

## Editorial



**Dear Readers,**

The theme of this Bulletin, *Missio Dei*, is taken from the results of the SEDOS Mission Symposium of last year when it was concluded that “Mission starts in the mind/heart of God”. Thus, the question that arises is: “Who is God?” We start therefore with the article by Fr. Stephen Bevans who describes “that great interpersonal movement or ‘dance’ among the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity: Holy Mystery, Holy Word, and Holy Spirit,” and our own participation in “God’s life of mission” through *giving everything*, as the love of the Triune God teaches us.

From this basic understanding of God as a Holy Trinity, we move to a more (post-) modern question about the transcendence of God. Is it correct to present God only as a personal creator god? What about the “hiddenness” of God, the *deus absconditus*? The current understanding of God seems to focus on this ‘forgotten’ aspect of Christian theology. We start therefore with a longer philosophical article by Henry Touaboy that seeks to point out the *immanence within the transcendence* of God’s Being. The reason is that if God would be perfectly transcendent we would not be able to know of Him.

The next—more radical—article is from the pen of Enrique Martínez Lozano who considers this move towards a more “non-dual” vision of God and human beings as a paradigm shift which he calls “*post-theism*”. It wants to move away from the I and Thou view in theology to an understanding of God as “the common foundation of all beings - our ultimate identity-,” and to perceive it as “the greatest cohesive force.”

I am the author of the last article. My interest in Buddhism as a missionary to Japan led me to reflect on the question of whether Buddhism has an experience of God. It is

said that “there is no God in Buddhism”, but this is based on a certain (mis-)conception of what or who God is. Buddhism teaches respect for his/its “hiddenness”. It is only in the silence of the heart that God’s love and wisdom for this world is perceived in depth. This reasoning has been developed more in-depth in a consequent book on “The ‘god’ of Buddhism” that will soon be published by Angelico Press, New York, and an Italian version of the book is on the way as well.

We end this reflection on how we can understand God in the context of mission with a book review of the latest work by Fr. Jacob Kavunkal, SVD. He speaks in line with the article by his confrere Stephen Bevans by stressing the idea of the *extensio dei*, the “divine who reaches out” in mission, with His love for his creation: Mission as a “Divine Reaching Out”. At its root is the biblical narrative of divine goodness, culminating in the ministry, death and Resurrection of the Incarnate Word of God, continued in the creation of the Church, at the service of the “divine self-reaching out.”

Every year, SEDOS holds a General Assembly for its more than 80 member Congregations. We publish here the Annual Report that the Director of SEDOS presented at the General Assembly which was held at the Generalate of the Lasalle Brothers, on 10 December 2021.

To close this Bulletin, we would like to inform our Readers of two upcoming events of SEDOS, namely the Spring Session on the theme of *Mission in a Secular Europe*, and the Residential Seminar on the theme of *Formation for Mission*. One can see from the programs that the contributions to these themes will be rich and that our understanding of mission in these fields will be enriched as well.

Peter Baekelmans, CICM  
Director of SEDOS