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# Coming Events:

PREPARATION COMMITTEE MEETING FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY, April 2, 3:00PM at FSC Generalate EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING, April 7, 4:00PM at SSND Generalate

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, June 2 — All day — at the FSC Generalate

# S E D O S

### Servizio di Documentazione e Studi

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1976

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Father James Lozé, SJ for Fr. A. Roest Crollius, SJ

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Executive Secretary: Father Paul Brekelmans, PA-since November '75

Documentalist: Sister Agnetta Pionkowski, SSpS-since September '67

Staff: Miss Philippa Wooldridge-since October 175

Mrs. Marie Storms-Luyckx-since November '75

Mr. Jack Mcko-since February '76

# WHERE IS SEDOS LOCATED?

SEDOS is located at the corner of Via Marco Polo and Via dei Verbiti in the Entrance House of the College of the Divine Word Fathers (SVD), one block from the Stazione Ostiense and one block from the Porta San Paulo.

# HOW DO I GET THERE?

Metro/Tram: Cet off at the PYRAMIDE PORTA SAN PAULO stop.

Bus: No. 94 from Largo Argentina; No. 23 from Risorgiamento, e.g.

Train: ROMA-OSTIENSE stop, using the Servizio Ferroviario Urbano.

### AN AFRICAN CHURCH IN TRANSITION

From Missionary Dependence to Mutuality in Mission

by Dr. F. J. Verstraelen

This, latest acquisition of our Documentation Service, is one of the best books on Missiology published in the recent past according to Bishop J. Blomjous.

Dr. Verstraelen is assistant director of the Department of Missiology at the Interuniversity Institute for Missiological and Ecumenical Research in Leiden, Holland. With his wife, also an expert, he spent eight months in Zambia in 1973 and by the end of 1975, his case study was published. It consists of two volumes, 420 pages. Price: US \$7.00. It can be ordered from: I.I.M.E.; Boerhaavelaan 43; Leiden, Netherlands.

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(Here follows a report, written by the author, and reprinted from IMPACT, a newsletter from the Catholic Secretariat, Zambia, No. 64 December 1975.)

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When I left Zambia at the end of August 1973 I took with me 2,150 written pages containing notes of interviews, dossiers and background information gained from several sources. In addition to this research material, 853 questionnaires were received back from all nine dioceses. Most of these questionnaires were filled with extensive explainations, remarks and observations. All this material had to be sorted out and evaluated. In order to prepare the questionnaires for computer analysis more than 112 000 figures had to be put down for coding. The reason why we mention these points is to give some idea about the volume of work involved in writing the report.

All in all, more than 1000 people have cooperated in this research. From the composition of those people (respondents) we may generally conclude that they form a fair and proportionate representation of the laity, priests and religious of the Catholic Church in Zambia. Without thier contribution this type of research could not have been carried out. We therefore owe many thanks to them for their cooperation.

#### THE REPORT

The title of the report is: An African Church in Transition. From mission—ary dependence to mutuality in Mission. The title reminds us that this research was not meant to be a general survey of the Catholic Church in Zambia. It has the more limited objective of describing and analyzing the internal and external relationships of this Church in a period of transition from 'missions' to a local and missionary Church. The main interest of this research is therefore to assess the practice of the localization process of the Catholic Church in Zambia, its relationship to foreign missionary assist—

ance within it and the scope for mutuality and exchange in its outside relationships.

The report contains fresh information and new insights into vital aspects of building up the local Church as regards ministries, self-support and selfhood. Special attention is given to the (promoting or hampering) role of foreign missionary assistance in this localization process. The main emphasis of the study is on evaluating the quality of relationships which in a humanistic and Christian perspective have to develop onto truly reciprocal relationships.

## SUITMARY OF THE CONTENT.

The findings of the 1973 Zambia Research are presented in Thirteen Chapters, subdivided into seven parts.

The whole study is directed towards Chapter XII where we analyze concept, problems and possibilities of <u>mutuality</u> (or reciprocity) in the Catholic Church in Zambia. But, since the dimension of mutuality (as an expression of mature relationships) is intimately connected with the degree of localization, we consider first the localization process in greater detail (Chapter VII-IX).

We are especially interested in locating the 'driving forces' as well as the restraining forces' at work in the various members and groups of the Church in its move towards a mature and relevant Church. Because localization of the Church can only be realized as a movement of many (in a group or community), special attention is given to the inside and outside relationships (Chapter X-XI). Chapter V describes the accelerated take-off of the localization process of the Church by analyzing views and experiences of change since Independence and the Vatican II Council. Chapter VI contrasts Zambianization in general with localization in the Catholic Church and pays attention to the tension between local and universal aspects of the Church. Because it is expected that the report will be read also outside Zambia, we have provided more general information on Zambia and the Catholic Church in Zambia in Chapter II-IV.

## SOME CONCRETE POINTS.

The report presents qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data are the statements in which the respondents express their opinions, feelings, attitudes, etc. These statements (several hundred have been quoted!) form undoubtedly the most interesting part of the report. They provide a concrete insight into the complexity, variety and specificity of various approaches to the problems under study. The quantitative data provide indications regrading the numerical distribution or proportion of certain types of answers. Because we consider the respondents to a large extent as representative of all groups of Church members, the numerical percentages of

answers indicate therefore also general trends of viewpoints, attitudes, etc. found among the laity, priests and religious in Zambia. It would be a sheer impossibility to even summarize all the findings of this report. Here we can only hint at some of them:

As regards involvement of the laity in the work of the Church: 65.5% of the respondents are of the opinion that the laity is nowadays doing more in and for the Church than some years ago. In the post-Independence period a new orientation has emerged, banning a former more fearful and passive attitude and leading to a better understanding of the Church and to a more active involvement in the work of the Church. But, lay people are also sharply aware of the dual impact of the newly gained freedom on the life of Christians: people feel nowadays more free either to back out of their Christian duties or to involve themselves in a more personal way in the life and the work of the Church.

Evaluating the actual strength of the Church: To the question 'What would happen to the Catholic Church in Zambia if all expatriate missionaries (Priests, Brothers and Sisters) were to leave?', the following answers were given:

- a. the Church would manage to carry on (34.4%)
- b. the Church would collapse completely (24.5%)
- c. the Church would get a great apportunity to become more self reliant (31.1%)

Those favouring the latter optimistic viewpoint expect that, once the Church is cut off from expatriate assistance in personnel, a twofold benefit would be gained for becoming a stronger and a more localized Church: Churchleaders would have to rethink the present understanding and structure of the priesthood; the shock of new circumstances would wake up many more laypeople to take up responsibilities in the Church than is the case at the moment. For some, reliance on the power of prayer and on the Christian law that suffer preceeds life, is a ground for full confidence in the potential strength of the local Chruch.

As regards self-support: There is an overwhelming consensus that 'lack of understanding' is the main obstacle to self support (average score 57.5%). This common conviction can therefore be used as a startingpoint for a more intensified reflection and action in this field. Selfsupport is, however, not only a question of better organization, motivation for it most be more clearly put within the spiritual context of a Christian community that has to be equipped for better witness and service. 'Supporting their own Church should have priority. More than anything else it makes people aware that it is their Church' (Priest, Lusaka Diocese).

As regards Church and African culture: About 80% of all respondents are of the opinion that there are aspects of Zambian culture and traditional ways of life which should be kept also in Zambia today. But there is an ambivalent tension between tradition and modernity. It is a time of transition: some oppose strongly new ways of life (such as the mini-dress, boy-girl

friendship), others oppose old ways of tradition (e.g. that after the death of a husband or wife, a new partner is being appointed by relatives; that children belong to the family of the wife). Several are aware that the solution should not be sought in 'either-or', but in a mixture, amalgamation of traditional and new ways. 'We want to maintain our culture and customs, but we are changing them so that they suit our situation (Young Christian Worker, Lusaka). That seems to worry the local (Zambian) membors of the Church is the deficient socialization process of the younger generation (boys and girls), who seem to be exposed most to deviation from good traditional values. Hence their stress on the value of initiation and puberty rites, which many want to be maintained or re-introduc..., although in a purified and adapted way. The importance of some kind of initiation for the modern youth is being stressed by 27.2% of the laity, 36.7% of the Catechists, 25.9% of the Zambian clergy and 18.3% of the Zambian Sisters. (The expatriate missionaries have in this respect far lower scores, from 7.0 - 14.9%).

As regards the dimension of mutuality in relationships: All expatriate missionaries (to a far higher degree than the Zambian members of the Church) are of the opinion that they can learn something for their vm spiritual development from the Africans as Christians (76.4%), and that the African way of life has something to offer to them for their own human development (73.5%). Expatriate missionaries refer in this respect to: religious attitudes like spontaneous approach to Cod (sense of Cod's presence in the universe), enjoying their beliefs in celebrating liturgy with the whole person, hope for life after death, social values: human persons are more important than structures or programmes, community—sense, helping and sharing, hospitality and good manners (polite), good listeners; personal qualities like patience, calmness, cheerfulness, 'no complexes', common sense.... The many statements made in this respect by expatriate mission—aries might come to many Zambians as a kind of revelation!

# USEFULNESS OF THE REPORT.

If people want to come to a common planning and action as regards building up their local Church in all its dimensions, they should try to come to a kind of consensus which makes such planning and action possible and successful. The report can serve as a contribution to locate in which respects the various Churchmembers agree and/or differ and why they do so. The report also analyzes the relationships of and within the Church and shows ways of improving these relationships. This seems to be of utmost importance since the quality of relationships will to a great extent determine the quality of the life and work of the Church.

### MINUTES OF SEDOS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MARTING

16 March 1976 / Sedos Secretariat / 4 pm

Present: Brother Charles Henry, fsc (Chair), Fr. Joseph Hardy, sma, Sr.

Danita McGonagle, ssnd, Sr. Claire Rombouts, icm, Fr. James Lozé, sj,
Sr. Godelieve Prové, scmm-m, Sr. Mary Motte, fmm, Fr. Paul
Brekelmans, wf - Secretary, Brother Vincent Gottwald, fsc - for
Agrimissio

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved with the following correction in the first sentence of the first paragraph: "...letters have not been sent out..." (cfr. SEDOS 76/78 - n..4)

### June Assembly:

- -the date has been changed from the 8th to the 2nd of June to accommodate one of the speakers, Fr. Masson, sj, who would not have been able to be present of the 8th; the assembly will be held at the FSC Generalate due to the fact that the Brothers will be in Chapter, the participants are requested to bring a picnic lunch.
- -the request will be made for candidates to fill the vacancies of the offices of President and Treasurer in the election to be held at the assembly.
  - =prior to the election, clarifications will be made concerning the duties of the treasurer.
  - =the assembly will be asked to confirm Fr. James Lozé, sj, as the replacement for Fr. Ary Roest Crellius, sj, on the executive committee until the regular elections.

Report on the activities of the executive secretary:

- -Fr. Brekelmans reported that he had visited seven grneralates.
- -Father had also assisted at the Cor Unum meeting (cfr. Minutes, 16.2.76 SEDOS 76/78-79 n.4): the arrangements with Cor Unum concerning the use of Sedos documentation needs further study.

## Pilot project proposal:

- -Brother Vincent Gottwald, fsc, on behalf of the Executive Committee of Agrimissio, presented the idea for a pilot project for development, planning and consultation service to be sponsored by Agrimissio and to be worked out by Mr. Terry Waite with the cooperation of Sedos.
- -In January, 1975 the executive committee met with Mr. Waite, and after study, agreed to provide him with a base in view of cooperation for mission. At the end of a year, the outcomes were to be assessed and the necessary decisions taken regarding the next step. (cfr. SEDOS 75/26 N. 2) It was felt that the present proposal could be another step in cooperation for mission, but that further

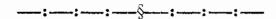
clarifications would have to be made concerning the proposal/ project before a definite decision could be reached. The committee requested Brother Vincent to draw up a clear proposal and the matter will be considered again at the next executive meeting.

Evaluation of the Executive Secretary by the Committee:

-In view of the fact that the six-month's trial period for which the Executive Committee had requested Father Brekelmans to work with Sedos in the capacity of executive secretary will end in another month, the evaluation (begun with the evaluation by Fr. Brekelmans last month), was concluded at the meeting.

=After having studied Father Brekelmans' report and having reflected upon the present demands of the secretariat, the executive committee agreed that in view of Father Brekelmans' health, he would not be able to meet the requirements of the job of executive secretary.

The next meeting of the executive committee will be held on 7th April at 4 pm at the SSND generalate.



PROGRESS RUPORT -- GENERAL ASSEMBLY, JUNE 2, 1976

Our last sectional meeting for the preparation of the next General Assembly took place on March 15th at the FSC Generalate. As usual, we were warmly received by Bro. Charles, our sympathetic President, and by the Brothers. After tea, we had our discussion in two groups: French speaking and English speaking groups.

More than twenty people turned up and we thought that discussions in smaller groups would be more profitable.

Our next meeting will take place on April 2nd at 3:00 pm at the same reace.

After the usual exchange of views, we will gather together in the Eucharist and shared prayer.

The date of the General Issembly of Sedes is fixed on June 2nd, 1976 at the FSC Generalate. Sr. Denise Maraval and Fr. Joseph Masson are preparing the position papers which will be sent by April 25th, 1976. We hope to give a consolidated report of all these discussions in the Sedes issue of April 15th.

Thanks to all those who have sent a written answer to some issues rais 1 by the questionnaire.

## IN THE SERVICE OF THE APOSTOLATE

Chosen by Father Paul Brekelmans from "Reflections" - P.A. publication Rome 1975, Doc 3/106 D-3. - after six months with SEDOS.

What is our apostolate?
Basically,
stripped bare of all scientific,
sociological, philosophical, theological vocabulary,
it is simply them:

To proclaim and teach the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.

Our apostolate is not something, it is someone. And because of this, what we say will not matter nearly so much as what we are.

We are missionaries

sent by the Church for whom Jesus Christ gave his life to Bring his life to all men,

and in doing so

to call forth the gift within them for God did not await our arrival
to begin his work.

We must leave no avenue unexplored,

no stone unturned, no means untried,

in fulfilling this mandate.

Lack of imagination can never be an excuse

for resisting inevitable change,

for clinging to a dead or dying past in defiance

of the signs of the times,

for taking the "easy" way out,

or for becoming discouraged.

Though few of us may be gifted to write fine theological treatises, and fewer still, perhaps, to understand them; Though rare be those among us capable of electrifying the scientific world with a learned sociological, anthropological, or ethnographic tome;

Though it may never fall to our peculiar talents to guide a parish with a sure and steady hand, nor be entrusted to initiate high-level dialogue with men of different faiths or none at all:

Not many among us are wise and learned men ...

Yet all of us - Tise men and fools alike -

have it within our power

(with the help of God and despite our stubbornly clinging

imperfections and favourite sins)

to reflect in our lives before men

the one we proclaim and profess to follow.

If the reflection is faithful, It will be one of service, not domination, availability, not self-seeking, humanity, not cold intellectualism, understanding, not condemnation, moral strength, not self-righteousness, reace, not confusion. In 17:3 - 1 Co 1.26-31.

The	НЕАІЛИ	) EETING	$\circ f$	5th	March	1976	at	the	SSND	${\tt Generalate}$
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Present:	Sr.	Carmelinda Sciscento,	MPF	Sr. Hargret Biesterveld,	SCHT-H
	Sr.	Julia Hoore,	SSJ	Sr. Regina Burrichter,	SM
	Sr.	Thérèse Mary Barnett,	SCM4-T	Sr. M. Carmela,	${ m LCM}$
	$\operatorname{Sr}_{ullet}$	Annemarie Oosschot,	SC #I-M	Sr. Jennifer Condron,	LOM
	$\mathtt{Sr}_{ullet}$	Corry Jacobs,	SCHTI-H	Sr. Monica Davis,	SNDN
	Sr.	Annie Deseyn,	ICM	Sr. M. Gerard,	RGS
	$\mathtt{Sr}_{ullet}$	Mary Motte,	FMM	Sr. II. John Grogan,	LCM
	Sr.	Josephine Wall,	SNDN	Sr. Henriette Hoene,	SSND
	$\mathtt{Sr}_{ullet}$	Francis Webster,	SCIM-M	Sr. Godelieve Prové,	SCLM-M
	$\operatorname{Sr}_{ullet}$	Esther de Vlaming,	SCIM-M	Sr. Peg Rahilly,	IOM
	Sr.	Alberta Stango,	SSJB	Sr. Bernadette Steele,	SCMM <b>-T</b>
	Sr.	Veronica Mungoven,	FMM	Sr. Agnes Takaki,	FMI
	$\mathtt{Sr}_{ullet}$	Margaret Nigent,	SBS	Mr. Terry Waite	
	$Rev_{ullet}$	Albert Kuuire, Ghana		•	
Chairman:	Sr.	Mary Motte,	$\mathbf{F}\mathbf{M}$		

The meeting began as scheduled at 9 a.m. After registration and distribution of name tags, Sister Mary Motte, fmm. welcomed the participants. Sister Godelieve Prové offered prayer reflecting the subject of the morning's deliberations. Death and Dying.

There were two speakers. First, Sr. Francis Webster summarized her paper entitled "Some Reflections on Death and Dying in the Western World" and then Rev. Albert Kuuire reflected on "Death and Dying - an African experience". Following ach presentation there were group discussions. After the lunch break, a short plenary session was held for summarizing these discussions and for asking questions of the speakers.

The questions praced for the group discussions were: -

In the context of apostolate/mission/evangelisation, what meaning do these reflections have?

In what way can I/we as a member(s) of the Christian community accept responsibility for the obligation of this community toward the dying?
What can we learn from other cultures?

The meeting ended at 1.30 p.m.

esumé: Reports of the discussion groups of the SEDOS HEALTH SETIMAR: Death and Dying

Starting from the input of the papers presented by Sister Frances Webster, SCM (-M and by Father Albert Kuuire, which dealt with death and dying in Western and Chanaian cultures respectively, the groups in their morning and afternoon discussion concentrated their reflections on the process of dying and the degree/type of acceptance with which one meets death in the different cultures.

A good deal of attention was accorded the phases of dying as presented in the Mübler-Ross book, and the significant linkage between personalized experience and a share understanding was particularly emphasized. Death as the fulfillment of growth in life and the relationship of the community in this growth process received observation at some length, and especially the communal reception of the Sacratent of the Sick,

with all that this act implies of solidarity and communion.

The negating function of euthanasia as a prevention of the process of life naturally culminating in death was also discussed at some length.

In general, the reports specified the avoidance trends present in Western culture in relation to death and dying - while the stronger accent in Ghanaian cultures would seem to be on acceptance. For the Christian death = the high point of growth, and it is imperative that we find ways to express this realization in our technological society. Education and a renewal of the theology of death are called for. For the Ghanaian, death = a journey to return to the ancestors, a parallel in many ways to the Christian belief, and a belief which is perhaps reinforced more extensively by the culture.

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## DEATH AND DYING - A WEST APRICAM EXPERIENCE

A Summary of the talk presented by Rev. Albert Kuuire

The Body-Soul, Profane-Sacred dichotomies current in the West and inspired by Greek philosophy do not exist in most African ways of thinking. In Ghanaian ways of thinking what is sacred cannot be abstracted from what is profane and vice versa.

Death is an event common to all men: yet the attitudes towards it can differ more or less profoundly from one people to another. The moment of the approach of death is not the best time to ask the moribund to verbalise his inner attitude towards the event. It is not the Ghanaian who, for scientific curiosity will conduct a sociological survey in these moments in order to find out what the dying thinks deep within him at this moment. And the moment after death is too late. As a Dagasti proverb says "The door of Death is not knocked at a second time".

What the Ghanaian (and most Africans) thinks of death and his reactions towards it are expressed in his everyday life chiefly in the use of proverbs and other sayings, particularly in the dirges used at funcrals. To express the ruthless and inconsiderate manner in which death claims its victim, the Dagaati say: "(Kuube tegre)" - "No one can exchange his death nor postpone it for another time". The Ashanti express this mercilessness of death with a proverb which says: "If death comes to kill you and you supplicate it, calling it 'Father', it will kill you; if you supplicate it calling it 'Mother', it will kill you".

Besides the proverbs and funeral dirges, personal names are frequently expressions of one reality or other of death, for example in Dagaati personal names such as "Kuubeyangdaa" (Death makes no particular appointments with its victim), "Kuubesoore" (Death does not ask), "Kuubeterzie" (Death has no particular place), etc.

The attitude of the Ghanaian towards death is ambivalent. It is first of all a painful event for the deceased and his still living relatives. It is the chief that "comes into your house" when it pleases and strikes whomsoever it pleases and you can do nothing about it. Death is frightening especially because of its unexpectedness; it comes on its own terms and you cannot strike any bargain whatsoever with it, either to hold on for a short while or come back later. It is painful and pityless because it

has its own criterion for the choice of its victims and respects no other criteria such as age or the social responsibilities that its victim may still have. This makes death odious and hateful and something that cannot be loved although, paradoxically, because of its power, it commands some respect and the Chanaian finds himself subdued and reverent before it.

Yet, on the other hand, the fact that death is believed to be "a going home" to join one's ancestors in their land, makes death a necessary event which is not altogether imacceptable. Although it causes a lacerating pain to the living relatives of the deceased and is a difficult journey for the deceased himself, the thought of the deceased being reunited ultimately with his forebears leaves something to be desired in death. For one who has lived long enough to see his great grand children, and for one who has been suffering from a long illness, death is even seen as an accomplishment.

Thus there is in the Ghanaian an ambivalent attitude towards death which also explains all the care that he takes both for someone who is dying and those already dead. Death is hateful and would be avoided if possible, yet, on the other hand, because of the end to which it leads, it can be desirable. For the deceased, death is the journey that he has to make to "the Home of the Ancostors", the "place" where all his forebears are gathered together. It is for this reason that the Dagaati speak of the deceased as someone who has "gone home", someone who has "gone to his forefathers".

The death of a relative cencerns one in many ways. If the journey in which his deceased relative has gone is a success then, this also becomes his own cur ess, a success in this life and a partial success of his own journey when the time coles for him to take it. If, on the other hand, this journey is not an "immediate success", i.e. if the deceased delays on the way, he, the living relative can be responsible for it and will suffer retribution. This explains the numerous worries which the Chanaian has for the dead relative and which obliges him to make many consultations and sacrifices. These are to ensure that the end of the journey is reached. He will therefore appreciate very much any help, particularly moral help and sympathy from friends and cooperation from other relatives in this situation.

The funeral celebration is a very important feature in Ghanaian lift. The immediate funeral in the presence of the corpse has two main ends: (1) to sympthise with the living relatives and to lament with them and (2) most especially, to wish the deceased himself a safe journey to his ancestors. Subsequent celebrations which usually take place in the case of elderly people and involve sacrifice making, have as purpose to clear all possible obstacles on the way and thus enable the speedy and safe arrival of the deceased in the midst of his ancestors. These subsequent celebrations may follow as a result of an indication, through consultation with a diviner, that the particular deceased "has not yet reached home".

Speaking about Ghanaian attitude towards death a question which cannot be left out concerns the cause of death. As most Ghanaian languages express through proveres, God is, in the final resort, the ultimate explanation of death just as He is of all other phenomena. An Ashanti proverb expresses it most clearly: "If the Supreme Being has not killed you, but a human being kills you, you do not die". Novertheless, this does not prevent the Ghanaian from believing that the immediate cause of Jorch can lie with some other being, especially malevolent ones and that these immediate cause have

to be found out.

Taken for granted that a person died of such and such an illness, it will still be necessary to find out the "mystical cause" of the illness. This mystical cause, which is the real cause of death, can come from an ancestor or someone else in the family. (Not that the ancestors actively cause sickness and eventually death. No, they cause it in the sense that they refuse to protect their ward because of some wrong that he or another member of the family has committed against them). The mystical cause of death can come also from other spirits which are malevolent or from witches and sorcerers. The witch is thought responsible in the case of a long protracted wasting illness while the sorcerer is believed to kill more instantaneously and is usually suspected—when sudden death occurs.

To make certain that no obstacle causes the deceased to delay on his journey home, a diviner is consulted to find out the mystical cause of the death and appropriate sacrifices made. It may take one sacrifice to remove such an obstacle and harmony and peace be restored in the family or it may demand many sacrifices and possibly a long time, even years.

Sickness then is seen by the Ghanaian as the most immediate and visible cause of death but behind which one still has to look for the mystical and real cause. Although not every sickness leads to death, still in one way or other it makes the Ghanaian think of the event of dying and death. Sickness is the preparation for "making the journey home". It leads to death - it is dying. As a preparation towards death, the sick person, especially when the sickness has taken a turn for the worse, is considered as one who is about "to take the feet of death". At this juncture the attitude of the sick man is one of ambivalence. He is in a state of helplessness which forces him to resign himself "into the hands of death". He knows he faces the experience from which there is no possible escape. Yet, even before such deep helplessness the prospect of immediately joining his ancestral congregation after the event of death gives his present situation a worthy purpose. This hope of joining the ancestral congregation becomes, particularly in instances when the illness is almost unbearable, a true desire and often leads him to wish death would come sooner.

As he lives this state in which the probability is that he will soon be joining his ancestral congregation, the moribund makes his last preparations to appear before his forebears. For the Dagao it is his forebears who will accept him into their midst. This admittance into the ancestral congregation depends on how well the dying man has lived his moral life here. As a new-comer to the ancestral home he will be received or refused immediate admittance accordingly. So the sick person will, from his sickbed, give directives that all the moral wrong he might have done be made right. If he owes someone something, he will say it and ask that the debt be paid. And if he killed someone in "cold blood" this will be the time to make a confession of it and ask that the appropriate sacrifices be offered on his behalf. When all is put in order he is then ready to start his journey and death with all its painful results can come. He is ready to the best of his powers to appear before his ancestral congregation even if the death which takes him there is full of pain and bitterness.

Thus the time of sickness provides a period of adjusting and preparing oneself for death.

Attitude of the Relatives toward the dying. The attitude of the relatives of the dying person is mainly one of great anxiety and concern for him in all areas of his life. Even though they realize that death is tightening its cruel grip on him, they never cease medical treatment nor stop looking for new treatments, even when they are quite certain that no medicine can do him any more good. The Dagaati express this ambivalent attitude with the proverb: "no one can take off the medicine pot from the stove as long as the patient is still alive".

Another area where relatives manifest their concerned attitude towards their dying relative is in their effort to find out the cause of his illness. This leads them to numerous consultations with the diviner and to make the many sacrifices which may be ordered by him. Already at this point, the relatives' concern for the "good home arrival" of the dying is manifested, but also there is revealed their innermost desime that the dying be restored to health.

Visits to the dying patient, most especially by relatives and friends is something of which the importance cannot be exaggerated. As the Dagao would say: "even if you have a quarrel with someone, when he lies dying you cannot refuse to visit him." To refuse or fail to visit a sick relative or friend, who will nost probably die, is a most obvious way of manifesting one's deep hatred for him. Nothing can excuse one from visiting a dying relative, especially when the sickness is a protracted one and the patient has been lying on his bed for some time unless one is himself ill.

In conclusion I would like to observe that I have tried as much as possible not to make any comparisons. Personally, I think this is a very important and interesting area in the apostolate and pastoral ministry, particularly in other cultures which have a different philosophy and hence categories different from one's own.

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N.B. We are not circulating Sister Francis Webster's interesting paper "Some Reflections on Death and Dying in the Western World" since it was distributed to all members. Anyone wishing for a copy should contact Sister Francis Webster, M.D., M.P.H., SCMM-M. Suore Medico Missionarie, Via di Villa Troili 32, 00163 Roma. Tel: 62 28 098.

"Una Missions in Circ. dei Er nesso ni Wineri-Conventuali 1925-1952", by Tattes Luo, published by E.M.I. Via del Melencello 3/3, 40135 Fologna, 219 pages with illustrations.

A Mission in China: - Some fifty years ago, a group of Conventual Missionares from the Sardinia province founded the Mission of Hingan, in Shensi - south-east China; the mission prospered until 1952 when the Macist revolution took place - once in power - it exiled all forcign missionaries and forced the local church to go underground.

Matter Luo, a young Chinese seminarist from Hingan, left the country in order to become a priest. He is now in Italy and directs the Italian Conventual Missionary centre while awaiting a brighter future.

Entton Lac has turned the circumstance of his exile to account by writing the history of the Hissian of Hingan which is enlivened by the fact he was a witness of many of the events. Since it is written with extreme simplicity and treats of the recent past it has something to offer Christians to-day.

Taken from AIMIS, No. 106/76.

### WHERE TO BEGIN?

## MOVING TOWARD ADEQUATE MINISTRY

(This article is reprinted from AFER; January 1975; Volume 17, No. 1; pg. 9ff. The author, Mr. Dominic Mwambi Mwasaru, is at present teaching at Eldoro High School, Taveta, Kenya)

After every harvesting season my grandfather complains of poor harvests from his coffee trees. It is ten years ago since he planted them, but he has got hardly anything from them so far. Now his livehood is threatened because he depends on them.

I know why my grandfather gets poor harvests. Firstly, the altitude of the area is too low for that type of coffee. Secondly, the rains are not sufficient. Thirdly, the soil is not suitable. Coffee is certainly a wrong cash crop for this area. Perhaps cotton, cushewnuts, or coconuts would do better. My grandfather knows about the possible suitability of these others. However, it is another thing to try them out. He is as stubborn as a donkey when it comes to change.

### NECESSITY OF CHANGE

The ministry structures in the Church in Africa are like my grandfather's coffee trees. They are unsuitable to the situation in Africa.

Take the Economic aspect of it for example. Our ministry cannot stand without the money of Western churches. The training of ministers (priests and catechists) is done with Western money. The upkeep of these ministers is met through Western money. The building and running of parishes is done mainly with Western money. The whole machinery presupposes a Mestern economy.

Now take the <u>Cultural</u> Aspect. The key-word here is alienation. The priests particularly are terribly alienated from the local community. Their training is done outside the community in comfortable isolation. Essentially, the training does not have the local community in mind. Its curriculum is more genred towards completing the prescribed time and material than towards the needs and interests of the local community.

At the end of this training process the priest is an outsider. He finds himself 'de-communitisized'. His relationships in the community are affected. They tend to be both superficial and artificial.

This situation is then perpetuated by the isolative parish set—up. The tent that the missionary pitched outside the village has remained. Even worse, it has become a prison for the local clergyman. It cuts him off from the stream of life in the village. Few local clergymen manage to break through the walls of this prison. The rest remain captives of this indefinite alienation.

There is also another aspect: the priest as <u>Leader</u>. What kind of a leader is a priest? He is an 'imposed' leader. He is imposed on the community by the church system. He does not emerge out of the community. The system normally takes the candidates in their tender age for training. One is only required to

be a good innocent lad. The opinion of the community would, of course, be premature at the time. Due to the isolated training, the community cannot have a realistic opinion about him.

But why the stress on the community? After all, is not priestly vocation a personal affair? Is it not a personal response to the touch of Christ? So, why this emphasis on the community? Yes, priestly vocation is a personal response to Christ. Yet, this personal response takes place in a community, it cannot afford to ignore the community. If it does, it is barren. The community is essential for any kind of life.

The priest is also a monopolizer. He belatedly tries to monopolize the ministry. He dominates the liturgical celebrations. The rest of the congregation are almost passive. He is the indispensable boss in the instruction of catechumens. He does little or no instruction himself but has the final say regarding those to be baptized. The catechist is simply the priest's junior officer. It does not matter whether the catechist is more qualified than the priest.

Now let us consider pastoral problems and activity. The priest is a know-it-all. He will handle a marriage problem with little or no consultation. He does not feel the need of consulting a doctor, social worker, or any other expert. He is enough. A Jack of all trades, and a master of none. He will initiate a community project without prior consultation with the people. He is the father of the people. Therefore he knows better what they need.

Come, let us look again at the 'touchy' areas. Firstly, the economic structures of ministry are unrealistic. Secondly, the cultural structures of ministry are appalling. Thirdly, the structures of leadership in the ministry are rediculous. Do we expect these structures to bear satisfactory fruits? We would be like my grandfather who expected a rich harvest from his coffee trees. Change is necessary for better results.

#### THE GOAL TOWARDS AND FOR WHICH WE ARE CHANGING

What are we changing to? What are we changing for? We want to change to a new pattern of structures in the ministry. But a new pattern for what? A new pattern, not for its novelty, but for its relevance. The pattern in question must be sensitive to the responsibility of Christian ministry.

It should be an adequate medium of the salvation proclaimed by the Gospel. We are changing to a pattern more faithful to the demands of the Gospel. We are changing for the sake of man's liberation (Salvation). Our ultimate aim is man's liberation from bondage of sin — Man's liberation for the fullness of life with God and fellow man.

## The Outline of the New Pattern.

We want a financially self-supporting ministry. We need a declericalized ministry. A ministry led by people naturally emerging from the community. A ministry relevant to Africa's needs and problems. A ministry authentic to the African life situation.

### THE VENTURE TOWARDS NEW STRUCTURES

Where do we begin this struggle towards new structures? We begin with freeing the ministry from clerical domination.

The Liturgy takes the first priority.

The liturgy has undergone various changes after Vatican II Council. Yet, it has essentially remained the priest's business. The priest's helpers are young lads called altar-boys. The adult members of the congregation are mainly spectators.

The Church has seen the ridiculous nature of this set-up. Thus, lay ministers have been re-introduced. The lectors and acolytes should now be the rightful helpers of the priest. Why continue to keep boys around the altar? They ridicule the liturgy. The liturgy seems either priestly business or childish business. It is time the ministries were taken seriously.

any community is capable of producing men suitable for these ministries. Any community can easily produce lectors and acolytes. These men should participate fully in the celebration of the Liturgy. Lectors as readers could also comment on the Word of God. Why should priests monopolize comment on the Word of God? Acolytes as helpers should actively assist the priest as the main celebrant.

The second place goes to the Ministry of the Word.

Let us explore the task of catechesis. The central man here is the catechist but the boss is the priest.

What of the rest in the community? Do they have any role (or say) in the recruitment of the catechumens or in the process of instructing them? Do they have a voice in the admission of catechumens to baptism? The community must be involved throughout the whole process. Recruitment, instruction, and baptism of catechumens is the concern of the whole community. The catechist has a special role in the procedure. The priest also has his place as poster. However, these two cannot do the job properly without the community. The way in which the community is involved may vary from one community to another. It is up to each community to find out the best way for its particular situation.

Catechesis is not for catechumens only. Baptized persons still need the nourishment of the Word of God. They should continually deepen their personal knowledge in the mysteries of the Word. Yet, so many people 'finish' with baptism. 'I have got my new name. What else?" they argue.

Why do christians think and argue this way? There may be many reasons but one is very obvious: There are hardly any church structures to provide instructions after baptism. And this is because the ministry is priest-dominated. The priests are very few, which is a very serious obstacle to the post-baptismal instruction of the faithful.

Christians in Africa have to re-discover a continuous catechesis. They must get structures which can sustain catechesis throughout one's life. They have a clue in the pattern of African life. Its main stages can be used: birth and naming, initiation, marriage, elderhood, death and burial. Birth and naming can correspond to the christian Baptism. Initiation will correspond to the Sacrament of Confirmation. Marriage will correspond to the Sacrament of Marriage. Elderhood

can correspond to the lay ministries and divine orders. Death and burial will correspond to the Ameinting of the Sick and burial services.

And then in every day life the function of the meal. It keeps us going from stage to stage, and links us tegether. Does it not clearly refer to the Eucharist where word and sacrament play their role? Thus the Sacraments provide the best starting point. They characterise the daily life of people.

Alas, the administering of the sacraments still takes place in terribly individualistic fashion. It is in flagrant opposition to the African's way of life. This individualism must go. The communal dimension of the sacraments must be revived by all means. Just as the cardinal stages in African traditional life are important cummunity events, the administering of the sacraments must likewise involve the community. Let celebration not be a hollow word.

This community context is essential for a life-long catechesis. By involving the community we discover various talents among the members. These talents can be utilized for catechesis at the different stages already mentioned. They can also be used for catechesis in different life situations.

The development of this pattern gives us numerous catechists, catechists of different kinds. They vary in terms of education and personal gifts. They will vary according to the community they serve. This is what Father Shorter calls 'various types of catechist'. In this pattern the catechist is not the priest's underdog; nor is the priest the unquestioned boss. In this pattern the ministry of catechesis is shared. Individual talents and skills are used for the benifit of the whole community.

## SOME IMPLICATIONS

The pastoral ministry must also be a shared ministry. The priest is no longer a know-it-all. Important pastoral problems are a concern for the whole community. The priest does not attempt to solve them single handed. He co-operates with the leaders (or elders) in the community. He consults them before important decisions.

This declericalized pattern of ministry has another implication. <u>Leaders</u> emerge naturally from the community. They will be available for the ministry.

The priest is no longer indispensable. Liturgy and community worship can be done without him (except the celebration of the Eucharist and Penance). Catechesis is done by various people in different times and stages. The factor of ordination is not essential in the process. The pastoral activity is also a shared responsibility.

The third implication is about ordained ministers. In this pattern, the priest is seen as a co-worker in the ministry. He is one of the ministers in the community. And what if a community has no ordained minister? They are bound to ask why they cannot have one? They will surely ask for the ordination of one among their leaders. Some may be ordained deacons and others priests.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>See his article "Catechists" in AFER 1 & 2 '74, p. 175. It is Chapter 17 of the Position Papers prepared for the AMECEA Study Conference 1975.

It all depends on the needs of a particular community.

In this pattern, the talk about scarcity of priests is nonsense. Bishop Kalilombe rightly dismissed scarcity of priests as the basic problem in the ministry. "The real issue at stake is rather: adequate ministry, he said. "Until such time as the laity have been fully involved, and a realistic redistribution of ministries (ordained and non ordained) has been made, it is impossible to say whether we have too few priests or too many!"<sup>2</sup>

Thus the task of declericalizing the ministry is an effort to find adequate ministry. The development of this pattern is shaped by the particular needs and conditions of a local community. The structures in this pattern are authentic and natural to the community. Structures that safeguard and foster life, have little room for alienation or artificiality. The ministers are part and parcel of the community. The imposed, artificial ministers will disappear. And the structurally alienated minister will vanish as well.

With community leaders in charge, big changes are likely to come. An authentic liturgy may develop more easily in these circumstances. Realistic methods of life-long catechesis can be discovered more easily. A relevant approach to the pasteral ministry may emerge more easily. On the whole, a self-reliant ministry will begin to emerge. The community will have a ministry which has structural identity. They will have a ministry which is adequate in terms of personnel. This will be a structurally self-reliant ministry.

# THE PERSPECTIVE OF FINANCIAL SELF-RELIANCE

The talk about structural self-relaince does not make sense without financial self-relaince. Money is one of the greatest problems regarding the church ministry in Africa. The Church in Africa finds it very difficult to maintain her ministers. Her ministerial machinery would instantly collapse without the aid of Western churches. How can this situation change when we have the new pattern in mind? Right now, the priest and the catchist are already a financial burden; how will the Church support so many ministers? The whole thing seems impossible!

Yet, there is a way. The large number of ministers will demand that each minister takes care of himself. Many of them are likely to be part-time ministers. After all, the ministerial functions are shared among so many people. Each of them gets only a small part in the 'big whole'. It enables them to earn their life. This should be true for both ordained and non ordained ministers.

The proposal may not sound convincing. Does it mean there is no room for full time ministers? It depends on the needs of the community. ... community may need the full services of a particular minister. This person may be ordained or non ordained. What matters is the particular service required by the community. In this case, the minister in question has a right to de-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> O.c., p. 59.

pend on the community. He works full time for the community; and therefore, the community must take care of his livelihood. But obviously not all
ministers qualify to depend solely on the community. Not even if the person
is an ordained minister! It is not ordination that matters but service.

Suppose the full time minister demands wages too high for the community to afford? This is unlikely if the minister is an 'original' member of the community. The standard of life is relatively the same for all members. The community can easily support a person in that range.

However, the case may be different for an 'imposed' minister. He standard of life may be too high for various reasons. His educational background may liebte a much higher standard of life. The standard of life in his original community may be higher than that of the present community. However in the new set-up such a case is exceptional. And exceptions confirm the rule. The structures in the new pattern are financially quite sound.

## POSSIBLE OBJECTIONS

The practical implications of this pattern may look very grave. Most African communities have a frightfully high percentage of illiteracy. Can we reasonably expect reliable ministers in such communities? Are we to trisking the Word of God in the hands of illiterates? Such questions trouble the minds of many.

Some warn that the pattern in question is a sure way to <u>syncretism</u>. Others are worried by a <u>multi-class clergy</u>. Imagine a bunch of semi-literate men in the ranks of clergymen! This is unbecoming for the clergy. Inother group is uncomfortable about <u>part-time ministers</u>. How can one serve two masters at the same time? One more group cautions about the 'fluid' communities. Some communities are ossentially changing communities. How are these going to have 'non imposed' ministers?

Some of the objections raised above are basically unfounded. They are possibly fruits of traditional projucide and bias. They could be symptoms of fear to change to the 'unfamiliar'.

One (that of syncretism) is, however, a good warning. Though one might question whether academic knowledge guarantees a proper understanding of the Word, this is rather beside the point. Such an understanding remains definitely required. Ministers in a community need it. This leads us to another point: the training of ministers.

### WHAT KIND OF TRAINING

An elaborate system of training (like our seminary system) is out. The system in some catechetical centres is also questionable. The un-interrupted two years' training is unhealthy. The students complete their courses with an 'I—have-finished' mentality. Furthermore, the course is likely to be so complete that they get little out of it.

What then is the system of our new pattern of ministry? The process of pattern points to gradual training. It demands the process of rotation from field to class and vice-versa.

Some training centres in Eastern Africa already point the way. The Gaba Pastoral Institute is a typical example. The Mitume Catechetical Centre at Kitale (Kenya) is a significant trial. Students come to the Centre about three menths and then go off. When one group is away, another group of students may come in. While they are in their respective communities, tutors try to visit them.

The proposed Viongozi Centre in Kisii (Kenya) will be another significant experiment. The Centre hopes to train different types of community leaders. Thus, they will offer courses on parish councils, cooperatives, poultry keeping, singing, liturgy, marriage, youth leadership, and catecheties. Mobile units is another area still open for experiment. They can help in giving various courses to people on the spot.

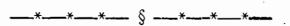
This process of training will still depend on Western churches in money and personnel. Shall we ever become self-reliant? Yes, if we re-orientate the system of training. It aims at developing the local community in all its aspects. The economic standard of the local communities is bound to rise and qualified local personnel will become available. Therefore, the self-reliance of training structures will materialize.

### Conclusion

Like my grandfather, we are challenged with change. We are challenged to try out new structures of ministry. We need a pattern culturally and economically founded in African soil. We need a ministerial set—up free from clerical domination.

Yet, the pattern we look for is not an end in itself. It is not an ideal we want to build. It is a tool we want to get. A tool which can faithfully meet the demands of the Gospel. A tool to bring <u>liberation</u> and abundance of life to man in Africa. We want a medium of hope for all mankind. We cannot afford to despair or to remain indifferent. We shall be unwise to follow the stubbornness of my grandfather.

- - Dominic M. Mwasaru



SPECIAL MENTION from the list of documents for this month are:

"The Yearly Photobook of S.V.D." for 1976 which is focused on the Black Christian in the U.S.A.

"Tools for Time Management" by Edward R. Dayton, published by MARC—USA, which gives those who are always short of time, very useful hints to arrange their day properly. The book is also pleasant reading because the type is large and topics are arranged in alphabetical order. Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506; USA. Price: \$4.95.

# ON-GCING FOR ATION

A list of selected materials on this topic available at Sedos Documentation Department compiled by Sister Agnetta, S.Sp.S.

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1/231	FMM Documentation on Formation, 1972. (48) Also in French
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