

SEDOS

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BUILDING INTER-CULTURAL COMMUNITIES

SEDOS 1987 - GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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<u>CONTENTS:</u>	<u>Page:</u>
1. BUILDING INTER-CULTURAL COMMUNITIES: MISSION IN COVENTRY. Daphne Bronkhurst, FMM	5
RESPONSE: Catherine Hughes, SND	9
2. BUILDING INTER-CULTURAL COMMUNITIES: TOWARD MULTI-CULTURAL COMMUNITY. Edward Van Merrienboer, OP	11
RESPONSE: Paquita Tamayo, RSCJ	17
3. THE VOWED LIFE: ANNOUNCING THE GOOD NEWS TO A SECULARISED WORLD. Desmond O'Donnell, OMI	20
4. SEDOS GENERAL ASSEMBLY 1987.	27
5. ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SEDOS 1987 ASSEMBLY.	29
6. SEDOS BULLETIN SUBJECT INDEX AUTHOR INDEX	APPENDIX APPENDIX I V

IN THIS ISSUE: This issue contains the texts of the two conferences and responses delivered at the Seminar during the SEDOS Annual General Assembly on December 9, 1987. Daphne Bronkhurst FMM pointed to some of the difficulties encountered by those who had to integrate in another culture in her case, an Indian in an industrial town in England. She had some pertinent advice also, as a foreigner, about building a relationship with the local Province of her religious Congregation into which she had moved.

Ed Van Merrienboer, OP enlarged on this theme and drew some practical consequences for leadership at the Generalate level of international Congregations and Societies.

In preparation for the SEDOS Seminar, March 15-19, 1988 on EVANGELIZATION: THE CHALLENGE OF MODERNITY, there is an article by Desmond O'Donnell, OMI on the problems faced when announcing The Good News of Jesus Christ to a secular world. The text is slightly abbreviated.

SEDOS GENERAL ASSEMBLY highlights are given and also the full text of the SEDOS Annual Report to the 1987 Assembly.

This issue also contains the SEDOS BULLETIN index for 1987.

(Ce numéro présente le texte de deux conférences (ainsi que les réponses qu'elles ont suscitées) données lors du bref séminaire à l'Assemblée Générale Annuelle de SEDOS, le 9 décembre 1987.

Daphné Bronkhurst, FMM, a relevé certaines difficultés rencontrées par ceux qui doivent s'intégrer dans une autre culture: elle est elle-même une Indienne engagée dans une cité industrielle d'Angleterre. Elle nous donne aussi quelques indications judicieuses sur la façon de nouer des relations, comme étranger, avec la Province de sa Congrégation à laquelle elle a été affectée.

Ed Van Merrienboer OP s'étendit sur ce thème, en tirant quelques conséquences pratiques à l'intention des Concils Généraux des Congrégations internationales ou des Sociétés missionnaires.

Pour nous préparer au Séminaire de SEDOS du 15 au 19 mars 1988, sur "EVANGELISATION: LE CHALLENGE DE LA MODERNITE", nous présentons aussi une version abrégée d'une conférence du P. Desmond O'Donnell OMI, sur les problèmes rencontrés dans l'annonce de la Bonne Nouvelle de Jésus Christ dans un monde sécularisé.

Ce numéro contient aussi le Rapport Annuel de SEDOS présenté à l'Assemblée Générale de 1987).

NEWS:

SEDOS Executive Committee approved the applications for membership of three new congregations at its meeting on January 5, 1988. They are:

1. SUORE DEL BAMBINO GESU (ST. MAUR).
Address is: Via Trionfale, 8062/D, 00136 Roma.
2. INSTITUTE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (IBVM; Loreto Sisters). Sister Noni Mitchell is Superior General and their address is: Casa Loreto, Viale Appio Claudio, 10, 00178 Roma (Capanelle).
3. CONGREGATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT (SSS). Father Anthony McSweeney is Superior General and their address is: Via G.B.de Rossi, 46, 00161, Roma.

We welcome all three members to SEDOS and look forward to our collaboration in the work of mission.

HAITI: A meeting at SEDOS on November 29, 1987 addressed by Fr. Jan Hanssens of the Scheut missionaries brought us up-to-date on the increasingly serious situation following the aborted elections. Copies of Fr. Hanssens's report, in French are being sent to those who were present and will be mailed to members on request.

SUDAN: An 'Up-Dating' meeting on the situation in the Sudan was held on December 17, 1987 in SEDOS. It was attended by representatives of many Congregations and Societies involved there. Possibilities of future collaboration were examined in light of the increasing difficulties from massive shifts in population.

COMING EVENTS:

EVANGELIZATION: THE CHALLENGE OF MODERNITY

SEDOS RESIDENTIAL SEMINAR 1988

The SEDOS Residential Seminar on this topic will be held at Villa Cavalletti, Grottaferatta, March 15-19, 1988.

SPEAKERS:

DES O'DONNELL, OMI; was born in Dublin and has worked in Australia for over 27 years where he does counselling, retreat work, on-going formation, and diagnostic testing. A clinical psychologist by profession, he studied in University College Dublin, the Ateneo in Manila and did post-graduate studies at St. Paul's, Ottawa. Des began studying Modernity Secularization while at St. Paul's and has since given talks in Britain, the USA, Ireland, South Africa and Australia. He has written for such reviews as Doctrine and Life, The Furrow, and Review for Religious as well as publishing several books and study guides for group work. Des is now in his second term as the Oblates' Regional Councillor for Asia/Oceania.

ABBE A. NGINDU MUSHETE is from Zaire and is a priest in the Diocese of Kinshasa. He is at present Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of Kinshasa, member of the Ecumenical Association of African Theologians and Editor of the Association's Bulletin.

MARCELLO de CARVALHO AZEVEDO was born in Belo-Horizonte, Brazil and did his university studies in Rio de Janeiro, Rome, Frankfurt/M and New York. He has been Provincial of the Jesuits in Brazil and President/Executive Director of the Conference of Religious in the same country. He teaches in Rio de Janeiro, the Gregorian University, Rome and has been a research fellow at the Woodstock Center for Theological Research, Georgetown University, Washington D.C. Author of several books and numerous articles, he has delivered papers and held conferences in many countries of the Americas, Europe and Asia.

INTER-FAITH DIALOGUE: Three sessions will be conducted by MICHAEL AMALADOSS SJ. on this topic. The dates are as follows: February 25, March 24, April 28, 1988.

A Study Guide, "MY NEIGHBOUR'S FAITH AND MINE," published by the World Council of Churches, is available at SEDOS Secretariat (Lire 5000). Participants should have a copy of this Guide. We will mail it to participants on request. Attendance at the sessions is free of charge. Registration forms are being mailed to SEDOS Members.

SEDOS SEMINAR DECEMBER 9th 1987.
BUILDING INTER-CULTURAL COMMUNITIES IN MISSION SITUATIONS

MISSION IN COVENTRY, ENGLAND

Daphne Bronkhurst FMM.

(Daphne Bronkhurst, FMM was born in India. Daphne joined the Franciscan Missionaries in 1964 and is a teacher by profession. She was principal of a number of schools in India. In 1985, Daphne began working in England doing voluntary community service work at the St. Barnabas Family Center in an inner-city deprived area in Coventry. The center is in a multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-faith setting. Among other projects, the center has day care for the elderly, single-parent groups and women's groups. The center employs a number of women in the area and trains them as group animators. The center is a real community resource).

John in his prologue proclaims: "The word was made flesh, He lived among us, and we saw His glory, the glory that is His as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth". It is this event that initiated the process of inculturation which has never ceased but is now urgent. This urgency is due to the awakening of local cultures, the search of peoples for their identity and Christian ministry which must strive to incarnate the Gospel in a way that can challenge and renew it constantly.

As an international missionary Institute, we Franciscan Missionaries of Mary have been reflecting on this theme for several years. Meetings at different levels have helped us look at the changing situation in the world and the Church and accordingly discern how we may live our charism. Our discernment has led us to make our prayer, our way of life, our ministry, ourselves, a more credible witness of the Good News.

INTER-CULTURAL COMMUNITIES IN BRITAIN

My experience relates mainly to the Midlands where I am living and working since April 1985. Our insertion in Coventry is in response to a request from the Bishops' Conference to missionary institutes. In view of the fact that these institutes now had returned missionaries they were being asked to move into areas where there were immigrants. So we moved into Coventry. I was sent there in response to the international spirit of our charism. Besides, as an Indian I was familiar with the language and the cultural and religious traditions of the Asians living in our area.

First Reactions: What were my immediate re-actions after just a few weeks there? I felt I was in a society that devalues people and their skills, but recognises that they have to live and so, doles out money each week to them.

- in a Church that glories in her past achievements in terms of missionaries sent out etc., but is now tired. She seems almost to have lost her missionary dynamism and appears to be content with caring for the Church-goers, always hoping that those outside will one day come in;

- aware of assumptions easily made about black people. Since Asian immigrants came mostly from rural areas, they are therefore the business people who own the corner shops, have large families, do not speak English, etc. Other black people are noisy, responsible for riots, etc. Black people similarly, make assumptions about white people.

- shocked and pained by the subtle racism I experienced personally, and that I saw others live through. Reflecting on this, in retrospect, I saw it as a grace, as it placed me alongside other black people who constantly experience it - because they are the problem!

Coventry has a population of about 340,000, of whom about 26,000 are black. There are only a handful of black professionals which may reflect how the "equal access policy" has been implemented over the years. The presence of 18 centres of worship other than churches, 153 black groups, 17 professional groups undertaking multi-cultural work, all helped me glimpse what our ministry is all about. Recent surveys show that unemployment is high in the city (31% of the working population in our area).

Our Problems are common to those of any large inner city in Britain: poor housing, single parents, incest and child abuse, vandalism, wrong use of leisure time, isolation of the elderly, high incidence of debt due to easy credit facilities, powerlessness of voluntary and statutory agencies to provide services due to financial cuts within city councils - these are some of them.

Our Strengths must not be forgotten:

- great friendliness, acceptance and openness, hospitality;

- tolerance and resilience, enabling our people to bounce back to life - to find HOPE;

- a wonderful capacity for celebration;

- a strong commitment by community workers to effect change, if possible at policy level, but especially at grassroots level which is where life pulsates. Incidentally, our place, as Christ's ministers, is as community workers, where possible. Some of us may have to run institutions, but those of us who can, may come closer to the reality of people's lives if we live and minister among them.

SITUATIONS OF CONFLICT

Personal: My education, formation, specialized training would have prepared me to work in India although in our Institute we are formed for universal mission. Coming to another country all this changes. We have to acquire new skills, learn new languages, adapt to a new environment and to

unsalaried work. While this is happening, we must be content to wait, feeling useless at times and alone.

Cultural: Cultural differences distinguish one people from another. In the past, religious were almost a distinguishable cultural group within society and our own cultural identity was thereby submerged. In recent years, we are re-discovering the wealth of our own cultural heritage and our life is enhanced by these cultural riches. The same is true in society. There can be a tendency to think of one culture as superior to the other but in reality, all are different and each has a place in God's plan. The integration spoken of in the West seems to me more an assimilation, where the majority, the stronger cultural group can easily impose its values, behaviour, dress, etc. on the other.

Religious: This assimilation by the stronger cultural group can also happen within religious communities. We Indian religious, have barely discovered our Indian heritage, prayer forms, gestures, music, symbols, etc. We are now feeling at home in them. Coming to England means at least initially, forgetting all this and adapting to western liturgy. The way we pray is different. Our local Church here is not as vibrant and alive as in India. Because India is 87% Hindu and 1.7% Christian we needed to make our way of life comprehensible to those around us. The same may apply here, but the need to make our life with God more understandable to those around us does not seem to be as much a priority here as it was in India.

Community: In India, we are born into a community, then into a family - we spontaneously share and care and are hospitable. In Britain too, we strive to create community. But the climate, the style of housing, computerisation are to some extent responsible for the loss of the personal touch. Again, this may be true within some religious communities and Provinces. On my part, I must remember that the entire Province does not know at which stage I am in my growth as a Franciscan Missionary Sister, (FMM). I must accept the Province as I find it. I must listen and learn, be open to experience "FMM" life lived here in a different way. Poverty, for example, understood and lived in the consumer society and in the Third World will be different. I do not have to conform but I must set out to understand this new rhythm of life in prayer for God has a new message for me in the Coventry experience.

THE RECEIVING PROVINCE

The following are some observations that may be helpful to communities in the receiving regions or provinces.

- Guard against a tendency in those who come to act in an inferior way and in those who receive to act in a superior way, especially where those who come are from formerly colonised countries.
- Be continually aware of drawing out gifts and latent talents and accept that this process will take time. In short, be enablers.

- Where the Province has been sending personnel in the past it may have several returned missionaries. There can be tension when conversation is about the "missionaries", as they were known to the sending province and as they are portrayed by the person who is coming from where those missionaries worked.
- The Province will need to plan an induction period for those who come to enable them to learn the language, visit some communities, consider options in ministry. This will vary according to the person.
- There is a need to realise that we come, clothed in our culture and traditions and would love to share them. Try to create an ambience for this to happen.
- Accept that those who come want to belong; they want to feel they are here for ever; they want to share in the life of the Province, in all its aspects.
- And there is a mundane but necessary reflection - some countries, like Britain, may not give work visas. This means that we who came may then be a financial strain. Receiving Provinces thus experience a richness and a poverty. The wealth of intercultural communities must be seen alongside the apparent loss of efficiency that could result from opening up to an inter-cultural experience - but this is what our Christian life is all about!

SENDING PROVINCES

- Ensure that the entire Province is formed for universal mission, ready to be 'sent', even if some never go.
- Members of the community need to receive a deep faith formation, so that the priority in life is a commitment to the Lord, not to a professional career.
- They must know and assume their own cultural traditions, for without doing so, it is almost impossible to be open to genuine cultural differences in others.
- Animators and formators need to have had some experience of living in intercultural communities.
- Dialogue with the persons who are being sent, discerning together about health, types of ministry, possible conflicts and detailed information about the receiving Province.
- Continually offer support after the person has gone, through letters, information, etc etc. It is important to prepare her or him to wait (feel useless), to listen and respect what they find, to share any experiences of conflict, to enter into a 'dialogue of life' with the different cultural groups.

In Conclusion I quote from the preface to Vincent Donovan's "CHRISTIANITY REDISCOVERED", (pg. vii) which refers to evangelisation. I apply it to intercultural communities.

"In working, do not try to call them back to where they were; do not try to call them to where you are, as beautiful as that place might seem to you. You must have the courage to go with them to a place that neither you nor they have ever seen before."

I pray that our efforts may lead us to that new form of intercultural community living where none of us has ever been before.

RESPONSE: Catherine Hughes SND.

(Catherine was born in the South East of England. She spent a number of years in Liverpool in the College of Education both as lecturer and principal. As Catherine sees it, the life experience that contributed most to her development was her eight years spent as principal of a comprehensive school in Kirby, a slum area outside Liverpool. The school has 1850 children from the Liverpool area. When Catherine was Provincial in Britain she visited the sisters of her Congregation in Peru and Nigeria as the two provinces were linked to Britain. She has been Superior General of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur for three years).

Daphne is dealing with two levels in her paper: first, living in an English city with an immigrant population of 7.8%; second, living in an intercultural community within this situation. In talking of that first level she uses a significant adjective - she talks of the Church as seeming tired. I wonder if that description is not what we would apply to much of society in the northern hemisphere as contrasted with the South today?

Britain is a predominantly old society. The sense of life one encounters in the countries of the southern hemisphere where young people abound, is not there. And a society where the old predominate finds it very hard to absorb new people.

I was privileged in having a father who never accepted discrimination against black people but that such discrimination exists is certain. To-day a moral vacuum is evident in my country. Our Prime Minister, playing the part of the fairy godmother, is attempting to fill this vacuum by insisting on the profit motive in a consumerist society. She is confident that this is working. I doubt it.

One of the few moral forces left in our country is the monarchy and it is sad to see how little it has done to promote inter-racial relationships. How wonderful it would be to have a black member of the Royal Family! The strength of the old non-conformist conscience has gone. A great ecumenical effort is needed now among the churches to promote friendship and justice among the peoples.

What can we expect of a multi-cultural religious community? In former times we were told that nationality, like feelings, did not count. What mattered was the assumption of a new culture, the culture of our new religious community. And so coming from different cultural backgrounds we all ate like French peasants of the late 18th and early 19th centuries! In the wider context what is expected now of those who come to live among us from other cultures? Are they expected to conform simply to the customs of the country?

I would ask Daphne not to despise the institutions. After many years of experience I am impressed by the work of the Coventry Comprehensive School in the local community. And it is in building community that one approaches solutions to the problems. It seems to me that what is asked for is humble dialogue, going on all the time, asking the gentle questions which will help us to explain ourselves to one another, and allowing each other to express ourselves in our way.

I am continually struck, in this search, by what we share as human beings. The cultural expression of what we are, what we feel and think is different but what is underneath is a common humanity and the ways in which it is expressed are manifold. In the search for this common humanity we have to encourage one another to prepare for its unveiling in the final revelation.

BUILDING INTER CULTURAL COMMUNITIES IN MISSION SITUATIONS:
TOWARD MULTI-CULTURAL COMMUNITY

Edward Van Merrienboer, OP

(Born in the USA., Ed was a teacher of Theology and Missiology at the Aquinas Institute, a post-graduate school of theology in Missouri. He was a member of the National Catholic Education Council in the Justice and Peace section. As well as being on the Provincial Council for 12 years, he was Promoter for Justice and Peace for the Dominican men in the USA. For the last four years Ed has been the Assistant General for Apostolic Life for the Dominican Order and in this capacity has visited all the Provinces of the Order).

In a recent popular journal, there was an extended article on decision-making in the business community. The author described various methods that executives use to define questions, problems, issues in order to obtain a solution or decision. The central point of the article was that the way we define an issue is the chief determinant of any solution. Using this insight I would like to preface my remarks about concrete actions that members of General leadership can take to promote multi-cultural community with some considerations about how we think about culture, church and religious life in the present moment.

It is not my intention to exhaust these topics in the limited time we have today but rather point to some directions that we, as leaders, should ponder as we move into new areas of our religious project.

THE REALITY OF CULTURE

Today, it is taken for granted that culture exists and that our primary task is to understand, respect, and accept the cultural fact of human experience. Those of us living in a multi-cultural community here in Rome often explain behaviors which are new to us in terms of culture. In congregational mission statements it is common to read of the need to inculturate our efforts for evangelization. But has this always been true of religious life, the church, and of society?

I would propose for your consideration the fact that the reality of culture is a rather new consciousness within the human family. The very development of the word culture is perhaps one of the most revealing indicators of this recent awareness. During the late 19th century and early part of this century, culture was defined as the fine arts, humanism, science, instruction, and education - usually on the highest level. This limited notion of what human culture was can be found in the standard dictionaries of those times and in some which are still in use today.

Culture in this context is that which is preferred and it is often seen in the context of its opposites. A popular example would be to refer to someone as "having or not having" culture. Referring to someone as a peasant, low caste, without education, etc., are variations on this same theme. An assumption made by this definition is that those who do not obtain the highest level of art, education, etc., lack those qualities which make life most human. They live life on the level of the concrete and are even unaware of the mystique of being human. Faith, for them is more magic than belief.

Thankfully, this definition of culture has been refined, enriched and reworked in the social sciences during this century. In 1952, Kroeber and Kluckhohn offered a definition which has become a standard reference in the social sciences. They write:

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements of further action. (p. 14).

Culture and People: This understanding includes much more than what we would expect in museums! Culture is made by people and at the same time is so powerful that it has a way of "making" or shaping people. This cultural conditioning is for the most part so deep within us that we are able to live in our culture with little awareness of it. The classic question in cultural anthropology is, "Does the fish know that it is in water?" In fact, we are most likely to become aware of the fact of culture when we are taken out of our culture and placed in another. We can only guess what reactions the fish has when it is taken out of the water but we have many examples of what happens to people in these circumstances. We know of experiences of "cultural shock", "cultural isolation", inculturation, etc., because there has been a great deal of reflection on cross cultural experiences in the last 100 years or so.

My first point in discussion of multi-cultural community is that the phenomenon of culture is a rather new one to humanity. Much of what is being said is in the early stages of investigation. It should not come as any surprise to us as religious leaders that we have a great deal to learn in this area. It is to be expected that many of us will feel inadequate in the face of the many cultural experiences that we must have as part of our ministry. The challenge of culture is global and it is touching the economic, political, social, religious aspects of our lives.

THE CHURCH AND CULTURE

A second area which requires some reflection on our part is the evolution of the thinking of the institutional Church regarding culture in

relationship to faith. Again, I am not able to give a complete history within the limits of this session but I would like to note certain "landmarks" which are helpful to our understanding.

"Maximum Illud": The apostolic teaching of Benedict XV in 1919, (Maximum Illud) on missionary activity - often referred to as the Magna Carta of missionary work in this century - demonstrates this growing awareness of culture that I have just spoken of in relationship to the development of the faith in mission countries of his time. Benedict attacked the fundamental problem of the "Europeanization" of mission work. In very direct terms he spoke of the "tragedy" of missionaries who spent themselves "in attempts to increase and exalt the prestige of the native land they once left behind them." He went on to state that the chief aim of mission work is to make the missionary superfluous by promoting local clergy to full responsibility for the future of the Church in their home nation. No country, he said, has ever been converted except by its own clergy. His insistence that the missionary enter into the mentality of the people which is always more than being able to simply speak their language continues to challenge us today. It is to the great credit of many who worked in the missions during this post World War II period, that they took these words to heart and saw their mission to include the establishment of the local clergy.

Second Vatican Council: It is within the context of this history that the Pastoral Constitution of the Second Vatican Council addressed the question of the relationship between faith and culture. (c.f. no. 1-4, 53-62). The Council accepted the broad definition of culture which I have noted earlier and offered principles for the proper development of culture.

In its insistence on the fact that culture is a product of human activity, the Council pointed to the truth that all cultures share in the "Incarnational Mystery" and in the "Redemptive Mystery". That is, every culture is infused with the Divine gift of grace and contributes through this goodness to the building up of the reign of God. In other words, even before the name of Jesus is preached, the very grace of God is already present in some aspects of a given culture.

The Council also notes that all cultures must receive the challenge of conversion because they too share in the reality of sin. The very fact that culture is a product of human activity assures that it will reflect the broken and wounded qualities of people. In other words, in all cultures we can expect to find customs, words, rituals which are good, helpful, beautiful, loving and grace-filled, and at the very same time, we can expect to find within all cultures behaviors which are hurtful, degrading, ugly and evil.

In the mind of the Council, it is the constant challenge of the church to discern these qualities in all cultures. The church must be more willing to accept and incorporate those good things from all cultures. And, it must enter into a process of conversion with all cultures to purify the evil therein by combating errors.

Evangelization in the Modern World: The final teaching that I wish to include in this reflection is the Apostolic Exhortation of Paul VI, Evangelization in the Modern World (EVANGELII NUNTIANDI) which reflects a certain maturity of thought ten years after the Council. (c.f. no. 1-5, 17-24, 29-39, 57-58). His words coincided with a new moment in ecclesial history when the ministers of the church are not only in all the nations but are increasingly from all the nations. We are living in a new ecclesial moment which is unmatched in the history of the Roman Catholic Church. The integration of indigenous clergy into the hierarchy is but one sign of this change of ecclesial reality.

Religious and Missionary Institutes: Religious Institutes find themselves in the midst of this change and in many cases are leading this transition in local churches. This rapid change is often promoted by the fact that many of our members who are working outside their home country are volunteers who have strong personalities and initiative. They have many of the traits of emigrants, explorers, and pioneers of past ages. Also, the young who find themselves called to religious life are more creative than others their age. Some have a history of dynamic involvement before they entered our communities. For example, for a young woman in the Third World to break out of many of the traditional roles and mentalities established for women requires a spirit of challenge. Is it any wonder that this spirit will also permeate our community life in those locations? Change is to be expected for some time as these new members take on roles of leadership in our Institutes.

I would like to stress strongly that we are not speaking of what might happen but rather what in fact is going on in Religious life. For example, in 1986, for the first time in the history of the Dominican Order, the majority of the delegates (52%) to our General Chapter did not come from Europe. This change meant more than a simple change in numbers, it was a change in mentality for all of us. There was a growing willingness to look at all aspects of our life and mission to discover our common charism. We are now more aware that we are moving toward a new reality which demands a total openness to the truth wherever it is found. Religious life in the future must be marked by a greater readiness to wait, to learn from others, to be part of behaviors, to respect customs. These directions will in fact purify us and, I believe, offer us a new opportunity to discover the founding charism anew.

It is a fact that most of us concretely came to leadership through this process, often chosen because we reflect some of these attitudes needed for the future. It is this sensitivity which must not be lost in the task of administration.

SOME TASKS FOR LEADERSHIP ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

The very limits of time, space and our own culture often make us wonder if we can do anything at all. My experience as an Assistant General has led me to see that we have three roles which can help build multi-cultural community:

- (a) articulate our common vision for the future with concrete applications to locations that we visit;
- (b) affirm and challenge behaviors which contribute to or detract from the building of that vision;
- (c) make executive decisions to realize aspects of our vision. I would like to say more about each of these tasks and offer some concrete examples of what some are already doing to work toward multi-culture community in "mission lands".

(a) Articulating a Vision: The most familiar method of sharing a common vision is to stress those things which are alike within the Institute but I would like to suggest that my experience has shown me that it is far more effective to stress what is unique and special in each member in multi-cultural situations. When I have placed stress on what we have in common it is often that which has the majority or the longest history which is stressed. But the vision that I have found which makes most progress in mission locations where new and old cultures are living in our communities is that "all gifts are welcome in our Institute" if they enrich our life and mission. Those gifts which do not are made clear through a time of testing or experimentation. This open mentality can encourage people to be themselves rather than feeling a pressure to be like their members in other nations. The core of each charism finds its place within our history as it has in the past.

As leaders, we must articulate the truth that there is a legitimate pluralism in our Institutes and it has always been there. Even in Europe we can note that there is a variety of life-styles and missions within our Institutes. Again, our awareness of culture is new and the demands for inculturation more clear now than, may-be, in recent times but, from the missionary journeys of St. Paul and the question of observance of Jewish customs, these questions are with us.

Essential to this whole task of leadership to articulate the challenge to be multi-cultural is the need for institutes to take a position on this point. In our General Chapters this theme must come forth on our agendas. We must speak openly of the tensions and the hopes we have as we become a global community. As the Institute becomes more articulate about multi-culturalism as one of its goals, the more leadership must reflect this goal back to the members during encounters, communications, and formal visits. Through these efforts, we can hope that a gradual process of ownership will take place.

(b) Affirm and Challenge Behaviors: Most religious I have known through the years have a very high attraction to words, statements and even slogans but many find it hard to find concrete expression for these words. It is part of our task as leadership to point out in the concrete that a particular project, behavior, activity, etc., is moving us toward the vision we have accepted in our statements while others, it must be clearly stated, do not help this progression. I have found it

necessary on some occasions to name names of those who are real assistants in the progress of the community. Also, it is necessary to offer them some protection in their efforts from those members who resist any type of change from what they have known on the mission. The argument that "we have always done it this way" should not be enough to continue a certain practice.

We must be willing to use the moral authority that we have been given by our membership to promote their vision. To remain silent in face of behaviors which are totally contrary to the hopes of our Institutes as found in our Chapter documents is irresponsible. In particular, official visits are occasions when issues, long smoking, can become flames which is usually a healthy moment for our communities. The witness we give of courage in these situations can be lasting models for the future.

(c) Executive decisions: This area of leadership speaks of that which is most concrete. It relates to those decisions which we must make. I will only mention four types of decisions we can make and maybe during the question period I will be able to say more on these matters:

- (1) There are times when we must decide that a particular member's mission in a location is ended and it is time for a change. Needless to say, these moments are full of stress for us and the members involved. These situations require a "firm compassion".
- (2) In a situation where there is almost a polarization between people of two cultures, we may wish to add a "third culture", one who can bring some issues into better focus. It is also helpful to have clear time limits for those who come to assist new churches because these provide moments for mutual evaluation by all parties concerned.
- (3) Another area where we can make some decisions to enable multi-cultural community is to promote members from new cultures into leadership roles in our Institutes and to support them. Most often I find that my role is to reduce fear that they may make mistakes or not do as well as those who have come before. In relation to this point we must insist that our members prepare new members for leadership by getting them involved very early in their religious life in questions of management of our life and mission.
- (4) A final action we can take is to insist that when "mission" areas become independent units within our Institutes that they take on mission activity in other cultural locations. This continues to develop the multi-cultural aspects of the community and prevents a closing in on itself of the new group. The joy of establishing the community in a new location can turn quickly into a type of nationalism which can be counter-productive to the multicultural nature of the Institute.

IN CONCLUSION It is critical at this moment in history to have a deep sensitivity that we are in a new moment of consciousness in

ecclesial history. Some old answers will work but others must be evaluated in new situations. The core question for us as leaders is: Do we welcome this new moment or is it a burden to be suffered? In the book of Revelation we read, "You see I am making something new!"

We do not have all the answers nor should we expect this of ourselves or of others but the force of Paul's vision of neither Greek nor Jew, male nor female, slave nor free seems a little closer to reality in our mission locations today. We, like the church of long ago, are the agents of that vision.

RESPONSE: Paquita Tamayo, RSCJ.

(Born in Peru, Paquita is an educator and has been the principal of schools on the coast as well as in the interior of Peru. These vastly different urban and rural settings have given Paquita an experience of two totally different cultures, economies and peoples. She had been provincial in Peru before being elected to the General Council of the Religious of the Sacred Heart five years ago. She has travelled extensively, visiting their sisters on five continents).

Apreciación de la presentación: Primeramente quiero felicitar a Ed porque en poco tiempo ha sabido conciliar una parte introductoria con las bases teóricas y presentarnos luego muy concretamente "tareas" que podemos realizar, desde donde estamos, y que nos ayudarán a impulsar nuestra misión.

Me han pedido que reaccion desde mi ser latinoamericano, quiero decir sólo lo que me inspira la presentación de cultura que se nos ha dado, la relación fe-cultura y el desafío global que presenta.

1. la cultura como un modo de formar el pueblo (making people)
2. en Latinoamérica, la realidad multicultural la tenemos "dentro de casa"
3. las vocaciones populares

La cultura como un modo de formar el pueblo: Puebla dice que la evangelización en latinoamérica "genera pueblos", "se inserta en la existencia secular de las naciones" contribuyendo vitalmente al surgir de la nacionalidad e imprimiéndoles un carácter particular". Se puede decir que la evangelización en los orígenes de este nuevo mundo que es A.L.: se hace presente en las raíces del desarrollo de este nuevo continente (Puebla 4 y 7)

"Medellín hace un juicio sobre la evangelización en A.L. considerándolo sus luces y sus sombras".

Luz: "la hora de los misioneros y al inculturación de una fe en las culturas indígenas"

Sombra: "la no fidelidad sus miembros al espíritu de Dios en la historia", que Puebla desarrolla más hablando de contradicciones y desviaciones en medio de un gigantesco proceso de dominación de culturas (P.6) y de complicidad con los poderes terrenos (P.7) Se identificó demasiado la cruz con la espada.

Esto hizo que a pesar de los esfuerzos evangelizadores de inculturación, la fe pase por estilos europeos y a pesar de muchas iniciativas vas para crear Seminarios, monasterios, para formar una Inglesia local a través de una pastoral indigenista, fracasaron, y la gran mayoría de clero fue misionero y aún hasta hoy, el porcentaje de clero L.A. es relativamente bajo.

Sin embargo, no se puede negar que los misioneros unieron la evangelización de la fe a la promoción humana y a la lucha por la justicia, y a costa de altos sacrificios mostraron la importancia de situarse junto a los oprimidos y colaboraron en la formación de la identidad de la cultura propia y en la identidad de la misma Iglesia latinoamericana.

En este sentido quiero llamar la atención sobre una realidad que se está dando actualmente: al ser católico el sustrato radical del pueblo, destruir la fe significa también destruir al pueblo mismo, la conciencia que tiene de sí, su fuerza de construcción y de lucha. Se calcula que para el año 2,000, más del 50% de la población de Centro América, ya no será católica, debido a la acción de proselitismo de innumerables sectas que vienen del norte y que presentan una fe desencarnada, por la que el hombre no debe preocuparse de transformar su propio mundo. Una forma muy moderna de narcotizar al pueblo, de adormecerlo, para favorecer un dominio político.

El desafío nos viene entonces de la situación de injusticia institucionalizada, como de la situación de alienación cultural y religiosa.

Digo que en L.A. la realidad multicultural la tenemos "dentro de casa" porque a consecuencia de la conquista y de los procesos económicos, políticos y sociales que se sucedieron, al pueblo latinoamericano nos falta "integración".

Aún tenemos una cultura occidental dominante que condiciona la vida de los países y en la que no están presentes, con la misma voz y los mismos derechos, los grupos y valores de cultura indígena o mestiza.

Esto es un desafío para la presencia y el desarrollo de la Inglesia, de nuestras Congregaciones religiosas:
a qué mundo evangelizan?, con qué medios?;
nuestra evangelización continúa siendo un elemento que ayude a la integración cultural, social, a la formación de la identidad L.A.?

Y es un desafío también para desarrollar el sentido misionero y que

THE VOWED LIFE IN A SECULARIZED WORLD.

HOW ANNOUNCE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST TO A SECULARIZED WORLD?

Desmond O'Donnell OMI.

I MODERNIZATION

The amount of knowledge in the world continues to increase because of constant research and it is rapidly diffused through very efficient communication systems. Modernization is what happens when the knowledge is transferred into technology, which then has increasing and unforeseeable effects on economic growth, on social systems and on political decisions. Inevitably the individual too is affected in his or her values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour. Most of us remember the discovery of plastic in the 40s, of the transistor in the 50s, of computers in the 60s, of microcomputers in the 70s and now we observe technology move forward into genetic engineering in the 80s. All of these have affected people and systems in serious and often irreversible ways. This march of modernization shows no signs of slowing down and often appears to have its own self-propelled, autonomous momentum. It took 112 years for photography to go from discovery to commercial product, 56 for the telephone, 35 for the radio, 15 for radar, 12 for television and only 5 for transistors to find their way from the laboratory into the market. Again, as each of these products comes on the market, it touches - and in the case of genetic engineering, tampers with - human nature and human systems in often lastingly significant ways.

It is with the human effects of modernity that we are concerned and these are sometimes good, sometimes evil, and often ambiguous. Modernity can lead to human community and comfort, or to pollution and poverty for millions; it can facilitate or disrupt human values; it can enrich a poor country or steal its unrenewable sources of energy; it can help in the diffusion of truth or of lies through the media and it can pass on productive information or child pornography. In each of our lives it can make the superfluous become the convenient, the convenient become the necessary and the necessary become the indispensable, thus changing human nature itself.

Peter Berger's definition summarizes all this: "Modernization is the transformation of the world, brought about by the technological innovations of the last few centuries having economic, social and political dimensions all immense in scope". With many other writers he goes on to outline the many very personal effects resulting from the economic, social, political ones in his definition. SECULARIZATION is a very significant one of these.

II SECULARIZATION

It is important to stress that we are not talking here about Secularism which is a theory, an ideology denying the existence of God or at least his

action and relevance in the world. Nor is SECULARIZATION to be equated with atheism when in fact it might be the very opposite experience for many who are desperately trying to hold on to God who seems to be withdrawing from them. And certainly it would be simplistic to think that SECULARIZATION is the same as materialism.

SECULARIZATION is claimed to be more a fact than a theory, a reality more than an ideology, a process taking place more than a point of view. While it can lead to secularism, materialism, or atheism, it is in fact none of these. Some religious people find words like secularism, materialism and atheism convenient labels for what is happening in the church or in the vowed life today and it may be a description in some cases, but it is not addressing the deeper and more pervasive reality we call SECULARIZATION.

SECULARIZATION manifests itself when explanations of reality previously attributed to mythical or religious sources, are shown to have rational ones, as when the scientist takes over from the witchdoctor psychologist assumes some previously priestly functions or when a technological discovery disintegrates a theological theory. A group of Animists in Java lost their gods a few years ago when a new seismographic station began to foretell and explain volcanic eruptions more accurately than the local holy man. The Diak people of Borneo lost their fear of and their belief in their forest gods when bulldozers razed the jungle. For some people, the study of a good theology of providence could have a similar effect. These people are experiencing SECULARIZATION.

In a similar way, many modern christians first felt uncomfortable and then felt their faith questioned by a good church-history book, an accurate TV documentary, a skilled psychiatrist, two men on the moon, an old law proven pointless, a church authority found unworthy, a symbol disappearing or a culture collapsing - all more or less the result of modernization. The resulting discomfort and questioning within the individual person, is close to the secularization-experience. It is an experience of no longer having one overall referencepoint - a feeling of increasing disintegration.

If you are experiencing that somehow God is withdrawing, because religious explanations are increasingly less necessary, that the quantum of the secular is increasing at the expense of the sacred, that maybe, God is now less necessary as a postulate for human living or that because of modern evidence your longheld experience of God is no longer a comfortable one, you are probably undergoing the pressure of the secularization-experience. This is not a decision nor even a desire to become an atheist, even if it could lead to it. Nor is it necessarily the result of 'giving in' to materialism or to less-than-moral behaviour, admitting of course that both of these can easily increase its momentum.

The Good News to a Secularized World? If you are not undergoing the experience of secularization, then it is still important to understand it, because most of the people you are trying to evangelize, especially in the developed world, are probably experiencing it. It is from this fact that the present great missiological question arises - how announce the Good News of Jesus Christ to a

secularized world? Modernization and its result in secularization are now recognized as cultures, new cultures, ever-changing cultures and it is at this point that we recognize the break between faith and culture today.

Thus for the modern person, SECULARIZATION is a feeling of dissonance in trying to hold together what is happening in the world and what the Bible seems to say about God's providence or what is often said in churches and what is taking place in real life around us. It results in discomfort with one's present experience of God. Any naive belief in the immediacy of God will be challenged by SECULARIZATION and modernity. Old fashioned god-words and some ecclesiastical jargon will appear increasingly irrelevant to sincere secularized persons everywhere. SECULARIZATION can be defined as the gradual disappearance of mythical and religious legitimations or explanations of society.

Living with the ambiguities of the secularization-experience leads to a temptation to take refuge in fundamentalism which can be described as believing more and more in less and less in order to feel secure, or in agnosticism which is a lazy neither-nor land excusing one from the struggles, doubts and decisions which are part of any faith. Let us now try to analyse the challenge and opportunity which SECULARIZATION offers the vowed life.

III THE VOWED LIFE

For the vowed life, SECULARIZATION can be a deep call and a deep grace. LUMEN GENTIUM calls us to enrich, challenge, encourage and stimulate the church by our lives and our action. (Par.44). This is all the more reason why we must study, understand and give a gospel response to SECULARIZATION, to a secularised world.

Because secularization implies change at so many levels of human existence, we should recall that sociologists stress the vital importance of internal consistency for all groups in time of change. This internal consistency - our basic authenticity measured against what we claim to be - is now a matter of survival. Institutions which lack internal consistency are likely to disappear in times of rapid change, especially if their external image is also unclear. For these reasons, we members of the vowed life must address the phenomenon and the grace of SECULARIZATION. May I suggest that there are five areas where God might be speaking to us in all this?

(1) TRANSMITTING A NEW INTEGRATING PRESENCE OF GOD: Secularization as we saw, forces us to find a new presence of God, a presence which permeates, integrates, energises for action and which brings human and divine values into secular realities. Karl Rahner spoke of the vowed woman as having a profession which has no justification from the secular point of view even if she performs many useful secular tasks. What then might her profession and that of vowed men be? It is surely - as it always was - to give or rather to share with people their own experience of God. This is a demanding task; it demands that we each have such an experience first of all. We will have to pass on "something which we have seen with our own eyes, that we have watched and touched with our own hands" (Jn. 1.1b) and it will be vital that "in Christ we speak as men of sincerity, as envoys of God and in God's presence" (2 Co.2.17)

Back in 1970, Karl Rahner wrote: "Maybe we (he was addressing his own society) ourselves have been superficialized by the consumer society. Maybe we ourselves have not come to any original experience of God. Maybe we have not taken the trouble to let others participate in the mystical technique leading to such an experience. That rather bourgeois-chequered spirituality which was found - to outward appearances at least - in the religious orders before the first world war and which influenced religious life too much, may belong to the past and the young may say rightly that it is useless from the start. But a new spirituality in religious life and in the church will be assured of a real future".

Whatever form this new spirituality will have, it must surely be a very personal "faith in the Son of God who loved me and who sacrificed himself for my sake" (Ga. 2:20) and a very integrating one, enabling us to "bring everything together under Christ" (Ep.1.10). This - it seems to me - is the most serious challenge which SECULARIZATION puts to vowed communities today.

(2) INTEGRATION THROUGH REFLECTION AND PRAYER.

Integration: One of the deepest effects of SECULARIZATION is disintegration. There is no longer any one overarching human legitimation for the thinking person today. We, even as vowed people, stand and struggle side by side with the modern person in loneliness, doubts, fears and feelings of disintegration. We too are among the 'new poor'. The 'third world' is closer to us than we think; it is inside our shirts especially if we have already chosen the still greater poverty of fundamentalism with its moral, dogmatic and spiritual naiveté and elitism.

Serenity: We are however expected to stand with our fellow christians in serenity and in a "peace which the world cannot give" (Jn. 14.27). We stand with them in a spirit of confidence too, as Jesus did with his disciples, when for him and for them everything seemed lost - "I have told you all this so that you may find peace in me. In the world you will have trouble, but be brave; I have overcome the world" (Jn. 16.33). Only a life of prayer can discover and sustain this peace, this joy in the midst of a secularizing experience. Jesus led a busy life and had constant calls on his service, but we find the source of his power in actual physical withdrawal, to be with God - "His reputation continued to grow and large crowds would gather to hear him and to have their sickness cured but he would always go away to some place to be alone and pray" (Lk. 15.16).

Prayer as thinking: The form of prayer for today would seem to be what Macquarie calls 'prayer as thinking', it is a prayer which reflects on what God is doing in the world more than on what he has done in scriptural times, without, of course, neglecting this latter. It is a prayer which keeps our spiritual faculties alive. All reality - especially fast-changing or disintegrated reality - is opaque and this is especially true in the modern world when ambiguity is part of life everywhere.

Lest we ourselves succumb to the burnout of compulsive activity or the dropout of ceaseless seminars this life of "prayer as thinking" seems essential. A long time ago, Christopher Dawson observed: "Men today are

divided between those who have kept their spiritual roots and lost their contact with the existing order of society, and those who have preserved their social contacts and lost their spiritual roots". Could this be a description of vowed persons today?

(3) RELATIVIZATION OF ALL REALITY: I read somewhere that the Talmud says we will be held accountable to God for all the legitimate pleasures we have not enjoyed. When all this is said and done, there still remains the fact that so many of life's legitimate - or even essential - pleasures are denied millions today, in even our developed world. There also stands the fact that "we have not here a lasting city" (Heb. 13.14). One part of our mission is to keep christian hope clearly before people and thus relativize reality, both good and evil.

Material Goods: SECULARIZATION or not, the human person has a tendency to appropriate goods, material and spiritual, to hold them closely and even to be possessed by them. Our lives if they are lived in the simplicity and detachment which we profess, will relativize the enjoyment or deprivation of material things and remind others that they are to be shared - "Warn those who are rich in this world's goods, that they are not to look down on other people and not to set their hopes on money which is untrustworthy but on God. We can do this "telling" by our life style, before we do it in words, the opportunity for which may never come our way. We also speak to the poor enabling them to relativize their desire for justice and to recall that while they struggle for their rights, there is an opportunity for growth in their poverty too.

Forced Celibacy: Modernization has created so many who are enduring forced celibacy through broken marriages or infidelity and who are still avalanched by the media's sexual imperative. We can support these people even without speaking, because our lives experience the same yearnings and our minds are exposed to the same urgings and yet we struggle successfully on, without the assurance of genital involvement. But all this depends on our manifesting balanced and happy personalities, as people who have integrated their relationships and their sexuality in a healthy way. For secularized persons - many of whom suffer from confused psychosexuality - we can be supportive signs of survival and of fulfilled happiness through our lived celibacy.

Individualism: is a mark of the secularized person, coming very often as it does from hurt, insecurity and alienation. This can be so in our own communities too. The insecure person lives ambivalently between a desire to be accepted through cooperation and a fear of being dominated by submission. This is part of the disintegrating experience of modern life. If alienation is the pathology of our age, individualism is one of its clearest manifestations. By our vow of obedience lived out and seen not as 'doing what one is told' but as discernment of what is the best leadership in and through a caring community, we have much to say to the modern person about finding his or her own best expression of self in a confused world.

(4) PROCESS AND PILGRIMAGE: It is clear that vowed people will not be much longer on the edge of the human experience of SECULARIZATION and its consequential feeling of disintegration. We share with men and women everywhere their search for stability and for lost certainties as the river of secularization tries to move all of us up, down and forward. To an extent, we found ourselves insulated from the human condi-

tions until recently, but no longer. Even if it were not through necessity, we know that if we are to hold conversation with and to evangelize the world, we must pitch our tents within it, as God did.

We must be prepared to pilgrimage our way once again and enter into the human process which we should never have deserted. The fact that we accept this, will help so many others who find it difficult and who drop out into drugs or other forms of anomie and despair. Again, our vows lived authentically prepare us for the pilgrimage, ready us to keep moving, because we have publicly professed not to hold on, not to settle and not to be held. By our lived poverty, we refuse to be possessed by any material consideration and by our vow of chastity we also refuse to be possessed by any relationship. Obedience enables us to keep listening and looking at the map of moving events with eyes of faith and love.

(5) INTERDEPENDENCE AND INVOLVEMENT: Our communities are not islands of isolated peace in a troubled universe. They are sources from which we emerge to make a more human and so a more godly world. Our vows enable us to do this; having freed us FROM, they also free us FOR in a liberating way. Our vow of poverty truly lived, makes us free for involvement. Because we have nothing to lose, we can carry the struggle for justice further and when our lives are skilled in dispossession, we are not open to criticism from the rich whose lives we question for the sake of the poor. Our good news for the poor has to be in some way perceived as bad news for the rich and they will readily point to any beam or bank account in our own lives if these are obvious. Only by relinquishing the power of possessions can we demonstrate our competence to communicate freedom. Our vow of chastity makes us free to keep moving and to freely ask even our close friends - "Do you want to go away too?" (Jn. 6.67) Again, we can take risks which married people with concern for their families and for each other cannot be asked to take. Obedience, as we saw, offers us a freedom to live out a radar-like listening to God's word in the world around us. Truth comes only with listening and discernment and these take place best, among a group of sharing people. Obedience is a public statement that we blind ourselves to listen within and are missioned by a community through its leaders. This offers a model for others to do the same in the Church.

In conclusion, I submit that we are approaching the ideal today, as we find the vowed life standing less at a point of comfortable distance from the world and more at a point of painful dialectic with it. At this point it must be ready to say a confirming YES or a challenging NO - and do this by its life and activity - to all the results of secularization.

Indeed, if we are to follow the words of Lumen Gentium, Chapter VI, par 44, the vowed life must say this YES and NO even to the Church itself.

1. FACING UP TO MODERNITY Basic Books, New York. 1977
2. John Macquarie, NEW DIRECTIONS IN THEOLOGY TODAY, Vol III, Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 1981

3. THE FUTURE OF RELIGIOUS LIFE in Supplement to Doctrine and Life, Dominican Publications, Dublin, May 1972.
4. John Macquarie, PATHS IN SPIRITUALITY SCM Press, 1980.

The Steps for a Revolution in Theology

Summing up, the revolution that I have been trying to describe must find its inspiration in five powerful convictions:

1. that theology is for evangelisation;
2. that evangelisation today is irrelevant if unconcerned with social factors;
3. that when you evangelise in relation to social factors you must aim at making hearers of the message evangelisers themselves for they are the ones that must transform their society;
4. that hearers of the word will not become effective evangelisers in their society except in teams or communities, for one person alone is too vulnerable and too easily swamped and paralysed by the surrounding society;
5. that as evangelisation must be a team effort, so must be the acquisition of the theology needed to inspire it.

I have called this a revolution in theology. I am fully aware that this revolution has already begun and is well on its way in some countries, notably in Latin America. It is also struggling to emerge in our own country through the organisation known as the *Institute for Contextual Theology* and a Catholic programme known as *Faith and Life*. What would this revolution not achieve if taken up generally and vigorously by the churches and promoted in the seminaries, theological colleges, training courses for lay ministers and leaders, and refresher courses for clergy and laity.

Hopes for Change from within the Churches

Can we imagine the churches in South Africa revolutionising their theology so that even at this late hour it may become relevant to the agonising situation in which we find ourselves? It would be something of a miracle, for it is not easy to change church habits, whether they be liturgical, pastoral or theological habits. How difficult it is to change theological habits is illustrated by the fact that for all those decades since 1948 and even before, the Church leadership structures have been declaiming against apartheid (or 'segregation' as it was before 1948) but we have done little to change our theological methods in order to communicate the message and educate people in its implications.

Denis E. Hurley, OMI
Archbishop of Durban

Grace & Truth 1986/4

SEDOS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
December 9, 1987

Ninety members braved the elements to attend the Assembly at the Jesuit Generalate, Borgo Santo Spirito on a rare very wet morning in Rome. The morning session was given to a Seminar on BUILDING INTER CULTURAL COMMUNITIES. The talks and responses are given above.

The Assembly held its business session in the afternoon. It adopted unanimously the Annual Report, the Financial Statement for 1987 and the 1988 Budget. A copy of the Annual Report follows. The financial statement showed a modest credit balance of It.Lire 1.649.582 at the end of the year enabling the Treasurer to recommend there be no increase in SEDOS membership fees in 1988.

The assembly unanimously elected Sister Louise Di Stefano MFIC. as the new Treasurer of SEDOS. She replaces Father Leo Paul Nobert, OMI. Treasurer since 1979. A vote of thanks and a presentation marked the Assembly's warm appreciation of Leo Paul's voluntary services over the years. His generous sharing of his time and expertise contributed enormously to the work of SEDOS throughout these years. He was deeply appreciated by all the members and specially by the Executive Committee and the Secretariat with whom he worked so closely.

Sr. Margaret Loftus SND. was elected to a further three years membership on the Executive Committee.

The Assembly considered SEDOS planning for the future and recommended the following topics for consideration:

Decision Making in multi-cultural communities;

Strategic Planning for the placement of personel in mission situations;

Use of the Media and its impact on forming values; - demands an ecumenical approach;

The Peace Process in which those involved in mission must be actively engaged - ecumenical approach.

Ecology - a crucial issue for mission to day demanding again an ecumenical approach.

Inculturation: - we are still only beginning to grasp its importance for example, the consequences of applying modern technology to people in developing countries;

Responsible Involvement of Laity in decision making in mission situations;

Planned Destabilization in Sub. Saharan Africa: leading to a permanent refugee problem. These suggestions should be taken in conjunction with plans already under consideration by the Executive Committee as outlined in paragraph No.18 of the Annual Report.

The Assembly was presided over by the Vice President, Father Francesco Pierli, Superior General of the Comboni Congregation in the unavoidable absence of the President, Sister Helen McLauchlin, Superior General of the Religious Sisters of the Sacred Heart. He thanked all those involved in the work of SEDOS throughout the year and in the organisation of the General Assembly and congratulated them.

We wish to acknowledge once again our deep gratitude to the Society of the Divine Word for their great generosity in making available the offices for SEDOS Secretariat.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
to
SEDOS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9th, 1987

This Report covers the period 1st December 1986 to November 30th, 1987.

1. THE SEDOS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE is presently constituted as follows:-

			(Elected)
<u>President</u>	: Sr. Helen McLaughlin,	RSCJ	Dec. 1985
<u>Vice-President</u>	: Fr. Francesco Pierli,	MCCJ	Dec. 1985
<u>Treasurer</u>	: Fr. Leo Paul Nobert,	OMI	Dec. 1982 (Third Term)
	Fr. Michael Amaladoss,	SJ	Nov. 1983 (Second Term)
	Sr. Margaret Loftus,	SNDN	Dec. 1984
	Fr. Carlos Pape,	SVD	Nov. 1986
	Sr. Giuseppina Tresoldi,	SMC	Dec. 1982 (Second Term)
<u>Executive Secretary</u>			(Appointed)
	: Fr. William Jenkinson,	CSSP	July 1980 (Third Term)
<u>Associate Executive Secretary</u>			
	: Sr. Helene O'Sullivan,	MM	Jan. 1986

The Treasurer, Leo Paul Nobert, is leaving the Committee in December 1987. We are deeply grateful to him not only for his invaluable service as Treasurer but also for his personal interest in all the members of the Secretariate and his dedication in giving so generously of his time and expertise. We wish him well in his new posting. Someone else's gain is surely our loss !

The Committee met on eight occasions during the year at the SEDOS Secretariate from 3.30 to 6.00 p.m. with the high rate of attendance of members which we have come to associate with these meetings.

(Meetings took place in 1986 on 10th November, and in 1987 on 12th February, 20th March, 28th March, 21st May, 22nd June, 13th October and 17th November).

2. MEMBERSHIP OF SEDOS

The Executive Committee approved the applications of two Congregations during the year:-

- i) THE LITTLE COMPANY OF MARY, (Meeting of 12th February 1987, Minute 87/6). The Superior General is Marie Theresa Nilon, L.C.M., and their Rome address is: via S. Stefano Rotondo 6, 00184 ROMA. During the year they moved

their General House to London. The Rome address remains the same.

- ii) CONGREGATION DE LA RETRAITE; (Meeting of 22nd June 1987, Minute 87/35). The Superior General is Patricia Talbot, C.L.R., and their address is: 16 Avenue du Belvédère, 78100 Saint Germain-en-Laye, France.

We welcome both new members to SEDOS.

An application for membership has also been received from the CONGREGATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT, whose Superior General is Anthony McSweeney, SSS.

The RELIGIOUS OF THE SACRED HEART OF MARY withdrew their membership temporarily in 1987. We look forward to their rejoining. The CONSOLATA SISTERS withdrew from membership this year.

There are fifty-nine members, twenty-three of women and thirty-six of men.

3. ACTIVITIES OF 1986.

During the course of 1986 SEDOS continued its programme of activities combining the resources of its membership in order to serve the Church more effectively in its missionary activity.

We opened up some new lines of action and developed those activities in which we were already engaged. We summarise these briefly:-

4. SEMINARS

- i) A REFLECTION ON THE "LINEAMENTA" IN PREPARATION FOR THE SYNOD ON THE LAITY was the theme of the Seminar at the morning session of the December 1986 Annual Assembly.
Margaret Hebblethwaite, Sean Fagan, SM., and Emma Cavallaro spoke on this theme. The general assessment was very good. Sean Fagan's paper was subsequently published in French and Spanish Mission Reviews.
- ii) LAITY IN MISSION, theme of the five-day seminar at Villa Cavalletti, provided us with some unforeseen insights. All the Speakers were married lay people:- Deirdre and Dermot McLaughlin, a Canadian married couple, who are members of a Missionary Congregation; Donald Nicholl from England, recently of Tantur in Jerusalem; Anna Maria Tepedino from Brazil and Amin Fahim from Egypt.

The Seminar was reported extensively in SEDOS Bulletin 87/no.5 of 15th May 1987.

Villa Cavalletti was as usual fully booked and the assessment by participants ranged mainly from "excellent" to "very good".

- iii) A LOOK BACK AT THE SYNOD ON THE LAITY, theme of the Autumn Seminar was the third of our re-

flections on the laity in this year of the SYNOD. It was held in the Hall of the Jesuit Generalate at Borgo Santo Spirito, and was adjudged to be a very good overview of the Synodal proceedings, including its highlights and shadows.

The methodology of the Synod and the Synodal process raised questions about the nature of the Synod in general when compared with the original intent of Paul VI. All speakers emphasized the great value of the preparations which had been seriously undertaken in so many Dioceses but "missionary outreach" was not a factor which emerged with any great emphasis in the Synod.

- iv) THIRD WORLD THEOLOGIES: Michael Amaladoss, SJ., conducted a series of three study sessions on Third World Theologies. He dealt with three aspects:

- Dialogue with Other Faiths;
- The Uniqueness of Christ;
- A Theology of Liberation with special reference to Asia.

These sessions were limited to thirty participants. In preparation for these sessions the Secretariate made available to participants a useful selection of articles, amounting in all to about 180 pages, chosen by Fr. Amaladoss from contemporary mission reviews.

- v) "UP-DATING" MEETINGS. Other meetings during the year dealt with contemporary mission situations in various places:-

- Philippines - Bishop Labayen, O.Carm.
- Mozambique, Refugees - Mike Schulthesis, SJ
- Cuba - Paquita Tamayo, RSCJ
- Ethiopia - Giuseppina Tresoldi, MSC
- South Africa, Apartheid - Archbishop D. Hurley, OMI, and
Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa,
Secretary to the South African Bishops'
Conference, who has been imprisoned and
tortured this year following the declaration
of a state of emergency.

5.

SEDOS BULLETIN

A continuing request for the SEDOS Bulletin confirms the favourable assessment which emerged from the evaluation carried out two years ago. We are now printing 900 copies of each issue and there are no reserve copies of many Issues. In selecting articles for the Bulletin our intent is to include reflections on the missionary situations in diverse continents. Articles chosen for the Bulletin and original contributions from the various Seminars continue to be reprinted in other Reviews. Requests for the complete texts of abbreviated articles are becoming more frequent. A small increase in the cost of the Bulletin was

necessary as a result of the falling value of the U.S. dollar and an increase in mailing costs as of January 1988.

A number of General Administrations send the Bulletin to their District or Regional Superiors through the Secretariate. We can do this either directly from our office or at a reduced rate by sending them to the Generalate here in Rome. We would be happy to facilitate you in any way.

We receive many affirmations about the Bulletin from Rome, Europe and Overseas.

6. REORGANISATION OF THE DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

The number of members availing themselves of the material in the Documentation Centre has increased significantly. A record of the topics requested by members using the Centre shows a broad range of interests and so we will continue to maintain a broad spectrum of documentation to meet the needs of SEDOS members. A number of students from the various Universities and Regina Mundi are availing themselves of the Documentation Centre on the recommendation of their professors. Due to the computerization of data, the material in the Documentation Centre is easier to find. Browsing, especially in the book and magazine sections can be a fruitful exercise. A call to SEDOS prior to coming to the Centre has proved effective and time-saving both to members and staff.

7. COMPUTER

One of the most important aspects of the computerisation in the Documentation Centre is that it occasioned the re-organization and streamlining of documentation. Working with Father Thomas Farrelly, a Spiritan, who is a planning and computer expert we systematically defined the goals of the Documentation Centre and then detailed the steps to be taken to achieve these. One of our most important goals was to devise a simple method for codifying data that would enable us to know quickly:-

- 1) what material is available on a given topic and
- 2) where to locate it on the shelves:

We have achieved this goal.

All information catalogued for 1985, 1986 and 1987 is entered in the computer. Our target for the coming year is to enter the contents of the existing card catalogue from 1984 going back to 1978.

Sister Kathleen England and Sister Walter Santos, both Ursuline Sisters have made a great contribution to the smooth running of the Documentation Centre.

Sister Agnes Hoormann of the Sacred Heart Sisters volunteers one half day a week to enter new data on the computer. Without the generous help of these Sisters it would not have been possible to achieve the re-organisation which has taken place. We are very grateful to them.

8.

OTHER SECRETARIATE ACTIVITIES

We draw your attention to some of the special activities of the Secretariate during the year.

- 1) The Secretariate staff gave two workshops to two groups of the School Sisters of Notre Dame who were doing renewal courses in Rome. There were about 70 Sisters in each workshop. The topic was: JUSTICE AND GLOBAL AWARENESS in the new SSND Constitutions
- 2) Sr. Helene O'Sullivan addressed the Missionary Marist Sisters' General Chapter on the topic "CORPORATE STANCE AND RELIGION AND POLITICS"
- 3) Sr. Helene also addressed the UISG/USG Justice and Peace Commission's Public Meeting in February, on the topic POSITIVE ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE USA IN THE FIELDS OF JUSTICE AND PEACE
- 4) Sr. Helene was also invited by the Dominican Formation Director as a panelist during their study programme on mission
- 5) Fr. Bill Jenkinson was invited to spend a day with the Union of Missionary Animators during their week-long annual meeting held at Arricia from 12 - 24 November 1987. The general topic of the session was I PERCHÈ DI OGGI NELLA VOCAZIONE 'AD GENTES' (The 'Why' of Missionary Vocation 'Ad Gentes' today). The topic of Fr. Jenkinson's address was RISVOLTO ANTROPOLOGICO DELLA MISSIONE: ASPIRAZIONI E BISOGNI DEI POPOLI.
- 6) Your Executive decided that the Secretariate should assist Fr. Willie Henkel of the Urbaniana University in the preparations for the triennial meeting of the INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MISSION STUDIES (IAMS) which will be held in Rome at the Augustinianum from June 29 to July 5, 1988. The theme of the six day meeting is: CHRISTIAN MISSION TOWARDS THE THIRD MILLENIUM. The Association is an international, interconfessional and interdisciplinary society for the scholarly study of Christian witness and its impact in the world. In 1986 membership included 625 individual and institutional members of which 200 are from the "Third World". We have helped in three meetings of the Association's Executive held in Rome over the past two years in preparation for the 1988 session. You will be receiving more information about this important event in the coming months.

- 7) Fr. Bill Jenkinson represented SEDOS at the ECUMENICAL MISSION CONSULTATION co-sponsored by the U.S. CATHOLIC MISSION ASSOCIATION AND THE DIVISION OF OVERSEAS MINISTRY OF THE U.S. NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES from September 27 to October 3, 1987, at the Mercy Centre in Madison, Connecticut. The theme of the Consultation was DIVIDED CHURCHES COMMON WITNESS: AN UNFINISHED TASK FOR U.S. CHRISTIANS IN MISSION. 90 Mission representatives attended, approximately half coming from Protestant and half from Catholic Churches. Eight participants were invited from outside the U.S.A. and included representatives from the Vatican Secretariate for Christian Unity. A remarkable spirit of unity characterised the whole Consultation and specific arrangements were made for some significant ecumenical initiatives between Catholic and Protestant mission activities in 1988 in the U.S. The group approved by consensus a final MESSAGE from the Consultation. It will be published in due course.

9. COMMISSION ON WORLD MISSION AND EVANGELISM (CWME).

Representatives from this W.C.C. Commission met with a SEDOS Group at the SEDOS Secretariate during their visit to Rome. The meeting provided a useful forum for an exchange on mission. A valuable discussion on Formation for Mission today followed on a short presentation by Sister Rose Fernando of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary. The combined group looked forward to closer contacts and CWME representatives will most probably attend the SEDOS Seminar at Villa Cavalletti in March 1982. Father John Mutiso Mbinda of the Secretariate for Christian Unity and Sister Joan Delaney, MM., the Secretariate's representative at the CWME in Geneva, were present for the meeting. Gene Stockwell, (General Secretary), Pegz Gunanan and Yorgo Lemapulo represented the CWME and Rose Fernando, FMM., John Jago, SM., Marie Heintz, SA., Mary Alice Haley, OSU., together with Helen O'Sullivan and Bill Jenkinson from the Secretariate represented SEDOS.

10. HEALTH CARE AND MISSION

Dr Margaret Marquart of the German Institute for Medical Missions in Tuebingen, West Germany, followed up contact with us early in the year by calling personally to SEDOS Secretariate. She is particularly concerned regarding health care for the poor and the imbalance in the very considerable amounts expended on sophisticated medical services for the well-off and the decreasing amounts assigned for medical services to the poor specially in "Third World" situations. She stresses the important part which is - and more importantly, - can be played in this field by members of the missionary Institutes. Your Executive Committee has decided to cooperate with Dr Marquart in arranging a one-day Seminar in Rome on Health Care for the Poor in the coming year. More information will follow.

11. THE DUTCH MISSIONARY COUNCIL

During their visit to Rome in June a delegation of five representatives from the Dutch Missionary Council met representatives of SEDOS. The main focus of the meeting was an interchange of ideas on criteria for assessing development projects, on the work of SEDOS, and on the nature and work of the Dutch Missionary Council which is in dialogue with some of the Dutch Bishops as a result of proposed changes in its Constitution. Father Thuys, O.Carm., Acting President of the Dutch Missionary Council was accompanied by Jules Steegmans, President of the Dutch Lenten Campaign, H. Smulders of CEBEMO, Harrie Verhoven, SSS., President of the Dutch Pontifical Mission Associations and H. Voss of Caritas Neerlandica.

Carlos Pape, SVD., Herman Wijtten, SVD., Paul Symonds, S.J., Bill Headley, CSSp., Gerard Heesterbeek, OFM., and Henry Volken, S.J., were with the SEDOS Secretariate staff.

12. SOUTH AFRICAN APARTHEID

A number of contacts were made during the year with visitors from South Africa. The visits of Sister Cecilia Smit, who is Secretary to Fr. Smangalis Mkhathwa and of Mr Noel Stott who is founding a documentation centre in Pretoria for the South African Bishops were notable. An inspiring session with Archbishop Hurley and Fr. Smangalis Mkhathwa on November 25, 1987, gave us an historical overview of the evolution of events in South Africa and of the constant pressures to which non-white people are subjected. The speakers pointed to a question which is becoming more and more crucial for the Churches in South Africa. When every possible legitimate avenue of protest is classified as criminal by the Government is there any possible recourse short of violence? They also drew our attention to possible SEDOS initiatives which will be communicated to members.

13. SOLIDARITY IN CRISIS NETWORK

Alerts issued during the year in cooperation with the Justice and Peace office of the Major Superiors of Women and Men were appreciated by SEDOS members, a number of whom did take action on the alerts. South Africa and Haiti were among the places about which alerts were sent out.

14. WORLD POVERTY

The Annual General Assembly of last year, December 1986, suggested that SEDOS organise a session on what the Religious Congregations could do to effect structural change. In response to this suggestion SEDOS Committee decided on two approaches:-

- i) to provide pertinent information through articles on World Poverty and the Debt Crisis in the current Issues of SEDOS Bulletin. This was done.

- ii) to cooperate with the Justice and Peace office of UISG/USG through the Associate Executive Secretary of SEDOS, Helene O'Sullivan, who is also on the Justice and Peace Executive. The Justice and Peace office is organising two meetings to which SEDOS members will be specially invited:-
 - a) On February 16, 1988, the Debt Crisis and its impact on world poverty, on the working classes and on the poor will be examined by internationally known experts;
 - b) A second meeting will be held one week later on February 23rd, to provide religious/missionary societies with an opportunity to share what they are doing and what can be done about the Debt Crisis.

You will be kept informed on these meetings.

15.

LAY MEMBERSHIP OF SEDOS

A suggestion was made to your Executive Committee at the Villa Cavalletti Seminar to consider the possibility of lay membership in SEDOS. The Executive is inviting members to form a small Committee which will study this suggestion and the implications for the existing SEDOS Statutes. The Secretariate is at present involved in forming this Committee.

16.

PEOPLE AT THE SECRETARIATE

Ms Jacintha Alagiah who has been Secretary since September 1982 will be leaving the Secretariate this year at the end of November 1987. She is entering the Congregation of the Missionaries of Fatima and will start her Novitiate on December 8th, 1987. The Rome address of the Congregation is via Arco della Pace, 5, 00186 Roma. The Novitiate is at Terni.

We will miss her very much. In addition to her many skills, Jacintha brought a spirit of joy and friendship to the Secretariate and to the SEDOS Meetings and Seminars where many of you met her. We wish her well. May she be happy in her new way of life. Our thoughts and prayers go with her.

In the section of the Documentation Centre we mentioned the great contribution to the work of the Secretariate made by Sister Walter Santos, OSU., Kathleen England, OSU., and Agnes Hoormann, RSCJ. Sister Walter returned to Bangkok in July 1987, where she has been in mission for over twenty years. Sister Kathleen has now gone to the Secretariate for Non-Christian Religions, but remains in contact with us. We are indeed very grateful to them.

Ms Antigone Lloyd now has responsibility for collating, addressing and mailing the SEDOS Bulletin and for part-time work in the Documentation Centre.

Ms Philippa Wooldridge comes on a temporary basis specially to help at times of urgent work.

Fr. Bill Jenkinson, CSSp, and Sister Helene O'Sullivan, MM. - Executive and Associate Executive Secretaries complete the team at the Secretariate.

AN URGENT APPEAL: The departure of Sister Walter Santos and Sister Kathleen England makes our efforts to complete the re-organisation of the Documentation Centre more difficult.

We are appealing for two people to come to the Secretariate for one half-day a week. The computer programme is not complicated. You can learn it very quickly and we assure you of a welcome, and besides - the half day at the Secretariate can be a rewarding experience !

Please do contact us: telephone: 5741350.

17.

COLLABORATION

Collaboration with others in the work of mission is a permanent concern of SEDOS. During the past year this collaboration has extended to a wide variety of dicasteries and agencies. Among these:-

- The Vatican Secretariate for Promoting Christian Unity
- The "Council of Eighteen" - the combined Council of Representative's from the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples and the Womens' and Mens' Union of Superiors General
- The "Sixth Commission" - the Mission Commission of the Womens' and Mens' Union of Superiors General
- UISG and USG - the Unions of Superiors General of Women and of Men
- Multimedia
- Agrimissio
- The Association of Italian Missionary Editors (EMI)
- The Association of Italian Mission Animators (SUAM)
- The World Catholic Federation for the Biblical Apostolate (WCFBA)
- The United States Catholic Mission Association (USCMA)
- The World Council of Churches' Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME)
- Pro Mundi Vita - Brussels (PMV)
- Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, Multi-Faith Project

Your Executive submitted a selection of priorities in mission for possible consideration by the Council of Eighteen. These were as follow: Growth of the Local Church; Promotion of Women; The Importance of Youth; The Need for Dialogue with Other Faiths; Awareness of Kingdom Values; The Ecumenical Dimension of Mission.

LOOKING FORWARD

The Annual Assembly will provide an opportunity for the membership to examine the plans for the year ahead. We refer briefly here to the topics that your Executive **pro**poses - some of which are already in process.

- (1) EVANGELIZATION: THE CHALLENGE OF MODERNITY is the topic for the March Seminar at Villa Cavalletti. Suggestions for the Autumn and Winter Seminars will emerge at the Annual Assembly.
- (2) LAITY IN MISSION. In order to maintain the momentum of interest in the lay faithful we propose a follow-up to the Synod following on publication of the Pope's Apostolic Exhortation on the Laity. Our interest will have particular reference to mission situations.
- (3) PROMOTION OF WOMEN: We propose to use the recent Synod on the Laity as a starting point for a Seminar on the Promotion of Women - once again with special reference to Mission.
- (4) APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA. SEDOS members will be invited to reflect on possible action resulting from our meeting with Archbishop Hurley and Fr. S. Mkhathswa
- (5) RELATIONS WITH ISLAM - Needs to be addressed from the religious as well as the political, social and economic aspects (See the article by Tom Michel, SJ, in SEDOS Bulletin 87/9, Oct. 15, 1987 . The Vows of Religious Life in an Islamic Context).
- (6) HEALTH CARE OF THE POOR - We will cooperate with Dr Margaret Marquart by sponsoring a one-day Seminar on the imbalance of medical resources particularly in the Third World.
- (7) ECOLOGY: Some SEDOS members have drawn our attention during the year to the ecological disasters occurring in the situations in which they work. We propose that this topic and respect for the integrity of creation should be addressed by SEDOS during the coming year.
- (8) DIALOGUE - will be considered in its wider aspects in the course of the three sessions which will be facilitated by Michael Amaladoss, SJ, - referred to above.

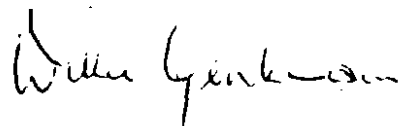
CONCLUSION

SEDOS will continue the task of enabling its members to exchange ideas and experiences about mission: seeking practical guidelines by means of information, documentation, studies and Seminars; stimulating thought and action in the Service of Mission and Evangelization.

We live in a changing world. It does not necessarily set the agenda for mission but it does influence it to a considerable degree. A simple example is the difficulty experienced today in obtaining entry permits and visas. This concentrates our thinking on such basic principles as the growth of the local Church, local vocations, basic communities and local lay leadership, inculturation, diversity and subsidiarity - and a host of others.

In the midst of all our efforts it is salutary to remind ourselves at year's end that without Him in whose name we witness we can do nothing, we are unprofitable servants. We commend our efforts to the Lord and pray that He may guide us in initiating them and bring them to fulfillment.

We thank you sincerely for your constant trust, support and collaboration.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Willie Jenkinson', with a stylized, flowing script.

Willie Jenkinson, CSSp.

Executive Secretary

APPENDIX I

SEDOS BULLETIN SUBJECT INDEX 1987

- AFRICA:** The Refugee Crisis in Africa: Opportunity and Challenge for the Church, 267-271; The Place of Missionary Societies in Africa Today, 272-277; The African Contribution to Evangelization, 244-246; Church Ministries for the Laity, 116-117; The Option for the Poor in South Africa, 90-97; Christianity and Islam in Dialogue: Statement from the Fourth Plenary Assembly of the Association of the Episcopal Conferences of Anglophone West Africa (ITCABIC), 58-63; Modestes Recherches d'une Communauté de Laïcs du Tiers Monde et des Congrégations Religieuses, 173-183; The Eschatology of the Kairos Document, 285-292; The Situation in South Africa, 362-371; Solidarity Network 372. L'Eglise au Burkina-Faso à l'heure du Synode, 324
- ASIA:** Religion in the Texture of Asian Life, 236-243; Conversion without Change of Community, 278-282; The Spirit Stopped Us From Going in to Asia, 153-162; Evangelization in Asia: A New Focus, 350-358.
- BASIC CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES** Diocesan Pastoral Planning with Base Communities, 293-295; Basic Ecclesial Communities in Annotto Bay, Jamaica, 250-252; Base Communities and Political Practice, 359-361; The Aisling Community - Families in Mission, 141-152; Ecclesial "People-Power", 245-246.
- BIBLE:** How did Jesus react to suffering ?, 98-101.
- BOOK NOTES:** Care for the Earth, 253; A Call to a New Theology, 254; P'eng P'ai and the Hai-Lu-Feng Soviet, 379; A Bibliography on Laity and Ministry in the Church, 127-129; 68; 310-312; 127-130; 102;
- BRAZIL:** The Church and Land Reform in Brazil. Report from a Delegation of the U.S.A. Bishops, 71-76; The Laywoman's Mission in Latin America Today, 163-172;
- BUDDHISM:** Encounter with New Forces, 238;
- CHINA:** The Emerging Local Church in China, 247-249; P'eng P'ai and the Hai-Lu-Feng Soviet, 379; 157-158;
- DIALOGUE:** Dialogue of Life: A letter from Kishorganj, Bangladesh; 86-88; Some Thoughts on Leaving Tangail, 1986, 88-90; Christianity and Islam in Dialogue: Statement from the Fourth Plenary Assembly of the Association of the Episcopal Conferences of Anglophone West Africa, 58-63;

- ECONOMICS:** Religions, Ecology and Economics, 305-309; Global Debt: A Human Problem, 211;
- EGYPT:** Modestes Recherches d'une Communauté de Laïcs du Tiers-Monde et des Congrégations Religieuses: Description de la situation Egyptienne, 173-183;
- EUCCHARIST:** The Laity: Some Questions Before the Synod, 216-224;
- EVANGELIZATION:** The African Contribution to Evangelization, 244-246; Evangelization in Asia: A New Focus, 350-358; Social Apostolate, 373-378; Critical Contextualization, 337-345; Conversion Without Change of Community, 278-282;
- HINDUISM:** Could Hindus Professing The Christian Faith Have Remained Hindus ?, 280-281;
- INCULTURATION:** The Laywoman's Mission in Latin America Today, 163-171; Conversion Without Change of Community, 278-282; Critical Contextualization, 337-345;
- INDIA:** Critical Contextualization, 337-345; Conversion Without Change of Community, 278-282;
- ISLAM:** Description de la situation Egyptienne, 174; Religion in the Context of Asian Life, 240-241; The Vows of Religious Life in an Islamic Context, 296-302; The Apostolate of Presence Is Not Enough, 303-304;
- JUSTICE:** Taking a Corporate Stance, Signs of Hope in the U.S. Church, 120-125; The Eschatology of the Kairos Document, 285-292;
- LAITY:** Vocation and Mission of the Laity in the Church and in the World Twenty Years after the Second Vatican Council, 17-26; A Preparatory Consultation for the Synod on the Laity from the Italian National Council for the Lay Apostolate, 27-32; Some Lay Consultations in England for the 1987 Bishops' Synod on the Vocation and Mission of the Laity, 33-38; The Synod on the Laity: some thoughts on the preparatory document, 44-51; Is Co-Responsibility Possible in Our Church. Models of the Church and their "hidden" Obstacles, 105-113; Church Ministries for the Laity, 114-119; Modestes Recherches d'une Communauté de laïcs du Tiers-Monde et des Congrégations Religieuses, 173-183; The Laity: Some Questions before the Synod, 216-224; Laity in the Mission of the Church Now and in the Future. 133-183;
- LATIN AMERICA:** The Church and Land Reform in Brazil, 71-76; The Laywoman's Mission in Latin America Today, 163-172; Political Projects and God's Project, 359-361;

- LOCAL CHURCH:** The Emerging Local Catholic Church in China, 247-249;
- MINISTRY:** Reconceptualizing the Missionary Calling, 41-43; Tomorrow's World: Training for Mission, 201-210; Healing as a Missiological Challenge, 227-235;
- POVERTY-WORLD:** Excerpts from John-Paul's Address to the Community of St. Egidio, 64.65; The Option for the Poor In South Africa, 90-97;
- RELIGIONS AND PEACE:** Day of Prayer for Peace, Assisi, 27.X.86, 77-85;
- SEDOS ASSEMBLY REPORT:** Seminar and Annual Report to the General Assembly, December 1986, 5-16;
- SEDOS SEMINARS:** Vocation and Mission of the Laity in the Church and in the World Twenty Years After the Second Vatican Council: a Mission Perspective by Séan Fagan, MM
A Preparatory Consultation For The Synod on the Laity From The Italian National Council For The Lay Apostolate by Emma Cavallaro;
Some Lay Consultations In England For The 1987 Bishops' Synod On The Vocation and Mission of The Laity by Margaret Hebblethwaite, 33-38;
- Laity in the Mission of the Church Now and in the Future. March 24-28, 1987:
- Part I - The Story of Deirdre and Dermot
Part II - The Aisling Community - Families in Mission by Dermot and Deirdre McLoughlin, 141-152;
The Spirit Stopped Us from Going into Asia by Donald Nicholl, 153-162;
The Laywoman's Mission in Latin America Today by Anna Maria Tepedino, 163-172;
Modestes Recherches d'une Communauté de Laïcs du Tiers-Monde et des Congrégations Religieuses by Amin Fahim, 173-183;
Feedback on the Synod and the Vocation and Mission of the Laity in the Church, (November), 313-336;
An Experience of the Synod: A representative of the Major Superiors of Women by Helen McLaughlin, RSCJ, 315-316;
An Experience of the Synod: A Representative of the Major Superiors of Men by Anthony McSweeney, SSS, 316-332;
L'Eglise au Burkina-Faso à l'heure du Synode:angoisse et Esperance by Mgr. Jean Baptiste Kiedrebeogo, 324-328;
Looking at the Synod in Retrospect by Peregrina Morgan, 329-332;
The Synod on the Laity. A Theological Perspective by Jacques Dupuis, SJ, 333-336;

VI

Aim of the Seminar, 130; A Synthesis of the Seminar, 184-188; "Good Ideas" - suggestions which emerged at the 1987 Seminar as a Follow-up to this Seminar, 189-191; The Laity: Some Questions Before the Synod, 216-224;

SOCIAL CENTERS: Address to Jesuit Social Centers, 373-378;

SOLIDARITY South Africa Thanks for Support, 372;
NETWORK:

SYNOD: An Experience of the Synod: A Representative of the Major Superiors of Women, 315; An Experience of the Synod: A Representative of the Major Superiors of Men, 316-323; L'Eglise au Burkina-Faso à l'heure du Synode: Angoisse et Esperance, 234-328; Looking at the Synod in Retrospect, 329-332; The Synod of the Laity: A Theological Perspective, 333-336;

THAILAND: Reconceptualizing the Missionary Calling, 41-43;

URBAN MISSION: Assessing the Future of Urbanization, 258-259; The Urban Context of the Global Christian Mission, 260-266;

WOMEN: Sculpting Feminine Features on the Face of the Church, 167-171;

WORLD CHURCH: The Way Forward for the First World Church in Europe, 51-58;

 SEDOS BULLETIN: AUTHOR INDEX 1987

Amaladoss, M.	SJ	216-224; 350-358	Kalilombe, P.A.	WF	272-277
Arrupẽ, P.	SJ	267-271	Kerkofs, J.	SJ	114-119
Berry, T.		305-309	Kiedrebeogo, J-B.		324-328
Boff, C.		51- 58	Kolvenbach, P-H.	SJ	373-378
Brown, L.R.		258-259	Loftus, M.	SNDN	184-188
Cavallaro, E.		27- 32	McCahill, B.	MM	86- 90; 303-305
De Conti, M.		329-332	McDonagh, S.	SSC	253-254
Donnelly, T.		41- 43	McLoughlin, D & D.		141-152
DuBose, F.M.		260-266	McLaughlin, H.	RSCJ	315-318
Dupuis, J.	SJ	333-336	M. Sweezy A.	SSS	319-323
Fagan, S.	SM	17- 26	Meeusen, M.	ICM	250-252
Fahim, A.		173-183	Michel, T.	SJ	296-302
Fragoso, A.B.		293-295 359-361	Mkhatshwa, S.		370-371
Galbiati, F.	PIME	379	Nicholl, D.		153-162
Gittins, A.	CSSp	201-210	Nolan, A.	OP	90- 97 285-292
Grundman, C.		227-235	O'Leary, J.	OP	44- 51
Hebblethwaite, M.		33- 38	O'Sullivan, H.	MM	189-191; 120-125
Henriot, P.	SJ	211-215	Ortemann, C.		98-101
Heyndrickx, J.	CICM	247-249	Pierli, F.	MCCJ	130
Hiebert, P.G.		337-345	Pope John Paul II		64- 65
Hurley, D.		362-369	Saldanha, J.	SJ	278-282
Inter-territorial Catholic Bishops' Conference of The Gambia, Liberia, Sierra Leone		58- 63	Shorter, A.	WF	244-246
Jacobson, J.		258-259	Tepedino, A.M.		163-172
Joseph, J.		105-113	USA Bishops		71- 76
			Wilfred, F.		236-243
			Zago, M.	OMI	77- 85