

## ***“MISSIONARY CHURCH IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD”***



### **SEDOS RESIDENTIAL SEMINAR 2008**

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# SEDOS

## Service of Documentation and Study on Global Mission

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me - He has appointed me to bring good news to the poor - to proclaim liberty to the captives and new sight to the blind - to free the oppressed and announce the Lord's year of mercy" (Lc 4, 18s)

*'The Spirit has sent me to proclaim liberty to the oppressed and announce the Good News of the Lord' (Lk 4:18ff).*

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"Missionary Church in a Globalizing World"... The dreamers of Globalization promise to unite peoples and cultures; to bring down barriers and make the World the home of one family. Our Gospel message is very much the same: to establish the Kingdom of God here on earth; to be one family with one Father in Heaven. Socioeconomic and cultural globalization seems to be part of the message to free the oppressed and bring the year of mercy the Lord spoke of. Why has this not taken place? Why is Globalization increasing the suffering of people? Why has the Spirituality of the Gospel been taken out of the whole Globalization plan?

The prophets of Globalization have worked hard during these past years to sell the world a dream message of a "new market oriented world system". In this new world everybody would be happy and would have all the basic needs fulfilled; nobody would be in want. Yet, the reality in which many people live today is not only far from the ideal promised, but even the suffering and economic hardships have increased for many people in Countries where life was poor before but simple and harmonious. The promises of salvation preached by the prophets of Globalization have not materialized for millions of people around the World. Market dictated profit has replaced the traditional ethics of society and society is blindly allowing these market forces to control their lives. Traditional spiritual values do not count any more. Our world seems to have substituted God for mammon; monotheistic faith has become money-theistic faith.



Where do we men and women religious fit into this set up? What is our role as Light of the World and Salt of the Earth? For a few days 144 men and women religious have come together in Ariccia to reflect on and share their experiences and the experiences of the members of our Congregations. We have seen the challenges and "we are not afraid". We are determined to renew our commitment as Christians in order to rekindle our light and to make it shine where it can be seen and be of most use to the people.

During these days Prof. Giuliana Martirani, Sister Anna Falola, NDA/OLA, Robert Schreiter, CPPS, and Daniel Groody, CSC, have guided our reflection with their inputs and comments. From these pages we wish to share our work with all our readers, so that this little bud which has sprouted in Ariccia will bring more of our brothers and sisters around the World to reflect on and increase our commitment to build the Kingdom.

*Fr Carlos Rodríguez Linera, OP  
SEDOS Executive Director*

## **Mot de bienvenue au Séminaire de Sedos de mai 2008**

Ariccia, 20 May 2008

**Chers frères et sœurs,**

*Je vous souhaite la bienvenue à ce Séminaire de SEDOS 2008. Tout joyeux de nous retrouver, Dieu a fait de nous des amis et des témoins. De tous les horizons, nous voici rassemblés, tout joyeux de nous retrouver.*

*J'espère que vous avez tous bien voyagé. Nous allons pendant ces quelques jours vivre, prier, réfléchir ensemble sur notre mission dans un monde en forte et rapide mutation. En effet, non pas seulement le monde est en train de changer, et bien rapidement, ne nous laissant pas toujours le temps ni de tout comprendre et ni de tout suivre, mais nous pouvons aussi dire que les mêmes changements rapides s'opèrent dans nos propres Congrégations, dans nos propres communautés, avec les joies et les questions que cela peut apporter.*

*Que le monde change, nous ne pouvons que le constater et l'accepter. Ignorer cela serait vivre dans l'illusion. Je dirai même que refuser d'accepter que le monde et nos différentes Congrégations et communautés changent serait carrément refuser de vivre. C'est dans ce monde et dans nos communautés respectives que chacun et chacune est appelé à annoncer la Bonne Nouvelle du Christ Ressuscité. C'est dans ce monde en plein changement, avec tout ce que cela apporte comme valeurs et défis, que nos différentes congrégations essayent de montrer que Dieu aime vraiment son peuple, que Dieu est proche de son peuple, que Dieu fait route avec son peuple, que Dieu écoute les cris de son peuple, que Dieu souffre aujourd'hui avec nos frères et sœurs en Birmanie et en Chine malgré les catastrophes de ces derniers jours, et aussi en Afrique du Sud.... Portons tout cela dans nos prières.*

*"Without letting ourselves be locked into the proposals (suggestions) of the society around us, we, as responsible men and women, 'choose' and do what seems most likely to promote God's plan. To be able to do this, we must see clearly and rightly, have a penetrating understanding of the things of the world, perceive what is at stake, and understand God's calls.*

*Saint Paul in his Letter to the Ephesians says: Be very careful about the sort of lives you lead, like intelligent and not like senseless people. Make the best of the present time, for it is a wicked age. This is why you must not be thoughtless but must recognize what is the will of the Lord.... Be filled with the Spirit" (5:15-18).*

*"The good choices of a missionary life **are not** simply matters of logic and good management. They are rooted in a right and faithful path. They also ask for*

*a bit of folly, the folly of the Spirit which is the wisdom of God” (Pierre Lefebvre, CICM, Missionaries like St Paul, 47).*

*May this 2008 SEDOS Seminar help us to be more rooted in the world and more open to the Spirit of Jesus always present within us. If we do so, there is no reason to be afraid.*

*I want you to know that your presence, your collaboration, your participation, and your fellowship during these days are greatly appreciated by all and especially by the SEDOS Executive Committee.*

*May God send us His Spirit and let us be open to it and let us be open to each other’s experience and sharing.*

I declare the Seminar open.

Edouard Tsimba, CICM  
Président SEDOS



Participants register on arrival ...

Giuliana Martirani

***Socio-Politico-Economic Framework  
of Market's Globalization  
And Justice and Peace Universalism***

***Justice and Peace Universalism: the Way of Beauty*** <sup>1</sup>

The way of beauty implies to rediscover the way of the art of living: living as art, as music, as symphony, as peace and joy. It also implies to be able to say again: "God, how great You are! This is life, indeed, how beautiful this life is!". In a word, it means praising Him and giving thanks to Him.

The *Pilgrimage of the Wayfarer* is a way to recover the lost road of beauty. It is the journey of one who decides to walk, who decides not to remain in his "rotten, stagnating, rough" situation. This pilgrimage actually begins like a time of the spirit lived in a moving, open, mobile space.

It is the desire to unify space and time, so as to make them coexist in a harmonious way. The space/nature relationship is actually very compromised, therefore we do need time in order to rebuild a harmonious relationship with it.

However, this pilgrimage of the wayfarer can be made without travelling around the world, but just by trying to rediscover the way of beauty in the very place where we live, by trying to harmonize space and time within our daily reality.

It is the desire to recover our "Royal Dignity" in our personal and collective life: the *kingship* which is constitutive of each one of us, the empowerment, and the kingship of the human groups, this *omnicracy* Capitini spoke about and which entrusts power to each and everyone of us.

In this way we may succeed not only in giving meaning and beauty to our personal lives but also in restoring the beauty of human existence itself; we may succeed in going beyond the actual collective moment, both national and international, of our democratic systems, which actually bear more likeness to dictatorships than to genuine democracies; we may also succeed in getting rid of hunger and war, which are slaughtering two thirds of humanity; we may succeed in solving the problem of pollution, which is threatening the very life of our planet.<sup>2</sup>

## *The Way of Beauty* <sup>3</sup>

<b>Majestic WAY-farer of...</b>	<b><i>The way of beauty</i></b>	<b><i>The road</i></b>	<b><i>The path</i></b>	<b><i>The goal</i></b>
<i>Departure on the journey</i> <b>1. Absolute</b>	<i>The way of kingship</i>	<i>The road from Heaven to earth</i>	<i>Who loves</i>	Love
<b>2. Time and space</b>	<i>The way of the horizon</i>	<i>The road of the sea</i>	<i>Is patient and generous</i>	Patience
<b>3. Relationships within the family and the community</b>	<i>The way of mediation</i>	<i>The road of Cana and Bethany</i>	<i>Does not give in to anger, forgets the offence</i>	Faithfulness
<b>4. Knowledge (culture, science, education)</b>	<i>The way of humility</i>	<i>The Road of Emmaus</i>	<i>Does not give in to envy, vanity or pride</i>	Joy
<b>5. Common goods and economy</b>	<i>The way of sobriety</i>	<i>The road of the Mount of the Beatitudes</i>	<i>Does not seek his own interests</i>	Benevolence
<b>6. Legality</b>	<i>The way of resistance</i>	<i>The road to Ninive</i>	<i>Is respectful, is not pleased by injustice</i>	Self-control
<b>7. Politics and the universal common good</b>	<i>The midday way</i>	<i>The road of Caesarea of Philippi</i>	<i>Truth and its joy</i>	Peace
<i>Goal of the journey</i> <b>Midday dream</b>	<i>The midday way</i>	<i>The road of Jerusalem</i>	<i>Forgives everything, trusts everyone, bears everything, never hopeless</i>	Goodness



## 1. Socio-politico-economic framework of Market's globalization

Slides on the geopolitical situation of the world of today.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Justice and Peace Universalism

### *The community and cooperation*

Life is a dance between competition and cooperation. This dance resembles the Brazilian *Capoeira*, in which the dancers mime both struggle and embrace. But at the end of the dance of life cooperation wins.

"On the earth, the evolution towards big cooperative cells probably began when the small energetic batteries of respiration began to slash their way through the cell walls of the bigger bubble producers so as to get to their rich molecules. This process bears a likeness to the way some humans invaded other kingdoms or nations so as to obtain manufactured resources and raw materials. The problem with this method was, and still is, that at the end the invaders drain all the resources, devouring their hosts. After a while, nothing is left for the invaders to take from their victims. This crisis is a new challenge for life.

"It seems that, freeing themselves from the invading respirators, the big bubble producers stipulated a contract beneficial to both. This is not much different from the contracts stipulated between two countries when, for example, a rich nation offers electrical systems to a nation of the Third World, in exchange for food products. And as we well know, it is not so easy for them to agree on a contract really beneficial for both parties....

"Evolving towards cooperation, the big cells must have understood it was worth while feeding the batteries by which they were pushed, in exchange for being guided to where they could find food and light. But before evolution reached this stage of cooperation, there has been a phase of uncertain struggle between cooperation and competition".<sup>2</sup>

The operation described is realized by the cells through three different means:

### organization;

### a system of communication;

### revision of their programmes (exchanging the DNA)

In a similar way, human communities, as a result of their sacred history, also passed from contest to cooperation, and this through the following means:

### community and common life;

### the sharing of the same goals;

### fraternal correction and capacity to admit one's mistakes and, therefore, to change.

### *The style of the Lamb in our talents and communities*

It is possible to redefine our sense of community in the light of the Beatitudes, rooting our professional and associative realities in:

### the *common good*: as participation in the construction of the city of God;

### the *common goods*: not forgetting water, land, air, fire, and all living beings, that is to say: the whole Creation.

It may be possible to interpret the seven Churches of the Apocalypse as the place where the passage from memory and tradition to utopia and planning of a Kingdom of justice and peace occurred:

*the community of Ephesus* (priests, religious institutes, theologians ...) as a symbol of non-violence and ecumenism;



*the community of Smyrna* (environmentalists, professions connected to medicine, engineers, lawyers...) as a symbol of *the ecological local-globalism*;

*the community of Thyatira* (women: housewives, professionals, nuns...) as a symbol of *the feminine visibility in culture, politics and economy*;

*the community of Philadelphia* (educators, mediators, psychologists and professions in touch with culture and education) as a symbol of intercultural local-globalism and new forms of education;

*the community of Sardis* (jurists, magistrates, politicians...) as a symbol of the local-globalism of *human rights and of juridical internationalism*;

*the community of Laodicea* (local authorities and parliaments...) as a symbol of *fair politics and the reform of the United Nations*;

*the community of Pergamum* (world of economic production) as a symbol of *the local-globalism of fair economy* (fair trade, economic ethics, microcredit ...).

### ***Collective talents: the seven churches***

Community	<b>Goals</b>	Profession (talents)	Professional communities
<b>Ephesus</b>	Non-violence and ecumenism	Priests, religious institutes, theologians...	Episcopal Conferences, USMI, CISM, UISG <sup>1</sup> , universities, associations of theologians...
<b>Smyrna</b>	Ecological local-globalization	Environmentalists, professions connected to medicine, engineers, lawyers...	Ecological associations, professional rolls, bioethical commissions...
<b>Thyatira</b>	feminine visibility in culture, politics and the economy	Women: housewives, professionals, nuns...	Federations of Housewives, professional rolls, women's associations, USMI...
<b>Philadelphia</b>	intercultural local-globalization and new forms of education	educators, mediators, psychologists and professionals in touch with culture and education	syndicates, educative associations, Universities, psychological and psychiatric rolls, cultural mediators, NGOs...
<b>Sardis</b>	local-globalization of human rights and legal-internationalism	Jurists, magistrates, politicians...	Associations of magistrates, lawyers, NGOs defending Human Rights, political party...
<b>Laodicea</b>	fair politics and reform of the United Nations	Local authorities, parliaments, cooperative activities, volunteers...	Associations, NGOs, political parties
<b>Pergamum</b>	local-globalization of fair economy	world of economic production	Micro-credits, ethical banks, syndicates, <i>Bilanci di Giustizia</i> <sup>2</sup> , agricultural Cooperatives, fair trade, Lets...

### ***Life against death: the Beatitudes***

To turn utopia into a project is to challenge the saints, that is, to those who know well they are but the helpless servants of a project that can only be performed by the Holy Spirit: the Beatitudes project.

Our lack of faith in the presence of the Holy Spirit prevents us from realizing ... the utopia.

We are not blessed, we are not happy...

- The progressive impoverishment of entire continents ... and yet ... blessed are the poor.
- Illnesses that become true and actual epidemics like cancer ... and yet ... blessed are the afflicted.

- Endless violence between people, social and ethnic groups ... and yet ... blessed are the non-violent.
- The obvious injustices and those sneaky and hidden ... and yet ... blessed are the starving for justice.
- The indifference and the heart of stone of so many ... and yet ... blessed are the merciful.
- The race to reach money and success through multinationals, Kick Back City, mafia ... and yet ... blessed are the pure.
- Wars and atomic peril ... and yet ... blessed are the peacemakers.
- The world is afflicted ... and yet ... blessed are the persecuted.

Our world is overwhelmed by the plagues of violence, war and hunger, but, at the same time, it is so rich in communication, with individual and collective consciousness increasing constantly, and people, goods and services getting more and more international. In this world, the commitment of so many people, and not only of religious, is prophetic: lay men and women, believers or not, and families commit themselves to self-limitation (*poverty*), purity of body, mind and spirit (*chastity*), justice and peace (*obedience to the project of God*). These lived *Beatitudes* are one of the most important keys to open the doors of the future to our world.

Today more than ever, our world – and not only the consecrated – needs to practise *smallness*, that is, *chastity, humility and freedom from the fictitious links of faithfulness* (obedience to the Kingdom of God). What is more, the practice of the evangelical counsels is now easier, since our generation has a greater consciousness, a limitless access to information, and the fruits of the Second Vatican Council, like the development of the dialogue with the other beliefs and world religions.

It is only by becoming culture that a “Beatitudes Project” can realize the Sermon on the Mount and God’s project for our happiness. These should be the main aspects of this culture:

- ### providence (blessed are the poor),
- ### sharing (blessed are the afflicted),
- ### innocence (blessed are the non-violent),
- ### renunciation, freedom to say, “no, thanks!” to undue consumption (blessed are the just),
- ### service (blessed are the merciful),
- ### smallness (blessed are the pure),
- ### non-violent solution of conflicts (blessed are the peacemakers).

So as to become a concrete programme, these cultural and spiritual values have been converted in recent years into educative proposals, thus defining a new alternative to an obsolete and meritocratic school that taught us nothing but success, challenge and money. They became pragma-values through education:

- ### to interdependence and globalism (blessed are the poor),
- ### to interiority and difference (blessed are the afflicted),
- ### to non-violence (blessed are the non-violent),
- ### to the model of development and to an awareness of consumption (blessed are the just),
- ### to self-development and globalism,
- ### to an inter-culture (blessed are the merciful),
- ### to Human Rights and the environment (blessed are the pure),
- ### to peace (blessed are the peacemakers).

Blessed are the poor and the afflicted. Therefore, if ... we are non-violent, just, merciful, pure and peacemakers<sup>1</sup>, the Beatitudes may become a springboard for the evangelization of culture, just as Trinitarian dogma helps us to understand the meaning of our existence as a *sequela Christi* that makes us discover and follow our Christian vocation: with the Holy Spirit, in the footprints of the Son, towards the Father.

### ***Memory and utopia in order to lose the complex of superiority***

The short and fascinating biblical Book of Tobit can help us to make our way, our Passover, from memory to utopia, from “Tobit, memory” to “Tobit, utopia”, and therefore to evolve from *virtual communities* to *virtuous sons*. I daresay many of our Christian communities should meditate on this small Book. So should the so-called European Christian nations, as they show great difficulty, after millennia of history, to incarnate their Christian *sequela* in concrete political and economic measures. So too should Christian families, associations and communities – so-called by reason of their history, tradition and practice – those at least who have survived in some way the storm which has struck the Christian community and its values in these last few years.

They should reflect on it, if only to realize that they are not these “*certificate Christians*”, irreproachable before God and men, following faithfully all the Christian rules and canons, to realize that all they are is God’s goodness towards them.

Tobit had to lose progressively the presumption inherent in his name, “*how good I am*”, so as to discover, during the span of his family history, *the goodness of God himself*, which is made manifest in the name and experience of his son, Tobias. Like Tobit, many of our Christian communities have *their “certificate of guarantee”* – the life of saints and of the religious Founders, regular recourse of the Sacraments, commitment in charity work (parish, voluntary work, associations ...) – but they need to rediscover, rereading their own history, how good God has been to them. In this way we may give merit and thanks to Him and not to ourselves and to *our own strength*. We may thus realize that our “Christian certificate” families and communities practice a virtual charity more than a real one. We may also acknowledge ourselves as virtuous children of both a paternal and maternal God, who – by pure goodness – filled our existence with His gifts, saving us from our blindness, like Tobit, and from our incapacity to create genuine relationships of love, like Sarah.

However, the Book of Tobit is a book of acts: *Book of the Acts of Tobit*, therefore this Book is all about the concrete events that happened in the life of two families: Tobit’s family (Greek transliteration of the Jewish name Tobit, which literally means “*my goodness*”, abbreviation of the theophorical name he gave to his son Tobias, which on the contrary means “*Jahvé is good*”), and Sara’s family, being herself a “certificate Jewess”. Nevertheless, her husbands die one after another and leave her without a descendant, as happened to another much more famous Sara in the Bible.

Both families are of healthy formation. Nowadays, these families would be devout Christian families: going to Mass every Sunday, educated in the Christian values, leading a faithful sacramental life, early Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation during adolescence, marriage in the church despite the fashion of civil marriages.... Both belong to families with a long religious tradition, like modern families that have been Catholic for many generations.

### ***The prodigal son’s elder brother, Tobit: all the “first” and the “perfect”***

Tobit’s ancestors all have theophorical names, bearing testimony to a long history of faith: Tobiel (*God is my sake*), Ananiel (*God was merciful to me*), Adonel (*God made me happy*), Gabael (*God is high*), Asiel (*God distributed*). Tobit, however, is not a theophorical name: neither like his ancestor Tobiel (*God is my sake*) nor like his son Tobias (*God’s goodness*).

It is simply and presumptuously “Tobit”, that is to say: “*my goodness*”. He actually looks like this Pharisee who feels he is all right – as opposed to the Publican – and in line with all the precepts of his religion. Tobit also resembles the prodigal son’s elder brother, full of resentment. Our “Tobit-communities” sometimes adopt a similar attitude towards atheists, Muslims, Buddhists and all those who follow other religions. This presumption of Tobit (*how good I am*), comes from a faithful religious past. The memory of all his ancestors, with their theophorical names, makes him feel in the present as “perfect”: he is a pious Jew, one of those who went on observing the law even during the exile.<sup>2</sup>

This glorious past and this irreproachable present should be, according to our criteria, more than rewarded, in terms of well-being (health) and “well-having” (money), these two things that – in the depth of our hearts – we expect from God. But in spite of this, Tobit becomes blind and poor! As one might say: so much effort for nothing! Tobit’s pride is injured to death. He is deprived of what should have been, in the eyes of the world, the signs of God’s favour towards him. First of all, the *certainty* that is given by a clear perception of life (capacity to know what to do, discernment, wisdom). Then the *security* of money (guarantee of stability for oneself and for one’s wife and children). Instead of this, Tobit is wounded in his certainties and securities, such as often happens to our “Tobit-states, communities, and families”. He no longer sees and is subjected to the humiliation of having to let himself be guided and maintained by others. But Tobit will only understand all this progressively and much later, through the experience of his son. In fact, when the hour finally comes for him to give his departing son his last paternal advice, he transmits nothing to him but money – today, it would have been a bank cheque – and a few rules and precepts to follow. An inheritance of money and commandments. He is not able to transmit to him his experience of love of God and of human beings, perhaps because he did not love them enough.

Tobit and Sara’s anxiety can only be dissolved by God himself, who visits them in the person of the Angel.

The inner recovery of Tobit and Sara gives them a new, clearer, more transparent vision of the world. As a result, their attitude is “more Christian”. Breaking the presumptuous pretensions of our small and mediocre goodness, the miracle opens us to *God’s own goodness and intervention in history*. Tobit opens his eyes, Sara opens her heart and they both understand that the only thing to do is to follow the Angel, like Tobias. However it would be impossible to understand *the goodness of God* and that *another world*, the one He dreams of, *is possible*.

At the beginning, the Angel is a common person, his name, Azaria, is not even a theophorical one. He is someone we might meet on a square, a taxi driver as one might say today, since the angel asks for remuneration. He may even be a foreigner, perhaps a Moroccan.... Then, on speaking to him Tobit discovers they have common ancestors, perhaps he discovers that the God he calls *Allah* is the same as the one he himself calls *Yahweh*. He then entrusts his son to him. This anonymous angel, half foreigner, one with whom Tobit has a relationship based on work and money – as payment corresponds to the service given – becomes the healing Angel of God. It is only once we have begun the journey that we will discover that our companion actually is a messenger of God (*Raphael*) and has the task of healing us.

### **Our “Tobit Christian communities”**

In our Christian communities – whatever they may be: nations, religious communities, associations or families – do we still remember what we call “Christian tradition”, that is to say the experience of God’s accompaniment? Tobit had ancestors who bore witness to this presence of God in history. Are we able to recall to our minds how concretely, through the events of our life, *God has been our sake (Tobiel)*, the one who *made us happy (Adoneh)*, who *distributed his gifts (Asiel)* and *healed us (Raphael)*? Are we able to recall to

our minds how God *announced to us*, as he did to Mary, a great hope and a great joy (*Gabriel*)?

Or perhaps we consider the Angels to be mysterious and magical creatures, a bit like elves and dwarves, winged creatures from pagan mythological stories? Do not we see them at work in our own sacred history, sacred because accompanied by a God who cares for us, like a mother or a father, accompanying his children though never constraining us, *present* at our side but never taking our place?

Perhaps our megalomania of “*perfect certificate Christians*” still lets us recognize when we have been these angels for others. But it is much more difficult to recognize in the very events of our lives, in our concrete daily lives, when others have been those angels for us. Maybe they were atheists, foreigners or immigrants, one of those people we usually consider to be religiously, spiritually, culturally, socially or economically inferior. Nevertheless they may have been for us messengers of a *God who is our sake, who rejoices with us, who distributes to us, who heals us... who announces to us (Gabriel) ... a God who-is-with-us (Emmanuel)*!

Tobias symbolizes our imperfect child’s longing for freedom. The importance of the generation of children bears more likeness to their time than to our’s (as it must be indeed). They are perhaps the last genuine relationship of love which lays us bare before ourselves and before God.

Therefore, our children may help us to accomplish our passover:

- from *virtual* nations, groups, families or communities, virtual because pseudo-virtuous, imprisoned in the arrogant presumption of being good, first and *perfect*,
- to *virtuous children* of both a paternal and maternal God who gives us love and plenty of gifts through his Angels. This implies that we recognize God’s supremacy, only he is *first* and we all are *second*: “You won’t have any other God”.

Thanks to the thousand and one mistakes we make with our children and their generation daily, we come to understand we are not absolutely perfect. They reveal to us how blind we are, since we hardly perceive and understand the journey of their life, the road they are called to walk on. However, we are not to accompany them on this road, for this will be the task of an unknown Angel. They open our eyes to see we are not the “perfect certificate Christians” we thought we were, as we were thinking like *Tobit*: “*how good I am!*” and they make us understand that the only genuine experience is that of *God’s goodness*, which he offers us through our children and through his Angels.

In this way and only in this way, can we ourselves become *messengers* of the Good News, *announcing* the great joy and the great hope whose name is *Emmanuel*, that is, “*God-with-us*”: God did not abandon us, he did not leave us orphans! Thus we shall become *Gabriel*.

But all this will only happen provided we do not fall into the trap of another angel, Asmodeo, the seducer. He was the one who killed Sara’s husbands out of jealousy, for he did not want her to have descendants. Supreme adversary of the future, he did not want her family to have any future! He was a distinct Angel: instead of being a messenger of God he had his own rules and powerful temptations. And we know the name of these rules and temptations: money, success and revolt against God. An angel who stops every affective relationship. However, this angel is not so hard to defeat, since with Raphael’s help Sarah and Tobit’s powerful prayer quite easily sent him thousands of miles away!<sup>3</sup>

### ***Does the Holy Spirit exist or not ?***

To rebuild a peaceful relationship with ourselves, with our neighbour, with Creation and with the peoples of the world, it is not enough to get rid of the superiority complex we borrow as Cain’s descendants. Above all, we must positively rebuild these relationships, so that our “Cain thoughts, words and behaviour” may gradually be corrected. Furthermore, one can only rebuild these relationships by rooting them in



concrete, tender thoughts, words and behaviour. This right type of behaviour is based on those qualities that make someone's company so sweet and which the Christian tradition calls "*gifts of the Holy Spirit*". Whoever is filled with these gifts becomes a peacemaker for all those who surround him: wisdom, good sense, aptitude for giving good advice and for discerning what is good from what is bad, inner force and courage, moderate language, attention to others and to life itself. Too often we think that all this depends on our personal qualities and virtues, forgetting that they are God's *gifts*, and therefore, *free* gifts. God left us neither as orphans nor alone to finish the work of Creation and to accomplish the ages: he gave us His Spirit.

But is there really such a thing as the Holy Spirit? Do we really believe in his presence among us? Anyway, his gifts are there ... so close to us ... free gifts, provided we beg for them, that is to say, provided we do not fall (again!) into the trap of pride and presumption, that is trusting only in our own strength!

The Holy Spirit, *ruah* (the Hebrew expression is feminine!) can also be described as a breeze, a breath, a wind, ethereal like the soul... He is an *emptiness* that is full and he is *fullness*. He is energy, force, apparent emptiness that is in fact absolute fullness. And he is the fullness of *Res Novae*.

### ***The Res Novae: five points to redefine ourselves as Community with innocent methods***

In order to redefine ourselves in the light of the Beatitudes – on the personal and collective level and including every sort of institution: cultural, religious, political, economic and social – we need to learn how to live in *commune-unity* in all aspects of our civil life, and not only in our religious communities. Hence we are called to follow the example of Saint Francis, that is, to find *new ways to conceive and express* the life of our planet, and then changing our cultural, educative, scientific and technological models. In this way our planet should really become the Garden of Eden dreamt of by God. This cultural, educative and scientific conversion cannot be delegated to some *ad-hoc* institution, as it regards each man and each woman of our world, as well as each culture and each people, with its own political and economic structures. Furthermore, we should also follow the example of Saint Francis and learn again *how to love Creation* itself and all the living beings. Thus we may overcome universal hatred and reach the cosmic synergy God dreamt of *in the beginning*.

Therefore this conversion concerns our whole life. According to the model of Saint Francis, we could almost summarize it in five points: cultural, religious, economic, political and social.<sup>4</sup>

### ***The Five Manifestos:***

1. **\*Cultural:** personal choice of poverty and joyful sobriety
2. **\*Religious:** *ad gentes*, preferential option for the Global South
3. **\*Economic:** to sing the *Canticle of the Creatures*, Nature no longer considered as something we can use and throw away, but as a sister and a brother
4. **\*\*Political:** to live in *commune-unity*. To recover kingship (empowerment) at the level of:  
micro-communities: families, groups, associations, religious institutes, Cooperatives;  
medium-communities: States, regions;  
macro-communities: regional groups, European Union;  
mega-communities: UN of the nations, UN of the peoples, that is, civil society;
5. **\*\*Social manifesto:** to live in common-union through global mega-communities (missions) and local micro-communities (parish).

### *Chastity of spirit, mind and body for a new culture<sup>1</sup>*

	<b>Evangelical counsels</b>	<b>The Word of God</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Pragma- Value</b>	<i>Behaviour</i>	<b>Counter- value</b>	<i>Behaviour</i>
<b>Family and community</b>	Purity Non-violence	Tobit, Job	faithfulness patience	Pact of common life, solidarity	Reciprocal help	"I am free to..." Utilitarianism	selfishness "I am going away"
<b>Friendship</b>	Purity Poverty	"You are my friends" (Jn 15:14)	Loyalty	Pact of friendship, company	Aggregation	To follow one's own interests	break quarrel
<b>School</b>	Purity Non-violence	"If you do not become as children..." (Mt 18:3)	Person	Reciprocal growth	Discovery of one another's talents, orientation	meritocracy	Elite and excluded
<b>Culture</b>	Purity Justice Non-violence	"Love justice", "Wisdom does not inhabit a soul that does evil" (Wis 1:1.4)	Life	To create and maintain life within and around us	Solution of the conflicts, mediation, peace	violence	Death

### *Non-violence and peace for a new politics<sup>14</sup>*

	<b>Evangelic al counsels</b>	<b>The Word of God</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Pragma-value</b>	<i>Behaviour</i>	<b>Counter-values</b>	<i>Behaviour</i>
<b>Neigh- bourhood</b>	Purity, Non- violence	The oak of Mamre (Gn 18:1-15)	Sacred character of the host, confidence	Good education, good, neighbourhood relationships,	Welcoming kindness reciprocity	To look after one's own business	privacy closed doors
<b>Society</b>	Purity, justice	"They held everything in common" (Ac 2,44)	Participation	Sociability	Common good	individualism	Marginalisation, exclusion
<b>Politics</b>	Purity, Justice, Non- violence, peace	"If someone wants to be the first..." (Mk 9:35), "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees" (Lk 11:52-53)	Equality	Common good	Construction of the <i>polis</i>	Social, national and international hierarchy, Aligning oneself with the powerful	Abuses of power Colonization war



## *Poverty, justice and mercy for a new economy<sup>1</sup>*

	<b>Evangelical counsels</b>	<b>The Word of God</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Pragma-Value</b>	<b>Behaviour</b>	<b>Counter-value</b>	<b>Behaviour</b>
<b>Nature</b>	Purity, Poverty, non-violence	"So that he would cultivate and care for it" (Gn 2:15)	Bio-diversity	Fertility, Utilization	Safeguarding of the natural patrimony	Challenge, exploitation	Pollution, Bio-diversity loss
<b>Trade</b>	Poverty, justice	Justice "the cheated salary" (Jas 5:4)	Honesty Just pay	equity	Justice	To accumulate money	Theft and fraud
<b>Work</b>	Poverty, Justice	"Do not be a burden on anyone" (I Thes 2:9)	Co-responsibility	equity honesty	Just salary rights	Exploitation Pushiness	mobbing, to push past other people
<b>Economy</b>	Poverty, Justice, Purity	Magnificat (Lk 1:46-55)	justice	equity	cooperative activity and Human Rights	Exploitation	Racism slavery Impoverishment

The unity of charisma in a global world

There are a great variety of ministries ... but the Lord is one

*There are then various gifts given to various people and communities, but the Lord is one.*

*There are many ways to build the Kingdom of Justice and Peace, but one alone is God and does all and in all.*

*And to each individual person, to both sexes, to each community and people is given a particular manifestation of the Spirit for the common good of all the Earth.*

*To each person, sex, community and people is given the gift of wisdom, the gift of a vision that sees within the reality, perceiving it, understanding its hidden meaning, living the particular in harmony with the whole, the gift of discernment and of just judgement. To these is given the gift of interiority.*

*To some is given the gift of science, the gift of technology,*

*The ability to build tools, machinery and technologies.*

*To these the gift of method is given.*

*To others is given to trust God*

*And to have confidence in Him, they received the gift of the highest spirituality.*

*To these is given the gift of faith.*

*To some are given concrete realizations:*

*the ability to heal the scourges of poor and sick people,*

*and of impoverished countries,*

*as well as the wounds of the disconsolate, the afflicted and the depressed.*

*They shall perform miracles:*

*where there is misery they make well-being bloom,*

*where there is illness they will build hospitals and provide medicine,*

*where there is violence they will bring justice, Human Rights and peace.*

*To these is given the gift of charity.*

*To others is given the gift of prudence,*

*the intuition of the economic and political course,  
the outlets of our choices, the consequences they'll have in the future.  
To these is given the gift of prophecy.*

*To some is given the competence to judge people and events, analyzing them,  
but also to educate, to bring out, so as to be able to lead each person and people,  
giving them indications and directions.  
To these is given the gift of orientation and education.*

*To others is given the ability to communicate and to know many languages,  
the familiarity with the mass communication, satellite and Internet,  
and the capacity to make this communication easier  
by using non-violent methods in study groups and therapeutic sessions.  
To these is given the gift of communication.*

*To some is given the gift of interpreting languages and cultures,  
and everything that is said, and therefore to use all the potentialities of communication,  
discerning its cultural, philosophical and ethical orientations.  
To these is given the gift of culture.<sup>1</sup>*

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### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> G. Martirani, *VLAndante maestoso. La via della bellezza*, Paoline, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> G. Martirani, *VLAndante maestoso. La via della bellezza*, Paoline, 2006.

<sup>3</sup> G. Martirani, *VLAndante maestoso. La via della bellezza*, Paoline, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> These slides form part of a CD attached to the volume: G. Martirani, *VLAndante maestoso. La via della bellezza*, Paoline, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> G. Martirani, *La danza della vita. Dalla competizione alla cooperazione*, Paoline, 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Unione Superiori Maggiori d'Italia, Conferenza Italiana Superiori Maggiori, Unione Internazionale Superiore Generali.

<sup>7</sup> "Bilanci di Giustizia" is an Italian association that promotes fair economy.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. T. Bello - G. Martirani, *Fotografie del futuro. Le Beatitudini come stile di vita*, Paoline Editoriale Libri, Milano 2003.

<sup>9</sup> G. Martirani, *La danza della vita. Dalla competizione alla cooperazione*, Paoline, 2004

<sup>10</sup> *id.*

<sup>11</sup> *id.*

<sup>12</sup> *id.*

<sup>13</sup> *id.*

<sup>14</sup> *id.*

<sup>15</sup> *id.*

<sup>16</sup> G. Martirani, *Il drago e l'Agnello. Dal mercato globale alla giustizia universale*, Paoline, 2003 (3).

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## *Mission in the Second Decade of Globalization*

### The Second Decade of Globalization

It might seem odd to some at this seminar on mission and globalization and what it means for missionary congregations to begin talking about the “second” decade of globalization. I have deliberately chosen to do so for a number of reasons. **The first** is to remind us how long we have been grappling with this phenomenon. While talk about globalization reaches back into the 1980s, it was not until the collapse of Communism in most countries and the rapid spread of information and communication technologies that globalization began to press itself upon our consciousness as it does today. **Secondly**, in having had nearly two decades to ponder it, we should be looking at the phenomenon in a more nuanced way. Sweeping generalizations that might have been acceptable in the early years of our experience of globalization should be gradually replaced by more careful and strategic thinking. **Third**, having now had the amount of experience with globalization we should be able to see patterns and shape policies that will best serve the mission to which we are called.

Consequently, this presentation will be in two parts. The first part will be my own reading — limited as it is — on where we are in three key areas in globalization: the sociocultural sphere, the economic sphere, and the religious sphere. I have been trying to follow the research on globalization over the last fifteen years or so, especially as it might pertain to the mission of the Church. Nonetheless the literature is now so vast that no single individual can keep abreast of it. So you will have to bear with this limited perspective.

If where we stand nearly two decades into globalization might be considered part of the “signs of the times” we must read, then we must look to where it is calling us to mission in the immediate future. In the second part of this presentation, then, I will look at four sites of mission that seem to be especially connected to the phenomenon of globalization, and where we might see ourselves today in regard to it.

### Where We Are in the Second Decade of Globalization

Before beginning looking at the three spheres of globalization, I would like to preface it by saying something about the general state of research into globalization. In a recent volume that tried to do exactly that, a number of authors noted that we are largely still using social frameworks developed for an earlier era to explain the complex phenomenon called “globalization”.<sup>1</sup> Especially George Ritzer (who coined the “Jihad versus McWorld” metaphor for the social order under globalization) made an especially strong case for this. Neither Immanuel Wallerstein’s “World System Theory” nor Hardt and Negri’s “Empire” nor others have presented a fundamental rethinking of older frameworks. Authors tended to re-emphasize the familiar paradigms from their own perspective.<sup>2</sup> This is a little disheartening for those of us who are trying to deal with the material and moral consequences of globalization. To be sure there are nuances that have been brought into the discussion, but alas not new frameworks that help us understand globalization and its mechanisms more fruitfully. Neither Marxian models nor “new colonial” models nor

social systems theory seem to move us much further ahead, although they may provide the comfort of recognizable frameworks to which we have become accustomed. They end up lulling us into thinking that we do not have to change much of our accustomed ways of viewing and doing things to come to terms with globalization and its consequences.

Having made this disclaimer, I must say that I have no new model to propose either. What follows here is an attempt to see where some shifts are taking place and make some suggestions about what this means for us in mission. Let me say, however, one thing that you will need to know about what is said about globalization here. The more I have tried to keep up with the thinking about globalization the more I have become convinced that, lacking more powerful explanatory models for grasping globalization, it always pays to approach the phenomenon as two-sided. There are positive and negative dimensions of nearly every aspect of globalization. These two dimensions are also almost never symmetrical: depending on where you are, one side will be likely more evident than the other. Consequently, the fact that everything gets more and more linked in globalization means that emphasizing only one side of the picture to the neglect of the other will not get us further in resolving the dilemmas that it creates. To see only the positive consequences of globalization can make us triumphalistic in tone and morally callous in character to the suffering in the world. To see only the negative consequences may make us feel prophetic or righteous, but it may contribute little to grasping the possibilities that will alleviate suffering. Most missionaries are likely to see the negative more clearly than the positive, because of our commitments to the poor and to justice. But changing those situations will call for a broader array of strategies than simply postures of resistance. Having said all that, let me turn then to the three spheres of globalization: sociocultural, economic, and religious.

### ***Changes in Globalization in the Sociocultural Sphere***

There are three changes in the sociocultural sphere I want to highlight: communications technology, the rise in migration, and the increasing multiculturalism prominent especially in urban areas.

The most important development in communications technology in recent years has been the cellular telephone. As recently as fifteen years ago, more than forty per-cent of the world had never made a telephone call; there was pessimism about whether much of the world would ever be reached by landlines or fixed satellite reception. Today the estimates of the number of cellular phones run as high as nearly one telephone per every two people. To be sure, access to telephony is still very unevenly distributed, especially in rural and remote areas. But it is transforming the lot of many people who work in small-scale farming and production by linking them to the markets for their produce more quickly and directly.

Most recently, Raul Castro has now permitted Cubans to purchase cellular phones. Widespread telephony not only can benefit people economically, but politically as well. The revolutions generated by students in Serbia, Ukraine, and Georgia at the turn of the millennium were largely made possible by telephone contact with outsiders (Serbian students coached students in both Ukraine and Georgia regarding strategy).

The increasing number of people with access to computer technology and the Internet lags behind telephony. Yet as it increases, it provides people not only access to more information, it becomes a new way to mobilize people as well. The campaign that resulted in 120 countries signing a ban of the use of landmines was generated almost entirely through use of the Internet, as have been a number of ecological initiatives. In my own country, it has brought change to the electoral process, both in disseminating information and in securing small-scale financial contributions for political campaigns. While countries are still able to block access to certain sites, the continued growth of the technology available will likely be able to circumvent that in the near future. In that regard, it can be an important boost to Human Rights initiatives.

Migration has received dramatically more attention during the last decade in all sectors. The 2005 United Nations Development Programme Report estimated that one out of

every thirty-five people on the planet is in migration. The majority of the world's migrants are women. In Church circles, the excellent document *Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi* (3 May 2004) provides a wealth of insight and important policy suggestions. Conferences are being held to explore the theology underlying a ministry among migrants and develop more effective pastoral responses.<sup>3</sup>

One the positive side, migrants' remittances to their families in their home countries comprise more flow of capital into those countries than all the foreign aid given by the wealthy countries combined. It constitutes a significant part of the annual Gross National Product of many of those countries and is often the single greatest source of foreign investment. While much of it goes to meet the immediate needs of the families of migrants or to improve their way of life (better housing, a refrigerator, etc.) rather than longer-term investment, it does improve the existence of many families.

The negative side of migration is immense. Journeys to places of employment are often hazardous and many die each year crossing the Mediterranean and along the border between Mexico and the United States. Migrants frequently suffer abuse and discrimination in the countries where they work. Migrants are often lonely and isolated in the country of their employment. At home, their families suffer from the absence of a loved one, and that can have long-term effects especially on children. The fact that some families have access to more money than others may create tension and jealousy on the part of those other families who do not have the same kind of access.

Migration in search of work is creating greater multicultural sites around the world, especially in cities. While many cities (especially in times of empire) have often been multicultural places, there has been a dramatic increase of multicultural realities in recent years, even to places where this had not been the case before. Consequently, those places especially are struggling to find new ways of having people of different cultures live together peacefully, and to become more integrated into the economic sphere of those countries. The tensions created in multicultural societies have sometimes resulted in violence, and have provoked xenophobia in many places, notably in Europe.<sup>4</sup>

There have been three waves of responses to growing multiculturalism. The first largely ignored the role of culture in peoples' lives and urged pathways of assimilation on all levels: economic, social, and cultural. A second wave, beginning in the 1970s, argued for immigrants maintaining their culture. It was from the policies flowing from this stance in progressive social democracies that the term "multiculturalism" first emerged. In a number of places — again, especially in Europe which had had little experience with multicultural realities — this led to the isolation of immigrants and contributed to their remaining at the bottom of the economic ladder. More recently, sociologists have become interested in a new approach, beginning with an acknowledgement of the limits of how much difference can be tolerated by a community, and seeking ways to develop an approach that aims at assimilation in some areas of the immigrants' lives as well as maintaining cultural patterns of distinctiveness.<sup>5</sup>

### ***Changes in Globalization in the Economic Sphere***

The economic sphere of globalization has claimed the greatest attention worldwide, and in missionary circles. Because of our commitments to the poor, we see most acutely the effects of exclusion from the benefits of globalization, and the wrenching character of globalization on their lives because of markets beyond their control and decisions made in which they have no voice. Typically, the theological writing on globalization has especially reflected on the plight of the poor in the time of globalization — as well it should.<sup>6</sup> As such it has been principally negative, often accompanied by sweeping assertions.

But to dwell on its negative effects on the micro-level for those who are suffering most can cause us to neglect the more positive dimensions of the effects of economic globalization at the macro-level. It has raised hundreds of millions of people above the poverty line. In 1980, 1.1 billion lived below the poverty line (defined as living on one



U.S. dollar per day). By 2000, 400 million of those people had been raised above that poverty line — despite an increase in population in poor countries of 20%. Because this population increase has meant that, numerically, there are more poor people below the poverty line, another fact is obscured. The percentage of people in the world living on less than \$ 1.00 per day has dropped from 32% of the world's population in 1980 to 23% today. If the growth rate in the world economy from 1980 to 2000 can be sustained, the UN Millennium Goal of halving the number of people living on less than a dollar a day could be reached in 2015.<sup>7</sup>

I do not want to appear to be an apologist for globalization in citing these figures. There are many problems with globalization that are familiar to this audience. But the globalization of trade has been the single most effective measure we have found to reduce poverty on the macro-scale, despite all its shortcomings. In the nineteenth century, it lifted much of Europe out of poverty, and is doing the same today in China, and appears to be beginning to in India and Brazil, and in smaller countries such as Vietnam.

The injustices suffered by the poor and the plight of job loss as factories are moved around the world in search of cheaper wages must remain a missionary concern. But well into the second decade of globalization, I would propose that there are two considerations that should have a bearing upon how international missionary congregations think about and act on globalization. First of all, it is important to have two-sided thinking on globalization. On a macro-level, it has been an instrument of poverty alleviation over a longer period of time — better than any other we have found so far. As we fight injustice on the micro-level, we must remember that our experience on the ground has to be seen — at least at times — from a broader level as well. Secondly, we must be aware of other factors contributing to poverty, especially corruption and bad governance, and support those thinkers who are trying to find workable ways of poverty alleviation. To put all the blame on distant capitalists may obscure what we are able to change on the levels to which we have greater access. I will return to this in the second part of this presentation.

### ***Changes in the Religious Sphere***

I would like to focus upon two changes in the religious sphere that are at least partially influenced by ongoing globalization. The first is the continued growth of Pentecostal and Charismatic forms of faith. It is estimated — perhaps even conservatively — that as many as 25% of all Christians today practice Pentecostal and Charismatic forms of faith. Its rapid growth in Latin America, Africa, and parts of Asia has been well documented. As some of these people migrate to Europe, North America and Australia, they are taking this faith with them. Now the largest Christian congregations worshipping on Sunday in large Northern European cities are often Pentecostal ones. Globalization plays a part in the spread of Pentecostalism in at least three ways. First of all, it can bring discipline into family life — especially for adult males — who are making the transition from rural to urban settings where work and living patterns are different. Giving up drinking, gambling, and philandering brings greater cohesion to the family. Second, direct access to the gifts of the Holy Spirit gives powerless people a new sense of self-worth and power. And third, Pentecostalism's emphasis on the spirits and healing may seem closer to patterns of indigenous religiosity than the more settled and institutional forms of Christianity like Roman Catholicism. It provides a smoother transition into the translocal religion of a globalized world than the alien structures of historical forms of Christian faith.<sup>8</sup>

The second change is going on within the Roman Catholic Church. It has to do with how it understands its catholicity or its being a genuinely World Church.<sup>9</sup> There are two senses of catholicity at play here, each based upon long-held tenets of what being “catholic” means. The first approach to catholicity is based on catholicity as the Church being extended throughout the entire world. By being in nearly every land and culture, the Church's evangelizing mission involves inculturation, interreligious dialogue, and

justice (especially for the poor). Engagement with the world, and a belief in the basic goodness of Creation despite sin, are hallmarks of this approach. These are all themes that appeared in the 1981 SEDOS Seminar, and helped reorient thinking for international missionary congregations at that time, and has animated SEDOS members down to the present time.<sup>10</sup>

The second sense of catholicity might be called Neo-Augustinian, since it owes a great deal to that strand of thinking in Catholic theology, especially as found in Augustine's great work, *The City of God*. This approach emphasizes the other long-held tenet of what constitutes catholicity, namely, adherence to the fullness of faith given in divine revelation to the Church. The Church stands as a beacon of truth in a sinful world, and that truth is embraced by entering the Church. Evangelizing happens, then, by bringing people into the Church out of a dangerous and sinful world. The Church is the visible presence of the City of God amid the Earthly City. The world has little to teach to the Church, because the Church has truth from God. The best way to change the world is to begin with oneself, and achieve a degree of personal holiness that will prompt others to change their own lives. The Church then provides a shining alternative to the world.

Both of these visions are present in the Church today. The latter has gained some ascendancy since it appears to be closer to the vision for the world of the current Pope. Both are ways of responding as a World Church to an increasingly interconnected, globalized world: one more or less embracing that world; the other, offering an alternative to it.

Thus, globalization is affecting even the religious response to the world, either consciously or unconsciously. It is now time to turn to the second part of this presentation about four areas of mission that seem to be highlighted for us by the second decade of globalization

### **Mission in the Second Decade of Globalization**

Our ways of engaging in mission are many. The four that I wish to explore here are prompted especially by the times in which we find ourselves: in the second decade of globalization. By making this proposal, I am not advocating abandoning the evangelizing work that missionary congregations are now undertaking. They are still important and even vital. It is, rather, to think about what is on our immediate horizon. The four areas of mission I propose here are these: (1) accompanying the bottom billion; (2) raising a collective voice; (3) engaging the new secularity; and (4) seeking alternatives to globalization.

#### **1. Accompanying the Bottom Billion**

Oxford economist Paul Collier has been a prominent voice in the global discussion of alleviating the acute poverty that about twenty per cent of the world suffers. Collier's work focuses especially on Africa. Last year he published a synthesis of what he has been thinking about this matter. It is entitled *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It?*<sup>11</sup> While acknowledging the considerable progress that the globalization of trade has helped to create, he sees about 20% of the world locked out of the potential benefits of globalization by larger structural factors that need to be addressed. This billion people at the bottom are concentrated in 58 countries, many of them in Africa and Central Asia. The structural issues that are blocking the alleviation of poverty in those countries constitute four "traps" in which these countries are caught. The poorest countries are caught typically in more than one of these traps at the same time. The four traps are: (1) protracted warfare, (2) being landlocked with hostile neighbours, (3) dependence on a single resource (either extractive resources or agricultural products), and (4) bad governance. This is not the place to go into a long description of these four traps. Here, I wish to explore only two of them because of their implications for mission.

The first trap is protracted warfare, usually internal to a country, but often abetted by neighbouring countries as well. Eighty per cent of the wars today are being fought in the



world's 20 poorest countries. The chances of war re-irrupting in those countries within five years are 50 per cent. One-sixth of the world's population is involved in five-sixths of the wars being waged today. There are a number of countries that have experienced protracted warfare now for half a century. The impact on the population, infrastructure, and resources is enormous.

The preferential option for the poor is part of Catholic Social Teaching, and preaching the Good News to the poor (Lk 4:18-19) have long been part of the Church's evangelizing mission. In our own time, the realization of the impact of protracted warfare has led to a new emphasis on peacebuilding and reconciliation. The 2005 Conference of the Committee on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches (a commission in which the Roman Catholic Church is a full participant), made healing and reconciliation the central theme of its reflection on doing mission today. The growth of interest in healing and reconciliation generally has opened up this area of our tradition for the conduct of mission today.

In our practice of mission, there are skills to be learned but also a theology and spirituality to be deepened in the membership of international missionary congregations. We are called to a ministry of reconciliation (*cf.* II Cor 5:17-20), and helping societies heal and rebuild is an important step in the alleviation of poverty today. Moreover, that experience of healing and reconciliation can be one of the most profound experiences of God that a person or a group can have.

Another area that our mission activity should be addressing is related to the third of Collier's traps, too much reliance on a single source of income. I want to address one area that relates to this, namely, the growing food and water crisis. From March 2007 to April 2008, the world price of wheat (the second most important food staple) rose 130%. In the first three months of 2008, the price of rice (the most consumed staple world wide) rose an astonishing 100%. In April of 2008, there were food riots in 13 countries. This steep rise in the cost of food staples is not an accidental or short-term thing. Many economists believe that this will be a long-term crisis such as the world has not seen in thirty years, and that it is likely to take two decades to reverse.

Four factors are contributing to this crisis: bad weather (especially drought), the rise in the cost of oil (necessary for transport and the production of chemical fertilizers), the production of biofuels in and for the wealthy world, and increased meat and dairy consumption in Asia. A dramatic increase in production will take about ten years to achieve. Most experts believe that what will be needed is larger scale farming since this is the most productive use of arable land. However, chemical fertilizers, genetically manipulated seed, and the heavy equipment needed all pose important questions to the environment and threats to long-term ecological sustainability. A return to small-scale farming may alleviate food shortages on a restricted local level, but with more than half the world's population now living in large cities, this does not offer a global solution.<sup>12</sup> The best forecasts at the moment suggest that the world's population will probably reach 9 billion — nearly 50% more people than live on the earth today. How will these people be adequately fed and the earth preserved properly? Feeding the hungry is an evangelical mandate; how is this to be carried out in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

These, then, are two areas that keep people locked in poverty — warfare and malnutrition — that mission congregations can address in a globalized world. They need to be taken into consideration as we plan our mission and our congregational future.

## ***2. Raising Collective Voice***

A second area of mission in a globalized world has to do with the use of the channels of communication that are available to advocate social justice and change. As was noted above, cellular phones and the Internet have already been used successfully in advocacy against landmines and for ecological issues.

One of the advantages that a Church like the Roman Catholic Church has is what

sociologists call its horizontal and vertical integration. The Church is horizontally integrated in its ecclesiology of communion: to be Catholic is to be in communion with other Catholics around the world. This kind of connectivity — heightened by the means of communication now available to us — allows a voice to be raised on transnational issues. The Church is vertically organized by its hierarchical structure. That gives it the capacity to address societies at all levels: at the grassroots, in the mid-levels of civil society or the public sphere, and at the top levels of national government. No other religious body has both of these dimensions of integration at the level of the Catholic Church. This sets the place for both advocacy and direct action.

At the level of advocacy, considerable steps have already been taken as groups of missionary congregations have banded together to form centres for advocacy with the United Nations and its many organizations, in the joint Justice and Peace Committee of the UISG and USG in Rome, or the Africa Faith and Justice Network as well as others. This work must continue and indeed be intensified.

At the level of direction action, projects such as the Solidarity with Southern Sudan Initiative, sponsored by the general governments of more than fifty congregations of women and men, is an exciting project. This international, intercongregational initiative is partnering with the Bishops of the Southern Sudan to rebuild society there after nearly half a century of civil war. It is a rebuilding of society physically, and also morally and spiritually. It has the potential of becoming an example of what such a collaborative response to post-conflict situations can be, and how pooling the resources of many institutions can be of lasting benefit to one of the most struggling parts of the world. As the human and financial resources of international missionary congregations are shifting, it is perhaps an especially opportune time to consider increasing collaborative action of this kind.

### ***Engaging the New Secularity***

In this second decade of globalization, the standard narrative about secularization has been shifting as well. Heretofore, the narrative went something like this: the modernization process of European society that began half a millennium ago has had a two-fold effect on religion (meaning here Christianity). First of all, it has gradually banished religion from the public sphere, making it a privatized phenomenon that people may or may not choose to follow. Secondly, in the process of marginalization and privatization, religious practice and belief will decline and eventually disappear altogether, leaving a secular worldview that is determined mainly by science. This secularization process began in Northern Europe, but it will spread throughout the world as modernization takes hold. Religion will thus finally disappear as reason replaces faith and other forms of non-rational thinking.

Some things happened, beginning in the 1990s, that have challenged this narrative of human history. First of all, there has been a resurgence of religion in many parts of the world rather than a decline. Some opponents of religion correlate that resurgence of religion with the rise in violence that was occurring at more or less the same time. There are some connections, but much more recent thinking is suggesting that the connections between religion and violence — while certainly there — are not principally causative ones: religion is often enlisted to legitimate violence as an ideological cover for other motives. The re-emergence of religion coincides with the collapse of secular utopian thinking, especially the fall of Communism in Europe and the former Soviet Union. People are seeking meaning that transcends them as individuals, but distrust totalizing, utopian schemes. Secondly, the spread of modernization has not necessarily meant secularization (in the sense of the disappearance of religion) in some parts of the world. Certainly the United States stands out as an exception to a narrative of secularization spreading out from Europe. In parts of Asia modernization and the introduction of global capitalism has been done with authoritarian governments (as in Korea, China, and Vietnam) or unchanged levels of religion (as in India). Today, people are more

likely to speak of modernities (in the plural) than modernity as some single or uniform phenomenon.<sup>13</sup>

As regards modernity Europe may be an exception rather than the rule of what will happen.

So new narratives are emerging, especially in Europe and North America. The German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, an avowed non-believer, surprised the world in his October, 2001 address upon being awarded the Peace Prize of the Frankfurt Book Fair by stating that religion retains its intrinsic value even in a highly secularized society. European society cannot be understood in its current form without acknowledging the role of faith in its genealogy. In a series of additional addresses, including his 2005 Holberg Prize lecture in Norway, he has expanded upon this theme.<sup>14</sup> We are living in what he calls a “post-secular society”, by which he means that a crude kind of scientism cannot establish itself as the sole arbiter of reality. Religion has its rightful place in the discourse of society, although it may carry the “asymmetrical burden” of having constantly to prove itself in the face of secular reason.

The Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor, a Roman Catholic, has also presented a recast narrative in a long and carefully argued book entitled *A Secular Age*.<sup>15</sup> He traces the development of secularization in a somewhat similar way. He notes that one cannot tell the story of the rise of secularization and the demise of religion by means of a “subtraction theory” whereby religion is subtracted from the sum of Western society. Rather, society has continued to be a “mixed” reality, wherein religion has both rational and non-rational elements, and secularity also has the same. As an example of the latter, one could look at the human rights discourse. The Human Rights theory posits the essential dignity and equality of all human beings without being able to substantiate, but only assert, this position. In point of fact, the Western Human Rights discourse, now seen as utterly secular, was originally a religious one. Human Rights were founded theologically upon the assertion that all human beings are created in the image of God (Gn 1:26-27). This too is an assertion of faith, but it is no more an assertion of faith than the secular assertion. Consequently, Taylor argues, religion and secularization exist side by side, each trying to negotiate the questions that modernity raises.

I point to this recent work (others, such as the U.S. sociologists José Casanova and Robert Bellah, are writing in the same vein) to say that this new line of thinking reshapes how we are to look at the New Evangelization, especially as it applies to Europe. The Neo-Augustinian view of the World Church would suggest that a re-Christianizing of Europe accepts the older narrative of secularization and proposes that the Church become a “little flock” of the elect that beams out truth in a world of relativism. The other view of the World Church suggests an engagement with secularization within this redrawn map of secular society, and plots a New Evangelization that “seeks the whole” in a fragmented society, and acknowledges the good and the not so good in both religion and secularity. Rather than looking for the purity of belief and practice, such an approach would mean trying to meet secularity where it stands, and help it find within itself both its rational and non-rational roots. Rationality does not trump all forms of non-rationality inasmuch as rationality itself has non-rational roots. Thus one can trace two broad strategies for a New Evangelization of secularized societies based on understandings of what the Church is to be in a globalized world. Mission to secularized societies has to take into account these understandings and the strategies that will flow from them.

### **3. Seeking Alternatives to Globalization**

As we have seen, globalization is a deeply ambivalent phenomenon when viewed through the lens of Christian mission. On the one hand, it is the best instrument yet found for alleviating poverty. On the other hand, it does not alleviate poverty evenly; it is widely acknowledged that it polarizes the “haves” and the “have nots” economically. Former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was fond of saying about globalization that there was no alternative. Historical studies have shown, however, that globalization is not inevitable. It has been stopped before, when countries have closed their borders

to trade. Such a thing happened in 1914 with the outbreak of the Great War in Europe, and globalization did not start again on a large scale for some seventy years.

Those who are concerned about globalization worry about its dehumanizing features, counting only those human beings as worthwhile who either produce or consume tradable goods. They see a grinding wheel where relentless innovation replaces efforts to build a just society and assure the common good. In the past ten years, the World Social Forum has become an annual site where dreams are set forth under the slogan, "Another world is possible".

Is another world possible, or is it only possible to create small islands of difference that we hope will not be washed away by the *tsunami* of globalization? Utopian thinking, now in some eclipse, is but a secularized form of eschatological hope. The problem has been that utopian thought, cut off from its religious origins, can become profoundly dehumanizing when it is only based on abstract principles and rules, and not on a gracious, merciful, and forgiving God who alone comprehends the future. The utopian disasters of the twentieth century — fascism and the various forms of atheistic Communism — provide ample testimony to that.

So are there alternatives? And if there are, should part of the evangelizing mission of the Church be seeking them out? My answer would be "yes" to both questions. To seek alternatives means not to acquiesce to the inevitabilities in which globalization is sometimes cast by its enthusiastic proponents. It can be modified — not just by the invisible hand" of the market but by the assertion of a common will. Those elements of globalization that so clearly stand against the deepest values of the Gospel must be addressed and changed.

The UK sociologist Leslie Sklair has struggled especially with this question.<sup>16</sup> Whether or not to simply adopt an anarchic stance towards the destruction of capitalism with no reasonable alternative to replace it, or to retreat into sectarian and isolationist shells does not present real and realistic possibilities for the world we live in. It may be useful to describe some of his principal points here.

First of all, neither capitalism nor socialist alternatives are closed systems. Socialist countries such as China and Vietnam have large sectors of capitalist practice. The social democracies of Western Europe have practiced "socialist" ideas regarding the welfare systems for caring for their citizens. The Catholic Social Teaching finds strengths and weaknesses in both capitalist and socialist systems, particularly as articulated by the late John Paul II.

Second, global capitalism is especially vulnerable on two points: class polarization and ecological unsustainability. It is at these two points that possibilities for change should be addressed. Even as sectors of the most impoverished are lifted out of their misery, the upper edge of society profits at a level far beyond its needs for survival. The food crisis we now face, and the way of life that those who have moved above the poverty line hope to have is simply not sustainable over a long period of time.

Third, Sklair suggests a shift in what he calls the "culture-ideology" of globalization, from a culture-ideology of consumption to a culture-ideology of Human Rights. By that he does not mean an end to consumerism, but dethroning it as the ultimate criterion of success for a society. The culture-ideology of Human Rights would not be addressed just to the so-called "first generation" Human Rights (political rights), but to the second generation (the right to adequate nutrition, housing, employment, education, and health care) and third generation Human Rights (the right to development).

A fourth point I would like to add to this list has to do with scale in alternatives to globalization. Certain things can be done in specific circumstances that do not require change at the global level. The success of micro-credit ventures in many parts of the world to enable the poor economically is an example of this. This is not an alternative to international monetary policy, but a niche where much good can be done in a very specific place. We may live in a globalized world, but most of us continue to live locally as well. Both the global and the local have a role to play in building the common good for humanity.



## Conclusion

What I have been arguing for here is a more complex, two-sided look at globalization as it pertains to Christian mission. The general governments of international missionary congregations have a special responsibility not only to keep this two-sided approach before the hearts and minds of their membership, but also to utilize both the horizontal and vertical integration of their congregations to carry forth the mission of God in the world. I have spoken of some of the changes or shifts in our sphere of activity that globalization is bringing upon us, now well into the second decade of globalization — changes at the social, economic, and religious levels. On that basis, I have suggested that these changes in turn cause us to focus upon four sites of mission in a globalized world today: accompanying the bottom billion, raising our common voice in advocacy and collaborative action, engaging secularity in a new way, and continuing to seek alternatives to — and within — globalization. These sites for mission could only be sketched in the broadest of strokes. But I hope that enough has been said here to help us find new ways to be as faithful to our missionary vocation as we can be. It is of course, in the end, not our mission but God's mission — a mission with which we are called to participate, a mission that we hope will change both us and the world.

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## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Ino Rossi (ed.), *Frontiers of Globalization Research: Theoretical and Methodological Approaches* (New York: Springer, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> George Ritzer, "A New 'Global Era', but Are There New Perspectives on It?", in Rossi, *op. cit.*, pp. 361-370.

<sup>3</sup> See for example Daniel G. Groody and Gioacchino Campese (eds.), *A Promised Land, a Perilous Journey: Theological Perspectives on Migration* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008).

<sup>4</sup> For a reasoned negative reaction to migrants, see Paul Schaffer, *Het land van aankomst* (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 2007).

<sup>5</sup> A large study using this approach that has studied multiculturalism in the United States (the third most multicultural country in the world, after Australia and Canada) is beginning to appear. See Robert Putnam, "E pluribus unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-First Century", *Scandinavian Political Studies* 30:2 (2007), pp. 137-174.

<sup>6</sup> Illustrative of this is the 2001:5 issue of the journal *Concilium*: "Globalization and Its Victims", edited by Jon Sobrino and Felix Wilfred.

<sup>7</sup> These are figures from a World Bank study cited by Robert Skidelsky in a review of Joseph Stiglitz's book, *Making Globalization Work*, in *The New York Review of Books* (18 April 2008), 62.

<sup>8</sup> For more on globalization and Pentecostalism, see Sturla Stalsett (ed.), *The Spirits of Globalization: The Growth of Pentecostalism and Experiential Spiritualities in a Global Age* (London: SCM, 2006).

<sup>9</sup> I develop these ideas further in "Forms of Catholicity in a Time of Globalization", *Imig Ugnayan* 8(2007), pp. 1-18.

<sup>10</sup> Joseph Lang and Mary Motte (eds.), *Mission in Dialogue* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1982).

<sup>11</sup> (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> As an example, two-thirds of Mexico's farmers produce only 12% of Mexico's food.

<sup>13</sup> See here the now-classic article of Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, "Multiple Modernities", *Daedalus* 129:1(2000), pp. 1-29.

<sup>14</sup> A number of these addresses may be found in his volume, *Zwischen Primitivismus und Naturalismus* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2005).

<sup>15</sup> (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

<sup>16</sup> See his book *Globalization: Capitalism and Its Alternatives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), and an update on it "A Transnational Framework for Theory and Research in the Study of Globalization", in Rossi, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-108.

- Sr Anne Falola, NDA/OLA -

***Globalization:  
Points of Fracture in Our Human Society  
New Social Sufferings, New Social Fractures  
- New Presences for Mission -***

### Introduction

It is a privilege to speak in front of this august body as an African woman, who is passionate about mission, on this important issue which touches human existence today. Globalization, the subject of our reflection, affects every dimension of the human person. It is not a faceless myth; rather, globalization is an overwhelming reality which affects every sphere of human life – the socio-political, economic, psychological, cultural, religious and spiritual realities. Succinctly, globalization as a contemporary concept can be defined as the widening, intensifying, speeding up and growing impact of world-wide interconnectedness (Kingsolver: 2001). As a result, we cannot deny its effects on our mission of evangelization today. True to its name it is a global empire which has ‘colonised’ every nation on earth and in line with the trajectory of empires throughout human history, there are victors and vanquished. Many scholars agree that in itself, globalization is neither good nor bad, but it is also indisputable that it is the major cause of growing imbalances in the world today.

There are a number of paradigm shifts in the concept of mission as the twenty-first century unfolds. For example, while Africa has been considered a mission field for over a century, African Christians are beginning to have an active participation in mission ‘*ad extra*’ and also attain a new consciousness of our responsibility towards mission ‘*ad intra*’. Today, Africa has to be missionary to itself and be generous enough, even in its poverty, to give and to share its enthusiasm for the Christian faith with the older Churches and with the upcoming communities of believers all over the world. This makes true a popular Yoruba proverb: “*ti ina iba ku, a fi eeru boju, ti ogede ba ku a fi omo re ropo*”, which means: “when the fire burns out, it is covered by the ashes and when the plantain tree is cut down, the young suckers grow in its place”. I hope that our ancestors in faith are proud of us and rest assured that their labour on African soil has not been in vain. Indeed we are grateful.

This paper is determined to raise a lot of questions, because I strongly believe that the fruit of our reflection during this Seminar is capable of shaping the future of the universal mission in which we all, Europeans, Africans, Asians, Oceanians and Americans are called to share actively and responsibly together. No doubt, the religious bodies we represent have been major role players in the mission of the Church in different parts of the world and have played indelible part in shaping the history of human civilization in modern times. Our missionaries of past centuries have dared to go where no one would go; their passion for Christ and for humanity gave them courage to face all kinds of danger and even death in order to reach out to those in need. Their traditional missionary apostolates included not only proclamation and catechesis but also the provision of education, health facilities and other basic needs of the people they met.

I praise the foresight of SEDOS for inviting us to re-discern our missionary strategies in this era of globalization. It is time to ask whether the old approaches are still life-giving to us and to the people to whom we are sent. What new challenges are being

raised by human brokenness which accompanies the new imperial structure of globalization? How should we respond to the modern day slaves of human trafficking, the under-paid labourers of the developing world, the many consequences of mass immigration, the suffering of “asylum seekers” and of displaced people? How do we bring Christ’s healing touch to the victims of modern diseases like HIV and AIDS? How do we respond to the new thirst for God evident even where God’s name is denied or abused? What choices do we make as religious men and women who want to heal and console?

### **View from the Top: A Parable**

There are many ways, even conflicting ways of viewing globalization. There is no single right description of this phenomenon or how it affects our world, the Church and her mission. I would invite each of us to choose his or her own position for analysing globalization and its effects on the men and women of the societies we come from or work in.

I have found a short parable that illustrates my own perspective. It is called a “*View from the Top*” used by Peter McVerry, the Irish Jesuit coordinator for Justice and Peace:

Jack lives in a flat on the top floor of a house. At 8 o’clock in the morning he pulls the curtains – the sun shines in. He looks out of the window at the mountains in the distance rolling down to the sea. He sees the ships coming in and out of the harbour and the yachts on the sea. The mountains are sometimes covered in snow, at other times they present a luscious green sheen. The sun shows the scene in all its beauty. Jack says: “It is a beautiful day. It is great to be alive”.

Jill lives in the basement flat of the same house. At 8 o’clock in the morning and she pulls the curtains – nothing happens. The sun cannot get in. She looks out of the window and all she sees is the white-washed wall of the outside toilet. She cannot see the mountains, the sea, the yachts or the sun. She doesn’t know what sort of day it is.

Here you have two people, looking out of the same house, at the same time of the day, into the same back garden. But they have two totally different views. There is a view from the top and a view from the bottom. Both views are equally valid – although one is admittedly nicer than the other! You will have guessed by now from where I view globalization – from the bottom, a privilege accorded to me by the fact that Africa is my land of birth, Latin America is my land of mission and my heart passionately holds the two very dear. I cannot deny the good things that globalization has afforded us, such as my being here in Rome to deliver this paper which has been made easy by the globalization phenomenon (internet, flights, etc). When well applied, globalization could be a powerful force for good, drawing people together and helping to forge all the inhabitants of the world into a truly human community.

In reference to our parable, *View from the Top*, it is worth noting that geographical demarcations have ceased to be the reference point for the bottom and the top views: there are many people in the developed world who are excluded and confined to the view from the bottom. Even though they live in the supposedly advantageous geographical zones, unemployment, immigration and social exclusion make the advantages of globalization elude them. Conversely, the view from the top also exists in Africa and other parts of the developing world; the few who reach the top in these countries actually make it impossible for others to attain the same height. They cheat, repress, destroy and even kill to maintain their advantageous position. There are situations of scandalous opulence in Africa; my own country Nigeria is a ringleader in this widening gap between the rich and poor, a concept totally alien to our traditional cultural values which consider all the members of the community to be socially bound one to another. A popular adage in our local language confirms this belief: “*Olowo kan laarin otosi mefa, otosi di meje*” – meaning, if only one becomes rich among seven poor siblings,



the seven of them are poor, since he is obliged to share his wealth with all. In other words, the siblings are bound together in poverty and riches; you cannot live in opulence while your brothers and sisters starve. This “was” the traditional African belief but it is fast becoming a thing of the past. Individualism and self-interest are disintegrating the fibre of our societies and local communities; while the traditional checks and balances fall apart in the wave of urbanization, the modern democratic system is not yet strong enough to check all the abuses.

At this stage, it is quite evident that this paper is biased in favour of those whose “view is confined to the bottom”. After all, if we sincerely collaborate in the mission of Jesus Christ, we cannot but allow our choices to be influenced by Jesus’ mission statement as expressed in Luke’s Gospel:

*The spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
for he has anointed me  
to bring the good news to the afflicted.  
He has sent me  
To proclaim liberty to captives,  
New sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord (Lk 4:18)*

### **Globalization and Understanding the Contemporary World and Mission**

The Second Vatican Council challenged us to respond to the “signs of our times”. However, the signs of the times are ever shifting. Forty years after Vatican II, these signs can be said to be very ambiguous. In fact, the changes are so rapid that before we finish elaborating the manner and method of responding we have to start elaborating a new thesis to respond to the “newer” challenges. It is therefore dangerous for our mission to spend too much time and energy on endless discernment, in the same vein, we cannot afford to fall into the danger of “un-discerned” action, getting the right balance is a challenge. The ambiguity and every shifting paradigm shift has thrown the mission of the Church in the world today into something near chaos. Albert Nolan, a South African social analyst and author, argues that we are living at the edge of chaos! (1) If this is true, I think we are privileged to belong to this historic period because chaos usually precedes great inventions; even the creation of the world as we know from the Book of Genesis was preceded by chaos (Gn1:1-2). The “signs of the times” are pointers to the future and since they are ambiguous, the great challenge for us is to be creative enough to elaborate a workable strategy to confront this uncertain future. Creativity enables us to put hitherto unrelated pieces together to create something new; this demands courage, which in missionary terms may be translated as apostolic audacity, generosity and openness to the unknown. It is an act of faith and capacity not only to read and interpret these signs but also to bring new life out of its decay. I would like to outline some of the obvious contentions which the contemporary context of globalization has thrown to us as missionaries:

1) The boundaries between the global and the local are fraught with tension, because on the one hand, there is a situation of political and economic dominance of Western culture with its accelerated communication at the international level while, on the other, there is resistance from other cultures which leads to a struggle for identity and cultural survival at the local level. This unclear cultural boundary defies our hitherto neatly elaborated theories on inculturation. For example, we hear such remarks as “which of the London cultures do you enter into?”. There is no longer one London culture; a taste of almost all cultures is found in every big city. Even African, Latin American and Asian cities are so cosmopolitan that the whole world seems to converge in them. Many languages are spoken almost everywhere, even though there are still dominant languages; every ethnic group has its own

corner in the shops, and on some streets only foods from certain areas of the world are sold. It can be said that the world is global and local at the same time, people move across the globe carrying along their distinctive cultural identities. They are in the big mass, but they do not want to remain anonymous or lost. People today suffer from the tension of living with a sort of cultural homogeneity due to city life and with an intensified longing and search for identity. This is a challenging point for mission in our globalized world, especially when dealing with issues such as Inculturation and dialogue in the urban centres. How do we respond to the needs of the immigrant communities without isolating them from others?

2) Traditional modes of community break down as a result of urbanization and immigration which affects our point of reference and contact for mission. For example, one mission strategy was to establish a rapport with the local community heads and gain entrance into the people's lives by rendering community services. Nowadays, the Government structures we deal with in the cities do not directly link us with the people, and our missionary activities could become another business enterprise in the city. The situation is more alarming when we consider the fact that one of the goals of globalization is to turn every village into a city. Community building thus becomes another challenge for mission today.

3) There is a break down of ideologies. Political ideologies were thrown into turmoil with the fall of communism and the failure of capitalism to bring the human race to the "promised land" of wealth and equality. Religious ideologies have suffered the same fate with scandal and wars caused by religious authorities in the name of religion. Even the scientific rationalism of the past that excluded the spiritual person is being questioned; people today are fascinated by spiritualities of all sorts, magic, vampires, the occult and the supernatural that cannot be scientifically explained. These breakdowns have created a vacuum. There is a new need to discern values, to find a new sense of right and wrong. There is a new need to understand justice which is not confined to a particular doctrinal teaching or ideology, but in the concept of a renewed humanity.

4) Globalization is not new, but there is a shift in the carrier of the global power. It has moved from political empires or nationally based powers to market control and transnational companies. This reality has forced many countries to abandon the socioeconomic systems that have sustained them for centuries in favour of a new system that, even if it provides some short term benefits to a privileged part of the population, endangers the very survival of the people in the long term. The consequences for our mission are that a hundred years ago we had to negotiate with the specific colonial powers of mission territories, but today who do we negotiate with? Again this touches on the ambiguity of globalization.

These are but a few of the challenges that globalization poses for mission today. We only become effective in announcing Christ in the twenty-first century if we creatively design our missionary response to these challenges. The long trek of human history with its success stories, discoveries and landmark inventions often hides the untold tale of the "losers" who bore the brunt of each generation. For instance, the great pyramids of Egypt were built by the suffering of slaves; the "New World" of America was built with the blood of native Americans and the humiliation of African slaves; the Industrial Revolutions of Europe were founded on the unwritten pain and deprivation of the miners, factory workers and their families.

It is not out of place therefore to ask who are the victims who pay the high price of the new revolution in today's globalised world? Are they the executive managers who have to battle day and night to keep up with the competition? Or the families who live permanently disintegrated as a result of inhumanly long working hours? Or the women and children caught up in the Asian sweat shops? Or the farmer who cannot survive the ever lowering prices of his/her products due to open market policies? Or the Africans who bear the weight of the debt of which they knew absolutely nothing? Would it be right to say that we are all victims, and that we are all broken by some invisible force which is seemingly beyond our control?

Tourism has become a big business as a result of globalization and promoting it has become a measure for development even when the facilities to sustain it are not readily available. For example, I was only a few months old in Abuja, the new capital city of my home country, Nigeria. It is a city many of us are proud of, it is beautiful and neat with a well laid-out road network, unlike many of our other cities which cry out for maintenance and are overcrowded. In central Abuja, street hawkers and “*okada*” (our local commercial and dangerous motorcycle taxis) have been totally prohibited, leaving many people unemployed all of a sudden. Many officially “unplanned” ramshackle houses were ruthlessly bulldozed a few months ago leaving hundreds of thousands homeless for the sake of the ‘Abuja Master Plan’.

The Catholic Church, which had pitched her tent among the “illegal” and the “unwanted poor” who were considered a menace in the new capital, was also badly affected — schools, community centres and churches which served these poor working-class sectors were all pulled down. It is clear that the desire of our Government is to turn Abuja into a first class city so as to attract tourism and get global affirmation. While the houses of the poor are torn down, luxurious hotels, shopping malls, neat and beautifully planned houses, gardens, and so on, are springing up. Good taxis and buses are still only in the imagination of many Nigerians. Only a very small and perhaps negligible part of Abuja’s population can enjoy all the luxury the city offers. The vast majority are condemned to live in the suburban slums — unplanned urban settlements with no sanitation system, poor housing, lack of adequate means of transportation to get to work in the city, and low paid jobs to maintain the *élite* system which is being installed in order to enter into the fast lane of development of the capitalist economy. The image of the African continent and its people who live a simple country life is becoming a thing of the past as urbanization is now the order of the day. We have to join the globalized world and the market economy or we relocate to another planet!

Our preoccupation is not that our world is very inter-connected due to the speed of communications or to other factors of today’s global networks. In fact, it would be a great gift to humanity if the right things were distributed around the globe. Computers, mobiles phones, (Global System of Mobile Communication – GSM) and so on have been poured out on every continent and almost on every village; diseases like HIV and AIDS have also spread. But today’s form of globalization is incapable of being the fast tool for spreading clean water, vaccination, electricity or good transportation systems to the whole world. How do we convince the powers of today’s global world, which saw the mobile phone spread to almost every corner of the globe in three years, that the Millennium Goal to end poverty is really achievable?

Collaborating in the mission of Jesus requires a serious reflection on the manner in which poverty presents itself today — as diverse forms of blindness, lameness and imprisonment. As Donal Dorr suggests, analysing the victims of globalization is not simply an identification of villains and victims; everybody — workers, managers, entrepreneurs, shareholders and even nations — is seemingly trapped in a system which is damaging to all (156). There seems to be an urgency to be attentive to human brokenness, to be near to those who are blind not only by ignorance, but by their desperate pursuit for more profit and financial security; to be attentive to those who are imprisoned at the bottom of the ladder and who, no matter how hard they strive, are so crushed that they cannot even take the first step up.

At this juncture, I would like to state that our generation occupies a vital stage since we are at the cross-roads of civilizations. Mission is not an event, it is not attained as a once and for all achievement. It is a continuous engagement with reality; it is journeying, not simply arriving; it is questioning, not receiving a simple answer; it is searching, but not finding a once and for all solution.

## The Points of Fracture and New Forms of Social Suffering

The recent Encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*, recognises the reality and the enormity of suffering and proposes a Christian attitude which does not pretend to completely eliminate suffering from the world, but which attempts to transform it with hope:

“Like action, suffering is a part of our human existence. Suffering stems partly from our finitude, and partly from the mass of sin which has accumulated over the course of history, and continues to grow unabated today. Certainly we must do whatever we can to reduce suffering; to avoid as far as possible the suffering of the innocent; to soothe pain; to give assistance in overcoming mental suffering. These are obligations both in justice and in love, and they are included among the fundamental requirements of the Christian life and every truly human life. Great progress has been made in the battle against physical pain; yet the sufferings of the innocent and mental suffering have, if anything, increased in recent decades. Indeed, we must do all we can to overcome suffering, but to banish it from the world altogether is not in our power. This is simply because we are unable to shake off our finitude and because none of us is capable of eliminating the power of evil, of sin which, as we plainly see, is a constant source of suffering. Only God is able to do this: only a God who personally enters history by making himself man and suffering within history” (n. 36).

I therefore invite each and every one of us to bring into this hall that awareness of human suffering and brokenness of the people we encounter in our apostolates. We cannot minister to the suffering in our world if we ourselves have not entered in some way into that mystery in our own personal and community realities. To be effective ministers to human brokenness, we must first acknowledge and assume our own brokenness, not with a sense of self-pity, guilt or shame, but with hope. Only then can we become what Nouwen called “*wounded healers*”. Therefore, as Pope Benedict said, our mission is not to remove suffering from the world since this is not in our power to do; rather our mission is to transform suffering and help it become life-giving and fruitful. We might learn some wisdom from the words of Helen Luke, that Christian psychologist whose life experience was a testimony to the transformative power of suffering:

“... real suffering belongs to innocence not guilt. As long as we feel misery because we are full of remorse or shame over our weakness, all we experience is a loss of vital energy and no transformation takes place. But the minute we accept objectively the guilt and shame, the innocent part of us begins to suffer ... we bleed, and the energy flows back into us at a deeper and more conscious level... For Christians, it is easy to give lip service to the “innocent victim”, to Christ carrying in innocence the sin and suffering of the world. But rarely do we even think of the essential practical application of this truth in the smallest of our pains” (110 – 111).

While we attempt to uncover the evils in the contemporary world, the goal is not to demonise globalization; rather it is to discern how we can be effective prophets to end the needless and senseless suffering which is being inflicted on millions of our brothers and sisters in the world.

One of the myths of globalization is that it brings prosperity to people and to our planet; however, the reality tells another story: The major consequence of the process of globalization is the absolute poverty of over a fifth of humanity; even the developed countries are hit by structural poverty due to a high level of unemployment and the deepening of differences. Even the countries who are at the vanguard of the new global capitalist economy are not immune to the reality of poverty, for example, one quarter of the households in the UK are on one form of assistance or another (Colier and Esteban: 32).



Globalization is strengthened by the growing obsession for economic growth in terms of technological and capital investment, often to the detriment of the human and spiritual growth of individuals and societies. However, the more the developing world strives to attain the positive economic and technological growth propounded by globalization, the more its people fall into the trap of dehumanization. This is because values which would normally serve as an antidote to tackle the negative effects of globalization are broken down. Examples of such dehumanization abound: family values are affected as countries assume these new economic structures; the village markets or corner kiosks are replaced by twenty-four hour shopping malls; the skilled craftsmen/women are replaced by specialised factory workers. When factories or industries decide to close down, people, left now with no particular skills, suffer the humiliation of joblessness with nothing to fall back on and often with no land to return to.

Economically, the global village allows the effect of a local policy to resound strongly in another country. For example, the beginning of the crisis in the late 1990's and early 2000's in Argentina can be traced to the growth of the Brazilian market and the devaluation of its currency. This encouraged many companies to close down in Argentina and to open in Brazil where the labour was cheaper and the teeming population provided a larger market. The result was mass unemployment in Argentina. When Argentina then decided to devalue its currency (Peso), investors (rightly) siphoned off the little money left in the reserve of the country and the nation was left bankrupt. The great and the rich might have suffered some set-backs at the level of profit, but the real victims of the crisis were the poor: people who had fixed salaries and whose little old-age pensions were lost, and the day labourers who were left unemployed or unpaid since there was no cash flow in the country. Women and children were left undernourished and overworked, because in order to improve the economy, the country had to export more grain and beef while the people at home were left hungry. Little wonder then that the Eucharistic Congress of year 2003 in Argentina chanted: "*Que escandalo morir de hambre en un pais que produce trigo!*" (What a scandal to die of hunger in a country where wheat is exported). The same boomerang effect happened with the publication of the cartoons about Muhammad in Denmark; it sparked off terrible violence all over the world. Our missions in Northern Nigeria suffered; for example, churches were burnt and a young Nigerian priest was tortured to death by Islamic fanatics.

Additionally, the control of the multi-nationals is not only economic and political, but it also affects the lifestyle and community decisions all over the world because, in order to attract their powerful investment and give employment to the teeming population of the South, Governments are ready to compromise over anything. Therefore, environmental laws are disregarded, tax payments go unchecked, working conditions are not challenged and unethical profit accumulation without further investment in the environment where the profit was made keep these countries at the lowest ebb of poverty. Nevertheless, the people work harder hoping that this will improve their situation; they are not aware that they are trapped in a vicious circle created by the new empire.

The vicious circle does not only generate victims. It also creates more oppressors. In a subtle way, the media advertisements advocate that the misery will come to an end and that happiness, freedom and self-esteem will be attained when you possess more of the products generated by this system; for example, mobile phones, flat screen televisions, new cars, a more modern computer, etc. While these are very useful articles, the globalised economy over-estimates their importance and thus raises them to the level of "idols". Otherwise how have we been convinced that it is more important to have a computer or a mobile phone than to invest in safe drinking water for our people? Or how would we explain the fact that our Governments show more eagerness to get mobile phone networks than to get good education and health systems for our people?



One of the greatest issues of societal fractures that the developing countries have to deal with is the craving for the Western lifestyle. Our global world of today has generated a perverse generation of insatiable youth, so desperate to attain the Western lifestyle that they would do anything: sell their bodies, body organs, carry drugs, and defy all international laws and common sense to get to Europe and North America – the “new heaven”. This materialism is bad news for secular society, but it becomes a grave matter when it creeps into religious life and the priesthood. We cannot deny the fact that there are some religious and priests from Africa, Asia, Latin America and now Eastern Europe who would do anything to get into Western Europe and North America and would remain there under any pretext, like unending academic study, sabbatical or even missionary work (in Nigeria we call them “*mercenaries*” not “missionaries”). The other side of brokenness in religious life is the lack of simplicity of lifestyle even when living in poor contexts, care has to be taken so that the local people do not see us and our institutions as another ‘multi-national business group’.

The ‘use and discard’ culture brought by the mass production market economy has made the present generation lose its capacity to judge and discern priorities. For example, a marriage is as disposable as a car — everything seems disposable and the human person has gradually crept into the category of “disposables”. Thus, marriage and the family which are among the most enduring institutions of humanity are in danger of extinction!

Culture is, according to Paul Gallagher in *Clashing Symbols*, “a transmitter sending subliminal messages, that affect our priorities without us knowing [...]; a complex light that signals what one should pay attention to [...]; a womb within which one feels perfectly at home [...]; an ever present horizon beyond which we cannot see [...]; an ocean surrounding us as water a fish [...]; a flight recorder preserving the memory of humanity’s journey” (Gallagher: 10-11).

Culture touches on every level of existence. So too, therefore, does cultural impoverishment. Gallagher believes that since globalization has generated a new culture, it challenges contemporary mission not to focus only on the conversion of individuals, but also on the conversion of cultures. The challenge presented to us as missionaries is to give faith a voice in the public world of culture and at the same time to encourage an intelligent analysis of cultural blockages to the Christian faith (93). In other words, if Christian faith does not become culturally vocal and creative, it may simply become a zone of spiritual comfort and even a narcissistic Christianity.

The narcissistic tendency which is perceptible in contemporary Christianity is manifested in various ways and can be said to be a weak but well contextualized point in different parts of the Christian world. For example in Europe, it can be observed in the fragmented life of “political correctness” where religion or the spiritual dimension of the human person is not given room for expression in public life. This has created a vacuum which in the long run is responsible for a fundamentalist attitude to religion or apathy towards any doctrine. It is a denial of the Christian roots of the European people in a bid to accommodate a new pluralism and a secularized European Union which remains an unresolved puzzle for the European Government and its people. The Catholic Church in Europe is challenged to create a mode of giving faith a voice in a culture where faith would rather be silenced or denied outright; this is essential, since excluding faith because we are too busy to discern how to give it new expression would result in the exclusion of a considerable number of European people who also long to manifest their faith and create a space for authentic dialogue with other faiths and cultures. North America expresses the same “self-absorbing Christianity” if the Church allows herself go into self-paralyzing depression due to the recent scandals, attacks and counter-attacks on the Church and sometimes rightly so. Is our faith in the Pascal Mystery strong enough to become witness to human vulnerability and God’s unconditional love, powerlessness as a way of sharing in the Cross of Christ in a society which glorifies the image, earthly power and success? The same reflection is proposed to the Church in Oceania.

In Africa, the same narcissistic approach to Christianity is obvious in the insufficient openness in dealing with the political and socio-economic challenges of the continent, coupled with the suspicion of some of the Church hierarchies towards inculturation. It is seemingly more conformable and safe to follow the same old Church structures and never to dabble in the uncertainty of something new which might challenge us to a deeper cultural conversion.

Latin America, on the other hand, suffers from the same narcissistic syndrome seen in the tendency to polarize positions and demonize the opposition. This creates a lot of “in-fighting” which reduces the missionary outreach and creativity of the Latin American Church. It is time for Latin America to recognize that it is not the only poor, it is not the only victim and we are all caught in the same web — North and South; we have to work together in response to our faith in Jesus who calls us into one human family. As rightly challenged by Puebla in 1968, let the Latin-American Church “give of her poverty”. Lastly, religious life and our mission can also become self-absorbing if we continue to focus mainly on our own problems, structures and conveniences. Can we really live “life in common” with the context of our missions sharing in the joys and pains of the people we have been sent to? To heal the cultural fissure in contemporary societies, Christian mission must not aim to create a cultural homogenization, as mission in past practice is sometimes accused of having done. Rather our mission is to create spaces for creative dialogue leading to discernment and mutual respect.

The homogenization of culture which has resulted from today’s globalized frameworks has caused a significant part of humanity to lose its traditional wisdom, technology and knowledge without replacing these with access to the technology and information network promised by the global system. Capitalist culture regards anything not economically productive as unworthy of investment. Thus traditional crafts, the languages of small ethnic groups, the source of sustenance of village populations, and traditional family structures, all of little profit in today’s new global systems, have been obliterated. Lands and water which have sustained generations of indigenous peoples have been destroyed by mining, oil drilling and forest exploitation. For example, the Niger Delta of Nigeria is a classic example of this kind of atrocity and so are many aboriginal tribes in America and Australia. Just as poverty is not limited to the developing world, neither is cultural impoverishment; the division of labour created by industrialization has turned people into specialists skilled at doing only one job. As knowledge-intensive systems come to dominate a society, vernacular-knowledge disappears. It is not life-giving to foster a single world-view which will be monopolistically controlled by a few powerful agencies.

Since globalization has brought this fast and global communication system so that we all get the news of whatever is happening in other parts of the world in a matter of seconds, the sense of insecurity has greatly increased. The bad news is always on ... murder, abuse, institutional violence, terrorism, destruction of the environment, not to mention earthquakes, *tsunamis* and hurricanes. These feelings of insecurity and hopelessness have led many to despair and a relentless search for distraction from these sad realities. Moreover, from the perspective of the developing world, the security which the close knit communities traditionally gave is being gradually broken down to give way to faceless urbanization. The traditional societies may have had no formal structures to attend to emergencies, but widows and orphans were adequately catered for by such communities, everyone knew they depended on one another and this knowledge kept them together. Today’s weakened family and community ties divide people; institutionalised charity in the form of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) is gaining ground in the developing world but this is prone to being abused due to lack of efficient quality control. It is clear that no Government, not even the most sophisticated and the richest can ever replace traditional society. Although far from perfect in dealing with human fragility and needs, reality is demonstrating that the traditional society was far more effective in enabling people to relate to one another, to God, to land and to other natural resources. The sustainability of the traditional economy and socio-political structures makes

a good argument in its favour as against globalization which will strip the earth bare within the next few generations of humankind if it continues unchecked. Therefore, the challenge of mission today is to focus on community-based projects, let us follow the adage: “think globally ... act locally”.

Ursula King, a North American feminist, scholar and writer, affirms that the widespread contemporary interest in spirituality is connected with the growing awareness that our society is in a deep spiritual crisis, a situation which calls for creative thinking and transformative ways of living in order to overcome the vacuum of meaning and commitment (3). Spiritual hunger is experienced in a variety of ways: some experience it as the need for something that will give them inner strength to cope with life, or peace of mind and freedom from feelings of fear and anxiety. Others experience it as seeing themselves falling apart and in need of something bigger than themselves to hold them together. There is a sense of being wounded, hurt, and broken and in need of healing. Many experience it as being cut off and isolated from other people and from nature; they long for connection and harmony. Some experience hunger for spirituality simply as a longing for God (Nolan: 8). This hopelessness experienced in economic and social life has brought about a new longing to ‘feel-good’ and an unending search for instant miracles.

There is a noted hunger for spirituality, but perhaps without the package of institutionalised religion. Nolan maintains that an increasing number of young people feel the need to be in contact with the mystery beyond what we see, smell, hear, taste, touch or think, beyond the constraints of mechanistic materialism (8). The ‘pick and mix’ culture can come disguised as “ecumenism” or “openness”, but when honestly analysed the bottom line may be lack of commitment and fear of structures. The success of *Tai  * in the south of France throws some light on the new spiritual inclination of our era: a return to community, a personal experience of union with God and openness to break social, racial and denominational barriers.

The search for spirituality and a new humanity has presented two major challenges to religious life today: the re-awakening of a deeper spirituality which supersedes the ritualistic, legalistic, moralistic and judgmental approach of the past; as well as the recognition of an essential ingredient of any authentic spirituality – the human dimension. The emphasis of these two aspects of our institutionalized and formalized spiritualities has opened the door to incorporate the enthusiasm of young people and people of good will into Faith Based Charity Organizations through volunteering. This is gradually becoming an important expression of spirituality. The relevance of charity and service to human brokenness is highlighted in the popularity and wide acceptance of figures like Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, especially among the young people.

### **‘New Presences’ for Mission**

The first missionary assignment before us in the contemporary world is not what we do but who we are. In a context where productivity, superficiality and image selling is the order of the day, mission has to offer something more authentic as a sign of the Kingdom. Today’s Christianity has to replace isolation, alienation, superficiality and pollution with community, participation, love, joy and inner values. The over-bearing and lethargic structures of globalization based on over-work, over-production, result and success-centred activity have to be replaced by human centred structures which make room for the holistic expression of the human person made in the image of God. It can be said that religious life has been contaminated with the evil of accelerated and success-driven lifestyles which in the long run drain the enthusiasm for the mission of evangelization, because “success” is not measureable in Gospel terms. Whereas mission has to be done with enthusiasm – a word whose Greek roots are ‘*en theos*’ and the literal meaning of which means ‘to be taken over by a god’.

According to Dorr's analysis of the link between enthusiasm and spirituality, the god of celebration was Dionysus in the ancient Greek world; his work was to move the world from a rational point of view to something quite chaotic. It is a state where human beings come alive in quite a different mode, namely taken out of themselves in an exuberant enthusiastic celebration (186). This was the state of the Apostles after Pentecost; people took them to be drunk and mad (Acts 2:12). This challenges the over-emphasis on the rationality of the world of technology, setting free the transcendent dimension of the human person. Today's men and women seem to long for a new enthusiasm, a new passion for something beyond themselves. We all need a new Pentecost.

Secondly, the missionary presence today has to reach out to the characterless nature of our urban centres without "spatial pauses", gaps for reflection or holy places, while the human soul yearns for these spaces. This is affirmed by the popularity of yoga, tai chi and eastern spirituality in the urban centres. Rowan Williams challenges religious men and women to make space in themselves and even though we live in a pressurized and crowded world, we must not lose the sense of providing space for others to breathe (Williams: 20). Can our communities be recognized as oases in the desert of an anonymous banal world? People today still yearn for spiritual experience; there is a thirst to move from ideas to experience, from intellectual knowledge to felt knowledge. The successes of such programmes as *Sacred Space* of the Irish Jesuits and the *Pray As You Go* of the British Jesuits are pointers to the desired spirituality of the contemporary society. Through the internet, these programmes personalise spiritual journeys and ask questions ingrained in the day to day living, community can then serve as a space to articulate these experiences and discern how they are lived out. Personalised religious experience holds a great attraction for people today (Nolan: 11). The most popular aspects of the Catholic spiritual tradition today are not doctrine related, but spiritualities rooted in personal experiences of mysticism and service for example, Ignatian, Franciscan, Julian of Norwich, etc. Therefore, for missionary spirituality to be relevant today, it has to dig deeper into its own mystical traditions and offer it as the foundation for self-giving for mission.

At another level, the mystical and spiritual experiences are missionary only when they have a boomerang effect in the larger society. We cannot enjoy the cosy retreat houses, wonderful personal and community prayers and not be fired with a zeal which will ignite the world with the fire of God's love. Thomas Merton, a contemporary American contemplative, links asceticism and silence with working for justice and evangelization in concrete situations instead of turning them into another "feel good" comfort zone of the consumer society. The Gospel demand is practical; it is useless to worship the God who is present everywhere and ignore God's presence somewhere. For example, can the modern shopping malls which are open for so many hours hide some 'unknown god' being worshipped by contemporary men and women like the Greeks in the Areopagus?

Succinctly, we need to get our spirituality incarnated in these realities. Can we imagine getting a stall in the shopping malls or some of our popular markets to serve as a "sacred space" where people can learn to discern the 'unknown god' they are worshipping in the market economy and get in touch with their inner reality? Is it possible to have market chaplains or priests/religious attached to the shopping malls where so many people congregate and are like sheep without a pastor? In Nigeria, it is becoming common to have the Angelus in some markets, to have a prayer meeting in market places. I think it is a cry for help for spirituality to be taken out of the boundaries of our churches and institutions to where people are real, operating in real life situations. People spend more time in the markets than anywhere else and there is a need to really interpret the spirituality of the Cenacle and the city-square of Pentecost in clearer terms as it concerns today's realities. This same idea can be applied to pubs and recreational centres where a "spirituality of leisure" would not be



out of place. A lot of people work in these places on Sundays and those who are able to get off the pressure of work go to these places to “relax” not necessarily because they do not want God, but because they are too tired to search for God. So could we create a conscious “presence” to bring God nearer to them?

Another point of missionary presence has to do with the effectiveness of the power of peace, compassion and justice. We have to help the victims and launch a campaign of globalization of compassion and solidarity. It is with great joy I see that there are many Christian Charity Organizations engaged in various forms of campaigns and building networks, e.g. anti-war, HIV and AIDS counselling and treatment units, ecology, justice and peace networks, etc. Globalization from below will gather humanity's pain and suffering to create a global network solidarity and compassion, this is already happening and I believe that the missionary presence has to be actively present in these initiatives, we cannot afford to work in isolation. It seems that contemporary men and women relate at a deeper level of consensus when responding to human suffering and this becomes a platform for ecumenical and inter-faith relations. Apparently mission today has to be done across denominational borders with the focus on the human person rather than doctrinal teaching; otherwise we simply pay lip-service to plurality and dialogue. I think the United Kingdom is a step ahead in this direction as many services, volunteering initiatives and even Christian retreat houses are inter-denominational.

It will be futile to expend energy on constructing an opposition to the phenomenon of globalization, and we do not have the human or material resources to wage such a war; however, the Gospel metaphor of the “mustard seed” is a powerful image and tool to direct interventions. Positive local actions, although small and insignificant at the beginning, could become yeast in the dough of global positivity. From the fracture we have earlier analysed, we see that people today strive for cultural identity, so our mission could focus on fostering this and providing spaces of encounter and dialogue with other cultures. An example is the “mustard seed project” the “*Manos Abiertas Foundation*” – a charity foundation which sprang from a small group of lay men and women who gathered to follow Ignatian spirituality in Buenos Aires; today we have over one thousand volunteers working in different parts of Argentina with the terminally ill, the homeless, abandoned children, supporters for people living with HIV and AIDS, etc. We started with two Jesuits and a few lay men and women who took the injunction of the *Spiritual Exercises* seriously – ‘Love is better expressed in action than in words’. *Manos Abiertas* has become a magnet which attracts many women and men of all walks of life who are tired of empty rhetoric and are eager to combine spirituality and charity.

Finally, in an article in the Irish Missionary Union Report 2007 Newsletter, Mary T. Barron makes a good analysis of the danger of considering missionary work and development as two separate entities and she advocates a closer relationship between development workers and missionaries. This argument is favoured by the evolving reality of mission which recognizes working for justice, peace and inter-religious dialogue as part and parcel of Christian mission in the contemporary world. Moreover, missionary commitment to development provides an answer to the holistic formation of the human person and long-term survival of the human race which is a problem posed by globalization. It is however, essential not to focus on or water down the core of the Christian missionary thrust which is the proclamation of Christ and His self-giving love to all humanity in word and deed.

## Conclusion

This paper has attempted to look at many facets of globalization and how they affect the mission of the Church. Since our attention is on the points of fracture, we have focused on



a proper understanding of human suffering and the new brokenness from the Christian point of view. The paper has posed a challenge for missionary activities to become more engaged with men and women of today in the realities in which they live rather than entertain a self-absorbed Christianity without an outward thrust. Ultimately, mission is a call to conversion, our own conversion and that of humanity, to a God of love. Globalization thrives on the accumulation of power (economic and socio-political), while the conversion proposed by the Christian faith is a *Metanoia* – a change of heart represented by the abandonment of power. It is through the renunciation of her attachment to power that the Church can become credible to a culture wearied by the abuse of power and violence in the exercise of power, just as Moses was sent in powerlessness – “take off your shoes” – in order to liberate the People of God, and the powerlessness of Jesus on the Cross continues to be the most powerful symbol of the true Power of God. It is only by replacing power with the service of obedience to God that we can make a meaningful impact in a world where competition and oppression by the powerful is a scandal (Collier and Esteban: 79).

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***Globalization and the Gospel:  
The Challenge of Religious Life***

**Introduction**

For the last couple of days we have been talking about the globalization, the Church, and mission. In this our final day of the Conference we want to look at the role of religious life and spirituality in our current global climate. The issue of globalization, as is abundantly clear, is so complex and far-reaching that we often do not even know where to begin. As leaders of Religious Communities, you know the great extent to which Religious life also has been affected, positively and negatively, by these changes. Discerning the presence of the Spirit and committing ourselves to the demands of the Gospel is the foremost challenge we face, and it is the reason why we are here for these days.

As we look at this challenge together, I should like to recall a story that I heard a number of years ago. It is about a community of people who lived on a dangerous sea coast where shipwrecks often occurred. In this place there was once a crude little life-saving station. The building was just a hut, and there was only one boat, but the few devoted members kept a constant watch over the sea, and with no thought for themselves went out day and night tirelessly searching for the lost. Many lives were saved by this wonderful little station, so that it became famous. Some of those who were saved and various others in the surrounding area wanted to become associated with the station and give of their time and money and effort for the support of its work. New boats were bought and new crews were trained. The little life-saving station grew.

Some of the members of the life-saving station were unhappy that the building was so crude and poorly equipped. They felt that a more comfortable place should be provided as the first refuge of those saved from the sea. They replaced the emergency cots with beds and put better furniture in the enlarged building. Now the life-saving station became a popular gathering place for its members, and they decorated it beautifully and furnished it exquisitely because they used it as a sort of club. Fewer members were now interested in going to sea on life-saving missions, so they hired life-boat crews to do this work. The life-saving motif still prevailed in this club's decorations and there was a special room where the club initiations were held. About this time, a large ship was wrecked off the coast, and the hired crews brought in boatloads of cold, wet, and half-drowned people, some of whom looked like we did the day we arrived. They were dirty and sick and some of them had black skin and some had yellow skin. The beautiful new club was in chaos. So the property committee immediately had a shower built outside the club where victims of shipwreck could be cleaned up before coming inside.

At the next meeting, there was a split in the club membership. Most of the members wanted to stop the club's life-saving activities as being unpleasant and a hindrance to the normal social life of the club. Some members insisted upon life-saving as their primary

purpose and pointed out that they were still called a life-saving station. But they were finally voted down and told that if they wanted to save the lives of all the various kinds of people who were shipwrecked in those waters, they could begin their own life-saving station down the coast. They did.

As the years went by, the new station experienced the same changes that had occurred in the old. It evolved into a club, and yet another life-saving station was founded. History continued to repeat itself, and if you visit that sea coast today, you will find a number of exclusive clubs along that shore. Shipwrecks are frequent in those waters, but most of the people drown! <sup>1</sup>

In many ways the central message of my talk is very simple: our mission today is the same as it has always been: To proclaim Jesus Christ as the revelation of the God of Life and to labour with him to build a civilization of love. We do this precisely by reaching out to any and all the people who are shipwrecked because of war, oppression, poverty, greed, abuse, drugs, fear, racism, meaninglessness, materialism, and many other perennial problems. We live out this mission not only as social workers, but as people who consciously and deliberately seek to follow Jesus Christ through the power of the Spirit. Amidst the many changes in our world and religious life, I would like to reflect on the ways in which the deeper current of our lives —namely our spirituality — calls and empowers us to become human, holy and hope-filled messengers of a new creation. I will structure my remarks around three levels:

- 1) Reflections on Personal Experience. 2) Reflections on the process of Globalization,
- 3) Reflections on Religious Life in a Global Age.

### **From Corporate Culture to Religious Life: Reflections on Personal Experience**

For the last number of years I have been asking what theology adds to the process of Globalization. I ask this question more specifically as a religious of the Congregation of Holy Cross and a Catholic priest. I thought about sharing some of the theological insights of what later became the book, “Globalization, Spirituality and Justice: Navigating the Path to Peace”, and I invite you to take a look at it if you want to explore the connection between our contemporary experience and the Christian tradition. But the more I reflected on this specific meeting, the more I thought it might be more valuable to talk about what led me to religious life in the first place and why I considered that life as a religious would provide a better alternative to a career in a multinational corporation, which we know is one of the central, animating forces of globalization.

I am now 43 years old, and I was born at the time of the Second Vatican Council in 1964. Given my age I know many of you are more qualified and more experienced than I am to give this talk, but I offer these reflections in the hope they will stimulate your own. In the course of growing up, I did not go to a Catholic school until I went to college, so most of what I knew about my faith came about through my family and the church we attended. Because of the nature of my father’s work, we moved on average every two or three years, which made it very difficult to identify where I actually came from. About the only thing that was constant in my life since then is change.

The church I grew up in did not seem to offer more in the way of stability. The local parishes, seeking to implement the norms of the Second Vatican Council, changed things regularly. I never knew the pre-Vatican II Church; I only knew the Church that was going through changes. In the beginning we had altar rails but within a few years we were suddenly receiving communion in the hands. We started off talking about the Sacrament of Penance and speaking to a priest behind a dark wall and then began referring to the Sacrament of Reconciliation and began sharing face to face. I began going to Mass out of a sense of obligation but then contemporary retreat movements began to introduce me to a more personal relationship with Jesus. When I went to college we started talking

about how a personal relationship with Jesus also had social consequences, so we began working on issues of social justice and outreach to the poor. This time of change marked much of my own personal development, but I think it was also something the universal Church was undergoing at the same time.

Although I was born Catholic I only had passing thoughts about the priesthood, they quickly faded the more I fell in love, dated and imagined myself on a track to marriage, family, and a career in business. At the time I did not have any formulation of a global economy, but I knew I wanted to become involved in an international career. Much of this flowed from my experience as an exchange foreign student in Uruguay and Argentina, and later in Chile, Peru and Mexico, which opened up new cultures and new worlds to me. These multi-cultural experiences enabled me to become more aware of the common bonds we shared beyond any of the particular differences between us.

Before returning to Latin America, however, and following in a family tradition, I began working for American Telephone and Telegraph and later the Bell System. AT&T at the time was one of the foremost, multinational corporations, and it provided me and my family with a relatively comfortable livelihood. My own social location at the time gave me the impression that success flowed from having money, power, and possessions, and the business world seemed to provide the best opportunities to seek these out. What is striking to me as I look back at this time is how uncritically I appropriated the values of a business and consumerist culture, without having tested their adequacy in my own life. This soul-searching came later.

In my first job with AT&T I began working in a division called, "Advanced, Mobile Phone Service". For the most part the Company was still "on paper" in that it proposed a new technology that provided cellular phone service. I began emptying garbage cans and sweeping floors as a high school student, and then through college worked my way up through engineering, marketing and public relations. These jobs brought me to New Jersey, New York and later Washington, DC, where the Company had its first test market, and I was in charge of the Company's first database. By 1984 we were not quite sure that cellular was going to succeed, and I tried to increase our customer sales beyond the roughly 250 customers in our database.

This Company later became Bell Atlantic Mobile Systems, then, after a series of other mergers, became Verizon Wireless. Now it is one of the largest cellular companies in the United States with more than 60 million subscribers. As this technology grew and expanded, they were offering lucrative opportunities to anyone with background and experience, not only nationally but internationally. Tremendous investment was happening in cellular, and opportunities were opening up everywhere. Even while still at college the Company I was working for gave me my own apartment, my own car, a car phone (which was a big deal in those days), an expense account, fancy dinners, flights home every weekend, a limousine to take me there, and more money than I had ever made in my life. According to what the world expected of me, or so it seemed at the time, I was finally beginning to "make it." So why then, as I began to ride the beginning of a wave of global prosperity (at least in that part of the United States where I lived), did I start thinking of religious life and the priesthood?

Religious life, with all its strengths and weaknesses, has always held out the vision and the hope of being more and not just having more. It has given me a way to understand that material development without a corresponding spiritual development leaves a person empty and dissatisfied. I sometimes look back at that time and wonder what it would have been like had I stayed in Cellular? But to be honest, not often. I do not miss that world at all. The job I had could not even begin to satisfy the deeper hunger within. What attracted me to religious life was a desire to grow spiritually, to be part of a global community, and to give myself to a mission *with meaning*. The more I grew in my spirituality, the more it led me to go out to work with orphans, the homeless, immigrants

and others who are marginalized. Working with these people has been much more of an adventure than anything I experienced in the business world because it taught me that real wealth is measured not in terms of profit and loss but in terms of people's inner wealth, what they possess inside themselves, namely, the quality of people's characters, the endowment of their souls, the quality of their relationships and the treasures within them.

Religious life gave me the opportunity to explore the terrain of the heart in a way that the global economy could not even begin to touch. Let me frame it this way: religious life for me is a matter of seeking after God's heart, learning about my own heart, and giving it away in service to other people and addressing the deepest needs of their hearts. This is what it means to be a consecrated religious: to belong to the heart of God and to be integrated into the heart of Christ, the way Christ is integrated into the Father. This kind of integration cannot help but be concerned with the levels of disintegration in society, one that brings to the forefront a mission of the Kingdom of God.

The global economy never gave me or taught me that there is a wealth beyond material prosperity. I am not sure where I learned it. But without religious priests, brothers, and sisters who helped to nurture, guide and sustain my vocation, I never would have discovered it. And I do not believe my story is unique. I am sure if we looked back and were able to talk to the people who helped us discover our vocations, we would learn that they too experienced a call within, which nurtured by others later grew and matured within the charism of a particular community.

I am in religious life now twenty-two years and I have been ordained for fifteen of them. I have never regretted leaving *that* communication in business for *this one* in religious life. Yet as I continue to reflect more on the contribution of theology, spirituality and religious life to the modern world, I find myself reflecting not only on the personal aspects of spirituality but on their social dimensions as well. One image, with multiple dimensions, continues to shape my reflection [PPT 1]: 1) that we are all on a common global ship, 2) that it is a time of Titanic change, 3) that we are veering way off course as a human community 4) that we are at a critical point in history, and 5) that when we can either be shipwrecked on the iceberg of greed or find a promised land of human solidarity. I believe it is within this arena that our spirituality and our mission takes shape, and I would like to dwell for a moment on this process of globalization before discussing some elements of religious life in the modern world.

### **From Isolation to Integration: Reflections on Globalization**

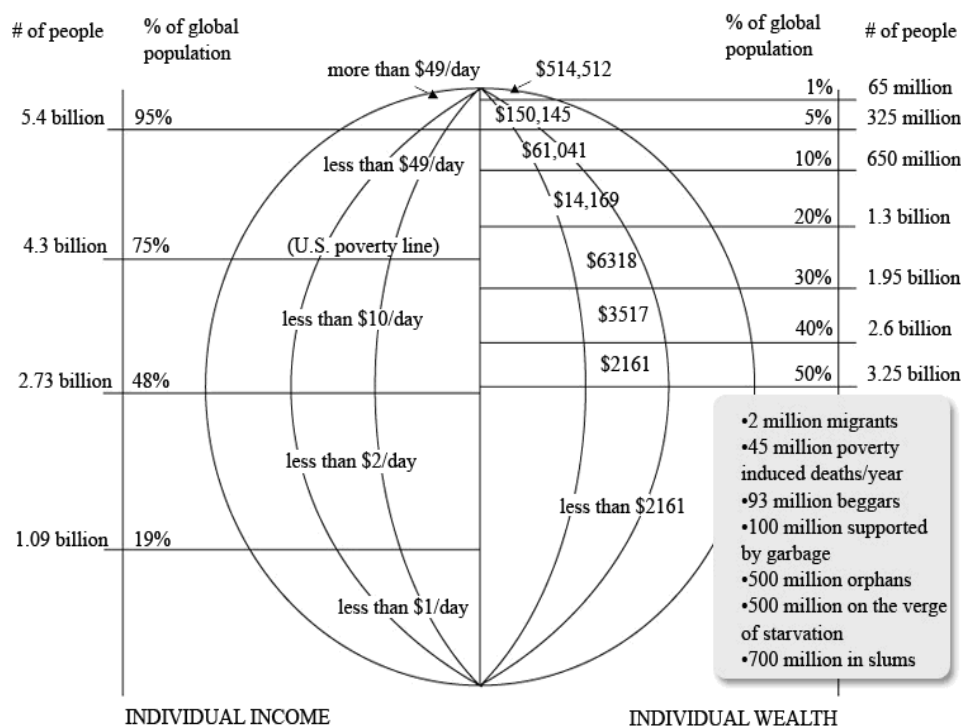
Much has already been said about different aspects of globalization, and it is not my intention to repeat them in detail [PPT 2]. But by way of summary, I would like to revisit some of this data as a way of clarifying our sense of what it means to journey together on this common global ship. One of the things globalization has made us increasingly aware of is that we are part of an inter-connected world, that we are linked together as never before. We are understanding this not only in terms of commercial markets, but we are also coming to understand this interconnection ecologically, anthropologically, even spiritually. The paradox of our contemporary reality however — if not contradiction — is that, while globalization is about becoming an integrated reality as never before, we are divided in ways never before seen in the history of humanity.

Robert Schreiter, who is the first and foremost theologian to take up this topic of globalization from a theological perspective, is one the editors of a special edition of *Theological Studies on Globalization*, which just came out this week (20-24 May 2008). In this issue one of the articles details some of the socio-economic data of our current global reality. Some of the most striking data I found in my research was that, although it is true that globalization has improved the standard of living of more than half the world, the gap between the rich and the poor is growing, not shrinking.



The richest one per cent of the world has as much as the poorest 57 per cent taken together.<sup>2</sup> The difference in income between the richest and poorest countries was 3:1 in 1820, 11:1 in 1913, 35:1 in 1950, 44:1 in 1973, and 72:1 in 1992.<sup>3</sup> Current research indicates that the economic trends continue to diverge.<sup>4</sup> In 2008 more than 1,000 people were billionaires, while a billion people survived on less than a dollar a day.<sup>5</sup> The figures below offer an economic snap-shot of the world:

### GLOBAL INCOME AND WEALTH



It is staggering to consider that, of the world's 6.5 billion inhabitants, the three richest *individuals* have more assets than the combined GNP of the poorest 48 *nations*, a quarter of the world's countries.<sup>7</sup> Also, of the world's 100 largest economic entities, 51 are corporations, 49 are countries.<sup>8</sup>

What has changed since I left Corporate America is how dramatically the disparities have accelerated. The salaries of Chief Executive Officers is now as much as 411 times higher than that of the average worker, nearly ten times the 42:1 CEO-to-worker ratio in 1982.<sup>9</sup> By 2006, the CEOs of major corporations made annually, on average, \$11.3 million. As these same corporations face financial pressures because of competition in the global economy, some CEOs and their corporate boards give themselves inordinate salaries and bonuses, some even after poor performance, laying off workers, and eliminating pension plans for many workers.<sup>10</sup>

The point here is not only to illustrate the extent to which we have lost our way, even in so short a period of time, but to highlight this disorder not only as a political, economic and social problem but as a spiritual one. As *Gaudium et Spes* noted:

The truth is that the imbalances under which the modern world labours are linked with that more basic imbalance which is rooted in the heart of man ... [where] many elements wrestle with one another. Thus, on the one hand, as a creature he experiences his limitations in a multitude of ways. On the other, he feels himself to be boundless in his desires and summoned to a higher life. Pulled by manifold attractions he is constantly forced to choose among them and renounce some. Indeed, as a weak and sinful being, he often does what he would not, and fails to do what he would. Hence he suffers from internal divisions, and from these flow so many and such great discords in society (n. 10, Walter M. Abbott, S.J.).

The issue, at root, is not that we have lost a sense of religion and become a secular society. We have simply just replaced one God for other gods and have moved principally from a monotheistic faith to a money-theistic faith. This new system has not helped us find a promised land of human solidarity but instead has really steered us off course and put us in grave danger of being shipwrecked, along with those we seek to help. In addition to the economic disparities, we know that we stand on the verge of running aground ecologically if we do not make a course correction. So what role do religious play in this process? We are certainly not the only group trying to deal with metanoia, but our role is critical.

My argument is that there are different levels of understanding globalization, and our current socio-economic setting is only dealing with one level of it, and I believe Religious life is significant in dealing with the others. I can illustrate this best by a contemporary analogy, and it will allow me to extend the ship imagery even further [PPT 3]. If we look at the challenge of navigation in our contemporary context, we recognize that we have three different systems which can help us. Sonar helps map out the ocean depths, radar helps us identify obstacles on the ocean surface, and global positioning systems help us understand our location through satellite technology.

Like sonar, theology in general and religious life in particular offer us insights into the world beneath the ocean surface by probing the deeper terrain of human nature in all its capacity for virtue and sin. Like radar, they offer us a picture of the world in front of us by examining how we interact with others and our environment. Like a global positioning system, they offer us insight into transcendent realities by helping interpret the signals from above which can help us find our way from within our own social locations.

I think the intense conversation around globalization has to do with the horizontal dimensions of globalization, but religious life can help the world deal with its more vertical dimensions. While most of the world is preoccupied with radar, part of our task is to help the world understand GPS and sonar as important instruments that can help us as we seek to navigate our way through the complex realities of this time of change. Such a mission can be particularly helpful in a world trying to come to terms with the paradoxes of globalization. You may be familiar with a reflection called, "A Paradox of our times", which is an interesting reflection on life in the modern world and which I quote in part:

The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider freeways but narrower viewpoints. We spend more but have less. We buy more but enjoy less. We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences but less time. We have more degrees but less sense, more knowledge but less judgment, more experts yet more problems, more medicine but less health....

We have been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet a new neighbour. We have conquered outer space but not inner space. We've done larger things but not better things. We have cleaned up the air but polluted the soul. We have conquered the atom but not our prejudice. We write more but learn less. We plan more but accomplish less. We have learned to

rush but not to wait. We build more computers to hold more information to produce more copies than ever, but we communicate less and less.... It is a time when there is much in the showroom window and nothing in the stockroom....<sup>11</sup>

Our lives as religious bear witness to the Gospel message, which, as we know, offers another paradox, which is built on premises that differ substantially from our global economy: that we find ourselves by losing them, the greatest among us is the one who serves, that the One who was crucified has risen from the dead. Put another way, as we travel on this global ship, even as much changes on the ocean surface, our job is to continue to understand human nature and divine revelation in order to offer witness to some of the enduring constants of what it means to be human before God. Even though we may have some differing interpretations of this task from culture to culture, at the root we have more in common than what makes us different.

### **Reflection on Religious in an Age of Globalization**

What then is the role of religious life in an age of globalization? As daunting as these changes may be, and as widespread, complex and revolutionary as these changes have been, in many ways the witness of religious life today is the same as it has been for previous generations. Though it meets new challenges, the call is the same as it was during the Industrial Revolution, the Enlightenment, the Renaissance, the Middle Ages and the early days of the Church: It is to desire one thing: Jesus Christ and the Kingdom he proclaimed. Taking on the mind and heart of Christ is the one constant that will not change in our calling, even as everything else does. By saying this I do not mean to suggest that our job is simply to offer simple, pre-packaged, theological answers to a period marked by new "wineskins". Globalization demands of us new competencies that are able to face new complexities, but at the core, our mission is still the same: to reach out to those who are shipwrecked in some way by war, poverty, division, addiction, fear, anxiety and many other social ills, to proclaim a God of Life and to build a civilization of love.

As we deal with these challenges I believe it is our task as religious to articulate some of the deeper currents of human life beyond this period of change and to examine them in the light of the Gospel message. What precisely do I mean? While globalization and technological developments have given us more and more control over the external world, they have given us little grasp of the inner world of the human person and the ultimate questions of human existence. We have witnessed incredible advances in technological, economic, political and social developments but these have not been met by corresponding spiritual development. Beneath the changes on the ocean surface are enduring human questions that globalization has largely ignored and left unexplored. These questions deal with loneliness and belonging, good and evil, peace and division, healing and suffering, meaning and meaninglessness, hope and despair, love and apathy, justice and injustice, freedom and slavery, and ultimately, life and death. These are the areas where people are being shipwrecked. And these issues can only be worked out in the inner depths of the human heart, where we forge the metal of what we most value. These values are the concern of spirituality.

There are many ways in which people define spirituality, but here I would like to offer a simple definition that spirituality in general deals with what people most value, and Christian spirituality involves living out what Jesus most valued. In other words Christian spirituality is about following Jesus, living out the values of the Kingdom of God, and generating a community transformed by the love of God and others. The goal of Christian spirituality is to foster justice, which is about making right our relationships with God, ourselves, others and the environment.

While the details of what we are to do as religious in an age of globalization is not entirely clear to any of us, what I want to highlight here are three areas which might help to strengthen our spirituality as we seek to be faithful to God and the Kingdom he proclaimed. These three areas are:

1) A spirituality grounded in the Incarnation, 2) A spirituality of the Cross, and 3) A spirituality of the Eucharist. These three areas are critical to a spirituality of justice and generating a spirit of life, hope and solidarity.

### ***A Spirituality of the Incarnation***

Our life as religious is based first and foremost on the following of Jesus Christ, who we proclaim as the Light of the world, the Prince of Peace, and the Saviour of the world. In the Incarnation we acknowledge that, through no initiative of our own, God became human. This gratuitous act of love leaves much to ponder, but here I want to see the Incarnation as a pattern for our own spiritual lives which calls us to become more human. As obvious as this point may seem, it is one of the central tasks of becoming a religious. Though some in our ranks are known as God's "frozen chosen", our spirituality should make us more, not less, human, more and more into the image of God and Christ, not more and more into an image we have of ourselves or even an image of what that self should be as a religious.

What does it mean to be human today? It is not my intention here to go into Aristotle or Thomas or Kierkegaard and their opinion on the human, valuable as they may be. But it is more to suggest that being human has to do with being authentic, genuine, and honest with our existence, with our struggles and fears, with our needs and desires, with our successes and failures, with our sexuality and our need for connection, with our hopes and aspirations. More than anything people are hungry to meet others of depth and substance in an age that is becoming increasingly superficial. I do not know how we can develop that depth without sincere prayer and reflection, since we cannot know what it means to be fully human independently of our relationship with God.

The main problem is that the global culture, profoundly marked as it is by consumerism, has its own ways of defining what it means to be human. If the Cartesian motto was "I think, therefore I am", the global one is more and more, "I consume, therefore I am". At the risk of trotting on old ground here, consumerism holds out the illusion that one more possession will finally satisfy us, that our humanity in all of its painful longing can at last find a resting place when it gets one more thing, but we ourselves know from experience that even after we have acquired something — perhaps something we long wanted — we realize there is always something more we want. There is something of our spirituality at work here.

When we get a new computer, there is always a better one that comes out the following week. If we get a new car, it quickly loses its intrigue after we drive it a few times. We can fill in the blanks. But the problem is not materialism. The Incarnation is a radical affirmation of a God who has taken on our material nature. The problem is a misplaced spirituality, which is a constant problem for human beings through the centuries. We are asking the things of Creation to be God for us in a way they never can be. *When we worship Creation and ignore the Creator we become less as creatures, in other words, we become less human.* A spirituality based on the Incarnation means understanding that we are made *by* love, that we are made *for* love, that we are made *to* love. God's coming in the flesh in Jesus Christ makes the realization of this love possible in our lives.

Our role as religious is to make manifest the most human quality: love, that defines

who we are as human beings. This means that our lives must always give expression to something more than even the good things this world offers. Who else is speaking this message today? We do not hear it in politics. We do not hear it from the media. We do not hear it from businesses. And, this is surprising, we do not often hear it in our schools either. I am always surprised by education even at Catholic Universities. We put a lot of stress on academic excellence, publishing standards, intellectual rigour, diversity of curriculum, and mastering a vast array of subjects and disciplines. All of these have value in their own right, and certainly our global culture in positive ways pushes those of us working in these settings to a level of professionalism that can free us and make us better ministers of the Gospel. But what shocks me about our educational system is that we spend so little time with the subject of self-knowledge and teaching our students to learn about themselves, to grow in self-understanding. More to the point, we spend so little time helping them understand what is going on inside their hearts. Their inner lives are like foreign lands, and not knowing how to navigate that territory, they follow the maps given them by a consumer culture, which does not lead them to anywhere of depth.

As our global culture evolves, people have less and less time to be alone, to be quiet, let alone to contemplate. Very often — and I even include myself in this — we have an I-pod plugged into our ears so that we cannot learn the more subtle, aesthetic aspects of our lives and the promptings of our hearts. To quote an adage by St Ignatius, I feel my computer, which is always with me, has become “my memory, my understanding, and my entire will”. I struggle with the challenge between contemplation and globalization even though I have had years to do self-reflection in my formation as a religious. Our young people have not had that formation. Some young adults today are so wired and connected to machines that they cannot speak to you unless somehow you are mediating a conversation through some kind of electronic gadget. What is at stake here is precisely our humanity, part of which we cannot understand without contemplation and especially contemplating who we are before the gratuity of a loving God. In an age of globalization, human development — especially as it is measured with respect to the quality of our relationships — has not advanced alongside technological development. Part of our role is to call into question the fascination of these gadgets and toys of the world and to recall the truth: that our lives are made for God and God alone. At its core, to be human means to know what it means to love and be loved, to know and be known, and to be free from all that binds us so that we can be free to love others.

To be people of depth and authenticity means becoming — and this is most difficult — vulnerable. I am not talking about a bleeding-heart vulnerability that has no sense of appropriate boundaries in relationships but one that knows how to share honestly and openly and authentically about the struggle to be human. As religious we have many ways of masking our existential vulnerability; globalization only intensifies our feelings of vulnerability. Yet we are afraid of our own vulnerability, and without dealing with it we cannot form meaningful relationships, not with each other, not with the poor, not even with God, who became vulnerable in Bethlehem, in ministry, and on the Cross.

For some young people the answer to the insecurity and vulnerability that we experience in a new global reality is to reactive-neo-conservatism. I heartily believe in being a witness to the world, in standing against a culture when necessary, and in being prophets and heralds of a new creation. I do not think the way of doing this is simply by donning the dress of previous generations as if the new evangelization of the world were about re-establishing a sense of lost-Christendom, complete with cassock and the full mediaeval religious regalia. John Chrysostom, was more direct when he said, in the early days of the Church the priests used chalices of wood and had hearts of gold. In his own day and age, he lamented that they



through our relationships, then we will be able to build bridges of every kind. By being in touch with our own humanity, I think we will also be able to reach out to those whose humanity is most threatened.

### ***A Spirituality of the Cross***

In a world that stresses more and more the importance of upward mobility, I believe a religious life founded on a spirituality of the Cross is central to human liberation. Paul's Letter to the Philippians speaks eloquently of the downward mobility of God and how Christ emptied himself of everything but love so that he could understand every level of human existence. It is from this lowest point of human existence and this darkest moment of human history that Christ opened up the possibility of hope and new life. In my own Congregation we have the motto of "*Spes Unica*", the Cross is our only hope. There is great meaning and mystery in this aspect of our spirituality, and I believe that the role of religious is to witness to hope from amidst some of the most hopeless of circumstances, and to speak about God from some of the most godless of places. Our life and ministries are never measured by the standards of our global economy but by the economy of the Cross.

And what does it mean to be crucified? It means above all a life of radical self-giving in service to others. Such giving is especially difficult in the midst of ingratitude, misunderstanding, rejection and downright evil, but our witness to the Gospel gives expression to the truth that love is stronger than any other power in the world. St Francis was once quoted as saying that there is nothing so powerful as gentleness, and nothing so gentle as real strength. Such love is capable of changing even the world of the human heart, and it also opens up hope for those who are poor. To be crucified today means standing with those who live on the shadow side of global prosperity, the bottom billion and more, or those who Ignacio Ellacuria referred to as the "people crucified in history".

Jesus' death on the Cross flowed from his love of the Father and his commitment to the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God as the Second Vatican Council describes it is a kingdom of truth and life, of holiness and grace, of justice, love and peace. As we know, this kingdom was at the center of the ministry of Jesus Christ and without this being the centre of our own ministries, we will have nothing to offer the world. Our ministries will be worth nothing in the end if we ourselves are not willing to invest all of our lives in this kingdom, even and especially as it brings us to the Cross.

One of the most important manifestations of the Kingdom of God in our age is human solidarity. I believe that one of the ways we can manifest Christ as the Light of the world and affirm our interconnectedness as a body of Christ. In a time when there are greater and greater divides between the rich and poor than ever before, one of our central missionary tasks is to bring out the *Imago Dei*, especially among those whose human dignity is degraded by poverty and global forces which have deemed them disposable and replaceable, especially those whose poverty and marginalization is intensified because of race, gender, religion or social situation. The area I know best is that among migrants, and it continues to perplex me that, while we are becoming more of an integrated world than ever before, with the movement of goods and services across borders in ways unimaginable, when it comes to the movement of people — especially the poor — it is a different story. Even while there is a lowering of trade barriers across the globe, today we are building higher walls than ever when it comes to labour. John Paul II's words are particularly fitting here, because he said globalization "yes", but it must always move us towards a "globalization of solidarity".

### ***A Spirituality of the Eucharist***

Thirdly, the call to become human through a spirituality of Incarnation, and the call to human solidarity through a spirituality of the Cross finds its deepest inspiration in my last point, which is the centrality of a spirituality of the Eucharist. The Eucharist

stands as the focal point of our lives for a world, despite its advances, crying out for a genuine freedom and love that flows from human transformation. Gustavo Gutierrez has noted repeatedly that in the end, what matters is not liberation theology but the liberation of people, and in the final analysis liberation theology is about the Eucharist. I think the same could be said about our religious life.

The Eucharist is critical to understanding the call of religious as a call to holiness. Holiness includes piety, but it is not limited by it because it must be built on a solid sense of what it means to be human, not just escape into a religious image of one's self. Holiness means referring all things to God and challenging a world bent on worshipping idols which enslave. A life of holiness has been and always will be about one thing: allowing our lives to be so taken up by the life of Jesus Christ and his Kingdom that He becomes our one desire. The role of religious life today is about living this truth and giving expression to it with the totality of our lives.

Without a sincere desire and commitment to be conformed to Jesus Christ, we only make God into our own disordered image and likeness instead of being conformed to his image and likeness. Religious life without a sincere desire for holiness may enable us to become well trained professionals with a religious veneer but we will be people who will have lost their *salt* and offer little of *leaven* to the world. Holiness is central to our witness in the world, which is a way of expressing a life fully alive and connected to God. Holiness is defined, first of all by a radical generosity, which is a language people understand in all cultures. Unfortunately, as I am sure we have seen in many of our congregations, this holiness has been inadequately understood, even by younger members with good intentions.

With the rise of secularism and the advent of post-modernity, there has been a great uprooting of many religious traditions. Many of the rituals and symbols which anchored people's lives in previous generations have been replaced by rituals of a secular or a consumer culture. Not all these are problematic, but not all of them lead to liberation either. The deeper questions are whether these rituals liberate or enslave, whether they generate magnanimity of heart or simply isolate ourselves in self-interest. Young people know this, they know there is something empty about the global culture and its empty promises of consumerism, and they are searching for a place to root their lives, to take a stand in the world, and to find meaning in it. The Eucharist gives us a way of taking all that our lives are about and allowing them to be transformed by the power of God's spirit into something new. It celebrates not only the Bread and Wine becoming the Body and Blood of Christ but also those who receive it. No ritual of our lives is more important than becoming what we receive in the Eucharist and being sent out to be bread for the world.

While so much attention has been focused on the cost of globalization and its social, economic, and political aspects, our job as religious is to highlight the human and spiritual costs of this time of global change. Here, I think is our greatest challenges and indeed where we can make our greatest contribution. Precisely by a commitment to become more human and more holy, which manifests itself through a greater communion with God and others in acts of human solidarity, we will then be light to the nations, salt of the earth, and instruments of peace. As economists emphasize the invisible hand and the need to keep the market free and unfettered, and as scientists in many diverse ways talk about the invisible mind and the need to seek truth through empirical data, our challenge is, always and everywhere and in everything — especially in our commitment to the poor — to speak through word and deed of the invisible heart. In the most godless of places that globalization has left behind, through a life founded on humanness, holiness and hope, we are called to make visible the invisible heart of God no less.

To give expression to one community that has taken up this challenge, I would like

to share with you a few clips of a video we just produced called, “One Border, One Body: Immigration and the Eucharist”. It is the story of how all of this comes together through one community at the border, and how building bridges sometimes means overcoming walls that human beings create. With one half in Mexico, the other half in the United States, and the Altar joining them together with the border-wall in the middle, it is one way in which religious and Christians can find ways of professing one faith, one hope, one Baptism, one Lord, one Cross and one salvation, amidst a political and global reality that sets up walls and divisions. It is the one place where I believe that a religious is proclaiming in word and deed that God is with us, that we can trust God, that Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, or, to put it briefly, that the Kingdom of God is at hand and we manifest it by the way we live our lives.

**Three Questions:**

- 1) ***What does it mean to be human?***
- 2) ***What does it mean to be holy?***
- 3) ***In what ways can we foster human solidarity?***

**Footnotes**

<sup>1</sup> The original text, to which I have made slight modifications, is from Theodore O. Wedel, “Evangelism: The Mission of the Church to Those Outside Her Life”, *Ecumenical Review* 6, no. 1 (1953): 24.

<sup>2</sup> Less than 50 million of the world’s richest people have more income than 2.7 billion of the world’s poorest people. See Branko Milanovic, “True World Income Distribution, 1988 to 1993: First Calculation Based on Household Surveys Alone,” *Economic Journal*, 112.476 (January 2002), pp. 51–92, esp. pp. 88–89.

<sup>3</sup> UNDP, *Human Development Report 1999* (New York: Oxford University, 1999) 38. For more comprehensive information, see Angus Maddison, *Monitoring the World Economy: 1820-1992* (Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1995); and Maddison, *The World Economy: A Millennial Perspective* (Paris: OECD, 2001).

<sup>4</sup> See World Bank, *World Development Report 2006*; Milanovic, *Worlds Apart*; and Glen Firebaugh, *The New Geography of Global Income Inequality* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> See Forbes Magazine, “The World’s Billionaires,” at [http://www.forbes.com/lists/2008/10/billionaires08\\_The-Worlds-Billionaires\\_Rank.html](http://www.forbes.com/lists/2008/10/billionaires08_The-Worlds-Billionaires_Rank.html) (accessed March 18, 2008).

<sup>6</sup> Two ways of assessing an individual’s economic status are by income and wealth. Annual income is the amount of money earned or

received by the individual over the course of a year. Wealth is the amount of assets accumulated at any point over the lifetime of the individual less his or her total debt. Wealth includes anything that has material value such as real estate, livestock, and retirement savings. I am grateful to economists Branko Milanovic and Rich Brown as well as to Mary J. Miller and Jesse Carrillo for their help in constructing this chart. The income calculations are done in so-called international dollars or PPP (purchasing power parity) dollars. The individual wealth calculations are drawn from the World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER) in Helsinki, as published in “Winner Takes (Almost) All”, *Economist* 381 (December 9 2006): 81.

<sup>7</sup> UNDP, *Human Development Report 1999* (New York: Oxford University, 1999) 37.

<sup>8</sup> For more on these statistics, see the Institute for Policy Studies at: <http://www.ips-dc.org/reports/top200.htm>.

<sup>9</sup> See Klinger, Hartman, Anderson, Cavanagh, and Sklar, *Executive Excess 2002: CEOs Cook the Books, Skewer the Rest of Us*, 2002), 1.

<sup>10</sup> For example, Bruce Rohde, former chairman and CEO of ConAgra Foods who retired in September 2005, received more than \$45 million during his leadership and retired with a package worth over \$20 million, even though during his watch share prices fell by 28% and the

company cut of 9,000 jobs. Hank McKinnell, CEO of Pfizer, was given over \$79 million for five years of work, even though under his leadership stocks decreased in value by 40%. The Company also guaranteed him a life-pension valued at \$6 million a year. Eleven CEOs for companies like Lucent Technologies, Home Depot, Hewlett-Packard, Wal-Mart, and others received a total of \$865 million in 2004 and 2005 even though their shares collectively fell in value by \$640 billion. Lee Raymond, who retired in December 2005 as CEO of oil giant Exxon, received \$686 million in compensation from 1993

to 2005, even as oil prices increased. See Jill Rauh, *CEOs Awarded Millions as Companies Downsize*, June 10, 2006, available at the Education for Justice website at Center of Concern website, [www.coc.org](http://www.coc.org) (subscription required). See also Sarah Anderson, John Cavanagh, Chris Hartman, and Scott Klinger, *Executive Excess 2003: CEOs Win, Workers and Taxpayers Lose* (Boston: Institute for Policy Studies, 2003), 1.

<sup>11</sup> For more on the origins of this reflection, see *A Paradox of Our Times*, <http://onespiritproject.com/paradox.shtml>: 8/18/2006



A picture of the Assembly during the Daniel Groody's talk

*Working Groups'  
Summaries  
and Reports*



## - English Groups -

### *Groups Summary Report*

The single most important change that globalization has brought to our religious congregations has been improved communication by computer, internet, e-mail, Skype, allowing us to collaborate more within our own congregations and then amongst other congregations and the world community. This technology provides greater participation of members, connecting us more quickly worldwide. At the same time, we are being challenged to articulate our missionary ethos to others who are ready to share it.

We seek alternatives to globalization by networking with greater creativity in order to be in solidarity with those in need. Because of the many faces of globalization, we continually need to look at the way we instill a mission spirit of the Church in new members and other partners in our ministries, as well as renewal of mission in the reality of today for the whole of our membership.



Fr Edouard Tsimba, CICM, the SEDOS President, is speaking with some participants

We heard about the challenges and regarding mission in the years to come see presences are centred around formation:

- formation for new members, on-going formation, and formation for lay involvement as partners in mission
- formation for all that involves:
  - \* the balance of structure and flexibility
  - \* how to answer to new needs, being open to change personally and communally
  - \* how to BE witnesses of Christ in community and ministry in prophetic ways
  - \* collaboration across networks

Our congregations need to stay in dialogue about lay involvement for community living and ministry. This will encourage our engagement with secularization, will aid charisms to be imparted and continually revealed, and could illuminate our own identity as congregations.

Because we are called to be truly human and holy, which is to be authentic, whole, integrated, living lovingly and connected to the Divine in us, we can foster human solidarity, being members of international congregations we have the mechanisms to make and enable connections of peoples, we can speak the truth of international situations from the lived experience and can raise our collective voice for justice and right relationships. We are challenged to further foster human solidarity by welcoming the immigrant and finding ways to resist xenophobia wherever we minister, being as compassionate as Jesus. Our experiences of shared vulnerability and our transformative experiences call us to deeper reflection and growth in human solidarity, framing how we live in our communities and how we minister.

### ***Summary Groups 1-4***

1. As people on mission, we are connected across the globalized world but we are not necessarily connected at depth and we do not always have or take sufficient time for reflection on our connections in the light of the Gospel. The quantity of diversity which we face, can be overwhelming and risks being superficial unless we bring to it a deeper reflection and face the issues of our own vulnerability and limitations. We are challenged to link our experience of the transcendent with that of the world around us.

2. At the end of these days of reflection, rich sharing and conversations on mission in a globalized world, we would like to highlight the following points: collaboration; the centrality of the mission of Jesus; diversity and intercultural living.



3. We value collaboration between people on mission. We are enabled to be more effective as we pool resources, share personnel, raise a collective voice and avail of the benefits of the modern age such as information technology. We acknowledge the challenges which collaboration involves and we recognise the importance of accepting our vulnerability and our limitations. Ultimately we are about God's mission. "Solidarity with Southern Sudan" is a major step forward in collaboration between people on mission.

4. We cannot let the consumer society define what it means to be human or to be effective on mission. Our role model is Jesus who though powerless on the Cross brought life to the world.

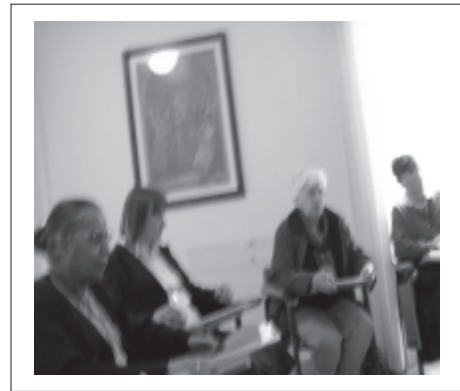
5. As people on mission, we struggle to live interculturally within our own communities. With the emergence of missionaries from different parts of the world, communities experience the gifts of diversity and the richness of cultures alongside the challenges of negotiating new and appropriate structures to facilitate this diversity. We see this as a foretaste of what the Spirit of God is bringing about in the whole world.

## **Summary Groups 5-8**

What is our role as men/women religious in the world of globalization today? How can we become seed and salt, bridging gaps, sharing hope, humanizing society and building the Kingdom?

### **Within our Congregations:**

- By modelling community through living our authentic religious vocation and by our openness to all others
- By moving into multi-cultural communities and really living it. The challenge used to be between young/old, now it is between cultures.
- By fostering human solidarity through shared vulnerability and transformative experiences
- By updating formation programmes to adjust to multi-cultural groups; we need to balance structure and flexibility
- By strengthening ongoing formation of sisters/brothers/priests to become open to lay involvement
- By making effective use of new information technologies to collaborate more within our own congregations and with other congregations, building on a foundation already in place as international congregations who can make and enable connections
- By centralizing finances; making groups self sufficient



### **Within our ministries:**

- By taking the untrodden paths
- By listening as people define their own reality
- By spreading the truth about international situations and raising our voice for justice and right relationships
- By updating programmes/projects to keep pace with the new problems connected to globalization
- By collaborating across networks as in Solidarity with the Southern Sudan, *Tsunami* relief
- By seeking to work effectively with the Local Church
- By being discerning about how new ministries fit in with our Charism
- By educating our people to go into our ministries and not for their personal careers

### **Within ourselves:**

- By learning to handle stress before it overwhelms us because we are only human!

## - Italian Groups -

### ***Sintesi del lavoro di gruppo***

Il seminario SEDOS 2008 ha dato ai partecipanti la possibilità di riflettere e confrontarsi sulla relazione tra Chiesa missionaria e globalizzazione, approfondendo in particolare tre aspetti: la comprensione del fenomeno della globalità e del processo di globalizzazione per come influenzano la vita e la missione all'interno delle Congregazioni, la presenza di nuove fratture che si traducono in altrettante nuove declinazioni dell'azione missionaria e il ruolo della spiritualità riletto alla luce del nuovo fenomeno e delle relative fratture.

#### **Comprendere la globalizzazione dentro e fuori di noi**

Gli effetti della maggior interconnessione tra aree del mondo e persone che vi abitano ha indotto una serie di mutamenti interni alle Congregazioni missionarie. Tra questi, i più evidenti riguardano una maggior presenza di consorelle e confratelli provenienti da regioni diverse dall'Europa, lo sviluppo di nuove tecniche e l'utilizzo di nuovi strumenti nella formazione, un più intenso scambio di informazioni e di contatti. Appare evidente che il motore di questi cambiamenti è la diffusione di internet e delle tecnologie della comunicazione più recenti, sebbene l'aumento di religiosi non europei potrebbe anche essere visto come il semplice effetto di una "semina" dei valori cristiani cominciata molto prima che la globalizzazione assumesse il volto odierno.

Termini come interculturalità, identità, apertura all'altro sono ampiamente dibattuti ai Capitoli generali e vissuti nel quotidiano delle Congregazioni e sono forieri di una serie di domande che hanno portato alla messa in discussione di stili e norme fino ad oggi apparentemente immutabili.

Mentre per alcune Congregazioni, nate come realtà internazionali, l'apertura ad altre culture era intrinseca fin dalle origini, per altre si tratta di uno sviluppo inedito che richiede attenzione, discernimento e disponibilità al dialogo. Per tutti, comunque, fare missione in un mondo che si globalizza significa essere consapevoli dei rischi di omologazione, di perdita di identità e di "virtualizzazione" dei rapporti umani: chiudersi in un ufficio e dedicare più attenzione allo schermo di un computer che ai fratelli vicini, confrontare fino a fondere i propri valori e il proprio carisma con quello delle altre Congregazioni, disperdere le peculiarità incarnate nella figura dei Fondatori sono possibili risvolti negativi che richiedono costante riflessione e consapevolezza per essere evitati.

Ma la globalizzazione porta al missionario anche nuove opportunità. In un mondo così interconnesso, vivere con la gente significa poter divenire strumenti per la comprensione del mondo circostante, condizionato da fenomeni che sono lontani solo in apparenza. In quest'ottica, il lavoro missionario si svolge tanto nell'evangelizzazione e nella lotta alla povertà nel sud del mondo quanto nelle società del nord, dove vengono prese decisioni, specialmente di natura economica, e si adottano stili di vita che determinano grandemente la vita di milioni di individui senza che questi abbiano voce in capitolo. La divisione stessa tra nord e sud del mondo è ormai un'espressione solo geografica, che contrasta con la compresenza di opulenza e povertà in tutte le aree del globo. In un mondo dove il conflitto, armato ma anche sociale, la privazione e la

disumanizzazione sono così presenti e informano a sé la quotidianità delle persone, occorre poi che la missione sia al servizio della riconciliazione tra popoli e gli individui, si faccia sollievo alla povertà ma anche lotta alla pauperizzazione e diventi il mezzo della riscoperta del valore della persona umana. I mezzi di cui i missionari dispongono sono un'occasione dal valore inestimabile per amplificare quelle voci di disperazione, di dolore ma anche di speranza e di fiducia che una società decadente, distratta e sterile non vuole ascoltare.

Emerge con forza la necessità di lavorare in rete: una singola Congregazione non può più, con le sue sole forze, far fronte alle richieste e agli appelli di un'umanità sempre più sofferente. Il coordinamento e la collaborazione intercongregazionale aperta, sincera e libera da protagonismi è il mezzo attraverso il quale agire in un mondo avviato alla globalità nella stessa dimensione in cui si producono oggi gli eventi e le loro ripercussioni. In rete deve essere anche il dialogo e il lavoro congiunto con quelle istanze della società che condividono valori e obiettivi compatibili con il Vangelo e l'insegnamento di Cristo.



### **Le fratture del mondo globalizzato**

La multidimensionalità della globalizzazione induce una molteplicità di fratture dalle quali derivano drammi, sperequazioni ed esigenze che chiamano la Chiesa missionaria a rispondere e a farsi non solo rifugio ma alternativa e proposta per tutta l'umanità. Le domande, le richieste del mondo globalizzato sono numerose quanto le fratture da cui derivano e si sommano ad altre che hanno accompagnato la missione da sempre.

È difficile operare una scelta e assegnare priorità agli impegni di cui la Chiesa missionaria deve farsi carico per affrontare quei drammi e quelle ingiustizie che la globalizzazione porta con sé. Tuttavia, alcuni ambiti d'azione emergono sugli altri per il loro essere fondamento di una visione del mondo sulla quale ogni altro agire deve essere costruito. In particolare, la missione ha il dovere di vegliare a che la presenza accanto ai poveri e agli oppressi non crei dipendenza proprio in quelle persone a cui il lavoro missionario mira a restituire dignità, umanità, autonomia.

Inoltre, la Chiesa missionaria può e deve svolgere un'intensa opera di coscientizzazione, fornendo alla gente gli strumenti per comprendere le conseguenze della globalizzazione e animando tutti a perseguire pace e giustizia come cardini della convivenza umana. Infine la missione deve dotarsi di una mentalità nuova, aperta all'interculturalità, capace di parlare a tutti con un linguaggio che comunichi qualcosa di veramente nuovo e riporti speranza là dove la macchina spietata delle dinamiche globali schiaccia l'uomo e lo travolge, tenendo a mente che missione significa portare Gesù come modello di umanità e condivisione.

La forza per affrontare le difficoltà non può venire che dal recupero del messaggio e del coraggio dei Fondatori, persone straordinarie che hanno saputo leggere e interpretare i segni dei tempi e farsi servi umili del progetto di Dio. Il voto di povertà, inoltre, va



riaffermato per ritrovare una maggior essenzialità nello stile di vita così come nella riflessione su una spiritualità più profonda e sentita, essendo quest'ultima elemento imprescindibile, cuore pulsante, linfa vitale della missione.

### **La spiritualità alla prova delle globalizzazione**

Nel contesto della volatilità delle relazioni umane, che rischiano di farsi sempre più virtuali, e della diffidenza generata dall'ignoto che accompagna la globalizzazione, il recupero di una spiritualità più profonda e pura diviene un'urgenza che ogni missionario deve sentire.

La riflessione sul concetto di umanità conduce alla consapevolezza della finitudine e della vulnerabilità dell'essere umano e rende ancora più forte la necessità di riferirsi a Cristo e riporre in Lui la speranza. A partire dall'amicizia con Lui, è possibile aprirsi in modo nuovo al prossimo, fargli sentire che è qualcuno di importante, evitare di ferirlo, conservare le forze fisiche per ascoltarlo, aprire le menti e le case, anche nel concreto, evitando di farle assomigliare a castelli protetti da fossati intangibili eppure insuperabili. Questi sono gli atteggiamenti e gli impegni che un missionario deve fare propri dopo averne ritrovato il fondamento nella comunione spirituale con Gesù.

Solo con questi presupposti sarà possibile accompagnare le persone e i popoli nel cammino verso la comprensione del senso della vita umana e del contesto storico in cui si svolge, quello della globalizzazione, nel quale occorre mettersi in discussione, "sporcarsi le mani", servire con tenerezza e delicatezza, orientare il pensiero e allontanare i falsi miti proposti dalla pubblicità e dai media.

Se la comunione spirituale con Cristo è il fondamento, la base su cui posa la vita di un missionario, l'aspirazione alla santità è la direzione, la meta ultima del percorso spirituale. Nella quotidianità della missione, il tendere verso la santità significa cercare di riscoprire lo straordinario nell'ordinario, abbracciare ogni giorno la croce, vivere con umiltà e passione la profezia della vita religiosa per poter discernere con chiarezza i contorni e il contenuto del progetto di Dio su di noi, nelle comunità e nella missione che è affidata a ciascuno. Dio deve potere abitare nel suo servo missionario, manifestarsi attraverso di lui, trovare in lui un canale per il Suo messaggio di verità, libertà e giustizia.

L'apertura e il costante riferimento a Dio di cui deve dare prova ogni religioso diventa così apertura e riferimento agli altri, capacità di farsi prossimo, disponibilità all'ascolto, volontà di lasciarsi a propria volta evangelizzare dai poveri, dagli emarginati, dai bisognosi, memori della grandezza degli ultimi così efficacemente affermata da Gesù nel discorso della montagna.

## - Spanish Group -

### *Conclusiones del grupo de lengua española*

#### **¿Cuál es el papel de los religiosos en ese mundo globalizado?**

1) Ofrecer un modelo alternativo de vida frente a la secularidad. Creemos que hemos perdido una parte importante de nuestra capacidad de ser significativos para las personas de nuestro tiempo. La única manera de ser alternativos, "liminales", es la de vivir con autenticidad los valores originales de nuestra vocación misionera, desde la acogida del otro, desde el acompañamiento y la solidaridad con los últimos, desde la no violencia activa, el compromiso por la justicia, la reconciliación, la preocupación por la ecología, la austeridad de vida...

2) Creemos que el futuro está en fomentar todo lo que nos pone en relación con los otros, lo que nos ayuda a trabajar juntos, a estrechar las relaciones entre las personas, las comunidades, las naciones, las culturas, las confesiones, las religiones, las congregaciones,... a buscar caminos que nos ayuden a representar la utopía de la fraternidad universal, el Reino de Dios.



3) Creemos que la misión sólo puede hacerse desde la pasión por Jesucristo y la pasión por la humanidad. Solo desde aquí podemos vivir con fidelidad la exigencia de una vida entregada al anuncio del Evangelio entre los más pobres, comprometidos en la lucha por la justicia, ofreciendo alternativas a esta única cultura globalizada, abiertos a la acción del Espíritu que haga nacer una nueva creatividad misionera, viviendo desapegados, desinstalados, desacomodados.

4) La misión de la vida religiosa misionera en este mundo globalizado es la humanización. Se trata de ayudar al hombre y la mujer concreta, de nuestro tiempo, a descubrir lo más auténtico y profundo de su ser, que es su capacidad para amar. Es ayudar a las personas a salir de su ensimismamiento para encontrarse incondicionalmente con el otro, especialmente con el pobre. Por ese camino sabemos que la humanidad encontrará al Dios que se revela en Jesucristo, el Dios encarnado. Creemos pues que nuestra misión es crear espacios para la solidaridad, para el encuentro, para la compasión como único camino de encuentro con Dios y con nuestra humanidad más auténtica.

## - French Groups -

### *Le rôle des religieux face à la globalisation.*

- ° La vie religieuse vécue en communautés internationales.
  - ° Le travail en réseau entre congrégations pour former un front uni face aux défis de la mondialisation.
  - ° Une qualité de vie religieuse plus conforme à la vie des gens du milieu.
  - ° S'insérer dans les zones de fractures pour être présentes aux gens, s'intéresser à eux, briser leur isolement, les aider à trouver des solutions à leurs problèmes.
  - ° Accompagner des immigrants pour les aider à s'adapter à la société et à s'y intégrer.
  - ° Vivre en collaboration avec les laïcs et les former à la foi.
  - ° Être porteurs d'espérance.
- 



## *Groups' Reports*

### *English A*

**Wednesday, 21 May 2008**

**Q: In your experience in General Governance what has been the single most important change that globalization has brought to your respective Congregation' carrying out its mission?**

**A:** Technological advances have provided immediacy in communication that has resulted in a broad based ownership of widely dispersed works. Rapid, efficient communication allows greater collaboration across borders. We must make prudent use of this rapid response capability and be beware of its pitfalls:

- Guard confidentiality by limiting the use of cc.
- E-mail inquiries and responses should respect the normal chain of command

Some of us have entered new countries recently but migrants increasingly come to the countries where we are have already been for years.

As our Global realities becomes stronger, there is tension between:

- our local and central governance structures
- top down and bottom up initiatives
- what is 'mine' and what is 'ours'
- shift from traditional missionaries and local vocations in leadership positions

As we consolidate our Provinces and Regions we have growing experiences with multicultural communities. Different languages require translations which can slow things down.

We are convinced of the benefit of inter-religious dialogue. Dialogue and contacts made with Buddhist Monks in Myanmar during the uprisings has allowed the flow of funding through the Sisters and the Monks to the Kerin victims of the Cyclone.

The Southern Sudan Project will have an international, inter-congregational community whose Provincial allegiance is not yet clear. This community where people from different countries and different congregations can live and work together will be a powerful witness to the people of South Sudan.

International initial formation houses necessitated by consolidation within religious congregations is providing broadening, multi-cultural experiences for our young candidates. Problems securing necessary travel visas for short and long term formation programmes are becoming more and more of an obstacle.

**Q: Which of the four new areas of Mission speak of what you see your Congregation needing to do in the immediate future?**

**A:** Accompanying the bottom billion and being a collective voice for justice are the two areas with which we have the most experience and confidence.

Some of us have our own NGO status at the United Nations, others belong to organizations that have UN NGO status. We cannot all be full-time political activists if we are to continue our traditional work in schools, hospitals and parishes.

**SUMMARY: MULTICULTURALISM WITHIN OUR CONGREGATIONS**

The Church went global two millennia ago, many of our congregations did so more than 100 years ago, even congregations who have stayed within the borders of one nation experience globalization through migration. One no longer needs to go on the missions to experience another culture.

The single issue our group selected is multiculturalism within our congregations, Regions, Provinces, works and communities.

- Technological advances have made communication across congregation's respective culture immediate. We more easily see ourselves globally.

- As congregations restructure, different cultural groups must come together and share resources.

- o Houses of Formation for candidates of different countries are both a challenge (language, cultural differences and VISA barriers must be breached) and a value (multicultural experiences for young candidates from the South who invigorate the older Religious with whom they come in contact)

- o Provinces and Regions consolidate across borders.

- o Provinces in the South must become more self-sufficient as support from Northern Provinces diminishes

- Through our multicultural experiences we see the necessity for inter-religious dialogue

- The Southern Sudan international community is a huge challenge but a dramatic witness that people from different countries, cultures and congregations can live and work together in harmony.

<b>Thursday, 22 May 2008</b>
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**What do you find most challenging about new presences for mission today?**

What is the quality of our current presences? What will be the quality of our future presences? If the worst politicians are from our schools, what does that say about what we have been doing? Quality of presence makes more of an impression than opulent edifices. We have to learn to be with people and just "lime", waste time, listen and learn.



In looking for new presences we must not abandon our traditional presences: schools, hospitals and parishes.

What does it mean to be a missionary?

Are you a missionary when you work with people of other faiths and respect their faith?

In Asia, where Christianity is a minority, we are not there to convert. We provide a quality, value-based education that will make better Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and Christians.

Are you a missionary when you are a local vocation working in your own country?

Mission is everywhere. There are needs everywhere. Through migration every country is a mission country.

How can I work with JILL (living in the basement of the luxury high rise) if I do not experience what she is going through?

Missionary presence in the marketplace: Saturday and Sunday Mass in the Mall was such a success that the Bishop closed it because it was drawing attendance away from the parishes. How do we evaluate our success in the Marketplace or in our institutions?

Being outside your own culture is an enriching experience: for us, for our young members in initial formation and our volunteers.

#### Volunteering and Community Building

##### ◦ Ireland

- \* Irish Aid gives a 15,000 Euro annual support (up to 2 years) to professionals (Accountants, doctors) to go overseas.
- \* Student Nurse exposure programme Uganda, Kenya
- \* Africa Summer projects
- \* one man NGOs can do much

##### ◦ Lasallian Volunteers USA: 40 new college graduates live in community and work with the poor each year.

##### ◦ Belgium: what can the volunteer offer (talent, expertise) in Africa? They receive more than they give.

##### ◦ Mexico: volunteer experiences lead to life changing decisions.

#### **What do you think it can mean to your congregation in the years to come?**

Enthusiasm for Global mission is strong among leadership but it can be a challenge to get general membership on board.

Our future lies in our Networking, collaboration and advocacy.

We can use our multicultural resources to follow the migrants.

Distance learning initiatives for refugees in Tanzania changed the mentality of a Congregation.

Managing the tension between the global and the local is a huge challenge. The locals need to be professionally trained to act on the international scene without losing

their culture. They need to build up their self-image. Some who come to Rome do not want to go back.

Each generation of our congregations has made mistakes the next generation has the right to make theirs. That's life.

Different religions come together to pray for peace.  
In Korea we work with other religions on specific issues.  
We dialogue with Hindus in India.

### **SUMMARY: QUALITY OF CURRENT AND FUTURE PRESENCES**

What is the quality of our current presences? What will be the quality of our future presences? Quality of presence makes more of an impression than opulent edifices.

We have to learn to be with people and just "lime", waste time: listen and learn.  
Being outside your own culture is an enriching experience: for us, our young members in initial formation and our volunteers.

#### **Volunteering and Community Building**

We shared our experiences with Volunteers in Ireland, USA, Belgium and Mexico. What they have in common is that the Volunteers always feel they receive more than they give and that the experience often leads to life changing decisions on the part of the Volunteers.

<b>Friday, 23 May 2008</b>
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### **What does it mean to be human?**

Some used to joke: Humans are men, women or Sisters.

Last year Ron Rolheiser said the original Greek text, usually translated as "The Son of Man" is better translated as "The Human One".

- To be one's best self, fully human
- To become who I am called to be.
- To be a quality presence
- To know myself, my weaknesses and capabilities. Stress on academia may overshadow our need to know ourselves.
- To learn from the humanity of Jesus.
- Intelligence and heart distinguish us from the other animals.
- I am incomplete. I am still in the process of becoming human; still being made in God's image. It is not a smooth easy process but one I share with others.
- In spite of the complexity of the global world we are still human capable of knowing and loving other humans and helping them learn who they are called to be.

### **What does it mean to be holy?**

Chardin says through Creation and the Incarnation nothing is profane, everything is sacred.

- To be human is to be whole, to be holy.
- Knowing God in a moment perhaps the moment of death
- Becoming who I am called to be is the beginning of holiness
- To be more rather than have more

### **What are the ways through which we can foster human solidarity?**

- By showing solidarity of purpose in the South Sudan Project, we can present a model of collaboration to others who cannot tackle large projects alone.
- Small things can make a difference. Start small; if you begin, it will grow.
- Can we repackage some religious services to address special needs? Two steps and a profound bow tried to block the loss of wetlands in South Korea.
- Huge response to *Tsunami* was an example of spontaneous solidarity. People are responsive to human need.
- Missionaries who choose to stay in a time of war are not forgotten.
- Our living among the poor is a sign of solidarity.

## **SUMMARY: HUMAN AND HOLY**

### **What does it mean to be human?**

- To learn from the Humanity of Jesus.
- To know myself, my weaknesses and capabilities.
- To be one's best self, fully human
- To be a quality presence
- I am incomplete. I am still in the process of becoming Human; Still being made in God's image. It is not a smooth easy process but one I share with others.

## ***English B***

### **Single most important change globalization has brought to your congregation in carrying out the mission?**

- Papua New Guinea, industry/forestry/fishing now the multi-nationals are moving in; violence and drugs have escalated, trust is breaking down, many of the young are into drugs which are rampant, AIDS is taking over, trafficking of organs. The loss of culture and self esteem requires a focus on domestic violence and family life.
- There is fear of co-opting whole cultures because of global commerce, a fear of being overwhelmed.
- Youth are oriented to fast money; culture idolizes those who have made it.
- People look to church for gain, reason Pentecostal movement takes root, seems to provide tools to get rich fast.
- Local input towards globalization, sometimes we are on top looking down on it but perhaps we need to look up on it.
- India: transform education for street children to integrate them into schools/to correct imbalance on social issues for those from rich backgrounds/tremendous brain drain with educated moving out of the country. Outsourcing technology creates have and have-nots.
- The world is smaller, values are absorbed rapidly: being rich is an ideal that will make you happy, communication can be an escape from enculturation - distractions outside easily available, no need to pay attention to where you are.
- Work on grassroots level, which is the real place radical changes can take place. Who reaches out to this level?
- We have a great role to play as international communities, listen to tribal stories; they are close to the earth, and have a lot to teach us. Whose culture is dominant, the culture of the mission? Local moving into Sudan, great challenge.
- Poland – globalization has brought good changes, new initiatives, it was a homogeneous country and this is changing rapidly. Thousands from China/ Vietnam now live in villages, bringing dysfunctional families/AIDS.
- Communities are becoming more multi-cultural, with more religious from global South.
- Sisters are working to promote/liberate women; assisting migrants.
- Barriers to travel — restrictions on who can come into Europe/US even in trade. Each country is protecting its own.

- Complexity of globalization, how many can take it on board and live with it.
- There is fear that the world is being turned into America with the desire to acquire things.
- There is a hunger for connectedness/ something more to life – are we responding at that level?
- What kind of formation needs to happen in congregations in order to avoid fundamentalism?

**What do you find most challenging about new presences for mission today?  
What do you think it can mean in your Congregation for years to come?**

**As local religious become more numerous than ex-patriates, we see specific challenges emerging:**

***With our Presence***

- New presences and new perspectives mean focusing our efforts on areas where the current need is greatest, e.g. ministry in the market places.
- Don't be afraid to take the untrodden paths while remaining in line with our charisms.
- It is a challenge to help people find sacred spaces and make spiritual contact; we need to open our communities to welcome people.
- Strive to work effectively with the Local Church.

***With our Projects***

- Focus efforts on collaborative projects and new presence to maximize resources
- Move from project based model of mission to spiritual based, from parishes/schools to faith sharing, believing in local resources, and sharing them.
- Conversion to new ministries is not easy; consider making one offer not many which confuses efforts. First ask: What are the needs of the group and what skills do the local people have and do they match the needs?
- Centralize finances under one umbrella so that individuals (especially ex-patriates) do not fund "pet" projects that leadership are not aware of, while other projects receive no support. The concern here is that the money dries up when the ex-patriates leave or die.
- Some new ventures have not survived because the local people looked to the ex-patriates to do everything. Don't build buildings where they are not needed; use trees for schools if this is what will draw people. We are overly dependent on structures.

***With our People***

- We need to shift our thought patterns, to be skilled in social analysis, because the entry point of our ministry is very important. We might think education is the most important need but people might be starving.



- Our members need to be educated before beginning a ministry and enter each situation with openness, not imposing culture. We need to educate our people for our ministries not their personal careers. Ask young members what their passion is.
- Although we are literate, we have much to learn; look from the bottom up not just the top down; don't forget roots; allow space for new experiments. Engage people locally before making decisions that affect them. Ask people what they think before beginning.
- Accept the big shift in the population of Congregations. We need courage to move into new foundations in other counties with the idea of future vocations. The challenge now is to sustain them.
- Several congregations have a cross cultural handbook with guidelines for people engaging in this type of ministry.
- Consider retreats among your own congregational members who return from cross cultural service. Directors should be skilled in working with missionaries.
- Encourage lay leadership; Engage them in our schools, medical centers to carry out our charism, where our heritage can continue but not our presence. There is both life and death in this.
- Reason given for not volunteering outside the culture of origin is often the culture shock of different standards of living.
- Become aware of the need to handle stress and take care of self; very few people will ask how you feel about your mission, the stresses and strains of your work.
- *Giving, giving, giving*, activism is rampant, we need to be present to ourselves.

### **What does it mean to be human?**

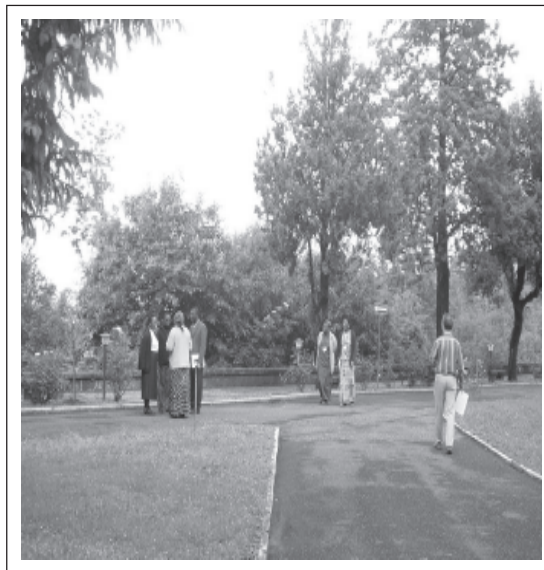
- Be in touch with the reality around us.
- Being comfortable with our own limitations.
- Someone in whose presence you would feel comfortable.
- Cannot separate being human and being holy.
- Being sensitive to what is happening around.
- Being honest with one's self.
- Being authentic, being yourself.
- Before Vatican II, emphasis was on holy, not on human.
- In touch with complexity within, deeper longings.
- Willing to adapt to changing circumstances.
- Although we speak about being human, we view God as part of this because we are Christian. The idea used to be that to be human was to be sinful. We tend to operate from our heads but in the incarnation God took on flesh; we are bodies and we cannot forget we are feelings as well as mind, getting in touch with that makes us vulnerable.

### What does it mean to be holy?

- Be open to the sacred in reality.
- Being your best self and remaining open to the Spirit.
- We can tap into a negative capability with us – Hitler, Stalin, it is there in all of us; people meeting negative to negative can be destructive – do we respond or react?
- Our presence as an integrated human being enables us to keep level of harmony within and respond, not react to others.

### What does it mean to foster human solidarity?

- Share our stories; the influx of immigrant boatloads from North Africa into Malta brings out the rampant xenophobia. We need to get to know them to fight anonymity.
- Change superiority patterns, model community openness.
- Right relationships, more honest, interactive, caring.
- Get like minded people together.
- Accompany people from where are they to where they want to be.
- Listen as people define their own reality.
- Ask questions: What culture do we carry with us into another place? If we are in touch with being human; solidarity should come naturally; we must go through various stages. Is it solidarity to help people meet a certain standard determined by us? Should we listen to people define their own problems? Solidarity is two ways: enter into a different kind of relationship with equality of positions/status/being.
- Students come out of a deconstructed generation; they need to get some context and structures. They seek to discover faith an adult way and find communities where they can live this out.



## *English C*

At our first meeting after we introduced ourselves to each other we spoke generally of the positive experience of the morning's lecture by Fr Robert Schreiter.

The language of North and South was seen by some as problematic. "My own individuality is more important than where I am from". However most recognized that while the language refers basically to economic realities it has now become part of the general vocabulary to refer to a whole range of modern phenomena. There is a subtle dictatorship in the use of this language. It is tied to a language of development in which most of the money comes from the North and 'the one who pays the piper calls the tune'.

The conversation moved very quickly to the concerns of many in the group about the general shift in the geographical origin of people in religious life. The fact that most of the young sisters in the women's congregation are from the South is a challenge for many groups. It is not just that there are many cultural differences there is also the generational gap.

It was acknowledged that there is a richness in being part of a community with people from different cultures. Some congregations have for many years deliberately created multicultural communities. This is not only for personal enrichment but as a witness to the world community of the possibility of living together.

Other practical issues were also discussed. How to invite younger people into leadership without burdening them too early? If they are asked to become leaders at a young age, given the age profile of the congregation these same people will be in leadership most of their lives. How much training? and what sort of training to give these younger religious? was also discussed. Some young sisters had been well educated in one country only to find that when they went on cross-cultural mission their qualifications were not recognized. How important is it for younger members to be qualified, anyhow? With Governments taking over education and medical facilities in some places, there is not the same need for religious to be involved in these sectors. There is a need for reconciliation in some communities given the pain and hurt experienced by many in this transition in religious life.

The fact that there has been such a decrease in Europe with regard to vocations and religious practice means that the North now needs the South. That many people and religious from the South are now working in the North is a huge change that is not fully appreciated. The liturgies in the churches of the North have changed quite dramatically. In many congregations in the North the majority of the people are from the global South.

Intercultural competence is the challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century

In our second day of group discussions the same themes were studied at greater depth. We started the discussion by struggling with the concept of globalization. Some thought that it was too overwhelming, others thought that the word was overused whereas others saw that we could speak of a "globalization of compassion and solidarity". "It is not a beast. We can still maintain our individuality and create spaces for meeting people and working together".

The members of the group were inspired by the morning's talk by Anne Falola, OLA. The message of meeting people where they are and the necessity often to create the spaces for such encounters was taken up by the group.

People spoke of the changes in their congregations because of the fall in numbers. In India there is a good example of congregations collaborating in the running of a hospital. The importance of collaboration was stressed. 'Don't do alone what you can do together'. Others mentioned that "Our mission is small" and "We can work in the crevices".

There is also a challenge to our lifestyle. "The world is offering so much. Do we need to have all that the world offers". Others stressed the need for a job. This is not always easy as Governments often change the rules so that religious are not able to get the positions that they had before. Congregations also need to have financial resources. It is not coming from the North in the same quantity so efforts are being made by religious of the South to sustain themselves.

Another important theme on this second day was that of collaboration with lay people. It is their mission too. Many different congregations work alongside lay people through different structures.

On the third day we began by speaking of 'the heart' and of human love. "I have been waiting for this". "God loves everyone. It is simple". "This is the answer to globalization". These images had been used by Fr Dan Groody in the morning's lecture. "Mother Teresa has shown us the globalization of the human heart".

The challenge in regard to new members is how to help them become better human beings. We need to reach out to all human beings, who can be quite noble but also quite evil. Some in the group had seen terrible atrocities committed against people in various countries. In the face of this many felt powerless. The powerlessness of the Cross leads us into an authentic spirituality needed for mission today.

We can speak of the human heart in a very individualistic way. A certain expansiveness of heart is needed which reaches out to the whole human community and the earth. The story of Fr Daniel sitting with the woman at the railway station and seeing God transform her before his eyes inspired many in the group. There was a lot of discussion about human solidarity and walking in others' shoes. There were warnings about not letting our hearts be hardened to the painful images seen on the TV.

We want to give of ourselves, to be totally present. There was a story of two seeds on the shop self. One was happy with who he was and where he was. The other saw his future as being sold and being planted. The reason, "My single death will be the reason for a thousand lives".

"Many of our sisters are struggling for an integration of their apostolic spirituality". We need to be deeply anchored in God. "This happens by letting life unfold things for us. By nurturing our humanity we are lead to solidarity". People spoke of being received joyfully by the poor or those suffering from AIDS. Where the visitors thought that they might have been intrusive the experience was quite positive. Those visited seemed pleased that others wanted to come into their space.

We concluded our meetings by expressing our appreciation for our time together. The *lectio divina* in the same group was seen as very positive.

*English D*

Wednesday, 21 May 2008

**Q. 1 In your experience of general governance what has been the single most important change that globalization has brought to your congregation carrying out its mission?**

Most congregations had a conscientisation programme in their congregations on the phenomenon of globalization in the last decade and hence there was a paradigm shift in their approach in living their mission in the particular context. For example, migration is a new reality and working with the migrants, misplaced, advocacy work and taking up their issues is a shift because of the effects of globalization. For some congregations, the biggest change was moving from institutional set up to grass root levels. There was also an attitudinal change that was to be open to learn from others from a position of always giving. There was also a change in awareness, and a search for who are the poor, the abandoned and the marginalized of today. As a result of newer technology in communication media, communication has improved within the congregations and hence a deeper sense of belonging. New vocations are coming from countries of mission areas and sometimes from immigrants and hence membership is changing towards the southern part of the globe. An important issue was how to move from the understanding of internationality to the reality of intercultural or international community living. This calls in for a multi-cultural formation and formation for mission. There is also a desire to live as earth community.

**Q. 2 Which of the four new areas of mission most speaks of what you see your congregation needing to do, in the immediate future?**

It was difficult to separate the four areas. The globalization has widened the gap between the rich and the poor. Growing multicultural contexts and increasing fundamentalism and violence challenges us:

1. To accompany the bottom line. For this we have to raise our collective voice in collaboration with other congregations, non-religious organizations and be a prophetic voice. (e.g. the collective effort of UISG / USG in Sudan.) In all the continents, there is a conscious effort to be attentive to the poor, their needs, empowering them and working for justice issues. Networking among congregations of similar charisms to realize our option for the poor is a challenge of today.

2. To seek alternatives to globalization and respond to situations in a practical way: perhaps with structural changes.

3. To commit ourselves for a new secularity.

4. Internationality and inter-cultural living is important for the sake of the mission. This leads to a deeper search of how to be a prophetic sign and how to deal with differences in others. The real issue is how to move from the understanding of internationality at the intellectual level to the reality of international/inter-cultural living.



Thursday, 22 May 2008

**Q. 1 What do you find most challenging about new presences for mission today?**

1. To grasp the changing culture and context both at local and international level.
2. To have a balance between our option for the poor and our option for the rich for the sake of solidarity and this requires networking and lay involvement.
3. Exaggeration of the use of communication media without discernment is a challenge for community life.
4. Most challenging is to live community life. We need to move from doing to being a presence. For this we need to form ourselves in having flexibility in community living and at the same time taking care in building communities.
5. We have to learn from the poor, giving to the poor from real solidarity.
6. To move from traditional ministries and to respond to new needs in new ways.
7. To translate our spirituality and faith into the language of today. There is a need to address the spiritual thirst among the young generation and share this with a new language.
8. To change our mindset and to redefine our mission and find new ways of reaching out to people with our experience of God and our apostolic presence.
9. Daring to risk new forms of ministries at the grass roots. For example market ministry. It is a challenge to shed our fears, to risk security and it calls for skills. Collaborating with lay associates or volunteers in sharing our charism.
10. Our concern is women and children who are exploited and abused.

**Q. 2 What do you think it can mean to your congregation for the years to come?**

1. Re-defining our mission.
2. On-going formation to inform ourselves of the changing realities.
3. A formation oriented towards this new understanding.
4. New ways of reaching out to the young today.

Friday, 23 May 2008

**Q. 1 What does it mean to be human?**

To be honest, vulnerable, to have feelings, intellectual capacities, spiritual dimension, to be able to love, understand, to be compassionate, relational, to accept myself knowing my boundaries and my limitations, to journey with others is all part of being human. Human person is a sum total of feeling, intellect, spiritual dimension and an integration between body, soul and mind.

**Q. 2 What does it mean to be holy?**

Fully human is to be holy. Holy is to be like Christ in my values, in my relationship with God, with myself and with others. It affects my thoughts, my words and my actions. It influences the choices I make. It is to be able to allow my heart to be touched by the heart of God. It is to be rooted in Christ. It helps me to transcend and go beyond to put

on the attitude of Christ. It is to love to the point it hurts. To be holy is to be spirit filled, one who sacrifices for the other. In other words, it is my connectedness to God or to be the compassionate face of God. It is to let go.

**Q. 3 What are the ways through which we can foster human solidarity?**

- To move with compassion for the suffering.
- Being with the poor and the marginalized affects my decisions, my life style from the perspective of a poor person.
- Listening, supporting and lobbying for the sake of the poor.
- Walking an extra mile from my comfort zone.
- Building good relationships with the rich and the poor and enabling solidarity between them.
- To be a life saving station.
- To live the prophetic dimension of our life.
- At the level of leadership, to animate and encourage this dimension.

Saturday, 24 May 2008
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**Q. 1 What is our role as religious men and women in the context of globalization today?**

To live our life authentically and to move out into the global reality and to be aware of the context and the effects of globalization and to take the positive aspects to further the mission. The challenge for us is to be prophetic and to collaborate with others to establish right relationship with God, with myself, with others and the Creation in this globalized world of today.

**Q. 2 How can we become seed, salt in bridging the gap, sharing hopes, humanizing society, building the kingdom?**

- To live our religious commitment authentically by being Christ centered.
- A life style that reflects the gospel values.
- Effective use of new technology in discerning ways.
- Involvement of lay people with mixing two multi-cultural communities.

# Acknowledgement

## **Mot de clôture du Séminaire de SEDOS mai 2008**

*Chers frères et sœurs, nous voici à la fin de notre Séminaire de 2008. Avec vous, je dis merci au Seigneur qui nous a envoyé son Esprit Saint et qui nous a accompagné durant ces jours. Tout à l'heure, nous allons dire une messe d'action de grâces et demander des bénédictions les uns pour les autres pour bien continuer la mission que le Seigneur nous confie.*

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*Grand merci aux Secrétaires de SEDOS : Ilaria et Celine.*

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*Au nom de vous tous, je dis merci à Misereor, à Missio Aachen et Missio Munich parce qu'ils nous aident beaucoup à couvrir les frais de ce Séminaire. Ce que vous payez ne couvre qu'une partie : le logement et la nourriture. Et les frais de la session c'est beaucoup plus que cela.*

*Nous disons merci aux secrétaires de USG et de UISG qui sont venus nous rendre visite et pour leur encouragement.*

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*J'espère que vous allez garder un très bon souvenir de ce Séminaire.*

*Après chaque Séminaire, nous le Comité Exécutif, nous essayons quand même de tenir compte des évaluations que vous faites en préparant le prochain Séminaire.*

*Nous vous demandons pardon si toutes vos attentes n'ont pas été satisfaites. Alors nous vous donnons rendez-vous pour l'an prochain.*

*Chers frères et sœurs bien-aimés, nous avons vécu ensemble ces jours-ci : originaires de différentes cultures ; membres de différentes Congrégations, laïcs, laïques missionnaires, consacrés (es) pour la mission, appelés (e) par le même Christ à Proclamer la Bonne Nouvelle. La mission qui nous est confiée est grande mais elle est possible. Conscients de ce que nous sommes, des personnes humaines, aimons à nous confier à Dieu pour qu'il nous donne les forces et la sagesse.*

*Frères et sœurs : Dieu n'appelle pas nécessairement des gens qualifiés. Mais ce qui est certain, c'est que Dieu qualifie les personnes qu'il appelle. Dieu n'appelle pas nécessairement des Saints. Il appelle des êtres humains et il les sanctifie.*

*Seul, nous ne pouvons rien. Avec Lui, le Maître de la Moisson et ensemble avec nos frères et sœurs, nous pouvons plus que ce que nous pensons et imaginons.*

*Alors, n'ayons pas peur. Continuons de donner le meilleur de nous-mêmes. Soyons des femmes et des hommes de prière. Devenons chaque jour des femmes et des hommes avec une spiritualité forte et profonde.*

*Et même quand nous ne voyons pas les résultats immédiats, continuons à croire, que Dieu lui, travaille.*

*Je voudrai terminer par cette prière que j'aime beaucoup : Seigneur donne nous la Sérénité d'accepter les choses que nous ne pouvons pas changer ; Seigneur, donne-nous le courage de changer les choses qui sont à notre pouvoir de changer ; Seigneur, donne-nous la sagesse d'en découvrir la différence.*

*N'ayons pas peur.*

*Bonne mission à chacun et à chacune. Que Dieu vous bénisse.*

*Edouard Tsimba, CICM  
Président SEDOS*



*Some of the participants on departure ... the last day*

To conclude ....

*Some  
more photos*



*Roses of the 'Casa Divin Maestro' Garden*



*Some symbols of the SEDOS' Member Congregations,  
at the Seminar, on view*



*... Walking near the lake*

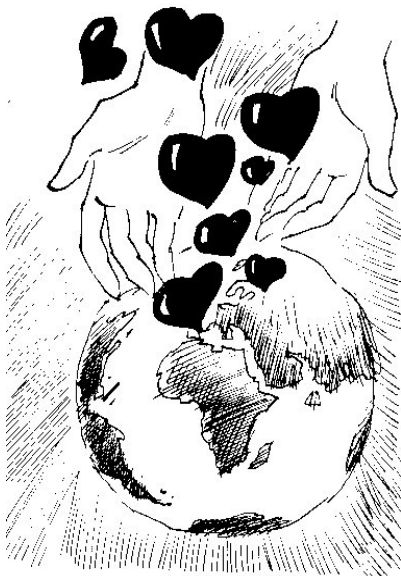


*Roses of the 'Casa Divin Maestro' Garden*



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