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### IN THIS ISSUE

Two contributions in this issue deal with spirituality in situations of violence. The MARYKNOLL SISTERS who have lived through the violence of El Salvador and Nicaragua meditate on the storm on the lake of Galilee; they were afraid-like the disciples as the boat filled with water and Jesus appeared unconcerned. They have survived, their faith is strengthened and they are ready to face the uncertain future with a new faith and determination.

The second is the message from the THIRD ASIAN THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE OF THE ECUMENICAL ASSOCIATION OF THIRD WORLD THEOLOGIANS. They search for a "liberation spirituality". They reject violence and one of its more vicious manifestations - sexism. They search for a spirituality which originates from the Spirit of God and contributes to the balance and blossoming, the healing and wholeness of life, of the human race, the earth, the cosmos.

(see also the Conference of Thomas Cullinan, OSB on "A Spirituality for Conflict" in SEDOS Bulletin, 84/No.1, January 15, 1984, 3-12).

It is important in inter-religious dialogue to hear how the partners in dialogue understand their own religion. ISLAM EXPLAINED has been published in consultation with Dr. DAVID KERR, Professor of Islamic Studies, Hartford Seminary in Connecticut. Many current references to Islamic fundamentalism seem to ignore the principles outlined here and treat Islam as nothing more than a political phenomenon. It may well replace Marxist-Communism as the enemy of the NEW RIGHT. (see also the article on Salman Rushdie's "Satanic Verses" in SEDOS Bulletin, 90/7, 15 July, 1990).

MARIO BIANCHI, IMC attended the

Lima preparatory meeting for the significant "COMLA IV" (THE FOURTH LATIN AMERICAN CONGRESS) which is the theme of the SEDOS Seminar on 9th October next.

There is an article from Sr. EM MCGLONE of the Medical Mission Sisters dealing with SPIRITUAL HEALING, a follow-up to the SEDOS Seminar on HEALTH IN A SEARCH FOR WHOLENESS reported on in SEDOS Bulletin, 90/7, 15 July, 1990.

WALTER HOLLENWEGER'S short incisive piece on The Challenge of Indigenous Churches written in the context of New Religious Movements also draws attention to the importance of healing in Christian mission.

We apologise for the late appearance of the 1989 INDEX.

## NEWS

### PERSONNEL A FAREWELL.

Sister HELENE O'SULLIVAN of the MARYKNOLL SISTERS completed her service in SEDOS at the end of July, 1990. Helene came to SEDOS in January 1986. Her contract was actually completed in December 1989 but at the earnest request of the SEDOS Executive Committee and with the approval of the Governing Board of the Maryknoll Sisters this was extended to July of this year. She was thus able to take part fully in the considerable activities which marked this Silver Jubilee Year of SEDOS.

At the 1989 SEDOS Research Seminar on Mission held at Villa Cavalletti in March of this year participants had the opportunity of ex-

pressing their appreciation and gratitude to Helene. It was the fifth Annual Research Seminar which she had helped to organise and to which she brought her considerable organising abilities. It was not only the seminars that were enriched by Helene. She made a splendid contribution to all the activities of SEDOS during these five years bringing to it new ideas, a fresh creative spirit, and a wealth of experience from her fifteen years in Hong Kong and her six years in the Office of Social Concern of the Maryknoll Sisters at their New York Headquarters.

She entered wholeheartedly into a team work approach which marked the work of all the departments of the Secretariat during these years. SEDOS

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## REFLECTION ON OUR EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE AND CONFLICT

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Maryknoll Sisters in Nicaragua

April 16, 1990

*(The following was written after a day's reflection on some of the violence that we have experienced individually and in groups in El Salvador and in Nicaragua from 1975 to 1990).*

"The winds blew so strong the waves dashed against the boat and filled it with water"

We were afraid. There were bodies in the streets. We needed permission to bury them! The Contras killed two Coop. members.

2.00am. Pounding on a door nearby. Shots. Silence. More pounding. More shots. We never knew where the danger would come from. We walked with arms over our heads, automatic weapons pointed at us, never moving out of single file. We lay in silence on the floor, shots passing over our house. We heard the bombs in the hills. Our boys are out there. Planes circling over head.

The road was cut off, no electricity, no water, no outside communication, surrounded by Contras for a month.

Fifty children in Church with me and the Guard shooting over us. Fear for myself, my own life, fear for the people I love. We cried and grieved.

"First they killed my daddy, then my mommy. My Daddy's feet were bare and I put his slippers on."

17 priests killed, dear friends, lay leaders, our Monseñor. The whole town was one large gaping wound. 80 persons killed.

"I could not recognize my son. They

threw acid in his face, his body so tortured, it was his clothes that told me it was he."

Our dear sisters Maura, Ita, Dorothy and Jean disappeared, raped, shot and we could not go to them even in death.

We were enraged.  
At women "de-wombed". At the National Guard who calmly looked at my friends lying in their blood. "What a shame", he said.

At our country for our part in these atrocities.

Our sister Nancy kidnapped, held by the Contras all day hearing the shots that killed her people.

"Wake up Jesus!!! Don't you care?"

We called out but could hear nothing  
So difficult to pray, I could only cry.

So difficult to hear each other's stories

To listen deeply and feel the pain and mourn together

To admit our brokenness and our frailty

To trust each other with it

To make decisions.

"Jesus confronted the violent wind and sea,

'Be quiet! Be calm!'"

You had to have heard us Jesus. How else could we have found the strength to respond?

Our people called us and we were there

They were massacred and we buried them

Were threatened and we stood by them  
 We more than survived  
 We responded pastorally to ourselves  
 We met together to tell our stories  
 We analyzed, both with our communities and with our people. Sometimes we lacked dialogue and trust. Now we know that if dialogue and trust are not present before a crisis they would not be there in its intensity. We sought psychological help when we recognized the need. We worked on relationships in community. Sought moments of "pray - play" together.

Decisions were made with the best information available, coloured by the intensity of the moment. We'd never been there before. What makes a decision "good" or "bad"?

We recognized the need to trust in a diversity of visions, styles of responses, capacity to handle intensely emotional situations.

"They were astounded! Who can this be?"

So many more questions than answers. What is reconciliation in Nicaragua? What is unity? Can we be neutral as Church? How do we take sides without being identified with a political party? How do we resolve apparent conflict between union with the hierarchical Church and the prophetic stance of Jesus? We are still on the edge of armed violence. How do we respond to the new threats of loss of liberty? Reversal of revolutionary gains? Entrenchment of an even more conservative Church?

There is still much turbulence in that deep sea, much turbulence deep within us that surges at unexpected times and moments.

We are not who we were five, ten, fifteen years ago. Our faith is stronger and our trust in ourselves, each other, and in community has deepened. We know that we have lived through tough times. We have not only survived but are ready to face the uncertain future, to minister with a new faith and determination.

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## ISLAM EXPLAINED

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(Published by Mr. Abdul Jalil, Chairman of Al-Huda Islamic Center, P.O. Box 962, Elberton, Georgia 30635 (Tel. 404/283-7510); in consultation with Dr. David Kerr, Professor of Islamic Studies, Hartford Seminary, Hartford, Connecticut; distributed through the Office for Christian-Muslim Relations of the National Council of Churches of Christ of the United States of America, New York, Hartford.)

In the Name of Allah, the beneficent, the merciful. **ALLAH** - for Muslims the greatest and most inclusive of the Names of God, an Arabic word of rich and varied meaning, denoting the One Who is adored in worship, Who creates all that exists, Who has priority over all creation, Who is lofty and hidden, Who confounds all human understanding. It is exactly the same word as, in Hebrew, the Jews use for God (*eloh*), the word which Jesus Christ used in Aramaic when he prayed to God. God has an identical name in Judaism, Christianity and Islam; Allah is the same God worshipped by Muslims, Christians and Jews.

"He is God, the One God,  
Independent and Sought by all;  
He begets not, nor is He begotten,  
and there is none like unto Him."  
(The Holy Qur'an, Chapter of  
Sincerity of Faith)

**Islam** teaches that all faiths have, in essence, one common message:

the existence of a Supreme Being, the One and Only God, whose sovereignty is to be acknowledged in worship and in the pledge to obey His teaching and commandments, conveyed through His messengers and prophets who were sent at various times and in many places throughout history.

**Islam**, An Arabic word, is rich in meaning. One important dimension is the "commitment to submit and surrender to God so that one could live in peace", peace (*salam*) is achieved

through active obedience to the revealed Commandments of God, for God is the Source of all Peace. Commitment to **Islam** entails striving for peace through a struggle for justice, equality of opportunity, mutual caring and consideration of others' rights, and continuous research and acquisition of knowledge for the better protection and utilization of the resources of the universe.

**Islam** teaches that the objective of the Commandments of God is that peace should be established in the human societies of this world, in preparation for a further dimension of human existence in the world to come, the Afterlife. **Islam's** vision of peace is therefore truly universal; it transcends time and belongs to the order of God's eternity.

**Islam** does not regard itself to be a new teaching, different or separate from that of other world religions. It is the re-affirmation of the ancient yet living truth of all religions which can be expressed in the following beliefs:

- the Uniqueness of the One and Only God who is Sovereign of the universe;
- the Revelation of the teaching and commandments of God through Angels in heaven to Prophets on earth, and written in sacred writings which all have the same transcendent source; these contain the will of God which marks the way of peace for the whole universe and all of humankind;
- the Day of Judgement which inaugurates the Afterlife in which God

rewards and punishes with respect to human obedience to His will.

Islam affirms these simple beliefs as the basis of the decent, civilized society for which it strives. Its vision of society is, in essence, no different from that upheld by all monotheistic religions. This is particularly true of Judaism and Christianity which share with Islam the direct spiritual lineage of the Prophet Abraham. Islam affirms the divinely-ordained missions of the Prophet Moses, through whom God revealed the sacred scripture called the Torah, and of the Prophet Jesus, through whom God revealed the scripture known as the Gospel. The message of Islam is in essence the same as that which God revealed to all his prophets and messengers. The Prophet Muhammed (the peace and blessing of God be upon him) was commanded to recite in the Holy Qur'an:

"Say: we believe in God,  
and that which was revealed unto us,  
and that which was revealed unto  
Abraham and Ishmael  
and Isaac and Jacob, and the tribes,  
and that which was vouchsafed unto  
Moses and Jesus  
and the prophets from their Lord;  
We make no distinction between any of  
them,  
and unto Him we have surrendered."

The Holy Qur'an 3:84

The success of civilizations and cultures is directly related to the extent of their practice of the righteous way of life revealed in the teaching and commandments of God, and set forth in the monotheistic religions which are confirmed by Islam. God's revelation enshrines the highest values of humankind, and the divine commandments are essentially no different from the values which human beings have cherished and striven to maintain throughout history, irrespective of cultural, racial, linguistic and socio-economic differences. Success in this life is directly related to the practice of these values.

Islam teaches that human diversity is a sign of the richness of God's mercy, and that God wills human beings to compete with each other in goodness in order to test who is the finest in action: this is, according to Islam, the reason for the creation of the universe. To strive for peace in the societies of this world is to compete in the fulfillment of human destiny in preparation for the ultimate Abode of Peace in a further, renewed dimension of human existence in the Afterlife. The irreducible minimum of faith is to believe in God as the sole sovereign Lord of this world and of the next, and to believe in the reality of the Afterlife for which human beings are to prepare by living righteously in this world. God alone is the Judge of human righteousness, and it is God alone who rewards and punishes in this life and in the life hereafter.

"Righteousness does not mean for you to tune your faces towards the East and West, but righteousness means one should believe in God (Alone), the Last Day, angels, the Book and prophets; and no matter how he loves it, to give his wealth away to near relatives, orphans, the needy, the wayfarer and beggars, and towards freeing captives; and to keep up prayer and pay the welfare tax; and those who keep their word whenever they promise anything; and are patient under suffering and hardship and in time of peril (stress). Those are the ones who act loyal and perform their duty."

The Holy Qur'an 2:177

**A Muslim** is one who is committed to peace by continuously striving to follow the way of righteousness and justice revealed by God; the Arabic word *muslim* refers to a man, *muslima* to a woman. In either case the literal meaning is "one who submits to God's teachings and commandments which leads to peace".

**Muslims** have three distinct advantages to help them in the practice of Islam as their way of life:

1) The Sacred Scripture, called the *Qur'an* which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the 7th century of the common era, and which, after 1,400 years remains authentic in its original Arabic text, in the language which is still used and understood by millions of people in the world today; it contains God's guidance in teachings and commandments which are valid for all times and places, and which encompass all spheres of human life;

2) The Prophet Muhammad, whom the *Qur'an* names as "the Seal (last) of the Prophets", and of whose life and mission there is a complete and authentic record in the *Sira* and the *Hadith (Sunna)*; these show how he exemplified the teachings and commandments of God in practice, and elaborated the principles laid down in the *Qur'an* in order to provide a sure guidance for their interpretation and application for all later times and societies;

3) The Sacred Law, called the *Shari'ah*, which sets out the way of worship prescribed in the *Qur'an* and the Prophet's practice; it goes beyond the common understanding of worship as the performance of religious rituals, and encompasses the whole of human life, individual and social; thus all so-called secular activities become acts of worship, provided they are performed with pure and righteous intention, seeking God's pleasure.

**Muslims** are enjoined to organize their lives on the basis of a series of ritual acts of worship which are ordained in the *Qur'an* as ways which discipline human beings to remember God constantly, accepting His Sovereignty and pledging to obey His commandments:

**1) Declaration of belief (Shahada):** this is the initial act of faith, expressed in a simple credal statement which testifies one's commitment to following the straight path of God's guidance upon which Muslims

seek to live their lives;

"I bear witness that there is no god but God;

"I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and His prophet."

**2) Prayer (salat)**, offered five times a day, has the effect of reminding the faithful that "remembrance of God is indeed the greatest virtue," and helps them adhere to the path of righteousness, and to restrain themselves from indecency and evil.

**3) Fasting (sawm)**, observed through the daylight hours of the 29/30 days of the Islamic month of Ramadan, involves abstinence from eating, drinking, smoking and marital intercourse; this reminds the believers of their dependence upon God, as well as their kinship with and responsibility for the millions of human beings in the world who experience involuntary fasting because of the lack of provisions, or their unjust distribution.

**4) Purification of wealth (Zakat):** this requires the annual giving of a fixed amount of excess personal assets for the benefit of the poor, the incapacitated, the deprived, and the welfare of the community; it serves to remind Muslims that all beneficence comes from the bounty of God, and is enjoyed only by His mercy; sharing becomes an act of purification both of the wealth itself, and of the giver whose soul is disciplined against greed by the virtue of selflessness.

**5) Pilgrimage (Hajj)**, which all Muslims should perform at least once in a lifetime if personal circumstances permit, gathers the believers as members of the diverse human family into a single community; they perform prescribed acts of worship at the holy House of the *Ka'ba* in Mecca which, according to the *Qur'an*, was originally built by the Prophet Abraham and his son Ishmael; and at Mount Arafat where they remember the pure and original way of life of Adam, the progenitor of all human

beings reaffirmed by the Patriarch of the entire human family, the Prophet Abraham, and finally perfected and completed by God for all humanity through the mission of the Prophet Muhammad - the way of life known as Islam which has at its heart the doctrine of the unity and uniqueness of the One God.

Each of these prescribed acts of worship bring Muslims daily and repeatedly before God Almighty as the Creator, Sustainer and Judge of all humanity.

Through these acts of worship God helps Muslims to fulfill the obligation of striving which He has ordained for this life: the striving actively and freely to surrender one's own will in obedience to the Will of God, inwardly in intention and outwardly in word and deed,

individually in personal conduct and collectively in the improvement of society; the striving for peace in the world through the announcement of true faith, and its defense against all that threatens it.

**Islam** presents human beings with a simple twofold invitation:  
to witness that there is no god but God Almighty;  
to witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of God.

This declaration is the door to a life of service, and to participation in a community of believers whose highest duty is to call humanity to embrace what is righteous and good, and to reject what is evil and degrading. *Muslims* are sisters and brothers of all people of true faith, and wish to strive with them for peace in this world.

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## LATIN AMERICA, FROM YOUR FAITH SEND MISSIONARIES

THE FOURTH LATIN AMERICAN CONGRESS, LIMA, FEBRUARY 1991

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Mario Bianchi, IMC  
Secretary General, P.M.U.

I took part in the Vth Continental Meeting of Lima which was held from 20-24 November last year, in preparation for The Fourth Latin American Congress, to be held in Lima in February 1991.

The Meeting took place in two phases, because it had two themes and objectives, distinct and at the same time connected to each other: the evaluation and definition of the preparation for COMLA 4 in individual countries and on a continental level; a missiological reflection, in keeping with the situation and missionary journey of the Latin American Church.

I feel that the tension and the spirit that guided the lively discussions, the exchange of information, the assembly's proposals and moments of prayer, are well expressed by the slogan and general programme of COMLA 4: **«Latin America from your faith send Missionaries»**

For the Church of Latin America the time has come to open to and commit herself decidedly to the universal »ad gentes« mission. The forthcoming Missionary Congress of Lima appears as if it will be a truly historical ecclesial event of this new missionary dimension.

This desire can be seen in the documents for COMLA 4 and in what was said and proposed during the Lima Meeting. However, the missionary journey must be considered and compared with the real situations of the Latin American continent, so that

this opening to mission, important as it is for the Latin American Church and the universal Church, may be undertaken with understanding, solidarity and hope.

The truly historic moment has arrived for Latin America. It coincides with the Vth Centenary of the evangelization of the continent and with the approach of the Third Millennium of Christianity. The Church of Latin America must go from receiving to giving; Latin American missionaries must set out in ever greater number for other continents to carry out the first announcing of the Gospel to non-Christians. Only in this way will Latin America become - as the Pope said - the continent of missionary hope.

It is good to know and remember the principal aspects and problems that the missionary Church has to face in Latin America today.

**1. Preparation and celebration of the Vth Centenary of evangelization.** All the Christian communities of the continent are preparing for this event so as to respond to the challenges of the new evangelization, which the Pope indicated as a theme for reflection for the renewal of the Latin American Church.

**2. «Give from your poverty»** The Puebla phrase was a turning-point; it has become a slogan and a programme. So it is good to examine it and evaluate it in its total significance which in different ways concern and

condition missionary evangelization.

As you know, in Latin America there are many situations of real poverty, often associated with situations of injustice and violation of human rights. In many local Churches there is a shortage of priests, to the detriment of the growth of Christian communities. This poverty cannot be ignored. Human promotion is inseparable from evangelization. Anyone who has a missionary spirit is even more sensitive to the cry of the poor and the oppressed. The poverty of vocations in local communities has a negative influence on missionary vocations. It also creates many *ad intra* mission situations that need to be solved.

3. **«From your faith, send missionaries»** This desire is reflected in the programme of COMLA 4, now in preparation. Faith is at the heart of this perspective, it is both gift and participation in the «*ad gentes*» mission in two very important ways:

a) Gift - the experience of faith made by the Church of Latin America shown in the depth of popular piety and of the experience of basic ecclesial communities. This can become, through her missionaries, an inspiration for the new mission communities.

b) Participation - the freshness and vitality of the faith of Latin America Christian communities will find its most demanding test in the promotion of missionary vocations, in sending «*ad gentes*» missionaries:

priests, men and women religious, lay people.

This is a demanding challenge because consecrating oneself to missionary work, above all with a commitment for life has never been easy, nor will it ever be easy for anyone. It is the Holy Spirit who raises up missionary vocations from Christian communities. The Spirit's call is connected both to the generous collaboration of those who are chosen and to the community to which they belong. Strength and grace is given by that same Holy Spirit who is the real protagonist of the vocation and of the missionary work.

It is a cause for joy and at the same time for anxious hope to think that the continent which contains nearly half the Catholics in the world, is shaken today by the breath of the Spirit of Pentecost projecting Churches of that continent into the universal «*ad gentes*» mission.

Mission is always a giving and a receiving, an exchange of gifts. If Latin America is to send, from her faith and her poverty, missionaries who will enrich the missionary Church, then she needs the support and love of the whole Church.

Ref. *Omnis Terra*, No. 205, February, 1990. This is an abridged version of the first part of Fr. Bianchi's article which deals in detail with the two-day study held at Lima in November, 1989 in preparation for COMLA 4.

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**THE SEARCH FOR A  
LIBERATION SPIRITUALITY \*  
THE EATWOT ASIA EXPERIENCE**

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*(Forty delegates from Hong Kong, Philippines, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, and Korea, gathered at the Ewha Women's University Retreat House in Suanbo, Korea, on July 3-8, 1989, for the Third Asian Theological Conference (ATC III) of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT). We lived together worshipped, reflected, loved, cried, struggled, sang, danced and laughed together. This message is the fruit of our ongoing search for an Asian liberation spirituality).*

"In the beginning  
God made heaven and earth  
Earth was without form and void  
and the Spirit of God  
Brooded over the surface  
of the waters"  
Genesis 1:1-2

ASIA.....

We paused in silence  
Before the awesome reality of Asia  
Her vastness, variety  
and complexity  
Her peoples, languages, cultures  
The richness of her history  
And the present poverty  
of her peoples.

We took Asia to our hearts  
Saw her and felt her within us  
Embraced her  
In her wholeness and brokenness  
While her rivers and tears  
flowed through us  
Her winds, her sighs, her spirits,  
Her moans, her howls, blew within us.

There is a rich Asia and a poor Asia  
Richness and poverty exist  
between nations  
And inside nations  
But the stark reality stands out;  
Most of Asia is poor.

It is a continent  
of vibrant religiousness  
Of living Faiths Confucianism, Taoism  
Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Shamanism,  
Christianity, and primal religions.

It is a continent  
of vast ethnic differences  
A diversity of cultures  
and indigenous traditions  
Which enrich Asian countries.

Though rocked  
by division and conflicts  
there is in Asia  
an emerging political consciousness,  
People seek justice  
demand basic human rights  
struggle for freedom and self-  
determination  
in their endeavor to promote life.

On arriving in Korea  
a country divided  
for well-nigh fifty years  
and even before we began our work  
we were saddened to hear  
that Christians working  
to overcome this division  
have been oppressed, detained,  
imprisoned.

In this challenging scenario  
forty women and men  
from different parts of Asia  
converged in Suanbo in Korea.  
Amidst the fragrance of pine, fir,  
and limestone hills  
our spirits fused.  
Together we searched  
for a spirituality  
that would free us  
from all that shackles and dehumanizes

In our search dawned  
the realization that we are hemmed in

by obstacles on all sides:  
 socio-economic, political, cultural,  
 religious, personal,  
 and psychological.  
 Obstacles that stifle truth  
 distort good  
 mar beauty  
 destroy unity and harmony  
 deface humanity  
 and pervert creation.

Our religious institutions  
 are patriarchal and  
 over-institutionalized.  
 They stunt human growth  
 rendering us silent spectators  
 and accomplices  
 in situations of injustice.

We discerned these realities.  
 We arrived at fresh insights  
 into sources of a spirituality  
 that is freeing all  
 from the principalities and powers  
 of this world.

We affirmed the value of non-verbal,  
 non-textual and non-scriptural,  
 religio-cultural sources  
 from which have irrupted into history  
 a variety of liberation movements:  
 the tribals, Dalits, Minjung,  
 the Cordillera people, the peasants,  
 human rights activists, women,  
 youth, peace and ecology groups  
 An authentic spiritual strength  
 emanates from their liberative  
 "primal visions"  
 and common life-experiences.

We recognized creative spiritual  
 resources born of music, poetry, dance  
 plays and dramas,  
 myths and legends,  
 folklores and cultural forms  
 connected with cosmic religiosity,  
 animistic cults,  
 and shamanistic practices  
 with their catalyzing forces  
 constituting the total ethos  
 of our people.

The source of our Asian  
 liberative spirituality  
 is the Asian people's struggles  
 against oppression,  
 the history of such struggles,

and hopes for a better future.  
 The memory of such struggles  
 and hopes is enshrined  
 in our people's sacred Scriptures,  
 stories and celebrations.

The Christian Bible is in itself  
 the story of the Judaeo-Christian  
 struggles for liberation.

For us EATWOT members  
 these memories and Scriptures  
 are precious.  
 The memory of Jesus  
 is particularly important for us.  
 His life, death and resurrection  
 are for all of us  
 summons and inspiration  
 to liberation praxis.  
 What then is spirituality?

Spirituality for us is bound up  
 with life  
 and all that life involves.  
 It is freedom and food,  
 dignity and equality,  
 community and sharing of resources.  
 It is creativity and celebration  
 of the God of life and liberation.

Spirituality originates  
 from the Spirit of God  
 who fills the earth  
 who gives, guides and accompanies,  
 blesses, accepts and works with.  
 Spirituality is  
 contemplation and praxis.  
 It is all that can contribute  
 to the balance and blossoming,  
 the healing and wholeness of life,  
 of the human race,  
 the earth,  
 the cosmos.

Spirituality comports two aspects:  
 OPENNESS and RESPONSE-ABILITY.  
 Openness to all humans,  
 all of nature,  
 from atom and molecules  
 to the ultimate mystery we call God.  
 Response is the second moment  
 a relevant reply to the need at hand  
 the cry of the situation  
 the call of God  
 that comes through people and events.

In the process of liberation

the reality of violence surfaces  
sooner or later.

Asian peoples  
are said to be tolerant,  
passive, and fatalistic.  
But down the centuries  
Asian peoples have been known  
to resist oppression fiercely.  
The term "violence"  
is used by oppressors  
to hide their oppression  
and denigrate any resistance  
to their supremacy.

In the face of State oppression  
and institutional violence  
armed resistance  
is sometimes unavoidable.  
But we Christians are ill at ease  
when arms are resorted to.  
Violence breeds violence  
intensifies hatred and contempt  
and divides God's people.  
We value the tradition  
of respect for life.

The martyrs who have sacrificed  
their lives for justice and life  
are showing us that  
the Cross  
remains the paradigm  
of kenosis--self-emptying  
in the Christian liberative struggle.

The Cross  
leads to resurrection  
When it transforms  
the forces of oppression  
and becomes redemptive.

Sexism,  
a manifestation of patriarchy,  
is sin.  
The concept and reality of sexuality  
are distorted.  
But humanity needs to become aware  
that our ancient cultures  
view human sexuality in its wholeness.  
Sexuality stands for beauty  
and creativity of humans  
as the image of God  
and portrays mutual need  
and interdependence.  
The authentic basis of common life  
in community and communion,  
it is part of human spirituality.

We condemn all attempts to distort  
and pervert human sexuality  
in pornography, the film  
and advertising media,  
the commercialization of sex,  
the abuse of the female body  
and its use as a commodity.

Patriarchal attitudes  
degenerate the value system  
and disintegrate the moral fibre.  
They abet human eradication  
through a process of human violence  
whose victims are the poor,  
the "diminutive" at the grassroots  
amongst the formidable banyan trees  
they are the marginalized,  
and the majority are women.

Integral to our search  
for a new spirituality  
is a vision  
of a new social order  
that is human and humane  
demanding the restructuring  
of society  
on an entirely new basis.

This vision calls  
for a safeguarding of the diversity  
and plurality of our peoples.  
It demands the organization of society  
where will blossom  
economic, social, political,  
and religious space for all.

Such a society can only emerge  
through the empowerment  
of the people at the periphery  
--the oppressed and disinherited  
to determine their destinies  
to live life to the full  
in harmony with self,  
others, and nature.

This vision is revolutionary.  
It seeks to open prisons,  
remove blinkers,  
set free the downtrodden.

It speaks of a community  
of women and men  
equal and free  
the celebrants of an unfragmented  
and wholesome earth  
and the God of creation.

In unity, solidarity and humanhood  
we march ahead  
to face the challenges  
and stem the rot.

Our strategies include  
reclaiming our history  
reinterpreting our Scriptures  
redefining our images  
retelling our myths and proverbs,  
legends and stories  
insofar as they diminish us.  
Reconciling ourselves  
to our ancestors  
we reappropriate our human dignity  
through self-realization.

We are building links in a chain  
that cannot be broken  
the chain of experience  
welded in love

and strengthened by commitment.

We do so through  
our ABILITY to RESPOND  
our OPENNESS to REALITY  
our HARKENING to the SPIRIT--  
the ultimate repository  
of the power that propels us.

In conclusion  
we believe with Kim Chi Ha

*"Rice is heaven  
As we cannot own heaven alone  
We should share rice  
with one another  
As all share the light  
of the heavenly stars  
We should share rice  
and eat rice together."*

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## SPIRITUAL HEALING: AN ATTITUDE TOWARD LIFE

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Sr. Mary Em McGlone, MMs

*(Sr. Mary Em McGlone, the author of this paper, has been an educator and practitioner in the field of holistic health since 1978. In 1981, she began the Medical Mission Sisters' Center for Human Integration (CHI) in Philadelphia. Mary Em teaches others to help themselves through Touch for Health, Foot Reflexology, One Brain, Stress Management, etc. Members of the Center staff offer a variety of courses as well as private counseling, all oriented towards healing and wholeness.)*

We know from the evidence of the ancient temples of healing and from the fact that healing rituals were and are a part of the practices of most forms of religion, that healing is an important focus in religious practice. Although the Buddha instructed his monks to care for the sick, among the founders of all the major religions of the world, possibly none was more actively engaged in the ministry of healing than Jesus Christ. Repeatedly, in the Gospel accounts, Christ's love and compassion move Him to heal the sick and suffering in response to their readiness to accept healing. Attitudinal change, which is one of the major themes of His teachings, was what Jesus looked for as an indicator for their readiness to be healed. So strongly did Jesus feel about that, that in preparing His disciples for their mission, He told them that when entering a new place, they should say, "Peace to this house" (Luke 10:5), and if that peace was accepted, to stay there and cure the sick, if not, to move on. In other words, without the proper attitude, you're wasting your time. The apostles and disciples were empowered to heal, and healing was designated by Christ to be the sign to the people that "the reign of God is at Hand". (Luke 10:9)

### INCORRECT VIEW OF HEALING

Unfortunately, in the course of Christian history, defending the faith took precedence in time and effort. Healing came to be viewed as something Christ had to do to lend credence to his teaching. Eventually, the attitude that prevailed for some time in the Middle Ages was that suffering was necessary to atone for sin and to identify with Christ, and since God created illness as a punishment for sin, it was presumptuous to seek healing. In later centuries, the image of the compassionate Christ which had been lost, emerged once again, and was especially evident in the formation of religious communities dedicated to serving the sick and suffering. In modern times, these efforts have, for the most part, been bound up with the science of medicine, although some shrines for healing (notably Lourdes) do exist. Even more recently, the charismatic movement, with an emphasis on healing, has taken hold in various Christian denominations. But even today, the mission that Christ gave to His disciples, that of healing the sick, has not been picked up by the majority of his ministers. Almost paradoxically, scientists have now begun to take a keen interest in

the phenomenon of healing, and are looking at the mounting evidence that attitudinal changes often result in spontaneous remission of diseases of all types more openly than has ever been the case.

### MEDITATION

One way of preparing the ground for the seed of healing to take root is the regular practice of meditation, or centering prayer. Meditation does not require commitment to a particular church or religion. It does, however, assume a belief in, and reverence for, a Supernatural Power as Creator and Sustainer of the universe.

Meditation is an act of surrender -- of letting go of one's usual preoccupations. Besides having positive psychological and physiological effects, it is a means by which we can sense and experience directly, or know intuitively, things we might never come to by rational deduction. One such insight is that God, the Creator, is in a unique relationship with each one of us. God is within us, loving us. We may have been told this all our lives, but in meditation we experience it. Failure to comprehend this, to believe it, or, on the other hand, to deny it, may be the root cause of all illness. In accepting God's love, we can begin to love ourselves, and as a result, to be able to reach out to others in love. Meditation is essential to those engaged in the healing professions, because it is through this relationship of love that healing can take place.

Prayer might be described as the 'oxygen' of the soul -- it keeps the spirit alive, and forms the vital link between our daily meditation and the activities of our day. Perhaps the most helpful act a practitioner can perform for another is to pray in gratitude for the healing taking place, even when we don't yet have

evidence of that healing, or know in what form it will take place. It is a way of acknowledging the interrelatedness between God, self and others.

### SPIRITUAL HEALING

Traditionally, spiritual healing has been synonymous with 'miracles', and those for whom this is true may reasonably argue that these events are rare. Generally, miracles are associated with an element of 'worthiness', either the recipient's or of someone interceding on his/her behalf. Documented miracles can and do occur, even now, and are required as proof that someone (deceased) should be recognized as a saint in the Roman Catholic tradition. These miracles are examined rigorously from the scientific point of view, and the focus is on a physical cure that cannot be explained in any other way. On the other hand, healing of spirit, of attitude, of memories, and of relationships, which are every bit as transformative as physical healing, as a rule tend to be overlooked.

Disease itself is still a mystery, although current explorations into the process are yielding whole new insights and, in fact, are opening up whole new fields of study (e.g.: psychoneuroimmunology). Have you ever wondered why, when two people are exposed to the same conditions, one can become sick, and the other remains well? Or why some people who do "all the right things" become ill, while others do "all the wrong things" and enjoy relatively good health? And if disease is such a mystery, how much more so is healing! Everything necessary for healing is within us, yet science cannot explain why it actually begins, what is the force behind it, still less, how to activate it. Perhaps the reason is that healing is a spiritual event or process with physical/emotional ramifications, not the other way around.



## ENERGY AND HEALING

Some of the most recent findings and newest technology developed in healing relate back to the most ancient of philosophies and practices in healing. A most comprehensive and exciting comparison of old and new, of science and spirituality, is found in Vibrational Medicine by Richard Gerber, M.D., who states simply, "If we are beings of energy, then it follows that we can be affected by energy."

The concept that disease is the result of energy out of balance has been pivotal to a variety of healing disciplines (e.g.: acupuncture) long before the time of Christ. Although the idea has been rejected by many, still it persists. Even Jesus was no stranger to the concept of energy as a healing force. When someone touched His cloak in order to be healed, Jesus is quoted as saying, "Someone touched me. I know that the power (energy) has gone forth from me." (Luke 8:46) In this statement we have an indication of an acute sensitivity to personal energy fields.

It is the nature of energy to be in motion. If we are beings of energy, as Gerber states, then the implications are that we are in constant interaction or relationship with the Source of that energy, with ourselves and with our environment, including the people in it. According to some, disease is the result of disharmony or imbalance in any, or all, of these relationships. Spiritual healing then, can be described as a 'righting of relationships', a metamorphic process which not only restores balance, but allows us to experience more fully, our own wholeness and integration. And while it may, theoretically, be possible to achieve this in isolation, because of the interactive nature of our being, healing almost always requires the loving intervention of another who serves as a catalyst to bring about transformation in our lives. The method of assistance is

simply the vehicle.

It is my belief that such miracles do occur all the time. We need to pray for them, expect them, look for them, and affirm them every day, in our own lives and in the lives of others. Sometimes, physical healing follows, and sometimes the realization is that the physical disability we were experiencing was not nearly as significant as the emotional and spiritual disabilities which have been healed.

## THERAPEUTIC TOUCH

Therapeutic Touch, a process based on the "laying on of hands" developed by Dolores Kreiger, R.N., Ph.D., of New York University, is possibly the best known of the healing modalities employed by nurses throughout the U.S.A. Having begun in the educational setting, there is a wealth of nursing research and journal articles dealing with the practice. Even so, it is founded on theory, and has yet to be proven scientifically. The theory is that human beings are energetic systems, and this energy extends beyond the physical self. Therefore, there is an interaction of energy fields when people are within close proximity, and the effect of this interaction can be enhanced by the intent to bring about balance and harmony to a person whose field is disorganized and/or depleted. Further, because of the interactive nature of this process, the practitioner also receives the benefits. This theory is supported by Einsteinian physics, as well as ancient religious/philosophical viewpoints.

While the "laying on of hands" usually is done in a religious context, this is not true of therapeutic touch. Nor is faith a prerequisite. However, "centering", or meditation is a sine qua non to its practice. One of the unique features in the teaching of therapeutic touch is this emphasis on centering. The purpose of

centering is to help us to let go of our concerns for the moment and be entirely present to the person with whom we are working. An analogy would be getting a phone call from a friend in distress -- if there are a lot of household distractions, we might ask the person to hold while we go to a phone in a quiet room so we can give the friend our undivided attention. Centering provides that "quiet room", no matter where we are. And it is not just attention, but intention, which gets focused.

The intention appropriate to the practice of therapeutic touch is that of being willing to be of help in "balancing" another's energy systems. Ultimately, healing comes from within. The rate of healing is consistent with the person's own readiness and need to grow and to change. This cannot be determined by the practitioner, no matter how much we would like to see a person relieved of his/her symptoms of physical or emotional distress. It is a matter of being present to a person where they are, rather than where we think they should be, or want them to be.

#### **A HEALING ATTITUDE TOWARD LIFE**

In any discussion or writings on the topic of healing, one adjective frequently used is the word 'controversial'. Perhaps the reason for this is that no matter what therapeutic method is being employed, we are dealing with belief systems. When our belief systems are challenged, we must defend them, or risk the possibility of having our personal realities turned completely upside-down. It can be as difficult for a 'natural' healer to believe that chemicals can positively benefit a sick person, as it is for a scientist to accept that passing the hands over a person can effect any change whatsoever.

I like to think of disease as a 'locked' place in the body. There are many keys which can be tried --

nutrition, chemotherapy, therapeutic touch, reflexology, surgery, meditation, etc. If the key fits perfectly and opens the lock, does it really matter what kind of key it is? It is important to note, however, that each 'lock' is really a double-lock, and the 'master key' that needs to be used in combination with all the others is attitude. The important role that attitude plays in the outcome of a person's disease process, has general and long-standing acceptance. However, it is an intangible factor, and as such, is difficult to objectify and research, and it is impossible to produce for another. So, scientific research has, understandably, focused more on the mechanics and the chemistry of disease, and the surgical, pharmacological, or technological responses to it.

#### **IMPORTANCE OF ATTITUDE**

We know, without being told, that a person can have the most advanced surgical procedure, done by the most competent physician, have the best nursing care and medications, but lacking the will to live, will die. It is time we got behind research with an emphasis on behavioral and attitudinal conditions which promote wellness/ disease. We, the caregivers, would also benefit from that tremendously. Presently, we are "fighting disease", "doing battle with", "declaring war on" and caring for the "victims" of various diseases. This language implies that there is something outside of ourselves that is waiting to "do us in" and that if we throw enough money at, it will go away. It is the modern answer to placating the gods of war, famine and disease. This habitual attitude of 'opposition to' keeps us in the role of "victim" just as much as the people for whom we're caring. When we relate to illness as an enemy, disease and suffering are meaningless. We see no end to the "fight". We become tired, depressed and burned out.

A healing attitude toward life is a belief system which recognizes that all of life's experiences, including injury, illness and other setbacks, provide us with opportunities to learn and to grow toward that which we are meant to be. Seen in this light, disease is not an enemy, but a teacher and motivator. Disease is manifesting in a physical way, the desire or need of the psyche (soul/mind) to re-establish balance and integration through a change of direction in one's lifestyle, behaviour and/or attitudes.

### ACCEPTANCE, A KEY

A basic attitudinal key to healing is acceptance (this is an active state, as opposed to resignation, which is passive). Acceptance opens us to the possibility of choice, and is grounded in assurance, that deep inner sense of strength and peace which develops as a result of having faced and handled (or at least having

learned from) difficult situations in the past. And while we can't develop these qualities for another person, we can facilitate their development -- first and foremost by choosing to develop them in ourselves. A habit of "choosing to accept" will most certainly affect our therapeutic encounters, possibly most directly through energy-field interactions.

In accepting life, we are also accepting death. Or, as a person who faces death put it, "A person who truly accepts life is not afraid to die, and a person who is not afraid to die can fully embrace life". If we think of life and growth as a series of transformations, then we recognize that death, rather than being a failure, is a final act of transformation in one's life. It is the ultimate healing.

Ref. Intercontinent, March-April,  
1990 No 196, 645 Washington  
Blvd., Baltimore, Md.21230, USA.

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## THE THEOLOGICAL CHALLENGE OF INDIGENOUS CHURCHES

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Walter J. Hollenweger

This article does not discuss the amazing numerical growth, vitality, and diversity of non-white indigenous churches or new religious movements. It looks rather at the challenge of these churches for our own theological thinking. In general the growth of the indigenous churches is part and parcel in the shift of the center of gravity of Christianity from the West to the South. These indigenous churches present us with three challenges. These are:

### TO RECOGNIZE A RETURN OF CHRISTIANITY TO ITS ROOTS

The Christian Church started as a third-world church, and it may well be that it is again becoming predominantly a third-world church. Therefore we should not be astonished that some of the leading officers of the world church (at least in the Protestant denomination) come from the third world. Two general secretaries of the World Council of Churches come from younger churches (Philip Potter from the Caribbean, Emilio Castro from Uruguay). The leaders of both the Lutheran World Federation and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches come from younger churches (Josiah M. Kibira from Tanzania, Allan Boesak from South Africa).

We might better understand this process if we remember the transfer of Christianity from the old Palestinian mother church to the young Hellenistic mission church of the first century. We might also be warned by history that a church which stubbornly remains within the confines of its biblical tradition -- as was the case with the Jewish Chris-

tians -- is digging its own grave.

### TO SEARCH FOR A NEW ECUMENICAL AND INTERCULTURAL THEOLOGY

In the past each nation, each culture, and each religion had its own history, its own roots, and its own future. History was lived in the plural as the different histories of more or less independent entities. Today, however, we still might have our different pasts, our traditions of the past, but we have only one future (in the singular). Only those religions which can represent in their liturgy and theology this common world history, this common future, can claim to be world religions.

From this it follows that non-white indigenous churches will have to work together with the rest of the churches for a common future. It is no longer desirable that each church works towards its own indigenous theology and liturgy but much more that their indigenous theology and liturgy is presented as a part of a common ecumenical theology and history.

That, however, is so far not the case. One can describe what is happening in the following simplified alternatives:

First, the younger churches in the third world are subsidized *ad infinitum* by the Western churches which finance a ministry trained and functioning according to the Western pattern, Western theological education, church organizations, and medical institutions.

Second, inspired by the non-white indigenous churches, the

younger churches forego their support in finance and people from the West and develop their own theology and church structure, including an educational system and a health service which is informed by their own indigenous tradition. The most impressive examples of this development are some non-white indigenous churches and also the churches of China -- it is said that their membership has tripled since the missionaries were withdrawn.

Neither approach takes the biblical message seriously enough. In both cases the challenge of the relationship between contextuality and particularity, between the indigenous and the universal dimension of the church, is bypassed. In the one case, this happens through officially denied yet in practice powerful financial and theological dependence. In the other case, it happens through total isolation from the Western churches.

The biblical authors were contextual theologians in the sense that the elements which they adopted into their thinking were integrated after a rigorous selection and reinterpretation process. In this we have to follow them. The criteria for what is acceptable and what is not are found not solely in the Bible but equally in dialogue -- and if need be in controversy with the whole catholic church.

**The same criteria are valid for Western theology** in relation to insights and discoveries of the indigenous churches. The dialogue between these churches is as necessary for Western churches as it is for third-world churches -- and this in the interests of a relevant and indigenous Western theology. This is true not only for missiology but equally for pastoral, systematic, moral, and biblical theology. In the latter disciplines, the relevance of the theology of indigenous churches has scarcely been acknowledged. There are still far too many biblical

scholars who have no idea of the hermeneutical tools of black churches in the United States and the United Kingdom. Too many pastoral theologians know nothing of the process of communication in a Zionist church or the liturgical tradition in the Cherubim and Seraphim churches; too many systematic theologians are unaware that there are ways of expressing the coherence of the Christian witness other than those we have developed in the West.

#### **TO SEARCH FOR THE PRACTICALITIES OF SUCH AN INTERCULTURAL THEOLOGY**

Practical encounter is hindered when even the selection of the theological language is a fundamental theological decision -- something which becomes evident in any seminar where non-white indigenous church leaders and Western theologians take part. If we choose the propositional terminology and definitions of the West, any third-world theologian would find it difficult to make specific contributions. On the other hand, if we choose the oral, narrative language of the younger churches, the theologians of the West find it difficult to make a contribution. In practical terms the Western language is almost always used, leading to the suppression of experience and facts which can be expressed only in oral language. Here the insight of W. Wink becomes obvious: "Even the choice of syntax and vocabulary is a political [and I might add 'a theological'] act that defines and circumscribes the way 'facts' are to be experienced -- indeed, in a sense even creates the facts that can be studied".

A solution is possible only if theologians -- and not just missiologists become bilingual. This should be all the easier since the oral, narrative language is well known to theologians through biblical scholarship.

### THREE IMPORTANT TOPICS

Three topics are particularly important for such an ecumenical theology.

**Dreams and Vision.** Most Christians of the third world have become Christians through dreams, visions, apparitions of ancestors, healings, and similar experiences, and seldom indeed on the basis of catechism or a sermon. That does not mean that catechism and sermons are unimportant, but they are not vital for somebody becoming a Christian. How can these third-world Christians take our theology seriously if we do not take seriously that which is the existential foundation of their Christianity? A biblical critique is part and parcel of this serious dialogue. Gabriel Setiloane complains bitterly that even the World Council left out a passage on the important function of ancestors in one of his articles. Furthermore, we Europeans also have to learn again to relate to our ancestors (see the many tombs in Anglican and Roman Catholic churches) our visions, and our dreams. To devalue them theologically and leave them to psychology, psychiatry, or parapsychology means to forego one's theological responsibility on a subject which is as important as moral or doctrinal theology. That such a study would throw up serious questions in our understanding of scholarship and theology is no reason to bypass it. On the contrary it could help us inaugurate an important paradigm-shift. Such a paradigm-shift might show us that secularization is a passing local affair.

**Healing of the Sick.** For non-white indigenous churches some form of healing the sick in church services is paramount. For them sickness is immediately a symptom of a deficient social relationship to people, to nature, to the ancestors, or to

oneself. Therefore a medical treatment which sees sickness as a physical deficiency only, which isolates a patient in a hospital bed when he or she most needs the support of friends, co-religionists and family, appears as a grotesque superstition of the ignorant white person who confuses the symptoms with the illness. Most non-white indigenous churches started because of a controversy on this issue. A fundamental dialogue on this issue is all the more important since the World Health Organization in Geneva also recognizes the one-sidedness, and in fact the dangerous incompetence, of the Western health industry and searches for third world alternatives. In any case, we can learn from these churches that healing is part of the liturgy, i.e., it belongs in the public services of the church and not merely to the pastoral care for the individual. (see the previous article in this SEDOS Bulletin. Ed.)

**Propositional and oral communication.** The Nobel Peace Prize winner, Desmond Tutu from South Africa, says that his theology can only be expressed adequately in song, story, and dance. It is interesting that for Tutu the locus of theology is the liturgy of the church -- a very old insight of the Christian church which we seem to forget, to our own disadvantage. Here again Western theologians have to become bilingual if they want to be competent Western theologians and not merely the religious rationalizers of the Western tribes to which they happen to belong.

Ref: Walls, A. F. and Shenk, W. R. Eds. EXPLORING NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS: ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF HAROLD W. TURNER. Elkhart, IN, Mission Focus Publications, 1990.

## BOOK NOTES

TRANSFORMING FEMINISM by Maria Riley, OP (Kansas City, Sheed & Ward, 1989, Pp.112 \$8.95.)

The energy of the women's movement has initiated one of the most far-reaching social revolutions of our age. It touches all dimensions of our lives from personal identity to our relationship patterns to the shape of our social and religious institutions. This shift in our social consciousness has opened new horizons for social ethics. On these horizons feminism and Catholic social thought meet.

Recognising that Catholic social thought has developed without the influence of the feminist perspective, Maria Riley has written to introduce a dialogue between the two. She has tried to situate this dialogue within the context of the larger society of which the church is a part. The book's thesis is developed in steps:

- an historical survey of the last 25 years of the feminist movement in the U.S.
- an analytical overview of the four major ideologies shaping modern feminism -- liberal, cultural, socialist, radical -- and the challenges to them, including the challenges of Third World women
- a feminist critique of Catholic social thought
- an introduction to a dialogue between feminism and Catholic social thought

Maria describes a feminist in the context of her book as follows: "a person, woman or man, who believes in the essential equality between women and men and seeks to create social attitudes, policies and structures that reveal and sustain that equality".

SEDOS members will read this book with particular interest in the challenges of the so-called Third World

women to the ideologies shaping modern feminism.

We recommend it warmly.

CHILDREN OF BETHLEHEM: Witnessing the Intifada by Patrick White. (Leominster, Fowler Wright Books, 1989, Pp.134).

Patrick White is a member of the de la Salle Brothers. He has written these short stories about ordinary folk, mothers, fathers, students, children, families among whom he has experienced genuine humanness and essential goodness. His stories present the point of view of Christians and Muslims, many of them his students with whom he has been in close contact before and during the Intifada.

Both Israelis and Palestinians have suffered. Both peoples are suspicious, defensive, manipulative, resentful and the basis of this is fear. There is no propaganda in this book. The stories are intensely moving and give a rare eye-witness account of the lives of young Palestinians, their fears and their hopes.

THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH REVISITED by Hervé Carrier, SJ. (Vatican City, Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace, 1990. Pp. 190, \$12.00).

There has been an impressive new approach in the Social Teaching of the Church during the past 25 years. It consists in reconsidering that teaching anew in the perspective of the whole teaching mission of the Church since its beginning, and in the light of its cumulative social experience through centuries. Part I of the book discusses the historical development of this new approach; Part II analyses key documents from Pope Leo XIII to John Paul II. There is a useful documentation on the Church's social doctrine which is inseparable from its vocation to go and teach all nations.

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Constitutions enshrine the equality of women and men in its membership. Helene's contribution in the Secretariat and in the wider membership manifested the wealth and richness that can come from implementing this partnership.

She was completely committed to SEDOS. She will be remembered with respect and affection, - respect for her professional expertise and her positive and creative contribution to the study of problems and opportunities arising in contemporary situations of mission; affection for her good humour, welcoming presence and infectious laughter which brought joy to those who worked with her and who visited us here at the Secretariat.

The participants at the seminar at Villa Cavalletti showed their appreciation by a sustained standing ovation. We do so again in spirit. We will miss you, Helene. We pray that God will go with you wherever you go and bless you in the years ahead.

CONGRATULATIONS to Sister ELLEN GIELTY elected General Moderator of the Sisters of NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR at their recent General Chapter - the first Scots-woman to be elected to this post.

Congratulations also to Sister PATRICIA CONOR re-elected Superior General of the RELIGIOUS OF THE SACRED HEART OF MARY at their recent General Chapter.

### COMING EVENTS

#### MISSIONARY OUTREACH OF LATIN AMERICAN CHURCHES

Speakers MONS. IVO LORSCHETTI,  
Bishop of Santa Maria, Rio  
Grande do Sul, Brazil.

Time 9.30 - 13.00  
14.30 - 16.30

ROMEO BALLAN, MCCJ  
Co-ordinator of "COMLA 4",  
the IV Latin American  
Congress

This Seminar is part of the overall preparation for the Fifth Centenary of LATIN AMERICA.

Date October 9, 1990

It is also an immediate preparation for COMLA IV - the 4th LATIN AMERICAN CONGRESS which will be held in LIMA in February 1991.

Place Fratelli delle Scuole  
Christiane, via Aurelia 476



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