que ce qui leur avait paru impensable se produisait: l'accession d'un mouvement islamique au pouvoir, non par les armes mais par le vote. Les apparents succès des mouvements islamiques en matière électorale ont conduit certains gouvernements, notamment en Tunisie, en Algérie et en Jordanie, à supprimer leur opposition islamique, sous prétexte que les extrémistes religieux menaçaient de "prendre la démocratie en otage" et d'utiliser le régime politique pour s'emparer du pouvoir et imposer leur volonté. Selon plusieurs experts, de nombreux gouvernements du monde musulman, dont la légitimité politique est fragile et dépend d'un important appui des forces de sécurité, ne tolèrent qu'une "démocratie sans risque" (c'est-à-dire une libéralisation politique qui ne menace ni leur pouvoir ni leur régime). Si certains gouvernements et experts voient dans le "fondamentalisme islamique" une grave menace pour la stabilité de leurs sociétés et la politique mondiale, d'autres soutiennent qu'il importe de distinguer entre les mouvements populistes authentiques qui sont prêts à collaborer avec les institutions du régime, et les inconditionnels du refus qui cherchent à renverser les gouvernements par une révolution violente.

L'Islam et le développement: l'ébranlement des paradigmes

La réaffirmation de la religion dans la politique et la société musulmanes est un défi aux préjugés et présupposés occidentaux et séculiers quant à la modernisation et la théorie du développement. Contre toute attente, certaines sociétés modernes ou occidentalisées (le Liban, l'Égypte, l'Iran, la Tunisie, l'Algérie, la Turquie et la Malaisie) sont devenues de grands pôles de la politique "islamique". À l'évidence, le chemin vers la modernisation ne se réduit pas à un choix entre "la Mecque et la mécanisation", entre une tradition statique et un changement dynamique, entre un gouvernement séculier et une autorité à visée religieuse. Des pays aussi dissemblables que l'Égypte, la Turquie, l'Arabie saoudite, les États du golfe, le Pakistan, l'Afghanistan et la Malaisie montrent la complexité et le pluralisme des expériences et expérimentations musulmanes, la diversité de leurs types et de leurs rythmes de modernisation et leurs divergences sur l'interprétation

et la mise en application de l'islam. À l'ancienne division de nombreuses sociétés musulmanes, qui découlait de l'insertion de l'éducation dans un contexte séculier moderne ou, au contraire, dans un contexte religieux plus traditionnel, vient aujourd'hui s'ajouter un nouveau secteur social à coloration islamique. Il comprend un échantillon de la société, à la fois urbain et rural, composé de chefs de file de partis politiques ou d'associations professionnelles, de médecins, de juristes, de scientifiques, d'ingénieurs, de journalistes et d'enseignants. Les organisations politiques et sociales islamiques se servent des moyens modernes pour diffuser leurs messages dans les médias: cassettes audio et vidéo, appareils de télécopie et internet. Ils interviennent dans la société civile comme des militants politiques et sociaux. Ils construisent des écoles, des hôpitaux, des cliniques et des banques et offrent des services juridiques et sociaux peu coûteux.

Les problèmes de souveraineté, d'idéologie et d'interprétation

La résurgence contemporaine de l'islam dans la vie politique musulmane pose de nombreuses questions, depuis celle de la souveraineté, jusqu'à celles de la théologie, de l'idéologie et de son application. La plupart peuvent se résumer aux deux questions suivantes: "L'islam de qui?" et "Quel islam?".

"L'islam de qui?". À qui incombe-t-il d'interpréter l'islam et de le mettre en application? Aux chefs d'État qui, dans leur immense majorité, sont des rois non élus, des militaires ou d'anciens militaires (cf. la Maison de Saoud en Arabie saoudite, Khadafi en Libye, Omar al-Bashir au Soudan), aux oulémas ou à l'élite religieuse comme en Iran, ou à des premiers ministres ou des députés élus? Historiquement, les oulémas étaient les conseillers des souverains, les gardiens de la religion qui bénéficiaient de la protection royale. Dans leur écrasante majorité, les oulémas d'aujourd'hui continuent de se considérer comme les premiers interprètes de l'islam et, en conséquence, comme un maillon nécessaire de tout processus d'islamisation. Au vingtième siècle, cependant, leur rôle et leur efficacité ont été contestés et par les mouvements séculiers et par les modernistes et les militants islamiques. Les critiques relèvent que l'islam n'a pas de clergé, que la formation islamique classique de nombreux oulémas les prépare mal à faire preuve de créativité et d'efficacité face aux réalités contemporaines et que la notion d'érudit ou d'expert (*alim*, pl. *oulémas*) doit désormais être étendue à de nombreux domaines nouveaux (l'économie moderne la médecine, la biochimie, etc.). L'immense majorité des organismes et dirigeants islamiques ont été des laïcs qui revendiquent le droit d'interpréter l'islam et contestent les prérogatives exclusives des oulémas en la matière. L'incitation récente à un engagement politique et à une démocratisation plus grande et le pouvoir que cette

tendance accorde en puissance aux assemblées nationales élues vient encore défier l'autorité traditionnelle des institutions politiques comme des institutions religieuses.

La seconde question "Quel islam?" concerne le processus d'islamisation de l'État et de la société: s'agit-il de les restaurer ou de les réformer? Certains réclament un État islamique fondé sur la remise en vigueur des formulations classiques de la loi islamique. D'autres insistent sur la nécessité de réinterpréter et de reformuler la loi à la lumière des nouvelles réalités de la société contemporaine. Il convient de garder en mémoire plusieurs faits historiques importants. Comme toutes les traditions religieuses, l'islam est un idéal qui a revêtu de nombreuses formes dans l'histoire et s'est prêté à des discours de niveaux divers. Il a été subordonné à la raison, c'est-à-dire à l'interprétation humaine, et au contexte historique et social. Si l'époque de Mahomet et de la communauté de Médine est restée le paradigme idéal, il n'y a pas eu dans l'histoire un modèle d'État islamique unique et bien défini. La loi islamique elle-même est le fruit de prescriptions divines et d'interprétations humaines, conditionnées par une conjoncture sociale. Les militants islamiques contemporains ont donné leurs propres interprétations ou paradigmes qui sont eux-mêmes des constructions humaines fondées sur des textes sacrés. On peut aujourd'hui mesurer cette diversité en relevant les positions opposées de l'État et de la société sur des questions comme la différence entre les sexes (le statut de la femme et son rôle dans la société, le port du hidjab ou voile islamique), les droits des minorités, la réforme agraire et la démocratisation en Arabie saoudite, en Iran, en Afghanistan, au Pakistan, en Malaisie, en Turquie, en Égypte et en Algérie. Le fait d'établir une distinction entre des visions religieuses et des réalités politiques rivaes conduit souvent à un réductionnisme religieux qui tend à considérer les conflits au Soudan, au Liban, en Bosnie, en Azerbaïdjan, en Indonésie ou en Israël/Palestine en des termes purement religieux, c'est-à-dire à en faire des affrontements entre Musulmans et Chrétiens ou entre Musulmans et Juifs. Si les communautés de ces pays peuvent être définies dans leurs grandes lignes en termes religieux ou confessionnels, voire qualifiées de sectes-comme c'est le cas pour les communautés catholique et protestante d'Irlande du Nord ou les communautés tamoul (hindoue) ou cingalaise (bouddhiste) du Sri Lanka - les différends et les querelles civiles tiennent souvent davantage à des griefs politiques (comme le nationalisme ethnique ou l'occupation, s'opposant au désir d'autonomie et d'indépendance) et socio-économiques qu'à la religion en tant que telle. Le sécularisme tendancieux de nombreux dirigeants politiques, universitaires et journalistes constitue un obstacle subtil mais puissant à la compréhension et l'interprétation du fondamentalisme religieux (qu'il soit musulman, chrétien ou juif). Ceux-ci, en effet, voient dans le sécularisme non pas simplement une possibilité ou un choix (parmi d'autres), mais un impératif (le seul choix

“rationnel”). Ces “fondamentalistes séculiers” considèrent donc l’association de la religion et de la politique comme tout à fait anormale (puisqu’elle s’écarte de la norme séculière), irrationnelle et dangereuse. Ils ne font pas de distinction entre ceux qui font partie du courant social majoritaire et les extrémistes violents, parce qu’il leur paraît plus facile de rejeter purement et simplement les “fondamentalistes” pour cause de fanatisme religieux. Ce problème n’est pas seulement d’actualité dans les sociétés musulmanes: il transparait aussi dans les tensions et les débats que génère actuellement le rôle de la religion dans la société en Israël et le droit dit “chrétien” aux États-Unis.

L’hypothèse selon laquelle le fait de mêler la religion et la politique conduit inévitablement au fanatisme et à l’extrémisme a été l’un des principaux facteurs qui ont amené à conclure que tous les mouvements islamiques sont extrémistes et que l’Islam et la démocratie sont incompatibles. C’est commettre une erreur et aller à l’encontre du but recherché que de ne pas différencier les mouvements islamiques, c’est-à-dire ne pas distinguer ceux qui sont majoritaires ou modérés (désireux d’agir à l’intérieur du système et de susciter un changement à partir de la base) et ceux qui sont de violents extrémistes. Il est rare que les actes de violence d’extrémistes juifs ou chrétiens soient assimilés au judaïsme ou au christianisme majoritaire; et c’est à juste titre que l’on considère une telle assimilation comme une distorsion aberrante ou l’exploitation abusive d’une religion. Or un discernement comparable est souvent absent lorsqu’il est question de l’Islam et du militantisme islamique. Le recours à la violence est un sujet particulièrement controversé. Il est parfois difficile de distinguer les modérés des extrémistes. La frontière entre les mouvements de libération nationale et les organisations terroristes est souvent floue ou dépend de l’angle politique dans lequel on se place. Les héros révolutionnaires américains étaient des rebelles et des traîtres pour la Couronne britannique. Menahem Begin et Itzhak Shamir, les groupes Irgoun et Stern, Nelson Mandela et le Congrès national africain et, jusqu’à une date récente, Yasser Arafat et l’OLP ont été considérés par leur opposition comme des terroristes et les dirigeants de mouvements terroristes. Des questions analogues se posent ailleurs. La théologie chrétienne de la libération et les mouvements auxquels elle a donné naissance en Amérique latine et centrale constituent-ils simplement une force révolutionnaire crypto-marxiste ou un mouvement populiste authentique ? Il se peut que les terroristes d’hier soient précisément cela : des terroristes; mais il arrive aussi qu’ils parviennent à se faire reconnaître rétrospectivement comme les dirigeants de mouvements nationalistes authentiques et deviennent les chefs d’État d’aujourd’hui.

Pour comprendre la nature des mouvements islamiques contemporains, il faut être capable de dépasser les clichés monolithiques faciles. La diversité dont témoignent les souverains et les gouvernements du monde musulman transparait aussi dans les différents mouvements

islamiques, depuis les groupes modérés et pragmatiques qui s’engagent au sein du régime, jusqu’aux extrémistes radicaux qui cherchent purement et simplement à renverser les pouvoirs en place et à imposer leur propre conception de l’Islam. Les Frères musulmans d’Égypte et de Jordanie, le Jamaat-i-Islami du Pakistan, le parti Refah de Turquie, la mouvance al-Nahda de Tunisie et le Front islamique du salut de l’Algérie, pour n’en citer que quelques uns, se sont détournés de la violence et ont participé à la démarche politique électorale. Dans le même temps, le Gamaa Islamiyya en Égypte, le Groupe islamique armé en Algérie et des organisations favorables au Djihad dans bien des pays se sont lancés dans la violence et le terrorisme.

L’Islam, la démocratie et le pluralisme

Des voix aussi diverses, dont certaines sont harmonieuses et d’autres discordantes, se font entendre dans le débat qui a cours depuis quelques années sur l’engagement politique et la démocratisation. On trouve en fait dans le monde musulman toute une gamme de positions sur la démocratisation. Les partisans du sécularisme prônent la mise en place de formes séculières de démocratie et la séparation de l’Église et de l’État. Les inconditionnels du refus soutiennent que l’Islam a ses propres formes de gouvernement et qu’il est incompatible avec la démocratie. Cette position est celle de musulmans modérés comme de musulmans militants, du roi Fahd d’Arabie saoudite aux organisations radicales comme le Djihad islamique et l’Organisation islamique de libération. Les conciliateurs pensent que l’on peut se servir des notions et institutions traditionnelles comme la consultation (shoura), le consensus (ijma), la réinterprétation (ijtihad) pour instaurer des formes de participation politique populaire et de démocratisation acceptables pour l’Islam. L’Islam politique a suscité des inquiétudes à propos du statut et des droits des non Musulmans dans les républiques islamiques comme l’Iran, le Soudan et le Pakistan et dans d’autres pays musulmans comme l’Arabie saoudite, l’Égypte, le Nigeria et l’Indonésie. Les tensions et les affrontements entre les gouvernements musulmans ou certains groupes islamiques et les Coptes en Égypte, les Baha’is (et tout récemment les Juifs) en Iran, les Chinois en Malaisie et les Chrétiens au Soudan, au Pakistan, au Nigeria et en Indonésie ont mis en lumière les questions de pluralisme et de tolérance. La situation est exacerbée par les revendications politiques et socio-économiques subjectives. On reproche aux communautés non musulmanes comme les Chrétiens en Égypte, au Soudan et au Pakistan ou l’Ahmadiyya au Pakistan d’avoir jadis collaboré avec les colons et bénéficié du régime colonial européen. De même, les Chinois de Malaisie et d’Indonésie, les Baha’is de l’Iran et l’Ahmadiyya du Pakistan, qui tendent à être plus avancés sur le plan éducatif et économique, se heurtent au ressentiment et à la discrimination. Certains chefs religieux et dirigeants

politiques sans scrupule n'ont pas eu de peine à mobiliser leurs partisans et à les dresser contre des minorités dont la réussite leur semble disproportionnée et à leur infliger d'inexprimables frustrations socio-économiques.

Pour régler ces problèmes, il faut réformer l'islam. Selon la loi islamique, les non Musulmans sont des citoyens de second ordre ou *dhimmis* ("protégés") qui forment leur propre communauté. En échange de leur allégeance envers l'État et de l'acquiescement de la capitation, ils sont libres de pratiquer leur culte et dépendent de leurs chefs religieux et des lois régissant l'exercice du culte, la vie privée, l'éducation et la famille. La plupart des États musulmans contemporains accordent les mêmes droits civiques à tous les citoyens, quelle que soit leur appartenance religieuse. Toutefois, la résurgence contemporaine de l'islam a réactivé les pressions qui s'exercent pour que soit juridiquement réaffirmée l'attitude traditionnelle à l'égard des non Musulmans qui a, certes, été modifiée par la législation actuelle, mais est restée inchangée dans la mentalité de nombreux Musulmans.

Les minorités non musulmanes connaissent certaines limites dans les États islamiques. Étant donnée l'idéologie officielle, certains se demandent s'il est légitime de laisser des non Musulmans occuper des postes clés dans le gouvernement. Dans de nombreux États musulmans contemporains, tous les citoyens, quelle que soit leur religion, peuvent exercer une fonction officielle, sauf celle de chef d'État ou de Premier ministre. Ce pluralisme séculier, moderne et libéral, est aujourd'hui contesté par ceux qui pensent que l'idéologie islamique de l'État exige un engagement envers l'islam. Dans cette hypothèse, il serait exclu que des non Musulmans occupent des postes de responsabilité dans le gouvernement, l'assemblée législative, la justice ou l'armée, qui sont les lieux où l'idéologie de l'État est élaborée et mise en oeuvre. En outre, les organisations islamiques radicales rejettent totalement la participation de non Musulmans au gouvernement, car ils la jugent contraire à l'islam. Ce rejet s'applique souvent non seulement à ceux qui sont membres d'autres religions mais aussi aux Musulmans qui n'acceptent pas leur interprétation radicale de l'islam.

S'ils tentent de réexaminer et de redéfinir les principes et les valeurs de l'islam et leur adaptation aux réalités changeantes de la vie moderne, les Musulmans devront s'interroger sur le problème crucial du rôle et du contenu de la loi islamique. Les questions auxquelles le contexte contemporain les invite à répondre sont notamment celles de savoir s'il leur faut simplement remettre en vigueur la loi islamique telle qu'elle a été définie dans le passé ou s'il est nécessaire d'actualiser les principes et les valeurs de la *shari'ah* et les adapter aux conditions de vie modernes, d'en donner une nouvelle interprétation (*ijtihad*) ? La question du statut et du rôle des non Musulmans est l'un des principaux aspects de la loi islamique traditionnelle qui devra être abordé dans le cadre de cette démarche. Sans doute la situation des non Musulmans dans les pays à

régime islamique était-elle bien préférable à celle des non Chrétiens dans la chrétienté mais, selon les critères des États modernes, l'attribution du statut de *dhimmis* aux non Musulmans aujourd'hui reviendrait à en faire des citoyens de seconde zone. Le règlement de ce problème est important non seulement pour les non Musulmans qui habitent en terre d'islam mais pour les relations entre Chrétiens et Musulmans dans le monde.

Étant donné l'histoire des croyances et des relations entre Musulmans et Chrétiens, les deux communautés ont d'importants défis à relever pour redéfinir leur position religieuse l'une par rapport à l'autre. Toutes les deux ont le désir de rester fidèles aux exigences de leurs textes sacrés et de leur foi, mais elles veulent aussi se prêter, autant que possible, à un réajustement de leur position (ou de leur doctrine). Si les Musulmans reconsidèrent le rôle et le statut des non Musulmans, les Chrétiens doivent également être prêts à reconsidérer des questions aussi importantes et controversées que le statut prophétique de Mahomet et la place ou la valeur du Coran dans la Révélation - questions doctrinales qui sont au coeur des relations entre le Christianisme et l'islam. De fait, certains penseurs et organismes religieux musulmans et chrétiens réfléchissent actuellement à ces questions, au plan national comme au plan international. Le fondamentalisme islamique fait partie du phénomène mondial de retour au religieux. Comme les autres familles religieuses telles que le judaïsme et le christianisme, le monde musulman présente une grande diversité d'orientations. Bien des Musulmans préfèrent que la religion se limite à la vie privée. D'autres aimeraient voir leur société et leur famille plus fermement enracinées dans leur foi et leurs traditions islamiques. Pour beaucoup, il s'agit d'une affaire plus sociale que politique. Pourtant, dans tout l'islam, on a vu de nombreux Musulmans s'engager résolument dans la bataille pour intégrer l'islam à l'État et à la société. Cette bataille a pris bien des formes. Si la religion a été exploitée par certains au point de devenir un instrument d'oppression et non de libération, elle a également réapparu comme une force politique et spirituelle de premier plan. Au cours du prochain millénaire, les questions de foi et d'identité continueront de jouer un rôle essentiel dans l'islam comme dans les autres religions. On ne peut nier les divergences spirituelles ni les conflits qui ont opposé les trois grands monothéismes. Pourtant, nos origines abrahamiques communes, les périodes de coexistence et de coopération (comme la *Convivencia* en Andalousie) et les conceptions, valeurs et préoccupations religieuses partagées seront tout autant mises en relief, au fur et à mesure que nous aborderons les enjeux du nouveau millénaire dans lequel l'islam existera au même titre que le Christianisme et le Judaïsme, non seulement dans les pays musulmans, mais aussi en Europe et en Amérique.

Christologie Féministe Asiatique

Aujourd'hui, les femmes du monde entier s'éveillent et prennent conscience qu'elles aussi sont des êtres humains créés à l'image et à la ressemblance de Dieu. De plus en plus de femmes prennent leur juste place dans la société. Elles essaient de participer et d'apporter leur contribution propre dans tous les aspects de la vie sociale. La théologie ou le discours sur Dieu ne fait pas exception, même si elle a été une prérogative masculine jusqu'à tout récemment. Dans la communauté de foi, des femmes de différentes parties du monde réfléchissent et expriment leur foi à part tir de leurs perspectives et de leur expérience propre.

Les discussions théologiques continuent à témoigner du rôle central du Christ dans la foi chrétienne. Au cours des siècles, les chrétiens ont fait de grands efforts pour comprendre et exposer le sens de la personne de Jésus pour leur contexte historique particulier. Aujourd'hui, la question christologique : "Qui dites-vous que je suis ?" reçoit aussi une réponse des femmes asiatiques et cette réponse a un accent particulier, provenant de leurs expériences de souffrance et d'oppression.

Le contexte asiatique

Il est essentiel de jeter un coup d'oeil sur le contexte asiatique avant de tenter de répondre à la question : "Qui est Jésus pour les femmes asiatiques?". Le continent asiatique n'est pas seulement immense mais aussi extrêmement divers et complexe. Il totalise environ 58 percent de la population mondiale et les femmes asiatiques représentent un quart de cette population mondiale. L'Asie est le berceau de civilisations et de religions anciennes. Elle est riche en ressources naturelles, en multiplicité de cultures, en langues et en accents ethniques. L'Asie est aussi le lieu où vivent des millions de pauvres illettrés. La pauvreté est une âpre réalité, spécialement en Asie du Sud. Aujourd'hui, le fossé entre les riches et les pauvres s'élargit à une vitesse alarmante en raison de l'économie de marché, de la mondialisation, de la privatisation croissante des ressources, des investissements de sociétés multi et transnationales, etc. Le résultat est une dévalorisation de la dignité humaine des pauvres et un individualisme croissant qui détruit le sens de la communauté. On peut donc résumer la double caractéristique de l'Asie en ces termes: pauvreté de ses masses de population et richesse de ses traditions culturelles et religieuses.

Femmes asiatiques

À l'intérieur de ce contexte global de pauvreté et de privation, la situation de la majorité des femmes est encore plus déshumanisante. En Inde, elles sont les

Dalits des Dalits,¹ en Corée, les *Minjung* des *Minjung* et, en Asie en général, les plus pauvres parmi les pauvres. La participation politique des femmes dans les pays asiatiques est encore très faible. Sur le plan économique, on peut parler d'une féminisation de la pauvreté, c'est-à-dire que de plus en plus de femmes sont pauvres et au chômage. Les tâches domestiques et le soin des enfants n'étant pas rémunérés, la contribution économique des femmes est sous-estimée et laisse croire qu'elles dépendent toujours des hommes.

La violence perpétuée envers les femmes revêt de multiples facettes sur ce continent: l'élimination sélective des foetus féminins, l'infanticide, les pratiques discriminatoires envers les petites filles et les veuves, la violence domestique et les abus sexuels de toutes sortes. En Inde, il y a un viol toutes les 47 minutes, du harcèlement toutes les 44 minutes, des brutalités toutes les 35 minutes et un enlèvement toutes les 44 minutes. Selon le Ministère de la justice, il y a 2 viols d'enfants par jour. La prostitution enfantine est un phénomène croissant en Inde, aux Philippines, en Thaïlande, au Népal, etc.. Selon une étude menée en 1994 par le Bureau International du Travail, rien qu'en Inde, il y aurait 400.000 enfants prostitués...

Dans l'ensemble, les femmes reçoivent toujours moins de nourriture, moins de soins médicaux, moins de possibilités d'éducation ou de travail, moins de repos et de loisir que les hommes. En Asie, les femmes sont sans cesse profondément meurtries et mortellement blessées. Elles ne sont pas seulement réduites en esclavage du fait du militarisme, du néocolonialisme, de l'oppression socio-politique; elles sont encore plus marginalisées du fait de l'aliénation religio-culturelle. Les préjugés patriarcaux profondément ancrés dans les cultures asiatiques continuent à déshumaniser les femmes et à empêcher un grand nombre de faire une expérience de vie qui en vaille la peine et qui ait du sens. Pourtant, cette expérience de discrimination du fait de leur sexe ne peut être séparée d'une situation de pauvreté, de maladie et d'oppression propre aux habitants du tiersmonde. "Quest-ce qui est unique pour nous, femmes asiatique?", demande la théologienne féministe Sun Ai Lee-Park de Corée: "c'est le

contexte particulier de notre réalité économique, politique et religio-culturelle”.

Signification de Jésus pour l'Asie

Les forces d'oppression à l'oeuvre en Inde et ailleurs en Asie prennent leurs racines dans le féodalisme, le capitalisme, dans la vie socio-économique et politique des gens et dans leurs croyances, leurs idées et leurs valeurs. Aujourd'hui, le servage économique est terriblement déshumanisant. Le système des castes tel qu'il est pratiqué en Inde contribue à perpétuer l'inégalité et la déshumanisation. Le néo-confucianisme dans des pays comme la Corée est utilisé comme idéologie culturelle et politique pour renforcer la soumission des femmes et sacrifier les relations hiérarchiques dans la société. C'est dans ce contexte d'oppression que nous posons la question : Qui est Jésus pour les Asiatiques? Nous savons que la majorité d'entre eux n'ont jamais entendu parler du Christ, car seulement 2,3 % des Asiatiques sont chrétiens. Malgré cela, les théologiens asiatiques ont tenté de répondre à la question à partir de différentes perspectives.

Selon le théologien indien Sebastian Kappen, il existe en Inde une triple aliénation de Jésus. Jésus est aliéné par le culte, les dogmes et l'institutionnalisme. *“Il (Jésus) est enterré sous le poids des couches accumulées de rituels, de rubriques, de canons, de concepts, de légendes, de mythes, de superstitions et d'institutions... Il est donc du devoir de tous ceux qui ont au coeur le message d'espérance de Jésus, de le libérer de la prison du culte, du dogme et de l'institutionnalisme, pour qu'il puisse, comme jadis, montrer du doigt les scribes, les pharisiens, les anciens, les prêtres et les Hérode d'aujourd'hui”*.² Dans l'ensemble, cette observation vaut également pour les autres Églises asiatiques. Si nous voulons que Jésus fasse sens pour ce continent, il faut nous concentrer sur Jésus libérateur et montrer comment il peut être source de lumière et d'inspiration pour les millions d'Asiatiques qui vivent sous le poids de l'oppression organisée.

En même temps, il est encourageant de noter qu'une christologie différente est en train de naître en Asie chez les femmes en général et chez les peuples marginalisés, particulièrement les *dalits* et les membres des tribus aborigènes³ en Inde, les *Minjung* en Corée. Beaucoup d'Asiatiques s'identifient au Christ souffrant, brisé dans la lutte contre l'injustice.⁴ D'autre part, la caractéristique de Jésus qui peut transformer la société asiatique est sa fonction de prophète. La tâche des prophètes, comme nous le voyons dans l'Ancien Testament, consiste à dénoncer les maux de la société, tout ce qui déshumanise et empêche l'être humain de devenir ce qu'il est appelé à être.

Les évangiles synoptiques témoignent de la proclamation du Règne de Dieu par Jésus (Mc 1,14-15). Cette proclamation était diamétralement opposée à tous les types d'oppression. La vision du Règne de Dieu est

celle d'une communauté où chacun a du prix et où tous sont reliés les uns aux autres dans un respect mutuel. Deux éléments étaient tout à fait clairs dans cette proclamation. D'une part, l'épanouissement de la personne et de la communauté humaine dans un projet d'avenir : pas n'importe quel avenir mais l'avenir absolu, libre de toute aliénation ; d'autre part, cet avenir est déjà là, en germe dans la propre personne de Jésus, dans sa parole et son action.⁵

La société juive au temps de Jésus était caractérisée par une hiérarchie sociale injuste qui déshumanisait la majorité des gens. Sur cet arrière-plan, Jésus proclame un royaume d'égalité, de justice et d'amour, en paroles et en actes. Les valeurs du Royaume qu'il a prêché étaient subversives, comparées à celles de la société dans laquelle il vivait. Jésus était bien le prophète de la contre-culture. Sa proclamation du Royaume était aussi un appel au repentir, à se détourner du péché et à répondre à Dieu. Un repentir pour les péchés personnels et structurels. Le péché structurel s'exprime en règles, lois, coutumes et institutions déshumanisantes de la société. La critique radicale que Jésus fait de la loi et du culte frappe à la racine du péché structurel.

Tout le message de Jésus peut être résumé en un appel à devenir des êtres humains authentiques.⁶ En d'autres termes, c'est un appel à répondre à l'invitation que Dieu fait de devenir ce qu'on doit être, de passer d'une existence inauthentique à une existence authentique, de la fragmentation à la plénitude ou au salut. Ce Jésus qui a proclamé le royaume de justice, de liberté et d'alliance et qui a défié toutes les structures oppressives, c'est celui qui fait sens en Asie aujourd'hui.

Qui est Jésus pour les femmes asiatiques ?

Pour répondre à cette question, il est important de rappeler que l'expérience des femmes est fondamentale pour la pratique théologique. Lors de la Consultation de Manille, en novembre 1985, les participants ont ainsi résumé l'expérience asiatique dans leur déclaration finale:

“Dans toutes les sphères de la société asiatique, les femmes sont dominées, déshumanisées et déféminisées ; elles sont objet de discrimination, d'exploitation, de harcèlement; elles sont utilisées comme des objets sexuels et considérées comme des êtres inférieurs et doivent toujours être subordonnées à la soi-disant suprématie masculine. À la maison, à l'église, devant la justice, en éducation et dans les médias, les femmes sont traitées avec préjugés et condescendance”.⁷

Une christologie asiatique féministe jaillit alors d'un processus d'identification avec les femmes opprimées de ce continent. Même si beaucoup de ces femmes ne sont pas chrétiennes, Jésus est pour elles celui qui prend leur parti, qui vient les guérir de leur situation brisée. Ce Jésus révèle un Dieu qui ne justifie pas l'injustice mais s'y oppose. Les féministes asiatiques essaient de vivre cette christologie en se joignant aux femmes de différentes religions dans une lutte commune pour la

vie. Pour elles, Jésus n'est pas le sauveur mais un sauveur, quelqu'un qui, parmi d'autres, montre la voie d'un avenir nouveau au-delà de la pauvreté et de la violence.⁸ Conscientes du contexte multi-religieux de l'Asie, les féministes asiatiques n'universalisent pas Jésus comme le seul sauveur. Elles contextualisent plutôt son histoire comme un modèle particulier de la lutte de l'espérance en une communauté de justice et d'amour, concrétisée pour elles, ici et maintenant, dans les femmes asiatiques qui luttent pour défendre la vie contre la souffrance injuste.⁹

Qui est Jésus pour les femmes asiatiques? Est-il le révélateur masculin d'un Dieu masculin? Les femmes asiatiques voient la masculinité de Jésus comme une particularité historique et non comme indicatrice de la masculinité de Dieu, exclusive du féminin. Les féministes asiatiques sont toutefois conscientes d'appartenir à une Église qui exclut les femmes de l'ordination, sous prétexte que le Jésus historique était de sexe masculin. Elles sont aussi conscientes que *"ni la judéité de Jésus, ni sa présence physique au premier siècle dans une communauté n'ont été gardées comme particularité essentielle, contrairement à sa masculinité"*.¹⁰ Elles croient que le Christ ressuscité a transcendé toutes ces particularités, y compris sa masculinité. Elles considèrent que leur tâche est d'affirmer l'humanité de Jésus plutôt que sa masculinité.¹¹

Les autres éléments de la christologie susceptibles de libérer les femmes en général et les Asiatiques en particulier sont le ministère de Jésus, sa mort et sa résurrection. En Luc 4, 16-19, nous avons en résumé le programme du ministère de Jésus. Celui-ci comprend la proclamation du Règne de Dieu qui est une puissante force de libération pour les femmes. Ceux qui sont à la périphérie des structures établies seront les premiers dans le Royaume. Au cours de son ministère, Jésus a montré sa préférence pour les marginalisés. Les femmes dalit, les minjung, les autochtones d'Asie peuvent tout à fait s'identifier aux marginalisés du temps de Jésus.

Jésus a traité les femmes avec bienveillance, comme des personnes humaines dignes de respect. Il les a appelées à être ses disciples et elles étaient là, libres de l'accompagner sans aucune crainte de harcèlement (Lc 8, 1-3). Jésus ne les a jamais traitées comme des objets sexuels. Au contraire, ses relations avec elles étaient de personne à personne. En Jean 4, Jésus rencontre la Samaritaine. Le dialogue entre eux est marqué par une commune recherche de la vérité de la vie. Jésus voit cette femme comme une partenaire égale dans le dialogue. Comme le fait remarquer Virginia Fabella : *"Non seulement elles (les femmes) comptaient pour lui comme amies, mais il a affirmé qu'elles étaient dignes de confiance et capables d'être des disciples, des témoins, des missionnaires et des apôtres"*.¹² L'attitude de Jésus envers les femmes de son temps et la façon dont il les a traitées est puissance de libération, libération si nécessaire aux femmes asiatiques, susceptible de leur donner une identité propre sans que celle-ci

soit dépendante d'un homme.

Les souffrances et la mort de Jésus ont également un sens très fort pour les femmes asiatiques. En écho à leur douleur, l'image qui revient le plus souvent dans les expressions théologiques des femmes asiatiques est l'image du serviteur souffrant. L'image de Jésus souffrant permet aux femmes asiatiques de donner sens à leur propre souffrance et à leur service. Tandis que beaucoup de femmes identifient leurs souffrances à celles de Jésus de façon passive, d'autres voient dans la passion de Jésus un acte de solidarité avec son peuple. Pour elles, Jésus est un homme intègre et compatissant qui s'identifie aux opprimés. *"Cette image des souffrances de Jésus donne aux femmes asiatiques la sagesse de faire la différence entre la souffrance imposée par un oppresseur et la souffrance qui découle de prises de positions en faveur de la justice et de la dignité humaine"*.¹³ Ainsi, les militantes philippines qui ont repris la lutte pour leurs sœurs et les autres pauvres souffrants considèrent que leur souffrance est rédemptrice.¹⁴

D'autre part, quelques femmes ont pris conscience que les sources de leur oppression ne sont pas seulement socio-économiques, mais que cette situation s'enracine dans une longue histoire patriarcale. Alors, en accord avec d'autres théologues féministes, elles considèrent la crucifixion de Jésus comme un immense cri contre le patriarcat. Du côté transpercé du Crucifié, le pouvoir sort transformé en amour qui se donne. La croix nous montre la kénose du patriarcat.¹⁵ La kénose de Jésus fut le chemin de sa glorification (Ph 2, 6-11). C'est à cause de sa résurrection que Jésus est proclamé Seigneur. La dimension libératrice de l'image de Jésus comme Seigneur libère les femmes asiatiques de la fausse autorité que le monde exerce sur elles. Reconnaître la seigneurie de Jésus c'est dire non à la domination patriarcale et libérer les femmes asiatiques, les préparant à obéir à Dieu seul et non aux hommes.

En plus de la signification nouvelle donnée aux images traditionnelles de Jésus, tel le serviteur souffrant et le Seigneur, certaines femmes ont créé de nouvelles figures. Elles ont exprimé la présence de Jésus-Christ dans leur culture, dans les religions traditionnelles et dans les mouvements politiques séculiers. Elles osent utiliser certains symboles politico-religieux de leurs mouvements pour décrire la signification de Jésus pour les femmes asiatiques aujourd'hui. Leurs figures christologiques émergent de leur expérience de lutte pour une pleine humanité. Certaines de ces figures représentent Jésus comme libérateur et martyr politique, tandis que d'autres le montrent comme une mère, une femme, une shaman.

Jésus libérateur apparaît dans de nombreux écrits de femmes en divers pays d'Asie. Les femmes aspirent à être libérées des multiples forces oppressives qui pèsent sur elles. La situation historique de l'Asie, faite de siècles de colonialisme, de néocolonialisme, de pauvreté, de dictature militaire et de cultures patriarcales, continue à tenir les femmes dans la

soumission. Il leur est donc naturel de voir en Jésus leur libérateur et de se sentir affermi par lui. Les femmes philippines qui participent à la lutte du peuple pour sa libération expérimentent dans leur propre vie “l'événement-Jésus”. Elles voient plutôt Jésus comme un révolutionnaire ou comme un martyr politique.¹⁶

Un certain nombre de figures féminines de Jésus ont vu le jour dans différents points de l'Asie, suivant les situations et les expériences. La figure de la mère est très répandue. De nombreuses femmes asiatiques voient en Jésus une mère pleine de compassion, qui ressent profondément les souffrances de l'humanité et qui souffre et pleure avec elles. Il pleure avec les mères qui ont perdu leurs fils dans les guerres et avec toutes les femmes coréennes dont les fils et les filles ont été enlevés par la police secrète. Selon la théologienne indonésienne Marianne Katoppo, leur figure de Jésus-mère casse *les modèles paternalistes, autoritaires et hiérarchiques* de nos vies et construit, entre les personnes, une relation “maternelle et attentionnée, qui met au monde et accompagne la croissance”.¹⁷

Outre sa figure maternelle, certaines femmes asiatiques voient en Jésus Christ une figure féminine. Dans son article “Asian Women and Christology”, Virginia Fabella partage ce qu'elle a appris des Coréennes. L'expérience de vie des femmes coréennes, en tant que *Minjung* des *Minjung*, est elle-même *han*, parce qu'elles subissent une oppression politico-économique qui s'ajoute à la domination masculine perpétuée par le système confucéen. *Han* est un sentiment qui mêle le ressentiment et l'indignation en même temps que l'abandon, la résignation et le manque d'estime de soi. Selon une femme coréenne, “*Jésus-Christ aura un sens pour nous s'il est l'exorciste de notre han*”.¹⁸ Pour ces femmes, le salut et la rédemption c'est être libérées du *han* accumulé. Le shamanisme est la religion coréenne traditionnelle. Dans cette religion, c'est le shaman, habituellement une femme, qui est le guérisseur, le soutien, le conseiller des femmes coréennes, tout comme Jésus le fut durant son ministère public. Les femmes coréennes voient en Jésus le prêtre du *han* et le voient plus naturellement sous une figure féminine que masculine.

Enfin, la théologienne indienne Gabriele Dietrich, utilise aussi des images féminines pour Jésus. Elle établit un lien entre la menstruation des femmes et le fait que Jésus ait répandu son sang sur la croix. Elle relie l'Eucharistie et l'écoulement de sang mensuel des femmes. Elle exprime cela d'une manière très forte dans son poème:

*Je suis une femme
Et tous les mois, mon sang
Me rappelle
Que le sang
C'est la vie.
C'est vous
Qui avez inventé
Les machines de mort*

*Qui sèment le deuil
Trois kilotonnes d'explosifs
Pour chaque être humain
Habitant de la terre...¹⁹*

Dans un contexte global d'oppression, de pauvreté et de souffrance, les femmes asiatiques interprètent quelques figures traditionnelles de Jésus susceptibles de donner sens et but à leur vie de misère. Elles ont aussi créé de nouvelles images, surgies de leur expérience unique. Même si la majorité des Asiatiques ne sont pas chrétiens, ils/elles voient en Jésus un libérateur, un sauveur et un modèle qui peut les aider à transformer leur situation actuelle d'oppression.

Notes:

- (1) Cf. article p. 16.
- (2) Sebastian Kappen, *Jesus and Freedom* (Jésus et la liberté), New York, Orbis Books, 1977, p. 23.
- (3) Cf. p. 24.
- (4) Voir Aloysius Pieris, “Le Christ a-t-il une place en Asie? Vue panoramique”, dans *Concilium*, 246 (1993), pp. 55 sv.
- (5) Kappen, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
- (6) Kappen, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-135.
- (7) Cf. “*In God's Image* (à l' image de Dieu)”, septembre 1987, p. 19.
- (8) Cf. Virginia Fabella, “Christology from an Asian Woman's Perspective”, in *We Dare to Dream: Doing Theology as Asian Women*, Maryknoll, N.Y., Orbis, 1990, pp.3-14.
- (9) *Ibidem*.
- (10) Monica Melanchton, “Christology and Women” in *We Dare to Dream: Doing Theology as Asian Women*, Maryknoll, N.Y., Orbis, 1990, p. 17.
- (11) *Ibid.*, p.18.
- (12) *Op. cit.*, p. 6.
- (13) Chung Okyun Kyung, *Struggle to be the Sun Again*, Maryknoll, N.Y., Orbis Books, 1991, p.57.
- (14) Cf. Virginia Fabella, “Asian Women and Christology” dans *In God's Image*, Septembre 1987.
- (15) Elisabeth A. Johnson, “*Consider Jesus: Waves of Renewal in Christology*”, Londres, Chapman, 1990, p. 111.
- (16) “Women and the Christ Event”, dans les Actes de la consultation des femmes, Manille, EATWOT (Association oecuménique des théologiens du tiers monde), 1985.
- (17) Marianne Katoppo, “Mother Jesus”, Logos, octobre 1983, p. 12.
- (18) Cf. Virginia Fabella, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
- (19) Cité par Chung Hyun Kyung, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

* Shalini Mulackal, Soeur de la Présentation, enseigne la théologie à la Faculté jésuite “Vidyajyoti”, à Delhi.

Réf.: *Mission de l'Église*, supplément du n. 128, juillet 2000.

Michael J. Kelly, S.J.

Church as Servant, Teacher and Prophet in Today's Hiv /Aids Crisis

Any of us in Africa today know the extent and intensity of the HIV/AIDS crisis. How can we as Church effectively respond to that crisis? Michael J. Kelly, S.J., professor at the University of Zambia, suggests four models we should follow. Each has its points of controversy, and the JCTR Bulletin welcomes an exchange of views on these points.

The Church as Servant

When Jesus had finished washing the feet of his disciples during the Last Supper, he gave them a fundamental commission and orientation: "You call me Master and Lord, and rightly — so I am. If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you must wash each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you" (Jn 13: 13-15).

The Church's response to this challenge of the Lord is to be a servant, to serve the People of God in their needs. *In Zambia, the greatest needs of God's people today are those arising out of their experience of HIV/AIDS.*

They are suffering pain, grief and human loss on an unimaginable scale. They are coping, and coping magnificently, with orphans in numbers which far exceed anything previously known in human history.

In their suffering, dignity, and patience, the people are showing that their joys and hopes, their griefs and anxieties are not only those of the followers of Christ. They are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of Christ himself among us today.

The outstanding characteristic of the Church's response called for to meet the HIV/AIDS epidemic is *service*. This of course is a major role that it shares with all other Churches.

The many home-based care networks, the care and compassion shown in mission hospitals, the self-sacrificing dedication of Mother Theresa's Missionaries of Charity, the work of many volunteers, the recently highly acclaimed coherent and organised response of the Catholic Secretariat to the orphans crisis: these and many other ventures bear witness to this priority.

As one manifestation of this service response, the 1999 *Zambian Catholic Directory* lists 34 urban and rural home-based care projects in Lusaka Archdiocese alone and a further 12 in Ndola Diocese.

The Church wants us
always to accept the
person infected with HIV,
never to spurn the person
suffering from AIDS.

In our bewilderment and puzzlement as to how to deal with the problems that HIV/AIDS bring, let us be grateful for the way the Church and its members have shown themselves so faithful to what the Lord asked of us, that we copy what he has done. And let us continue to examine how in our lives, our families, our Small Christian Communities, our parishes, our religious communities, our organisations, we can extend that response of service.

At this time, more than at any other, let us see how we can be Christ to our suffering brothers and sisters, to bereft orphans, to vulnerable children, to grandparents facing yet again the challenge of rearing children.

The Church as Teacher

The Lord also commissioned his Church to teach: "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations ... and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you" (Mt 28:19, 20).

The teaching role is inspired in part by recognition of how the Lord himself worked with people. He did not hesitate to associate with prostitutes and sinners. He never rejected them, never spurned them.

Following this example, the Church wants us always to accept the person infected with HIV, never to spurn the person suffering from AIDS. Because of the inspiration it draws from the life and practice of the Lord, the Church encourages openness about the disease.

It acknowledges the brokenness and weakness of its members - clergy, religious and lay. It acknowl-

edges that they may be HIV-infected, but it sees that this is a reason for service and compassion, never for condemnation.

The Church also teaches that even though HIV/AIDS is something new in the a curse sent by God. It is not God's punishment on the world for its evil ways. It is not God's punishment on any human being for promiscuity or sin.

God is every best loving instinct in us, magnified to infinity. God is the one who, like a mother, teaches us to walk, takes us in her arms, holds us close to her face. God is the one who personally entered into our sufferings in the death of Jesus on the cross, so that we might know that God understands suffering and death from inside.

Though HIV/AIDS is something
new in the
experience of humanity, it
is not acurse sent by
God.

The Church finds it unthinkable that such a God could curse anybody with the affliction of HIV/AIDS. "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son ... not to condemn the world but so that the world might be saved through him" (Jn 3:16,17).

God's concern for the world was greatest, his saving power was at its most intense, when in the mocked, despised, agonising, and almost despairing person of Jesus, he died on the cross.

Today, God still shows that mysterious, deep, powerful love by suffering in a person dying from AIDS, by grieving in a family that loses its loved one, by crying in an orphan left without mother or father.

The Church as the Protector of Morals

Faithful to its commission to teach peoples to observe all the commands that the Lord has taught, the Church energetically defends the principles and practice of morality.

This has been done to such an extent that some people see the teaching role of the Church as being almost exclusively confined to the *moral* area, and within that area to issues of sex. This is very one-sided!

The instruction from Jesus was to pass on everything he had taught, and his teaching was essentially

concerned with showing God as a loving parent and not as a vengeful despot.

In his day-to-day practice, the concern of Jesus was much more with showing love and kindness to others, especially those in any way afflicted, than with details of sexual activity. Most certainly, he spoke out strongly against adultery and fornication and lustful thoughts. But he left it at that. He did not go into further detail.

Faithful to its commission, the Church likewise speaks out strongly against adultery, fornication and lustful thoughts. It also speaks out against the debasement of girls and women which these practices so frequently imply.

The Church further speaks out in defence of the right to life and the sacredness of life. Hence it condemns abortion which is deliberately sought in order to terminate the life of an unborn child.

Also, when speaking about landmarks in the human and Christian vision of marriage, it states that "every action which ... proposes ... to render procreation (conception) impossible" is illicit (*Humanae Vitae*, n. 14).

How does this teaching relate to actions which might prevent the transmission of HIV, specifically to the use of condoms?

Is it true to say, as *Newsweek* did in its edition of 17 July 2000, that *Roman Catholicism forbids the use of condoms?* We have to think very clearly here. It will help to distinguish two situations: the first within marriage, with sex between a married couple; the second outside of marriage.

Today, God is still shows that mysterious,
deep,
powerful love by suffering in a person
dying from
AIDS, by grieving in a
family that loses its loved
one, by crying in a
orphan left without mother
or father.

The explicit teaching of the Church is that it is unlawful for a married couple to use a condom when they engage in sex, if their *straightforward intention* is to exclude the possibility of conception.

Special circumstances arise, however, in the case of what is called a discordant couple, that is, where one married person is infected with HIV and the spouse

is not. If such a couple engaged in unprotected sex (that is, without the use of a condom), the uninfected partner would risk becoming infected.

But if, when having sex, such a couple uses a condom in order to prevent the transmission of HIV to the one who is not infected, their action is directed to protecting an existing life. It is not directed to preventing the commencement of a new life.

There is a growing consensus among Catholic moral theologians that the Church's teaching finds room for this life-saving, "prophylactic" use of condoms.

They come together in union as man and wife, in sorrow because the life of one of them is likely to be shortened by HIV, but in mutual support and strengthening of their union by taking care not to put the life of the uninfected partner at risk.

There is a growing consensus among Catholic moral theologians that the Church's teaching finds room for this life-saving, "prophylactic" use of condoms. In this situation, the condom is used to protect against lethal infection. It is not being used to prevent conception. The protection of life takes priority and justifies the use of a condom.

In the second situation, where there is sex outside of marriage, the position of the Church has always been very clear. In every situation and circumstance, sex outside of marriage is unlawful.

Essentially that is as far as the Church goes, for the simple reason that the Church does not legislate for what it regards as an unlawful situation. Hence it does not legislate for any of the circumstances surrounding that situation, such as condom use.

In other words, what the Church prohibits is sex outside marriage. This is what is immoral. This is what should be avoided through abstinence. If however an individual chooses to ignore this prohibition and decides to practice extra-marital sex, the Church does not say — cannot say — how this immoral act should be conducted.

Nevertheless, *the sacred principle of the priority of life still stands*. Out of this principle flows not merely *lawfulness* of using a condom when there is a risk of contracting or transmitting the HIV virus, but even the

obligation to do so.

Responsible sexuality requires that those engaging in sexual activity take the necessary effective measures to prevent the transmission of HIV and other infections. A leading Catholic ethicist, Roger Burggreave, says, "This prevention is an urgent moral duty and not a non-committal advice or recommendation".¹

This would be the principle governing every act of sexual intercourse where there is a risk of HIV infection. It does not matter whether one is talking about fornication where neither party is married or about adultery where the intercourse is with somebody other than one's lawful spouse.

It does not make any difference whether one is talking about casual sex or commercial sex, about heterosexual or homosexual activity.

The situation does not change according to the age of those involved; neither does it change according to whether it is a man or a boy who initiates the sex or whether it is a girl or a woman.

Even in an unlawful union, *the protection of life is the overarching principle*, and hence, arises the obligation to protect oneself or one's partner against the life-threatening HIV infection.

Even in an unlawful union, *the protection of life is the overarching principle*.

Some may fear that the application of this teaching might lead to promiscuity, that it would serve as an encouragement to young people to engage freely in sex since it provides them with a way of protecting themselves against the HIV infection. It does not have to be so.

The guiding principle for a young person (indeed for every person) is to develop a mature sexuality that can realise its ultimate expression in a loving, sensitive and permanent relationship of union with another.

Abstinence, deliberately chosen, freely striven for, supports this development. That is why it should inspire the life and behaviour of an unmarried person. In doing so, it also provides infallible protection against the HIV infection. Hence, for an unmarried person, abstinence arising from a healthy sexuality is the first line of defence against HIV/AIDS.

But there is no reason to fear that having a fall-back

protection against the HIV infection, for circumstances where such abstinence is not observed, will promote irresponsible sexual behaviour.

The first rule of the road is to drive carefully so that there will not be an accident. But one wears a seat belt so that if an accident should occur, there will be less risk of fatal damage. Wearing the seat belt is an act of responsibility. It does not encourage careless driving, but protects against the harmful outcome of such driving, e.g., accidents.

The use of condoms in sexual encounters between unmarried persons is an act of responsibility. Sanctioning their use does not encourage a careless sex life, but protects against the possible life-threatening outcome of the unlawful activity.

The Church as Prophet and Leader

At the Last Supper, Jesus promised his disciples that he would send them “another Paraclete to be with them for ever, the Spirit of truth whom the world can never accept” (Jn 14:17).

He promised them that as his Church they would understand things in ways that the world does not understand them and that they would be strengthened to proclaim these insights fearlessly.

We need the Church to come out now and use its powerful moral influence and leadership to break once and for all the choking silence that surrounds HIV/AIDS.

The Church has always exercised this prophetic, leadership role. It has spoken out strongly, fearlessly. It has pointed out new directions. It has resisted oppressors. It has sided with the weak and powerless. It has always taken to heart Our Lady’s words about scattering the proudhearted, casting the mighty from their thrones, raising the lowly.

The whole thrust of Church teaching and action in favour of the poor is an expression of this. Its deep concern for justice, for an equitable distribution of the goods of this world, for the preservation of the world’s ecological heritage, springs from the same prophetic charism.

At the same time, the Church recognises its fragil-

ity and brokenness. It acknowledges that many times it has *not* spoken out fearlessly enough or strongly enough. It is aware that at times it has repeated the weakness of Simon Peter: it has temporised, it has been too cautious and fearful, it has been too silent.

With HIV/AIDS it has been the same as with other areas. The Church has spoken and acted for the lowly, for the afflicted. It has reached out in prophetic gestures to those that are afflicted. A dramatic expression of this occurred in a nearby country when the local priests refused to visit a woman who had AIDS because she had been a sex worker.

When the Bishop heard about this, he made a point of visiting the woman regularly until her death and celebrated her funeral Mass with solemnity in his cathedral.

We need more leaders like that Bishop. We need more prophetic gestures of this kind. *We need the Church to come out now and use its powerful moral influence and leadership to break once and for all the choking silence that surrounds HIV/AIDS.*

This silence leads to stigma and discrimination, and all three – silence, stigma and discrimination – only serve to make it easier to transmit the disease.

Unfortunately, the Church in its official aspect was not very conspicuous at the July 2000 International AIDS Conference held in Durban. Likewise, it was hardly represented at all at the ICASA Conference in Lusaka last year.

Once again, like Simon Peter, it may have been too silent. But people are looking to the Church to speak, looking to it for leadership.

They want to hear it proclaim loud and clear that persons living with HIV/AIDS are God’s very dear children, our privileged sisters and brothers who are called upon to do within five to seven years what will take forty to fifty years for the rest of us to accomplish — fight the good fight, finish the race, fulfill their God-given potential “in the mystery of the love that can and does bear all their wounds”.

People also want to hear the Church proclaim that there is a gravely unjust situation today in which some, a few, can literally buy life, while millions will never be able to afford the cost of extremely expensive life-preserving drugs and treatment.

They want to hear the Church speak out on behalf of the *empowerment of women* and their right to control their own sexual lives, seeing this as possibly the single

most potent way for reducing the transmission of HIV.

People want the Church to work ever more strenuously to break down all those barriers which only corral situations in which HIV/AIDS thrives and flourishes: the walls between the rich and the poor, between the North and the South, between the debtors and the creditors, between the sick and the well, between town and country, between the educated and the uneducated.

Today, the body of Christ
has AIDS, but Christ
having been raised from
the dead will never die
again.

The world wants the Church to work more fearlessly towards the day when every wall will be torn down and there will be no more male or female, no more Jew or Greek, but all will be one person in Jesus Christ.

Today, the body of Christ has AIDS. But Christ having been raised from the dead will never die again.

This faith inspires all believers that one day they will see every member of the body of Christ as an AIDS-free person in the AIDS-free reign of God. This is the prophetic message of hope that all humanity yearns to hear from the Church.

1) Ethics of Responsibility

The absolute minimum responsibility for young people who move into intimate sexual contact with their occasional, varying or semidetached partners, concretely consists in taking the necessary efficient measures so that pregnancy, HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and infections are prevented. This is a form of respect for life, the bottom line of which is expressed in the Commandment "you shall not kill". Not only does it require respect towards one's own life and health, but also toward that of the partner and of the possible third person who can be conceived (or infected by oneself or the partner). It is also a form of honesty toward society which is often saddled with the "consequences" when one does not take up one's responsibility. This prevention is an urgent moral duty and not a non-committal advice or recommendation.

Responsible sexuality implies also the task of obtaining information. Individuals should obtain infor-

mation about risky behaviour.... However, it is not as simple to determine which information is the most reliable and which information best serves human dignity. That is why society, which is responsible for the general welfare and public health, has a duty toward prevention and information.

[Roger Burggreave, Professor of Moral Theology, Catholic University Leuven: "From Responsible to Meaningful Sexuality", p. 305, *Catholic Ethicists on HIV/AIDS Prevention* (eds. J. F. Keenan, S.J., et.al.; New York, Concilium Publications, 2000)].

Ref.: JCTR (*Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection*), n. 44, Second Quarter 2000.

Books Received at SEDOS

Alberigo, Giuseppe, *History of Vatican II (Vol. III, The Mature Council, Second Period and Intercession — September 1963/September 1964)*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Allen, John L. Jr., *Cardinal Ratzinger (The Vatican's Enforcer of the Faith)*, London-New York, Continuum, 2000.

AA.VV., (Edited by Walter Wink), *Peace is the Way (Writings on Nonviolence from the Fellowship of Reconciliation)*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

AA.VV., *Tell the World... Catechetical Modules for Mission Animation*, Quezon City, Philippines, Claretian Publication, 2000.

Berrigan, Daniel, *The Bride, Images of the Church*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Boff, Leonardo, *Holy Trinity, Perfect Community*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Brandewie, Ernest, *In the Light of the Word (Divine Word Missionaries of North America)*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Burns, Jeffrey M./Skerrett, Ellen/ White, Joseph M., *Keeping Faith (European and Asian Catholic Immigrants)*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Chittister, Joan, *A Passion for Life, Fragments of the Face of God*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1996.

Chittister, Joan, *Living Well (Scriptural Reflections for Every Day)*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Colombo, Domenico (*a cura di*), *PIME, 1850-2000. Documenti di Fondazione*, Bologna, EMI, 2000.

Curreli, Augusta, *L'Historie de Bakbita*, Éditions du Signe, 2000.

Dagnino, Maria Luisa, *Bakbita, Raconte son histoire*, Roma, Canossiane Figlie della Carità, 1996.

D'Costa, Gavin, *The Meeting of Religions and the Trinity*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Dorr, Donal, *Mission in Today's World*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Fabella, Virginia, MM/Sugirtharajah, R.S., *Dictionary of Third World Theologies*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Froehle, Bryan T./Gautier, Mary L., *Catholicism USA, A Portrait of the Catholic Church in the United States*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Gheddo, Piero, *PIME, 1850-2000, 150 anni di missione*, Bologna, EMI, 2000.

Gilkes Townsend, Cheryl, *If it Wasn't for the Women (Black Women's Experience and Womanist Culture in Church and Community)*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Irrazábal, Diego, *Inculturation, New Dawn of the Church in Latin America*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Joyce, Timothy J., *Celtic Quest, A Healing Journey for Irish Catholics*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Kroger, James H., *Asia-Church in Mission*, Claretian Publications, 1999.

La Due, William J., *The Chair of Saint Peter, A History of the Papacy*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1999.

Lassus, Pierre, *Être Parents au Risque de l'Évangile (Pour en finir avec les sacrifices d'enfants)*, Paris, Édition Albin Michel, 1999.

Lazo Q., Efraín, *¿El Yatiri, Ministro del Tercer Milenio?* Cochabamba, Bolivia, Editorial Verbo Divino, 2000.

Lefebure, Leo D., *Revelation, the Religions, and Violence*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Lonsdale, David, *Eyes to See, Ears to Hear (An Introduction to Ignatian Spirituality)*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Manunga-Lukokisa, Godefroid, *The Challenges of an Inculturated Evangelization Among the Ndebele of Zimbabwe*, Roma Pontificia Università Gregoriana, May 2000.

McClory, Robert, *Faithful Dissenters (Stories of Men and Women Who Loved and Changed the Church)*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Merton, Thomas, *Essential Writings*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

O' Loughlin, Thomas, *Journeys on the Edges (The Celtic Tradition)*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Palermo, Savino, *Pour l'amour de mon Peuple*, vols. 1 and 2, Roma, Edizioni Dehoniane, 1997.

Pérennès, Jean-Jacques, *Pierre Claverie, Un Algérien par alliance*, Paris, Les Éditions du Cerf, 2000.

Pierli, F. /Ratti, M. T., *Lo Spirito effuso dal cuore (Spiritualità missionaria per il Terzo Millennio)*, Bologna, EMI, 1998.

Sarmineto T., Nicanor, *Caminos de la Teología India*, Cochabamba, Bolivia, Editorial Verbo Divino, 2000.

Segovia, Fernando F., *Decolonizing Biblical Studies (A View from the Margins)*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Smith-Cristopher, Daniel L., *Subverting Hatred (The Challenge of Nonviolence in Religious Traditions)*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Tilley, Terrence W., *Inventing Catholic Tradition*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Tong, John, *Challenges and Hopes (Stories from the Catholic Church in China)*, Taipei, Taiwan, Wisdom Press, 1999.

Vandergrift Verploegen, Nicki, *Organic Spirituality (A Sixfold Path for Contemplative Living)*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 2000.

Verhelst, Daniël/Daniëls, Hyacint, *Scheut Hier et Aujourd'hui — 1862-1987 (Histoire de la Congrégation du Coeur Immaculé de Marie C.I.C.M.)*, Leuven (België), Presses Universitaires de Louvain, 1993.

Zanini, Roberto, Italo, *Bakbita, A Saint for the Third Millennium*, ORCA Printing & Advertising Co., Ltd, 2000.

Auguri Padre Walter !

Après plus de huit années de service, au poste de Directeur Exécutif de Sedos, le Père Walter von Holzen, SVD, quitte Rome.

Au nom de tous les lecteurs de *SEDOS Bulletin* et des membres de SEDOS, ainsi que de ses employés, je tiens à remercier le père Walter pour ces huit années de service données à Sedos.

Le Père Walter aura été apprécié pour son zèle et son dévouement qui se sont exprimés à travers son travail pour SEDOS. Lui, le missionnaire jusqu'au plus profond de son être, il aura accepté de prendre un certain recul et de quitter pour un temps le terrain concret de la mission pour se mettre au service de la mission universelle de l'Église à travers l'oeuvre de diverses communautés religieuses.

Le Père Walter aura été un animateur hors pair pour SEDOS. Sa présence discrète mais combien efficace aura été la cause principale de l'expansion qu'a pris Sedos au cours des dernières années. Son esprit, empreint de créativité, et toujours à l'affût de nouveaux services à rendre, aura été d'un grand apport et d'une grande stimulation pour les membres de SEDOS.

Après quelques semaines passées en Suisse avec sa famille, sa communauté et ses amis, le Père Walter retournera en Amérique latine où il a déjà oeuvré comme missionnaire durant plus de quinze ans. Il entreprendra tout d'abord un temps sabbatique au Chili où il veut se consacrer à rafraîchir et perfectionner ses connaissances exégétiques et ensuite il s'investira au Paraguay, pays de ses premières années de travail missionnaire.

À un titre plus personnel, j'aimerais dire un chaleureux merci à Walter pour toute l'aide qu'il m'a apportée, avec une très grande générosité, pour faciliter la transition.

Alles Gute, unser Gebet wird dich begleiten !

Bernard East, o.p.
Directeur Exécutif de SEDOS