

# SEDOS Annual Report 2021

## 1. Activities of SEDOS in 2021

Before the last General Assembly, from 16 to 17 October 2020, we had a two-day **Autumn Seminar 2020** on *Past, Present, Future of our Congregational Structures in the Service of Mission* at the UISG, but the participation was only online, and it was organized in cooperation with the *Faith and Praxis* organization. Those who attended the Seminar were very happy. Thanks to the large number of participants (234) the income from the Seminar was more than expected and we were able to give a donation of 500 Euro to Faith and Praxis as well. Our fiscal year runs from November to the end of October next year. So, some of the income and expenses have been mentioned in this year's Financial Report.

The one-day **Spring Session 2021** also took place online and its topic was *Islam and Mission*. It was well attended (196) and the finances were ok. Mgr. Markus Solo, SVD, and Fr. John Mallare, CICM, cooperated to give the Seminar a well-founded content with Speakers from around the globe, though mostly from Asia as both the co-operators were from there.

The five-day **Residential Seminar 2021** on *Living Green Mission* was held after one year of patience, but it was well worth it. All the Speakers had agreed to join us again, and this made it easy to organize. However, organizing the event online while the Director was in Belgium, with the webmaster and secretary in Rome, and the Speakers in their own environments, made it less easy to organize, nevertheless the result was praised by all. Once again, the income too was more than expected thanks to the high number of participants (224).

Lastly, the **Autumn Seminar 2021**, conceived of as a five-day MISSION

SYMPOSIUM on the topic of *New Trends in Mission, The Emerging Future*, took place online from 11 to 15 October. A total of 680 people registered, and those who followed online numbered between 280 and 150 depending on the topic. The Executive Committee has proposed to hold the Symposium for free as a kind of present from the SEDOS Member Congregations to all missionaries in the field. There were in total 35 Speakers from around the globe on different aspects of Mission today. The participants were full of praise for the intensity, validity, and diversity of the talks. The talks were summarized by four members, and this was much appreciated because it is not easy to discern the unity behind the concerning different topics and opinions.

We received a word of encouragement from Pope Francis on the occasion of this Symposium, 30 years after the last one, and his Papal Blessing as well. The talks will be published by Orbis Books June next year. One free copy of the book will be sent to all Member Congregations and to the speakers at the Symposium once the book is published.

## 2. Administration of SEDOS in 2020

The administration of SEDOS is still in the process of simplification in order to allow the secretary to have more time to attend to new aspects of the work, such as webpage maintenance and the editing of the Bulletin. Thanks to the introduction of online registration for Seminars, Bulletin, Newsletter, and even this Annual General Assembly, more time is saved for other work that needs attention. The new books of this year still have to be entered in the system, and we would like to renew the filing system of the library and change to a more official index system.

The material needs of the office have been solved, with most of the documents systematized and archived, and the computers are working well. Now, more time can be given now to the organization of seminars, workshops, events, and visits to Member Congregations. The website can still be developed to answer the needs of young and old in mission. The form of the SEDOS Bulletin is well stabilized, but more effort is needed in welcoming new paying subscriptions.

### 3. Finances

The Executive Committee decided three years ago to set a limit on the finances at the end of each Fiscal Year. This limit is 100,000 Euro. The running cost of the office is about 50,000 Euro, and the total cost per year is about 70,000 Euro. This leaves about 30,000 Euro in case of need. Because there was a substantial surplus last year, it was decided to reimburse this money to the SEDOS Members in 2021, 250 Euro for the smaller Congregations and 500 Euro for the larger ones. This decision was welcomed by the Members especially in this time of Covid, and so now we are only a bit above the maximum.

The financial agreements with those working for SEDOS are in line with the request of the State. The religious working for SEDOS are paid by means of a donation to the respective Congregation, the cleaning lady presents a fiscal bill for every three months, and so do the translators from the last Autumn Seminar: 250 Euro half day, 400 Euro full day, taxes included. The situation of the English lady, Philippa, who has worked for SEDOS since September 1975 as translator, on a semi-volunteer basis, is not yet clear because of Brexit. She did a great job in checking (and translating some of) the articles of the Mission Symposium that were written for the book.

### 4. Basic Activities of SEDOS in 2022

#### Spring Session 2022:

*Mission in A Secular Europe*

11 March, online

#### Residential Seminar 2022:

*Formation for Mission*

9 - 13 May, in Ariccia, in-person and online

#### Autumn Seminar 2022:

(to be decided by the new SEDOS Team)

### 5. Conclusion

The *online Seminars* have become routine these days, and with much success, but we need to try the “hybrid” version: *online and in-person*. The organisation of this, as well as the financial arrangements for it, still have to be worked out. The *face to face encounters* at the Seminars were much appreciated by those living in Rome. It helped them to come home, and to meet members of other Congregations with a view to future cooperation and networking. Without this familial atmosphere SEDOS risks becoming a “virtual” organization that might lose much of its power and attraction. We will return thus slowly to the usual way of doing, but with the extra use of the online platform.

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The out-going Director,  
Fr. Peter Baekelmans, CICM,  
expresses his deep gratitude for  
the six fulfilling years at SEDOS,  
and thanks all those who have  
helped him to complete his  
mission for SEDOS.

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