

EVANGELIZING IN TODAY'S WORLD**FRATERNITY AND POVERTY: WAYS OF EVANGELIZATION****A COURSE IN MISSIONARY ANIMATION**

- 0.1. TITLE:** EVANGELIZING IN TODAY'S WORLD:
Fraternity and poverty: ways of evangelization
- 0.2. OBJECTIVE:** That the participants, starting from the problems of today's world seen in the light of the theology of the Kingdom of God,
- reassert their conviction that the Church will be sacrament of the Kingdom today and will evangelize efficaciously only if she renews herself profoundly in evangelical fraternity and poverty,
 - and so become witnesses and promoters of such renewal.
- 0.3. DYNAMICS :** The course means to be a communitarian religious experience which facilitates:
- a greater **AWARENESS** of the present world where the Kingdom of God comes unceasingly, and, in this context, of the mission of the Church today
 - a **RENEWAL** or **CONVERSION** of the **ATTITUDES** in accordance with evangelical fraternity and poverty, contents and fundamental demand of the Kingdom, "glory and sign of the Church of Jesus Christ" (GS 88)
 - a commitment of the Church in solidarity, expressed in **COHERENT PASTORAL OPTIONS**, so as to evangelize the world of today.

This Course has been prepared by the Department of Formation of the Movement for a Better World. It is recommended that the Course, made individually or in a group, be used with FABC Papers No. 16 and No. 17, *The Church at the Service of the Kingdom of God*.

The Course seeks to promote a peculiar sort of conversion, through a unitarian and dynamic process and an active methodology, in an atmosphere of interiorization, of sharing and of communitarian discernment in the Spirit.

0.4. STRUCTURE: INTRODUCTION—PRESENTATION

PART ONE : AWARENESS

The Church feels herself being challenged by the modern world in her evangelizing mission at the service of the Kingdom...

Objective: to place evangelization in the context of today's world and in view of the Kingdom; and, in this light, deepen and interiorize the mission of the Church as sacrament of the Kingdom for the world.

- Themes** - THE CHALLENGES OF OUR WORLD: SEARCHING FOR AN IMPOSSIBLE FRATERNITY?
- THE KINGDOM OF GOD, A NEW FRATERNITY IN CHRIST.
 - THE CHURCH, SACRAMENT (WITNESS AND HERALD) OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

PART TWO: CONVERSION OF ATTITUDES

The Church renews herself in evangelical fraternity and poverty

Objective: to place ourselves — as "evangelized community"— in a renewed attitude of conversion to universal fraternity and evangelical poverty, with all its implications and demands.

- Themes:** - INTRODUCTION: Need of conversion to fraternity and poverty in order to be "sacrament" today
- TOWARDS A CHURCH, AMBIT OF UNIVERSAL COMMUNION
 - TOWARDS A CHURCH-POOR, SHARING AND STRUGGLING FOR JUSTICE.

PART THREE: COHERENT PASTORAL OPTIONS

The Church reflects and projects how to evangelize today.

Objective: in the dynamics of communitarian discernment, to review the pastoral options of one's local Church and discover the new options which the Church must take today—as an "evangelizing community"—in order to evangelize the poor and witness to unity.

- Themes:** - INTRODUCTION: Need of carrying out conversion through pastoral options in order to evangelize today
- REVISION OF THE PASTORAL OPTIONS OF OUR LOCAL CHURCH
 - OPTIONS THAT SHOULD BE MADE TODAY, TO EVANGELIZE THE POOR AND WITNESS TO UNITY.

EVALUATION

0.5. GRAPHIC SYNTHESIS OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

PART ONE	PART TWO	PART THREE
<p style="text-align: center;">AWARENESS</p> <p>The Church feels herself challenged</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The challenges of our world. Searching for an impossible fraternity? 2. The Kingdom of God, a new fraternity in Christ 3. The Church, Sacrament (witness and herald) of the Kingdom of God. 	<p style="text-align: center;">CONVERSION OF ATTITUDES</p> <p>The Church renews herself in evangelical fraternity and poverty</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Need of conversion to fraternity and poverty in order to be "sacrament" today 2. Towards a Church, ambit of universal communion 3. Towards a Church-poor, sharing and struggling for justice. 	<p style="text-align: center;">COHERENT PASTORAL OPTIONS</p> <p>The Church reflects and projects how to evangelize today</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Need of carrying out conversion through pastoral options in order to evangelize today 2. Revision of the pastoral options of our local Church 3. Options that should be made today to evangelize the poor and witness to unity.
<p>U N I T A R I A N A N D D Y N A M I C P R O C E S S O F C O N V E R S I O N</p>		

0.6. INTRODUCTION

0.6.1. "The objectives of Vatican II are definitely summed up in this single one: to make the Church of the twentieth century ever better fitted for proclaiming the Gospel to the people of the twentieth century" (EN 2).

The Third General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops "awaited from the Pope a fresh forward impulse, capable of creating within a Church still more firmly rooted in the undying power and strength of Pentecost a new period of evangelization" (EN 2).

0.6.2. Three burning questions which the 1974 Synod kept constantly in mind:

"1. In our day, what has happened to that hidden energy of the Good News, which is able to have a powerful effect on man's conscience?

2. To what extent and in what way is that evangelical force capable of really transforming the people of this century?
3. What methods should be followed in order that the power of the Gospel may have its effect?

Basically, these inquiries make explicit the fundamental question that the Church is asking herself today and which may be expressed in the following terms: after the Council and thanks to the Council which was a time given her by God at this turning-point of history, **does the Church or does she not find herself better equipped to proclaim the Gospel and to put it into people's hearts with conviction, freedom of spirit and effectiveness?"** (EN 4)

- "Urgency of giving a loyal, humble and courageous answer to this question, and of acting accordingly" (EN 5)
- Invitation to **"the whole People of God** assembled in the Church to make a meditation on evangelization" (EN 5)

0 6.3. "We wish to confirm once more that the task of evangelizing all people constitutes **the essential mission of the Church**. It is a task and mission which the vast and profound changes of present-day society make all the more urgent.

—Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church —it is **her deepest identity**. She exists in order to evangelize..." (EN 14).

—"...The Christian community is never closed in upon itself. The intimate life of this community—the life of listening to the Word and the Apostles' teaching, charity lived in a fraternal way, the sharing of bread—this intimate life only acquires its full meaning when it becomes a witness, when it evokes admiration and conversion, and when it becomes the preaching and proclamation of the Good News. Thus, it is the whole Church that receives the mission to evangelize, and the work of **each individual member** is important for the whole" (EN 15).

—"Evangelization is for no one an individual and isolated act; it is one that is deeply ecclesial..." (EN 60).

0.6.4. Towards an evangelized and evangelizing community (EN 13):

a. "The Church is an evangelizer, but she begins by being evangelized herself. Community of believers...People of God immersed in the world and often **tempted by idols**...the Church has a constant need of being evangelized, if she wishes to retain freshness, vigour and strength in order to proclaim the Gospel..." (EN 15).

"...The Church is evangelized by **constant conversion and renewal**, in order to evangelize the world with credibility"(EN 15).

b. "Those who sincerely accept the Good News, through the power of this acceptance and of shared faith,...gather together in Jesus' name in order to **seek together the Kingdom, build it up and live it**. They make up a community which is in its turn evangelizing... Those who have received the good news and who have been gathered by it into the community of salvation can and must **communicate and spread it**" (EN 13).

0.6.5. The Church will be the leaven of the Kingdom and will evangelize efficaciously the world today insofar as she renews herself in fraternity and poverty, and expresses herself coherently in her evangelizing action:

—"We do not wish to renounce two allusions in particular, which seem to us to refer to primordial duties and necessities, and which offer us general directions for the efficacious renewal of ecclesial life. We refer, in the first place to the **spirit of poverty**... The second reference which we wish to make is the **spirit of charity**..." (Ecclesiam Suam 55, 56, 58).

—"The **spirit of poverty and charity is the glory and sign of the Church of Jesus Christ**" (GS 88).

—"The destiny of evangelization is certainly bound up with the witness of unity given by the Church...We wish to emphasize the **sign of unity** among all Christians as the **way and instrument of evangelization**..." (EN 77).

0.6.6. Hence, the *raison d'être* of this course.

To Present and to comment:

- its objective
- its dynamics
- its general structure

N.B. The **Procedure** of work, as in other courses, consists mainly of:

- . personal and communitarian prayer
- . personal reflection
- . dialogue in groups and in assembly
- . doctrinal inputs

PART ONE: AWARENESS

The Church feels herself being challenged by the modern world in her evangelizing mission at the service of the Kingdom.

Objective: to place evangelization in the context of today's world and in view of the Kingdom; and, in this light, deepen and interiorize the mission of the Church as sacrament of the Kingdom for the world.

Themes:

- 1.1. The Challenges of our World: Searching for an Impossible Fraternity?
- 1.2. The Kingdom of God, A New Fraternity in Christ
- 1.3. The Church, Sacrament (Witness and Herald) of the Kingdom of God.

1.1. THE CHALLENGES OF OUR WORLD: SEARCHING FOR AN IMPOSSIBLE FRATERNITY?

1.1.1. **Link:** Vatican II presented us with some of the main characteristics and problems of the actual world (re: GS 4-10).
With an open thrust towards the future, we must **continue** to read the signs of our time, renewing and deepening our awareness of the present world with its problems and the challenges it puts to the People of God, who exists and lives for the world.

1.1.2. **Objective:** to have a better **global** understanding of the "critical moment" in which we are called to live and work out our Christian being, well aware that the present world is longing for fraternity; at the same time as it seems to depart more and more from it; and that the fundamental cause of such a situation is the greed of power and money.

1.1.3. Fundamental Contents

1. A world divided into three big blocks:

- A) The industrialized countries with a liberal-capitalist regime:
 - a. Who form this block
 - b. Some of its main characteristics
 - c. Its policy of expansion

- B) The industrialized socialist countries:
 - a. Who form this block
 - b. Its ideology
 - c. China, the enigmatic colossus. Its "break" with USSR
 - C) The countries of the Third World:
 - a. Who form this block
 - b. Common characteristics
 - c. Some of their principal organizations or structures
- 2. Fraternity sought after and at the same time trampled down and denied**
- A) In industrialized countries of the First and Second World.
 - a. Concentration of economic, political, technical-scientific and military power in the hands of a few—nations, groups and/or persons (super-powers)
 - b. Greed of power and riches: idolatry of money, of prestige...; fight for hegemony of the world
 - c. Growing collective awareness of the urgency of a greater and more effective participation
 - d. The phenomenon of atheism and materialism
 - B) In the countries of the Third World:
 - a. Growing awareness of the oppressive and unjust character of present situation
 - b. Deep aspiration for liberation: desperate struggle for a new kind of international relationship
 - c. The spiral of violence
 - C) "North-South" (rich and poor countries) dialogue and confrontation
- 3. The Challenge of present time**
- A) The crisis of the capitalist system:
 - a. Some symptoms manifesting the crisis of the system
 - b. Power and strength that the capitalist system still possesses today.
 - B) The crisis of the communist system:
 - a. Some symptoms manifesting the crisis
 - b. Power, strength and influence of communism today.

- C) "Either total war or a new international order":
- a. Actual sharpening process of the conflict in international relationships; terrible dilemma: either total war or creation of a new international order
 - b. Towards a new cultural revolution?
 - c. New age of history, crisis of growth (GS 4). Gestation of a new model of man, of society, of human relationship.

Conclusion: Towards an impossible fraternity? Challenge for the people of God, pilgrim in history, in its mission of proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom.

1.1.4. Procedures

- a. Motivation of the theme and of group work: 1.1.1. (10 min.)
- b. Personal reflection (10 or 15 min.)
- c. Group work (in heterogeneous groups) (45 to 60 min.):
 1. What are the main characteristics of today's world?
 2. What are its most important problems?

N.B. Present the answers on posters. Each group should present not more than 5 characteristics and 3 problems, pointing out both the fundamental characteristic and problem.
- d. Assembly: reports
 clarifications
 dialogue in order to reach a consensus on the fundamental characteristic and the key-problem.
- e. Complementary theme (1.1.3. and 1.1.6.)
 N.B. Stress the third point: "Challenge of present hour".
- f. Audiovisual on actual world (if possible)
- g. Personal reflection and Eucharist on the theme: "Praying today's world"
 (Suggestion: while looking at a big map of the world. Penitential rite: petition of forgiveness for the sin of the world. Universal prayer: petitions for the world. Preface: praise for actual world. After communion: thanksgiving for actual world...)

1.1.5. Bibliography:

- FABC PAPER No. 16.
- FABC PAPER No. 17.
- Garaudy R., *Le Projet Esperance*, Ed. R. Laffont, Paris, 1976.
- Arrupe P., Address at the 41st International Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia, USA, August 2 1976.
- Synod of Bishops 1971: *Justice in the World*.
- Holy See, Document on arms race, 1976.

1.1.6. Elements for the development of the theme

1. **A world divided into three big blocks:** following a scheme which is in common use today and is generally acceptable, we can say that the present world is divided into three big blocks:

A) **The industrialized countries of the liberal capitalist regime**

In the present day international scene there is a well determined block of countries. They can be called by many names: Western Countries, Capitalist Countries, Rich Countries, First World, etc. Among them they have defence agreements (NATO), organizations for cooperation and economic integration (OCDE, EEC, etc.), together they resolve financial problems (IMF).

They are a group well defined by common characteristics as opposed to the group of socialist countries and the Third World. Nevertheless, there exist within the group itself enormous differences in development, military power, internal organization, defense, etc. And there too exist the fight for power and the overwhelming by the strongest.

a. **Geographically** this block of countries is made up of: North America (USA, Canada), non-communist countries of Europe (Spain, Portugal and Greece with less economic development, EEC and other non-communist European countries), Japan, Australia, Singapore, New Zealand and South Africa.

b. **Characteristics** which define this group of countries:

— controlled demographic growth, i.e. demographic balance in comparison with the rapid growth in population typical of the Third World (demographic explosion), e.g. in this group of countries the birth rate is 10-15%, whilst in under-developed countries it is 25-45%; besides, the present growth is normally under 1% and, in some cases, e.g. in Federal German Republic, it is negative.

— economic structure: in terms of productive income, a typical example of western economy at present time would be: agriculture 10%; industry (including manufacturing, building and public enterprises) 50%; state services about 20%.

- the market: both at the national and international level it is wide and well structured; it is not accidentally that the economic system of these countries is called “market economy”. Competition and the persisting pressure of mass publicity are still decisive factors in the market.
- a system of mixed economy or greater intervention of the State, as compared with classic make-up of capitalism in which the market was the fundamental centre of decision. It is clear that in capitalism, regardless of its modifications, its essential basic structure is maintained, which is characterized by the private ownership of the means of production and by the use of the private profit from capital and natural goods, with the consequent marginalisation of the working classes from the power of decision.
- Distribution of income: a minimum per capita income of 1,000, dollars has been conventionally established as a minimum for considering one country as developed.
- Political organization: in the capitalist countries, multi-parties or formal democracy prevails. This does not mean that the power lies with the people, although there are effective channels of participation.

N.B. According to the groups of participants and to the time available, choose or emphasize one or another among these characteristics.

c. The expansion policy of the capitalist countries:

- In the history of capitalism, one thing is clear: its tendency to expansion and its capacity for recovery in the face of crisis. We can in fact note the reality of these two points both on a national and an international level.
- The accusation of imperialism levelled at the countries of this block and particularly at the USA has its foundation in this tendency to expansion (a typical case of this is represented by the multi-national enterprises).

B) The industrialized socialist countries:

- a. **Geographic** constitution of the block: USSR, Poland, Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Democ. Rep. Germany; Yugoslavia, Albania, China.

In 1949, according to the Moscow Treaties of 25-1-1949, the COMECON, or Council of Mutual Economical Assistance, is set up with the aim of promoting and coordinating the economic expansion, and the trade exchanges of the member-countries. (Mongolia is also a member of COMECON; observers are Yugoslavia, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam).

In 1955, Warsaw Pact.

b. Basic Ideology of the system:

The Leninist Marxist system has as its goal the achievement of the "Communist Society", characterized by a complete material well-being (to each person according to his capabilities and needs), by the absence of any classes and by absolute equality; by "creative" work and by order, by the substitution of private ownership of goods and means of production for collective ownership.

The option for equality implies a coherent organization at economic, politico-administrative levels (re ISRA II, 2.2.).

It is evident that the carrying out both of the ideology underlying this system and its coherent organization are far from being achieved.

c. China, the enigmatic colossus.

— China, today, appears as a country in process of permanent revolution (in the opinion of many, it represents the highest "revolutionary" level existing today in the world, both in its internal organization and its foreign policy)

— China presents itself as a country of the Third World, but with the characteristics of a great power which is self-made.

— China breaks with the USSR in 1960, and is followed by Albania...

C) The Countries of the Third World

Used first by A. Sauvy (1952), the term "T.W." was adopted to indicate the group of countries, initially Afro-Asiatic and shortly after also Latin America, which sought to unite together in a kind of claimant alliance against the western countries (Europe and North America), considered to be the cause—direct or indirect—of their situation of under-development and backwardness.

Under the term T.W., there is an ambiguous reality, made up of exploiters and exploited, and diversified by many political, economic, cultural, religious, racial, historical elements. This grouping came together in the years following the last world war, after the formation of the "first" and "second" blocks. Initially these nations gathered together under a "nonalignment" formula, which however took on strongly vindictive overtones, especially in relation to capitalism.

The expression "T.W." indicates all those nations which feel themselves as being "third", outsiders, excluded from the way of life of the developed countries, alienated from that form of life to which they aspire; the "damned of the earth" as the African Franz Fanon calls them.

- a. **Geographically** this block is made up: all the countries of Latin America, all the countries of Africa, with the exception of South Africa, all the countries of Asia and Oceania, with the exception of Japan, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.
- b. **Common Characteristics** (however present in varying degrees and levels):
 - Epidemics and under-nourishment: chronically quantitative and, what is more serious, qualitative under-nourishment (according to FAO, 58% of the world population daily consumes less than 15 gr. of animal proteins; 17% consumes more than 30 gr.; in the poorest countries, less than 5 gr. a day; in the super-nourished about 70 gr....)
 - Non-utilization or waste of natural resources: the majority of under-developed countries possess substantial natural potential, but its exploitation is very difficult and partial (e.g. in Latin America, only 1/5th of the land is exploited but only to a limited extent). Under-employment is one of the main characteristics of under-development.
 - High number of farmers and low productivity: (e.g. in the USA, the land workers make up 12% of the population; in Western Europe 20% ; in Latin America 60; 70 in Africa and Asia...)

- Restricted and incomplete industrialization: the developed countries who make up about 25 per cent of the world population produce 90 per cent of the industrial goods and consume 85 per cent of energy produced throughout the world...)
- Greater social inequalities: in the under-developed countries the rich are richer and the poor poorer than in the developed countries.
 - Illiteracy: in developed countries illiteracy does not exceed 3 or 4 per cent; in Southern Europe the average is 20 per cent; in Latin America (with a few exceptions) 40-45 per cent; in Southeast Asia 70 per cent; in the Middle East 75 per cent; in Saudi Arabia 95 per cent...
- State of increasing collective awareness about the situation is in full evolution: within the past 30 years in the place of the traditional passiveness a definite psychological change is evident, that is, the discovery of their poverty and of its abnormal character which is inadmissible in today's world. This awareness, which is present in ever wider social strata, is united to a decisive will for transformation and development; such a thing is an historic factor of great importance and is absolutely new.
- c. As a consequence of such collective consciousness, the Third World countries **organize** themselves more and more so as to face their situation: e.g. OAU (Organization for African Unity), OAS (Organization of American States), ASEAM (Economic Organization of the Nations of Southeast Asia), UNCTAD (United Nations Conference for Trade and Development).

2. **Fraternity sought after and at the same time trampled down and denied**

The afore-mentioned three blocks are today in collision among themselves. Although there is a noticeable desire to change, the strong international tension is all too evident.

A) **In the industrialized countries of the 1st and 2nd block**

- a. There is an ever increasing **concentration** of economic, political, technico-scientific and military **power** in the hands of a few—nations, groups and/or individuals (super-powers).

These powers programme the type of man and of society which suits their own interests. With the justification of the ideology of the system, and principally through the mass media, they bring about the alienation of the poor nations. They control education so as to form men according to the "system". They manipulate popular aspirations for their own interests...

How long will mankind's destiny go on being in the hands of a few "programmers", who themselves depend on the powers supporting them? As a "positive"—hopeful—sign there is a generalized feeling of frustration. A consequence of this situation is also the rise of new myths, the increase of the forms of evasion (drugs, sex...) and particularly of violence as an outlet of one's deprivation (it is meaningful that in the richest countries this violence is often to be found among the youth belonging to high-standard milieux!)

b. At the root of all this there is the **greed for power and money**:

— In some, [that which dominates is the greed for **having**, the idolatry of **money**...; from there comes today's consumer society with its "religion" of welfare and comfort (it is terrible just to think of the enormous amount of money invested in making tablets for taking away appetite, dietetic products, recipe books for slimming; there are millions of people suffering from obesity, and thousands who die every year from excessive weight...)

— In others, prevails the greed of **power and prestige**, in the competition for domination.

— The "bigs" of these blocks are fighting among themselves for hegemony over the world (e.g. USA and Japan; USA and USSR; USA, USSR, and China...)

— We are also witnessing an **economic war**, which after all is nothing less than the defence of power.

c. In front of such a situation, there is, a **growing collective awareness**—becoming more and more universal—of the urgency of a greater and more effective **participation** in the decision-making about the ruling of the world (e.g. the actual weight of the Third World countries in the UNO...), in the fruits of labour, in a more equitable distribution of wealth, in the exploitation of natural resources, etc.

- d. The loss and/or the absence of the sense of transcendency is a typical and generalized phenomenon in the countries of the 1st and 2nd block. This leads man to the idolatry of himself, or of the system, or of the Party, with the resulting risk of degenerating into so many new forms of tyranny, of totalitarianism of racism and/ or into thousands of sorts of evasion and of subjective morals, which strives for self-justification.
- Not without reason, Vatican II, as we know qualifies contemporary atheism as “one of the most serious problems of our time” (GS 19; EN 55)
 - This issues a special challenge to all religions—not only to Christianity —for searching and striving to “re-express” their message, and their cultural and operative forms, so that they may present the authentic image of God, which will give a sound foundation and open true horizons to men’s responsibility in the building up of the world (GS 192-1).

B) In the Third World countries

- a. As a consequence of the ever more generalized awareness of oppression and injustice, there arises from these countries a cry for equality, a **deep aspiration for liberation**, a desperate struggle for a new sort of international relationship...
- their necessities with the remaining 20%, without mentioning many irritating inequalities! 60% of child mortality in the T. W. countries, etc...
 - the organization of non-aligned countries (UNCTAD, etc...)
 - growing risks of nations, groups and/or individuals ever more sick and tired of liberal-capitalist system making rich countries richer and richer, and poor countries poorer and poorer. They find unbearable e.g. that the world has reached a total military expenditure of almost one billion dollars **per day** on arms and weapons of destruction (re: R.L. Sivard, World Military and Social Expenditures, 1976, New York, quoted by Fr. Arrupe 2-8-1976), while there are 2,500,000,000 under-nourished men and women, and only 15 to 20 billions dollars **per year** are allotted for their aid...!

- b. At the same time, it is true that the capitalist system still has great power and great strength... (just think of all revolutionary attempts being smashed "from outside" in many countries of the T.W., etc.)

B) The crisis of the communist system

- a. There are many signs too of the crisis of the communist system:

— The "China-USSR" division: "Amalrik, a Russian who was accused of antipatriotic activity and deprived of his liberty... thinks war will break out between 1980 and 1985 and that, just as Rome and Constantinople fell, so Moscow itself will be taken and the Chinese people will emigrate in force. Mehnert (an expert) however thinks that the Chinese have their eyes on America rather than on Russia, much as the barbarians had their eyes on Rome when the empire was about to fall" (A. Amalrik, "L' Union Sovietique survivra—t—elle en 1984? Paris 1970, quoted by W. Buhlmann in "The Coming of the Third Church", ch. IV number 8).

(These countries reject both the liberal—capitalist and the communist model. While they join their forces against internal and external oppressors, they also divide amongst themselves—thus falling into ineffectiveness—in the very act of fighting for a new model of society. The conservative and reactionary forces avail themselves of such disagreement for manipulating and sharpening divisions, so that change becomes impossible...)

- b. The **spiral of violence** is a phenomenon ever more generalized nowadays. Is it possible to build up true brotherhood through violent revolutions? Is it not true that "sudden or violent changes of structures would be deceitful, ineffective of themselves, and certainly not in conformity with the dignity of the people" (EN 37)?

- c) Facing this state of affairs, which becomes more and more sobering, **efforts for dialogue** are multiplying in a desperate search for solutions. North and South, rich and poor meet periodically through forward

and backward steps, concessions and restrictions, tensions and conflicts; sometimes without understanding or even listening to one another. On one side there is the main concern of defending, the "status quo", on the other the effort for bettering the situation of marginalization and exploitation...

3. The challenge of present time

The problems presented (up to now) seem to concentrate on the crisis of the system of human and international relations:

A) The crisis of the capitalist system

a. There are many indications to prove that this system is in a state of crisis:

— the energy crisis

— the crisis of the system of world economy:

growing awareness of the need for a New International Economic Order (NIEO)

food crisis: 25% of world population owns 80% of its wealth, while 75% are compelled to satisfy their necessities with the remaining 20%, without mentioning many irritating inequalities! 60% of child mortality in the T. W. countries, etc...

— the organization of non-aligned countries (UNCTAD, etc...)

— growing risks of nations, groups and/or individuals ever more sick and tired of liberal-capitalist system making rich countries richer and richer, and poor countries poorer and poorer. They find unbearable e.g. that the world has reached a total military expenditure of almost one billion dollars per day on arms and weapons of destruction (re: R.L. Sivard, World Military and Social Expenditures, 1976, New York, quoted by Fr. Arrupe 2-8-1976), while there are 2,500,000,000 under-nourished men and women, and only 15 to 20 billions dollars per year are allotted for their aid...!

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— The “China-USSR” division: “Amalrik, a Russian who was accused of antipatriotic activity and deprived of his liberty... thinks war will break out between 1980 and 1985 and that, just as Rome and Constantinople fell, so Moscow itself will be taken and the Chinese people will emigrate in force. Mehnert (an expert) however thinks that the Chinese have their eyes on America rather than on Russia, much as the barbarians had their eyes on Rome when the empire was about to fall” (A. Amalrik, “L’ Union Sovietique survivra—t-elle en 1984? Paris 1970, quoted by W. Buhlmann in “The Coming of the Third Church”, ch. IV number 8).

— Euro-communism as a recent phenomenon in Europe (e.g. USSR protesting against the book “Eurocommunismo” by Santiago Carrillo, secretary of P.C.E.).

— The greater economic and political autonomy of the countries of the COMECON...

— The commercial business USSR with the West to meet the necessities of consumerism rising among the people.

— The growing number of dissidents in socialist countries and the contestation of all kinds in and out of the system (e.g. the “Chart of 77” in Czechoslovakia) etc.

b. It is equally true that this system still has great power and strength, much influence and expansion in the T.W. countries—especially in Asia and Africa—and a great capacity to lure especially the youth and the workers.

C) “Either total war or a new international order”

a. All the above elements seem to indicate that the structural contradictions of international get-togetherness are increasing rapidly, with the possibility of ending up in:

- . either a **global war**, caused by the desperate anxiety of survival of the two great ruling powers,
- . or the creation of a **new world order**, not only economic but also political (with some form of world government).

- “Factual evidence is telling us that our present world is sick, that drastic measures are needed to cure it, that what is required is a new international order... ‘The present crisis in the world economy is a crisis of international structures, not a temporary set-back in global development. What we are dealing with is basically a sick system and what we really need are fundamental institutional reforms, not marginal changes’ (‘Proposal for a NIEO’, report of the Third World Forum, by a Special Task Force, 1975). So far most of the attention has been concentrated on the need for a new international economic order...” (P. Arrupe, address at the 41st International Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia, USA, August 2, 1976).
 - Even though the changes do not come about today or tomorrow, it seems clear that the world is surely, if slowly, approaching the **moment** which we can call the moment of “**realization**”; there will be demand for clear thinking, generosity, courage (especially from the rich countries) that they no longer allow themselves to be blinded by power. It will require too the awareness of the enormous difficulties, the overcoming of so many rivalries, a greater political responsibility of the poor countries... and also the formation of the world public opinion which must accompany this process of change, to support it and make it actual.
- b. Towards a new cultural revolution? There are people thinking that “after the French revolution bringing the modern world political rights, after the communist revolution winning men economic rights, a third revolution is about to occur: in reaction against the materialism of both **capitalist** and **communist** systems, it will re-integrate moral and religious values in the modern world. In this revolution, coloured people (and hence mostly non-Christians) will play a great part” (L.S. Senghor, “Nation et voie africaine du socialisme”, Paris 1966, p.69; quoted by W. Buhlmann in “The Coming of the Third Church”, ch.X B, n.7).
- c. We can say, therefore, that the world is now pregnant with a new model of human relationship, of society and consequently of man (re: EN 36).

The world is facing a crisis of growth, a new phase of its history (re: GS 4): it is an agonizing metamorphosis, causing great suffering, "blood, sweat and tears", and many deaths, many wars (118 wars since the II World War...) UNTIL WHEN? IS FRATERNITY IMPOSSIBLE?

Conclusion:

Face to face with this panorama, in this global picture, which, also, explains what is happening "here and now" in our own country, we ask ourselves:

- Has the church, the Light of the Nations, a word to say? What is it? ("if the salt loses its savour...", Mt. 5,13)
- Which is the task of Christians in this unique moment we are living? We Christians, shall we be at last acknowledged as those who give their lives for their brothers, who are committed to a more just and fraternal world?
- What is the meaning and the worth of the Good News of the Kingdom? What values must the Church witness and promote, considering her own specific Mission of evangelization? What pastoral, coherent options must she take today?

1.2. THE KINGDOM OF GOD, A NEW FRATERNITY IN CHRIST

1.2.1. Link: Here is the challenge of the present time. Face to face with it, does the People of God have Good News for today's world? Shall we give in to the temptation of believing that fraternity is impossible? "It would not be an exaggeration to say that there exists a powerful and tragic appeal — of the modern world—to be evangelized" (EN 55). The Church is called, as much as ever, to say a word on the future of the world and to anticipate somehow courageously this future in her own life.

"As an evangelizer, Christ first of all proclaims... the Kingdom of God... Only the Kingdom is... absolute and it makes everything else relative." (EN 8)

1.2.2. Objective: To discover with deep and joyful conviction that the kingdom of God is an efficacious Promise of Salvation, as the new fraternity in Jesus Christ, and that therefore it is the Good News for today's world.

1.2.3. Fundamental contents:

1. The Kingdom of God in the message, life and work of Jesus
 - a. Jesus Christ makes the Kingdom the centre of his life and mission
 - b. The Good News of the Kingdom in his preaching
 - c. The Kingdom of God and the death-resurrection of Jesus
2. The new fraternity, in the freedom of the children of God
 - a. New sonship with God: sons and daughters in the Son (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:16; Jn. 1:21 and 3:1-2)
 - b. A new fraternity, that is not born of flesh and blood but of the spirit
 - c. In the freedom of the children of God
3. The great demand of the Kingdom: a poor heart
 - a. The Kingdom and the salvation—"each individual gains them through a total interior renewal" (EN 10)
 - b. Radical difference of the demands of the kingdom compared with the ancient law (Mt. 5 to 7; Lk. 6:17-49)
 - c. The Beatitudes, a real "eschatological revolution"; the most original of which is the one of the poor.

Conclusion: The Church prolongs and continues the presence of Jesus Christ, and his mission and condition of being an evangelizer. (EN 15)

1.2.4. Procedures:

- a. Motivation (1.2.1. and 1.2.2.)
- b. personal reflection: "What is or what does the Kingdom of God mean in my life?" with some biblical readings, e.g. Parables of the Kingdom. (Mk. 4:1-20 and 4:26-30; Mt. 20:1-16: 25; Lk. 14:15-24 etc)
- c. Communication of life, in small groups
- d. Input (1.2.3. and 1.2.6.)
- e. Dialogue in assembly.

1.2.5. Bibliography:

- Paul VI, Evangelization in the modern world, 8 December 1975
- FABC PAPER No. 16, "The Kingdom of God" (there are quoted various works on this theme)

- Lombardi R., Church and Kingdom of God, East Asian Past. Institute, Manila 1978
- Rahner K., Teologia ecumenica del futuro, Ed. Paoline, Roma, 1974.

1.2.6. Elements for the development of the theme

The presence of the “Kingdom of God” in Jesus’ life and message is too obvious — 39 times in Luke, 15 in Mark, 50 in Matthew, 5 in John — for it ever to be ignored or doubted (through a process which begins already in the new Testament this concept took second place, giving way to a concern for the Church, which fills the greater part of theological reflection over the centuries).

1. The Kingdom of God in the teaching, life and work of Jesus

The Kingdom of God appears as the **saving sovereignty of God** announced in the Old Testament and present in the more or less deformed hopes of Jesus’ contemporaries.

Jesus not only appears as the “eschatological prophet” who announces the arrival of the Kingdom, but also he himself offers this salvation in the name of God and carries it out efficaciously (sacrament).

a. Jesus Christ makes the Kingdom the centre of his life and mission (EN 6-12, especially No. 8)

- The history of the people of Israel is already a progressive and special (sacramental) manifestation of the saving and liberating action of God in and for the world.
- It is clear that God’s saving sovereignty was also present and acting in **other peoples, in other cultures** of the earth...to the extent in which men and women were able to live and develop the great values on which he/she must build up his/her own personality and the world.
- Jesus is the apex of God’s saving presence and action in the world. He himself is this salvation acting already in history (the sacrament of salvation and definitive sign of its universality). He brings God’s sovereignty — which is man’s salvation — to all, no one being excluded, not only overcoming the elite concepts of his time (pharisees, essenians, Qumran), but outweighing by far the limits of Israel as a chosen people (Mt.

8:12). By his life, death and resurrection he begins to exert a transforming influence on the world, penetrating and electrifying the whole evolving universe.

- . Jesus himself is a living Parable of God: he comes and dies for the cause of his Father in his absolute identity with it. He makes man's cause his own passionately, and always as God's cause.
- . That deep level of his personal religious experience, of his loving intimacy with God is the privileged place for us to find the root and force of all his life at the service of the Kingdom of the Father. He could not find incorruptible security in the reality of the world around him, marked by pain, injustice, illness, death, rather He received this security from his most profound experience of intimacy with God, alone and unique. (The expression "my Father" is mentioned 17 times in Matthew, 4 in Luke, 25 in John) (ISRA, Relation between the Kingdom of God and the person of Christ himself I and II).

The living God is the focus of his whole life: the forgiveness of sin, the casting out of devils, his miracles, his dealings with sinners and publicans, his offer of salvation on behalf of God, his stand towards the law, the Sabbath and the temple, his solicitous and liberating presence among the people... all this is nothing but the announcement of the divine sovereignty which was his own (EN 12; FABC PAPER No. 16, the Kingdom of God in the New Testament 1,2). The centre of all his life and activity was always God the Father, merciful and saying, deeply concerned for man and for the world. From here stems his conviction and his announcement of God's liberating sovereignty, which must—and can—be carried out already in history, as Jesus himself has experienced (EN 26).

During his days of earthly life, with his word and his deeds, Jesus invited people to faith in this loving-saving God. To this faith, he gave himself up lovingly at the moment of dying on the cross. (Lk 23:14).

b. The Good News of the Kingdom in his preaching (EN 11)

Jesus brings a joyful message, "Good News for all the people" (Lk 1, 10), "the Kingdom of God is at hand"

(Mk 1,15). "As the kernel and centre of his Good News, Christ proclaims salvation, this great gift of God which is liberation from everything that oppresses man but which is above all liberation from sin and the Evil One, in the joy of knowing God and being known by him, of seeing him and of being given over to him". (EN 9)

- Salvation, therefore, not merely immanent but also transcendent and eschatological (EN 27-28; FABC PAPER No. 16, "The Kingdom of God").
- Thus Jesus is the prophet of God's saving sovereignty. In his preaching, he presents the "content" of the Kingdom as God's salvation, as his liberating power reaching all that is bad, oppressive, alienating, and impoverishing for the whole man and all men (EN 30, 32-35). Man's cause has been taken up by God himself. That saving will of God becomes the critical nemesis of everything that may be bad for man. Jesus thus becomes a model of right action for the Kingdom. For this he lived and for this he died: man's cause is God's cause, and God's cause is man's cause. Absolute veracity of God who seeks man; immovable certainty of man in God's salvation.

N.B. It is obvious that Jesus had to meet existentially the different kinds of evil and of oppression that threatened the men of his time and place. But his true contribution to salvation cannot be limited exclusively to the concrete kinds of suffering of which the Gospels speak. Every man, every nation and every era has its own form of alienation from which they are to be liberated by the Good News of the Kingdom (EN 30).

To translate the liberating content of the Gospels into real concrete attitudes for every moment is the task of hermeneutics and of discernment. The very term **Kingdom** could be very little understood in certain cultural media especially if one does not keep in mind that its sovereignty is exercised directly over the oppressive forces that threaten persons, rather than over persons themselves for it is persons who are invited to form part of that Kingdom.

- One thing is clear in the mind and preaching of Jesus (Mt 28:19ff; Mt 8:12, etc.): “the Good News of the Kingdom which is coming and which has begun is meant for all people of all times”. (EN 13)

c. **The Kingdom of God and the death-resurrection of Jesus**

- From the words and deeds of Jesus, one deduces that He intended his death as a **gift of himself** bearing salvation (Lk 22, 20; 1 Cor 11:25; Mk 14:24; Mt 26:26-28). His whole life is a service of love for men. His “being-for-others”, the unconditional adhesion to the will of the Father, give proof of his fidelity to his own message, always open to the future of God. Only God has the last word. He felt his own death as implicit in the salvation on behalf of God, as an historic consequence of his loving service to men. The “for you” of the account of the Last Supper expresses very clearly that his death is the seal of his whole life. He dies as he had lived: for man and for all men, without exception. And this as an offering to the loving will of salvation desired by the Father. There is not the slightest “fracture” between the interpretation given by the Church of Christ’s death and that which he himself has left us. A death by love and fidelity to what constituted the only passion of his Life: the cause of God, as cause of man: the cause of man as cause of God.
- The resurrection of Jesus is an **historic—salvific event**; an act of grace; a divine initiative of salvation. It marks the passing of Peter and the other disciples from a state of defection and of treason (Mk 14: 66-71) to a **new** state of remission and of reunion, experienced as a gift of God.

Jesus, who proclaimed the imminent sovereignty of God has not failed, despite the contradiction of rejection and of death. With him—who during his life identified with God’s cause, the imminent sovereignty

of God—God himself has identified in turn, in resurrecting him from the dead; Jesus Christ himself is this sovereignty of God. Thus Jesus, who did not announce himself, but rather the sovereignty of God, proclaimed himself as it were “without meaning to”, so that the announcer has become the announced.

2. The new fraternity in the freedom of the children of God

Through Christ and from him there is displayed in the world—and more concretely in the community of believers—the new creation (2 Cor 5:17), the new being, the style which Jesus himself lived out; that style which since his resurrection irradiates in the world through the believers and which in Jesus has been brought to fulfilment. In what does it consist? What is the “novelty”?

a. Special **relation** and absolute confidence in the Father, up to **filial** abandonment (Abba) which overcomes all servitude:

- Christ rises; by his death he destroys death and gives us life, so that as sons and daughters in the Son, we cry out in the Spirit: Abba! Father! (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:16 Jn 1:22 and 3:1-2; GS 22). In Him “God reconciled us to himself” and to ourselves (2 Cor 5:18-19; Col 1:20-22; GS 22).
- Through the cross, Jesus overcomes all kinds of division between people and God, and transforms division into communion: “excluded from membership of Israel, aliens with no part in the covenants with their Promise, without hope and without God, immersed in this world”... “in Christ Jesus, we have become citizens like all the saints and part of God’s household.” (Eph 2:12-19)
- No more servants, but friends of the Lord Jesus; because he has made known to us the Father (Jn 15:15), in whose faithful love we believe and have put all our trust and security (1 Jn 4:10; 3:1-3, etc.)
- In and through the Spirit of Jesus, those who welcome him enter in a new relationship to God, not of servitude nor of fear, rather of sonship and of love. Thus they become “sacrament or sign of intimate union with God...” (LG 1).

b. The New People of God created by God through the New Covenant: the New Community (LG 9ff)

- Christ destroys in his own person all division and hostility, breaks down the barrier which used to keep them apart, restores peace, reconciling those two peoples, creating one single New Man in himself out of the two of them and uniting them both in a single body (Eph 2:11-22).
- “In his preaching He clearly taught the sons of God to treat one another as brothers. In His prayers, he pleaded that all His disciples might be “one”... He commanded his apostles to preach to all peoples the Good News so that the human race might become the Family of God, in which the fullness of the Law would be love.” (GS 32)
- In, with, and through Him arises a new fraternity which is not born of flesh nor of blood, but of the Spirit (Jn 1:12ff; 3:1-6). It is not ideological or psychological affinity. It is a gift, a fruit of the Spirit in ourselves; therefore it can overcome all the differences (Gal 3:26-28). Its “novelty” concretizes also in the overcoming of frontiers: it is not limited to one race, one culture; all walls of separation, barriers of hatred, discriminations have been broken down (Eph 2; Gal 3:27-8).

As he grows in his own identification, the follower of Jesus experiences himself simultaneously as Son of the Father and brother of all men. Indeed, every believer can only say “Our Father”, that is the Father of those who in Christ have been admitted to be sons and daughters in the Son. As the filial consciousness grows, the fraternal consciousness grows, too. Therefore, the “Our Father” is the prayer of the Christian community. “By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples” (Jn 13:35). “Father may they be one in us so that the world may believe...” (Jn 17:21).

In order to fulfil this new law of love, Jesus gives us his spirit (Rom 8:1-11). “As the first-born of many brethren and through the gift of His Spirit, He founded after His death and resurrection a **new brotherly community** composed of all those who receive Him in faith and in love...” (GS 32).

Sharing, through Him, in the interpersonal love of God, we are capable of loving as Christ loved us, up to giving his life for the brother. "This has taught us love—that he gave up his life for us and we too ought to give up our lives for our brothers" (1 Jn 3:16). Therefore to follow Christ means to be, to live and to suffer for mankind's salvation, that is, for the Kingdom of God, so that the saving sovereignty of God become more present in the world. Thus, to be Church means to become a sacrament, sign and instrument "of intimate union with God—outstanding vocation of man (GS 19)—and of the unity of all mankind" (LG 1; re: following theme).

- Thus, love is not merely a sign (EN 26), it is the presence of the already acting, saving and uniting power of God. Therefore Jesus teaches us: "that the new commandment of love is the basic law of human perfection and hence of the world's transformation" (GS 38). Consequently, to serve the cause of the Kingdom implies, above all, witnessing love, making unity, building fraternity.
 - "This solidarity—or new fraternal community in Christ—must be constantly increased until that day on which it will be brought to perfection. Then, saved by grace, men will offer flawless glory to God as a family beloved of God and of Christ their brother," (GS 32) when Christ hands over to the Father a Kingdom eternal and universal: "a kingdom of truth and life, of holiness and grace, of justice, love and peace." (GS 39)
- c. In the freedom of the children of God (Rom 8:21; 2 Cor 3:17)
- "When Christ freed us, he meant us to remain free... My brothers you are called to liberty." (Gal 5:1, 13)
 - Liberty which fills the very life of the historic Jesus, grounded in his total surrender to the will of the Father.
 - The liberty of the children of God must be, in fact, an essential characteristic of Jesus' disciples, who, led by the Spirit, make of their life a "mutual service in works of love" (Gal 5:13).

3. The great demand of the Kingdom: a poor heart

a. "This Kingdom and this salvation, which are the key words of Jesus Christ's evangelization, are available to every human being as grace and mercy, and yet at the same time each individual must gain them by force—they belong to the violent, says the Lord, through toil and suffering, through a life lived according to the Gospel, through abnegation, and the Cross, through the Spirit of the beatitudes. But above all, each individual gains them through a total interior renewal which the Gospel calls "metanoia"; it is a radical conversion, a profound change of mind and heart." (EN 10)

— This conversion entails above all the attitude of total openness to God's saving action. Man is to let himself be won over by the joyful message of God's sovereignty operating mercifully as of now. This requirement of a deep and radical conversion is already "per se" a characteristic of the Kingdom in action. It is man's reply of "yes" to salvation.

b. In the Sermon of the Mount (Mt 5-7; Lk 6:17-49), Jesus shows the radical difference of the demands of the Kingdom compared with the ancient law: **purity of heart** (Mt 5:27-32); before the external, formalistic legalism of the pharisees **innerness**. (Mt 6:4-17); poverty and trust in Providence (Mt 6:19-34); coherent works (Mt 7:13-27); love of one's neighbour including enemies (Mt 5:21-26: 38-48), as the sum and fulfilment of all the other requirements of the Kingdom, embracing the whole message of the N.T.

c. **The Beatitudes**—are not, in the first place, a moral code of a prevalently ethical and moralizing content, but rather a truly "eschatological revolution", as Schillebeeckx says—proclaim the demands of the Kingdom, which entail a deep conversion of mentality, of the evaluation of things (EN 18) and of the fate of men in a world distant from the God of salvation.

— The poor—sole original Beatitude, according to the opinion of many—and with them all the rest who appear to the world to be rejected, cast out, persecuted... receive the good news that the Kingdom of God comes for them. And that already, now, they are the preferred and the favourites...

- In interpreting the Beatitudes, we must avoid two opposing, equally inexact, extremes: an interpretation of a pure eschatology of the other world... —which would be no “good news” but instead a real alienation of resigned conformism—and a predominantly ethical interpretation, as if that very thing from which the Kingdom comes to liberate us were proposed as “norm.” The Beatitudes are in the basic line of all doctrine on the Kingdom of God which is already coming, which will change the situation of outcasts, of the oppression of the weak and the unjustly persecuted. And this is not presented in an apocalyptic perspective of violent disturbance of the situation, but neither as mere hope for the other world (EN 27-28).
- The Kingdom is a gift, a work of the power and mercy of the coming God (Mt 13:31-32; Mk 4:26-29; 1 Cor 3:6-9).
 “the wise and learned” of this world cannot understand, and consequently do not welcome it...
 the Father reveals and offers it to the small and spiritually poor (Mt 11:25-27; 5:3).

Conclusion: To call the participants to look with serene and hopeful eyes at today’s world, where the liberating and saving force of God is present and operating in the heart of all men and in a particular way in the community of those who believe in Him and are called to be sacrament of the Kingdom.

1.3. THE CHURCH, SACRAMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

1.3.1. Link: The Church is for the world. What is her mission in the Perspective of the Kingdom? “The Church remains in the world... as a sign—simultaneously obscure and luminous —of a new presence of Jesus, of his departure and of his permanent presence. She prolongs and continues him. And it is above all his mission and his role of being an evangelist that she is called upon to continue (LG 8). For the Christian community is never closed in upon itself” (EN 15).

1.3.2. Objective: To discover the Church as a reality different from the Kingdom and at the service of it. To become aware

that all the being and acting of the Church—her evangelizing task—must be oriented towards being a witness and herald of the Kingdom, “neither less nor more”.

To discover also, in a vital way, the necessity for the Church to renew herself by imitating Jesus Christ as “being-for-others”, that is, through attitudes of fraternity and poverty; and feel like being called to co-operate in such renewal.

1.3.3. Fundamental contents:

1. The Church is the community of those who believe and testify that the Kingdom of God broke in upon the world, in, with and through Jesus of Nazareth.
2. The Church, while being a sign of the Kingdom, has aspects in common with Christ, but cannot identify herself with him.
3. The Church “is on earth, the seed and the initial budding forth of the Kingdom... Her mission is to announce and establish the Kingdom of Christ and of God, among all peoples” (LG 5).
 - a. The Church is not the Kingdom
 - b. The Church, is witness and herald of the Kingdom
 - c. The Church has an irreplaceable function in relation to the Kingdom
 - d. Like Jesus, the Church:
 - announces, makes present and offers the Kingdom of God to the world (EN 8-9, 26-27).
 - proclaims the Kingdom by
 - . witness (EN 21. 41. 76)
 - . word (EN 11. 22. 42-44)
 - . action (EN 46ff; 58ff)
 - e. Meaning of the sacraments in this context (EN 23. 28. 47)
4. Evangelization and Kingdom of God (EN 18-19. 23-24. 30)
5. Under the action of the Holy Spirit (EN 75).

1.3.4. Procedure:

- a. Input (1.2.3. and 1.2.6.)
- b. Dialogue (in the assembly or in groups)
- c. Personal reflection—celebration of Eucharist

1.3.5. Bibliography:

- Paul VI, *Evangelization in the modern world*, 8-12-1975
- FABC PAPER, No. 16, "The Kingdom of God"
- Lombardi R., *Church and Kingdom of God*, East Asian Past Institute, Manila, 1978
- Moltmann J., *The Church in the power of the Spirit*, SCM,

1.3.6. Elements for the development of the theme

After Easter, this phenomenon—only more intensified—is observed as during Jesus' public life. Confronted by him, people identify themselves, they take sides. Those who believe that Jesus lives, from a group whose reason of unity is to witness to the unfolding of the Kingdom of God in Christ. This group, which is the Church, continues today to confess that same faith and that same hope. It is interesting for us to study the position of the community of believers in the face of the Kingdom and what force keeps it going in its witness and mission.

1. The Church is the community of those who believe and testify that the Kingdom of God broke in, upon the world, in, with, and through Jesus of Nazareth

- The Church is the group of those who realize that the liberating lordship of God has manifested itself in Christ, and they open themselves unconditionally to its action. They welcome the Kingdom offered them, on confessing that God re-established his liberating power already among men through faith in Jesus-Christ resurrected from the dead.

To admit and confess that Jesus has risen means to recognize that God has testified on behalf of Jesus; he has guaranteed in a more definite and radical way than through his miracles or style of life, that he is the one he sent, to whom we should listen (Mt 3, 16ff; 17,5); in whom is salvation.

By resurrecting him from the dead, God makes the scandal of the cross his own, which thereafter becomes sign of hope for mankind.

This recognition means a radical change of perspective in the hope of the apostles and their contemporaries. It is a matter of a real conversion, of a readjustment of their

criteria and values. Now it has been manifested that God saves us from death, gives meaning to the world and to humanity in Jesus Christ. In Him lies the hope of the future. In Him death and failure are overcome. In Him can be built up the fraternity of all men and peoples, that fraternity of which men and women are dreaming of, longing for, and yet hampering.

- It is up to the community of believers to continue in the world the task and the mission of Christ, that of being the living and efficacious sign of God's saving love for man. And of suffering—like him and united with him—for the salvation of the whole man/woman and of all men/women.
- This is the task of the Church. Being a Christian is a grace, but it is given to us in relation to all of humanity, for the others. The fate of the real community cannot be other than that of Christ: death and resurrection.

2) The Church, while being a sign of the Kingdom, has aspects in common with Christ, but cannot identify herself with him

- The apostles and the first disciples were aware that they were carrying on Jesus' work. Through the witness of their lives and words, they would announce that, in Jesus Christ, God saves us from death, reveals man's vocation and the destiny of the world; and they would call men to an in-depth conversion, so that the new life of the Resurrected would be manifested in them.

Thus, Christ's mission is continued by the Church (EN 15), or better still, through the community of believers. Christ continues to announce and communicate the lordship of God, his liberating proximity, which men and women receive in the obedience of faith. We discover, therefore, a line of continuity between Christ and the Church. The Christian community comes to be the prolongation of Christ and of his mission at this intermediary stage.

- This is true. But we must likewise show the other side of the coin: what puts the Church at a distance from Christ? We can specify this distance or differentiation in these two points above all:

The Church has nothing of her own. Everything in her, which is presence of the Kingdom and of salvation, belongs to Christ and his Spirit. She welcomes, experiences, announces and transmits salvation—which is solely the working of God in Christ. She is the announcement and communication of the Kingdom, always with reference to Christ.

She is not perfectly transparent to the action of the Spirit as Jesus was. She is a deficient instrument. Along with saintliness, she also has sin; with the Word of God, her own misleading word; with the saving action of God, the dead-weight of meaningless institutions; together with the witness of love, we also find laziness and complicity with those who dominate.

3. The Church “is, on earth, the seed and the initial budding forth of the Kingdom...” (LG 5; GS 45; AG 1...)

“The Church, endowed with the gifts of her founder and faithfully observing his precepts of charity, humility and self-denial, receives the mission of proclaiming and establishing among all peoples the Kingdom of Christ and of God.” (LG 5)

a. The Church is not the Kingdom

— for many reasons, the Church went so far as to identify herself with the kingdom, thinking that the kingdom “existed” there where the Church was. The parables of the kingdom were applied to the Church. The Church was considered as an absolute, an end... with the consequences that we all know...

— today, especially after Vatican II, it is clear that:

the Kingdom is the aim, the ultimate goal to which the Church strives, and which gives meaning to all her tasks. The Church’s purpose lies not in herself but in the already inchoate Kingdom which must be subsequently expanded until it is brought to its fulfilment by God (LG 9; EN 8)

the Church, then, **awaits the Kingdom**, not as something already in existence beforehand, but as something totally new which is being created by God in our world through the renewal of humanity which only He can bring to fulfilment.

b. The Church is witness and herald of the Kingdom

The cause of the Church is Jesus' cause, the Kingdom of God. This announcement is at the same time good news and judgement for the world. But it is also judgement for the Church because she is only Church of Jesus Christ to the extent that she is constantly converted to the Kingdom.

The Church's task is centred on the Kingdom. She must:

- . announce its coming in Christ
- . be witness of the Kingdom in faith, hope and love
- . be instrument of realization of the values of the Gospel in the temporal order, which will make her preaching and worship believable.

— The Church lives and works for the Kingdom. Christ assumes her as instrument of salvation, and sends her out to all the peoples (LG 9). It is the spirit of Christ who compels her to do her part towards the full realization of the will of God who has established Christ as the source of salvation for the whole world (LG 17).

— The Church is a seed of the Kingdom: she calls insistently on the premises of the Kingdom, on metanoia and faith. She prepares the ground for Christ's imitation as the condition to participate in the definitive Kingdom. With full power, she guides those awaiting the Kingdom, for Peter was given the keys of the Kingdom. She also celebrates the Eucharist as token of the banquet of the Kingdom:

- . she announces the Kingdom to all nations. The Church has received the mission of announcing and establishing the Kingdom of Christ and of God among all people
- . she recognizes the presence of salvation among peoples, admires the work of God in the various religions which constitute a real preparation for the Gospel, and makes an effort to fulfil their values (LG 5; 16; GS 1; AG 3)

. she herself, then, is already on earth seed and budding forth of the Kingdom for all mankind. She is only the beginning of the Kingdom, not the reality itself; while carrying out her mission, she yearns for the perfect Kingdom (LG 1.5.9)

— That is why the Church prays constantly and moved by the Spirit cries out: Come, Lord Jesus! (Rev 21; LG 17).

c. Irreplaceable function of the Church in relation to the Kingdom

— The vocation of the Church is unique. In effect, only through her can we recognize the Kingdom established by Christ. Only through her can we discover what the saving lordship of God inaugurated by Christ consists of. Despite all her imperfections, the Church is the only means of knowing Christ and the power of his resurrection. That is why her role in preaching and growth of the Kingdom is irreplaceable.

— The mystery of the Kingdom is now manifested in Christ-acting-in-the-Church (Eph 1). The revelation of the Kingdom, which forms part of its presence among us, is fulfilled through the Church's preaching (Eph 3, 6-8). The Church understands today as yesterday, that everything the Lord taught and was fulfilled in him for the salvation of mankind, must be announced and spread to the ends of the earth. In order that what was carried out once for common salvation may achieve its effect in all men (AG 3).

— This manner of transmission, this way of making the mystery of the Kingdom, the lordship of Christ present through the Church, is in fact the way the Father has chosen to make known to us his mystery, his plan for salvation. And the direction of this saving action of God is made manifest to us in the call made to all peoples, because the Kingdom of God is the encounter and reconciliation of all in Christ (Eph 3,6; Col 1, 26). This mystery of the Kingdom which gives meaning to history, operates in all places

but it is made **epiphany** and **revelation** in the ecclesial community which also represents, in its way, the growth of the Kingdom of God on earth (LG 3). We know that the Church's time is marked by this tension towards fulfilment; tension in turn which is lived by all creation and constitutes the ultimate meaning of historic becoming (Rom 8).

- At this intermediate stage, therefore, the revealing action of Christ **without the Church is unthinkable**. It is thanks to the believing community that mankind can recognize the meaning of the action of God, the coming of the Kingdom, the direction towards which history is going.

There is a continuity between the revealing function of Jesus of Nazareth and his revealing action as Kyrios through the preaching and signs of the Church. Certainly the Church is only a sign of the Kingdom to the extent that she is witness of Christ, and not a preacher of herself. Certainly the power of God to make things new is God's, Christ's, and never the Church's. But it is none the less true that the Kyrios wished to manifest himself and make himself known to people through this holy yet sinful community, which is the Church.

d. Therefore the Church, like Jesus

- **announces, makes present and offers the Kingdom of God to the world** (EN 8-9. 26-27...)
- **proclaims and establishes the Kingdom by**
 - . the **witness** (comment EN 21. 41. 76)
 - . the **word** (comment EN 11. 22. 42-44)
 - . the **action** (comment EN 45 ff; 58 ff)

e. What is the meaning of the sacraments in this context
(EN 23. 28. 47)

- If Christ announces the Kingdom through the Church's preaching and the witness of believers, so, too, does Christ transform persons, sanctifying them above all through the sacraments celebrated by the Christian community. The sacraments in the life of the Church represent the culminating points in the offer of salva-

tion on God's part. They are actions that show that his will to make us his own sons, to forgive us our sins, to give us his spirit, to share his bread with us, to come to our aid in the decisive moments of life, is serious and definitive.

- In a certain sense, then, one could say that the sacraments are oriented so that the Church may be and appear ever more fully **The Sacrament of the Kingdom**.
- (see other aspects in EN 47)

4. Evangelization and Kingdom of God

- “The Church exists in order to evangelize. Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity” (EN 14).
- “For the Church, evangelizing means bringing the Good News into all the strata of humanity, and through its influence **transforming humanity from within and making it new**: “Now I am making the whole of creation new” (Rev 21, 5; 2 Cor 5,17; Gal 6,15). But there is no new humanity if there are not first of all **new persons** renewed by Baptism (Rom 6, 4) and by lives lived according to the Gospel (Eph 4, 23-24; Col 3, 9-10). The purpose of evangelization is therefore precisely this interior change, and if it had to be expressed in one sentence, the best way of stating it would be to say that the Church evangelizes when she seeks to **convert** (Rom 1, 16; 1 Cor 1, 18; 2,4), solely through the divine power of the Message she proclaims, both the personal and collective consciences of people, the activities in which they engage, and the lives and concrete milieux which are theirs.” (EN 18)
- “For the Church it is a question not only of preaching the Gospel in ever wider geographic areas, or to ever greater numbers of people, but also of affecting and as it were upsetting, through the power of the Gospel, mankind's **criteria** of judgement, determining **values**, points of interest, lines of thought, sources of inspiration and **models of life**, which are in contrast with the word of God and the plan of salvation.” (EN 19)

— Accepting this announcement of salvation, living according to the criteria and values of the Kingdom requires a radical conversion, a profound change of mind and heart (EN 10), a vital adherence. Paul VI summarizes this in an “adherence to the Kingdom, that is to say to the ‘new world’, to the new state of things, to the new manner of being, of living—of living in community, which the Gospel inaugurates. Such an adherence, which cannot remain abstract and unincarnated, reveals itself concretely by a visible entry into a community of believers. Thus those whose life has been transformed enter a community which is itself a sign of transformation, a sign of newness of life: it is the Church, the visible sacrament of salvation.” (EN 23)

— Hence, the Church, as sacrament, is an evangelizer (EN 15). Those who have received the Good News and who have been gathered by it into the community of salvation, cannot but communicate and spread it (EN 13). So the Church, from being the community of those who have been saved, becomes, by a new dynamism, the community of salvation (of “saviours”). This is why to enter the Church does not mean having ensured one’s own salvation, rather it implies a new life at the service of the others; hence, to be a Christian appears today as a responsibility and a duty rather than a privilege: **chosen People of God**, sent out as light of the world and salt of the earth, to be witnesses and herald of the Kingdom (1 Pet 2, 9-10; Mt 5, 13-16; etc.).

5. “Under the action of the Holy Spirit” (EN 75)

— “Evangelization will never be possible without the action of the Holy Spirit... It is in the ‘consolation of the Holy Spirit’ that the Church increases (Acts 9, 31). **The Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church.** It is he who explains to the faithful the deep meaning of the teaching of Jesus and of his mystery. It is the Holy Spirit who, today just as at the beginning of the Church, acts in every evangelizer who allows himself to be possessed and led by him. The Holy Spirit places on his lips the words which he could not find by himself, and at the same time the Holy Spirit predisposes the

soul of the hearer to be open and receptive to the Good News and to the Kingdom being proclaimed" (EN 75).

- "We live in the Church at a privileged moment of the Spirit... It must be said that the Holy Spirit is the **principal agent of evangelization**: it is he who impels each individual to proclaim the Gospel, and it is he who in the depths of consciences causes the word of salvation to be accepted and understood" (AG 4; AAS 58, 1966, pp 950-951) (EN 75).
- "But it can equally be said that he is the **goal of evangelization**: he alone stirs up the new creation, the new humanity of which evangelization is to be the result, with that unity in variety which evangelization wishes to achieve within the Christian community. Through the Holy Spirit the Gospel penetrates to the heart of the world, for it is he who causes people to discern the signs of the times—signs willed by God—which evangelization reveals and puts to use within history" (EN 75).

Conclusion: The Church, like Christ, is the servant of the world: "being-for-the-others", in fraternity and poverty. In this way she seems to "diminish", but she manifests herself in a far more deep and authentic way, of humiliation and glory, like Jesus. It is precisely this "emptying of self" that, perhaps, is the most urgent exigency in the constant process of conversion of the People of God.

PART TWO: CONVERSION OF ATTITUDES

The Church renews herself in evangelical fraternity and poverty

Objectives: To place ourselves—as an “evangelized community”—in a renewed attitude of conversion to universal fraternity and evangelical poverty, with all its implications and demands.

Themes:

- 2.0. INTRODUCTION: Need of conversion to fraternity and poverty, in order to be “sacrament” today
- 2.1. TOWARDS A CHURCH, SCOPE OF UNIVERSAL COMMUNION
- 2.2. TOWARDS A CHURCH—POOR, SHARING AND STRUGGLING FOR JUSTICE
- 2.0. INTRODUCTION: **Need of converting oneself to fraternity and poverty in order to be “sacrament” today**

This introduction is meant to be the connection between the previous theme and the two great lines of renewal which are dealt with in Part Two. (brief presentation followed by dialogue)

1. Need of conversion: comment EN 10. 36. 41.
2. Evangelizing is, as we have seen it, preaching the Good News of the kingdom
 - Jesus reveals to us that the essential content of the Kingdom is **universal fraternity** in the full freedom of the children of God (final, total, universal salvation)
 - He reveals also that the exigencies of the Kingdom can be summed up in the Beatitudes, the first and most original of which, in the opinion of many biblical scholars, is poverty
 - The conversion to which Christ calls us is, therefore, a conversion to fraternal love and to simplicity and poverty of heart.
3. This is why Vatican II, recalling what Paul VI had written in the programmatic encyclical with which he opened his pontificate—“Ecclesiam Suam”—declares that “the spirit of poverty and charity is the glory and sign of the Church of Jesus Christ” (GS 88).

4. For this reason and because it is required by an attentive reading of the signs of our time ("The challenges of our world: searching for a utopian fraternity?"), in this second part, we shall focus our reflection and search, at personal and communitarian level as well, on these two main lines of fundamental renewal, or ways of being present in history, which ought to animate the evangelizing action of the Church today, and consequently, the efforts of conversion, both personal and institutional within herself.

- Keeping in mind the problems and challenges of the present world in the perspective of the Good News of the Kingdom, it seems that the Church is called particularly today to renew herself, as an "evangelized community", in fraternity (pluralistic unity, unity in diversity) and in evangelical poverty
- Let us see together what this means and implies "here and now".

2.1. TOWARDS A CHURCH, SCOPE OF UNIVERSAL COMMUNION

2.1.1. **Link:** "The destiny of evangelization is certainly bound up with the witness of unity given by the Church. This is a source of responsibility and also of comfort." (EN 77)

2.1.2. **Objective:** To reach a deep conviction that only a **united and fraternal** Church will be able to evangelize efficaciously today's world (EN 77: "...unity, way and instrument of evangelization"), and convert oneself to this evangelical value.

2.1.3. **Fundamental contents:**

1. **"The Church, the visible sacrament of saving unity"** (LG '9)
 - a. unity, goal and dynamics of History
 - b. the Church, mystery of communion and sacrament of unity for the world

2. **A fraternal Church**

- a. "happens" in the world through **concrete communities**
- b. creates and strengthens "conditions" for **dialogue**; promotes and organizes **corresponsibility and participation** at all levels; lives the **sharing of goods**

- c. acts according to a strategy, within the framework of a planned **organic pastoral**

3. A **diversified and universal Church**

- a. presents to the society signs and experiences of a true **pluralism**
- b. lives and promotes the passion for **totality**, for universalism, for the world.

2.1.4. **Procedures:**

- a. Motivation (2.1.1.)
- b. Group work (or Philips 6/6)
 - **positive** facts
 - **negative** factsin the field of universal fraternity: in today's world, in our country, in one's milieu (present the most prominent facts, not many).
- c. Assembly: reports and dialogue: stress the convergencies or the facts most frequently mentioned
- d. Exposition of the subject (2.1.3. and 2.1.6.)
- e. Personal reflection (the place and importance that, as an agent of evangelization, I actually give to fraternity, unity-universality, in my life, in my preaching, in my action)
- f. Dialogue in the assembly

2.1.5. **Bibliography:**

- FABC PAPER No. 17, "The Commitment in Solidarity".
- Rahner K., The Shape of the Church to Come, Seabury Press, New York, 1972
- Lombardi, R., Church and Kingdom of God, East Asian Pastoral Inst. Manila, 1978.

2.1.6. **Elements for the development of the theme:**

- 1. "The Church, the visible sacrament of saving unity" (LG 9)

N.B. Develop this point briefly; it is just a matter of offering a synthesis of the two previous themes and of emphasizing the link between the three of them.

The Kingdom of God is, as we saw it, the coming of the saving power of God into human history, its growing into the final, total, universal salvation of men in fulfilment, in freedom, and in love.

- a. This coincides practically with the Pauline conception of unity in Christ (diversified unity): Col 1, 20; Eph 1, 10; Col 1, 18; 2, 19; Eph 1, 22-23; 1 Co 12, 12; Eph 4, 5-16; etc.

The unity of the **whole Creation** in Christ and the particular unity of the **Church** as his indivisible Body. In these two ideas one finds germinally the whole doctrine of unity:

- this unity is the **goal of history**, that is, the full and perfect realization of unity in the hereafter, in the fullness of the Kingdom, as the effect of the final salvation of men—the definitive realization of universal fraternity in the plenitude of the freedom of the children of God;
 - it is also the **internal dynamics of the history of salvation**, that is, the “ALREADY-BUT-NOT-YET” of the Kingdom, which has to be accomplished already, here and now, progressively (Eph 4:1-16).
- b. This is what gives meaning to the **mission of the Church** since the first moment of her existence:
- **Mystery of communion (with God/among people):** People of God, pilgrims in history, and turned towards the future; **Sacrament of the Kingdom**, that is, sacrament of the saving unity, sign-instrument of the universal fraternity (in all time/everywhere—therefore, here, in this concrete country, and now, in 1978); only in this way can the Church succeed in being a clear efficacious and credible sign of hope.
 - Ever since the beginning of the history of the Church through the strength of the Spirit, the announcement of the Gospel has taken a practical turn: the building up of the community in the fraternity of Christ—a communion in learning from the apostles, in the breaking of the bread, in prayer and in the service of the brothers—(Fr. Arrupe, Discourses at the 41st International Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia, USA, 2 August 1976)

— Hence, the obligation for the Church of being (and **appearing** as such) the arena of real communion, in unity and universality. It pertains to her very essence to be **ONE** and **CATHOLIC**, **FRATERNAL** and **UNIVERSAL**.

Vatican II presents the Church explicitly as sacrament of unity for the world (a few texts: LG 9. 28; GS 24.32. 82.84.91-92; UR 2.6.8.12.18.20.24; etc), referring frequently to the tendency towards unity which can be seen through history as one of the deepest aspirations of man today, though it is constantly attacked in many ways (GS 2.55; DH 15; NAe 1; etc.).

2. A fraternal Church

N.B. One is not supposed to give a “doctrinal” or theoretical exposition of this theme, but rather some lines or characteristics which should define the Church historically, if she wishes to be faithful to the plan of God for her, in a world where the process of inter-dependence becomes more and more complex and, consequently, more difficult to deal with.

Obviously, it is not a judgement on the Church, but a call to deeper conversion, to renewal and commitment for increasing fidelity (UR 6).

Just like Jesus himself, the Church must carry on her task of evangelization by presence-word-action. Stress, particularly that the world today needs and accepts a prophetism of presence and action (witness of life), rather than a prophetism by word alone (EN 76).

- a. The Church—which gathers herself in the name of God and not in the name of parties or ideologies—which “happens” in the world through **concrete communities** that are nourished by the Word and by the Eucharist. These communities examine their temporal commitment and seek the will of God so as to announce the Kingdom by authentic prophetism. “As hearers of the Gospel, which is proclaimed to them, and as privileged beneficiaries of evangelization, these communities will soon become proclaimers of the Gospel themselves.” (EN 58)
- b. The Church creates and strengthens “**conditions**” for **dialogue** at all levels so that differences become reconciled and unity may grow stronger; e.g. structures of institutionalized dialogue (Synod, Episcopal Conferences, Pastoral

Councils, Priest Councils, etc. She lives and practises “domestic dialogue” as a testimony and foundation of other dialogues (“Ecclesiam · Suam”, part III, on the “circles” of dialogue; GS 92).

The Church promotes and organizes **participation** at all levels in the fields of elaboration, decision, organic action. Concretely, she makes new possibilities of participation for laity, women, young... She builds up new systems of information, consultation, communication and representation, so as to seek, all together, as the people of God, the will of the Father.

- c. The Church organizes the **sharing of goods**: distributing her personnel according to the needs of the local Churches; circulating pastoral experiences; disposing for common use material goods. (GS 88 and following theme on “evangelical poverty”.)
- d. The Church acts strategically, in a concerted way, within the framework of an **organic pastoral** well-planned, so that all efforts and resources converge for the common good, both of the Church herself and of the world.

3. A diversified and universal Church (EN 20.64.73...)

N.B. we know that diversity is an inseparable aspect of unity, but today it is necessary to point this out especially, because of the urgency in promoting a change of mentalities and attitudes that will make possible a true pluralism. We describe such role of the Church as an ideal.

a. The Church presents to the society—in which she incarnates herself progressively—signs, living experiences of an authentic **pluralism**: the convergence in faith of cultural, political, social diversities...

— To the image of a “disciplined army” she prefers the image of an **organic body** with real diversity of charisms, functions, ministries, mentalities, rhythm of engagement, etc.

— The Church strives, therefore, to overcome all oppressive forms and structures of uniformity, authoritarianism exaggerated centralization, etc.

- The Church favours the arising of those differences— of theological formulae, liturgical, disciplinary and organizational expressions—through which the universality and unity of faith can be legitimately expressed in the diverse cultures (EN 20). This means to **accept, respect, love and integrate** these differences into unity by means of dialogue (service to a more pluralistic and diversified, thus more rich, unity) and coordination.
- She promotes the identity, incarnation, maturity and creativity of local churches and basic ecclesial communities, and communion among them.

The Church uses and accepts the fraternal mediation of the Pope and of the organizations depending on him, when necessary, in order to re-establish and strengthen unity.

the Church takes on her own tensions, conflicts, difficulties, suffering them in the eloquent silence of love and of the cross...

b. As a universal Church

- She helps each group, community, local Church to place its life and action in an ever wider horizon.
- She sets up spaces of dialogue and shared religious experience with **non-Christian religions** and is ready to be challenged by “the seeds of the Word which they contain” (LG 15-16). She opens and accepts fields of collaboration with them in all that can contribute to the promotion of persons, groups and peoples (EN 53).
- She promotes the **unity of the world**, helping to build up national, “supra-national” (European, Latin American, Asian...) and international (worldwide) unity; and invites all to overcome new nationalisms and to accept the renunciations necessary for the construction of universal fraternity (GS 83-90).
- She offers to mankind a new **spirituality or mysticism** that may orientate its collective energies...
- She lives and promotes the passion for totality, for universality, for the whole world...

Conclusion: "The most simple Christians, the ones who are most faithful to the Gospel and most open to the true meaning of the Church, have a completely spontaneous sensitivity to this universal dimension" (EN 64).

2.2. TOWARDS A CHURCH-POOR, SHARING AND STRUGGLING FOR JUSTICE

2.2.1. Link: Another way to renewal and conversion which answers "primordial needs and duties" ("Ecclesiam Suam" 49), is also evangelical poverty, which, together with fraternal love, "is the glory and sign of the Church of Jesus Christ" (GS 88).
"Just as Christ carried out the work of redemption in poverty and oppression, so the Church is called to follow the same path if she is to communicate the fruits of salvation to men" (LG 8).

Hence the need for the Church, as an evangelized and evangelizing community, of constant conversion and renewal in regard to evangelical poverty (EN 15).

2.2.2. Objective: To feel the need and urgency of seeking together for new ways of living poverty today, at individual and mainly at institutional level. Also to strengthen the conviction that the credibility of the Church today, and consequently the efficacy of evangelization, are closely linked together with a preferential option for the poor. This means the commitment to justice and the attitude of prophetic freedom, in today's world, in face of money, power, social prestige...

2.2.3. Fundamental Contents:

1. Some Premises:

- a. One has to distinguish between
 - . poverty as a lack of the goods of this world
 - . spiritual poverty (of the "poor of Yahweh")
 - . poverty as a commitment
- b. There is a universal call of all Christians to live evangelical poverty
- c. There are permanent challenges and immediate urgencies that question us today.

2. Evangelical poverty and its relationship with fraternity

- a. poverty, a demand of fraternity
 - b. poverty, expression of fraternity
3. A Church, humble and simple
 4. A Church, free and committed to justice

5. In solidarity with the poor of this world (preferential option)
6. Sharing with the poor even from own necessities
7. In order to be credible as a sign of the Kingdom

2.2.4. Procedures:

- a. Motivation (2.2.1.) (10 min.)
- b. Group work or Philips 6/6

What is **facilitating** and what is **impeding** today the living of gospel poverty at individual and communitarian level?

c. Assembly:

- reports (posters)
- dialogue

d. Input: Given the amplitude, importance and complexity of the subject, one should divide and expound it in two parts:

- A. Towards a Church free and committed to justice (2.2.3. and 2.2.6., items 1 to 4)
- B. Towards a Church sharing even necessities in her service to the Kingdom (2.2.3. and 2.2.6., items 5 to 7).

e. Personal reflection (a few minutes at least) followed by communitarian dialogue on the implications of the theme, and/or exchange of experiences.

2.2.5. Bibliography:

- FABC PAPER No. 17.
- Fromm E., *To Have or To Be*, Harper and Row Publishers, New York, 1976.
- CELAM, *La Iglesia en la actual transformation de A.L. a la luz del Concilio*, Bogota, 1968
- Synod of Bishops 1971: *Justice in the World*
- Paul VI, *Octogesima Adveniens (OA) Populorum progressio (PP) Ecclesiam Suam (ES)*
- Arrupe P., "A new service for today's world", address at the 3rd Inter-American Congress of Religious, Montreal, Canada, 21st November 1977
- Taize, 2nd Letter to the People of God: "Share all you have and you will find freedom", Calcutta, 1 December 1976.
- Leclerc E., "The wisdom of the Poverello"

2.2.6. Elements for the development of the theme:

Evangelical poverty in and of the Church is a perennial problem

which has to be solved by each generation. Moreover, it is perhaps the gravest and most complex problem which the Church of today has to face (it is not just a matter of Spirit or generosity. Today it is necessary to have clear ideas, as far as possible, on what it means to be evangelically poor today, who are the poor "here and now", why the preferential option for them, how to realize best such option in each social context, etc.)

At present one feels more than ever the necessity and even the urgency to give to poverty contents, meanings, motivations not merely sociological but profoundly evangelical, so as to search together for new ways of evangelical living at individual and especially at institutional level.

1. Some premises

a. One has to distinguish different kinds of poverty:

- **Poverty as a lack** of the goods of this world is in itself an evil. The prophets denounce it as being opposite to the will of the Lord and, most frequently, the fruit of injustice and of sin
- **Spiritual poverty** belongs to the theme of the "poor of Yahweh" (Zeph 2, 3; Lk 1:46-55). Spiritual poverty is the attitude of openness to God, the availability of him who expects everything from the Lord (Mt 5,3). Although it appreciates the goods of this world, it is not attached to them and recognizes the higher value of the goods of the Kingdom (Amos 2,6-7; 4,1; 5,7; Jer 5, 28; Mic 6,12-13; Is 10,2).
- **Poverty as a commitment** takes on voluntarily and for love the condition of the needy of this world so as to denounce its evilness, and to witness to spiritual freedom from riches; thus following the example of Christ who made his own all the consequences of man's sinful condition (Phil 2:5-8), and who "rich as he was, made himself poor" (2 Cor 8,9) for our sake.

In this context, a Church-poor

- **denounces** the unjust lack of earthly goods and the sin which provokes it;
- **proclaims and lives spiritual poverty** as an attitude of spiritual infancy and openness to the Lord;
- **commits herself to material poverty**; the poverty of the Church is, in fact, a constant feature of the history of salvation.

- b. All the members of the Church are called to live evangelical poverty. But not all in the same way, because there are different vocations that imply different styles of life and ways of acting. Even among the religious, whose specific mission within the Church is witnessing to poverty, one must accept the diversities corresponding to the different charisms.
- c. Permanent challenges and immediate urgencies that question us today. One has to stress strongly that the example and the teaching of Jesus, the distressing situation of millions of poor in the world, the pressing exhortations of the Pope, of the Council, of so many Episcopal Conferences, of groups, movements, organizations, put before the Church a challenge and a duty that she cannot ignore, and to which she must answer as readily and boldly as the times require.
- Christ, our Saviour, not only loved the poor but also, “rich as he was, he made himself poor” (he did not only become a man, but he also became poor: birth, life, death, doctrine...); he lived in poverty, he centred his mission in the announcement to the poor of their liberation, and he founded his Church as a sign of this poverty among men.
 - The Church has always striven to perform this call, inspite of so many weaknesses and faults in the past (Ecclesiam Suam 44.45). Today, due to the conditions of poverty and under-development of so many men and nations, the Church feels the urgency of translating this spirit of poverty into attitudes, facts, norms, that will make her a more luminous and authentic sign of her Lord. The poverty of so many brothers calls for justice, solidarity, witness, commitment, effort and over-coming, for the full accomplishment of the saving mission Christ entrusted to her.
 - The present situation, therefore, requires of bishops, priests, religious and lay people, the spirit of poverty which, breaking the shackles of the egoistical possession of temporal goods, stimulates the Christian to organize economy and power for the benefit of the community (Paul VI, 23 August 1968)
 - The poverty of the Church and of her members must be a sign and a commitment. Sign of the priceless value of the poor before God; commitment to solidarity with those who suffer.

2. Evangelical poverty and its relationship to fraternity

Poverty is not a value in itself. Its *raison d'être* is based on love, on fraternity. It is born from and for love and fraternity.

a. Poverty, a demand of fraternity

— Money, social prestige, power—when unduly possessed or sought after—destroy fraternity

. since the beginning of history, at the root of the first homicide is hidden the avarice of Cain, who offered to God his worst fruits;

. how much brotherly love has been destroyed by money (divided families, enmities, hatred...)! how many are ashamed to be or to be known as, brothers of the "poor" because of social stigma...!

. at the bottom of the present day tragedy of the nations we find avarice: the idolatry of money, which leads to the idolatry of power and social prestige, to inequalities and unjust commercial relations which cry to heaven (statistics in theme I: "The challenges of our world...")

— "If peace is to be established, the first condition is to root out the causes of discord among men which lead to wars—especially, injustice..." (GS 63)

no fraternity without justice, nor justice without sharing like brothers, giving not merely out of what is superfluous, but also out of what is necessary...

how can we speak of our common "Father" where justice does not exist, where mutual relations are based on "power", "dominion", "oppression?" (NAe 5).

b. Poverty, expression or sign of fraternity:

— the test of the authenticity, for a Christian, is "to give his life for his brother"; to be ready to give one's life for one's brother implies, logically, an attitude of solidarity, which leads to share with him at all levels; all the more if the brother is poor...

— the Church, "mother", must be an efficient sign of God's special love for the poor, the outcast, the oppressed... A concrete, visible sign, made out of gestures, commitment, action. (It is impossible to be a Christian, or a Christian community, without a contemplative dimension. But also it cannot be such without a dimension of temporal commitment!).

3. Towards a Church, humble and simple

a. Humble

- which stakes her security, the guarantee of her efficacy, in the power of faith in God and in the resurrection of Christ. She does not rely on economic devices, nor on her own works and institutions, nor on socio-political conditions which secure for her a “status” of a strong and privileged “society”...
- which therefore gives up any kind of power, honour and privilege...
- always open to the Spirit, who manifests himself in history; is a willing disciple of all the truth and good there is in the world, knowing that she has no monopoly on truth about man and society.

b. Simple

- in her language: comprehensible to the poor, the uncultured, of whom she must be their “voice”,
- in her external manifestations: style of life, gestures, titles, rites, works, ministries, housing, clothes, travels...
- in mutual relations: fraternal and interpersonal and not mainly or merely “functional”: between bishops/priests and laity; priests/lay people...

4. A Church, free and committed to justice

a. Free

- free in her prophetic denouncement and announcement..
- free before economic and political powers...
- without fears; fearing not men but God alone...
- taking risks; according to the prudence not of the “flesh” but of the Spirit...

b. Committed to Justice

- “Anyone who in obedience to Christ seeks first the Kingdom of God will derive from it a stronger and purer love for helping all his brethren and for accomplishing the task of justice under the inspiration of charity” (GS 72) in a footnote, the Council document adds: “for the right use of goods according to the teaching of the New Testament (Lk 3, 11; 10, 30 ff; Mk 8, 36; 12, 29-31; 1 Pet 5, 3; Jas 5: 1-6; 1 Tim 6, 8; Eph 4, 28; 2 Cor 8, 13 ff; Jn 3, 17-18”).

- takes a stand for justice with courage and freedom (documents); sustains and helps Christians (bishops, priests religious, laity) who take positions in coherence with these documents; encourages those who struggle for a new order, gives a fresh impulse to those who get tired, those who do not hope anymore, who are frustrated...
 - denounces the inhuman forms of power, oppression, avarice; adopts a clear attitude towards unjust actual systems (multinationals...); defends human rights against all forms of marginalization, political persecution, abuse of power...
 - promotes education to justice by all means within her reach (“underdevelopment does not reside in the stomach but in the head; that is why one needs to create a new mentality”. Mons. Salcedo, founder of “Radio Sutatenza”, Colombia) alerts the conscience of the rich and powerful to their duty of “administrators” and not “proprietors” of the goods of the earth...
 - being aware that “the glory of God is man fully alive”, she chooses in favour of man and of all that is authentically human. In this way she witnesses to the fact that man is more than a party, more than a system, an ideology, more than the “raison d’Etat”...
 - prepares her members for “non-violence” and for suffering unto martyrdom, well aware that her commitment to justice will draw upon herself the persecution of the powerful of this world and a real poverty...
 - she strives to live, authentically, what she preaches to the world, to the society, to the nations and groups... (EN 32; Synod 1971 etc.)
- 5. In solidarity with the poor of this world (preferential option)**
- she recognizes herself among the poor; not for sociological, political or tactical motives. but in her fidelity to Christ.
 - she speaks for the poor (making herself their “voice”).
 - In the name of persons, groups, nations—and “from them” calls everybody to a conversion to justice as the foundation of peace and fraternity: “It is as if Christ himself were crying out in the mouths of these poor people to the charity of His disciples” (GS 88).
 - she defends the poor and the outcasts of this world; lives her destiny with them, thus making herself a witness of the:

- . God of mercy, who fixes his gaze of love on the miserable who have no voice, no rights, no opportunities in this world
- . God of compassion, who makes his own their sorrow; their hunger, their sickness... (Mt 25)
- . God of kindness, offering what she has and placing herself at the service of those who have nothing and are powerless
- She takes on what society refuses and excludes (Octogesima Adveniens, "New poor of today"); she creates new services, methods, etc., running the risk of being considered dangerous, troublesome and even demagogical in the eyes of the so-called "right thinking" people of this world
- Some of her members willingly and freely place themselves in the condition of the poor, choosing to share their aspirations, their struggles...

6. Sharing with poor even necessities (Gs 88.90; EN 12)

- one of the first manifestations of love, of solidarity, of fraternity is to share like brothers, at individual, group and national levels (Jas 2: 14-16; I Jn 2,17)
 "Indeed, it is the duty of the whole people of God, following the word and example of the bishops, to do their utmost to alleviate the sufferings of the modern age. As was the ancient custom in the Church, they should meet this obligation out of the substance of their goods, and not only out of what is superfluous" (GS 88).
- "... if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him; how does God's love abide in him? (I Jn 3,17). It is well known how strong were the words used by the Fathers of the Church to describe the proper attitude of persons who possess anything towards persons in need. To quote St. Ambrose: 'You are not making a gift of your possession to the poor person. You are handing over to him what is his. For what has been given in common for the use of all, you have arrogated to yourself. The world is given to all and not only to the rich.' That is, private property does not constitute for anyone an absolute and unconditioned right. No one is 'justified in keeping for his exclusive use what he does not need, when others lack necessities.'" (PP 23).

— what does this mean concretely? There are no recipes or magic formulae. But we can, at least, share some **orienting criteria**:

1. Poverty, as was said already, is not a value in itself; it gets its value and meaning as far as it is animated by love and lived in view of fraternity and communion (1 Cor 13).

2. Poverty is not so much a question of not having as of **knowing how to use the goods** for the Kingdom and its exigencies.

For an efficacious evangelization, it is necessary to have suitable means (EN 40). In this context, we must consider the use of mass media (EN 45).

3. “Redeemed by Christ and made a new creature by the Holy Spirit, man **can, indeed he must, love** the things of God’s creation... Man thanks his divine benefactor for all these things, he uses them and **enjoys** them in a **spirit of poverty and freedom**: thus he is brought to a true possession of the world, as having nothing yet possessing everything; ‘All things are yours: and you are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s’ (1 Cor 2, 22-23)” (GS 37)

4. **React against the present consumer society**, where so many identify happiness with ownership of material goods, thus devoting themselves entirely to possess more and better things.

— It is necessary to react against the flood of consumerism, which threatens us with drowning and simultaneously burying the world in its own residue ...It must be understood, as the bishops of the Antilles, Martinique 1975, have said, the incessant seeking for more and more consumer goods only serves to degrade us. We are in danger of becoming slaves: slaves of the strong pressure of marketing, above all by radio and TV, which makes us feel a “need” when we already have enough; slaves of greed which pushes us to accumulate possessions, that begin by being superfluous, end by becoming necessities; slaves of the superficiality which judges man for what he has and not for what he is. The scandal of this situation is not only that some squander money on luxuries, while others lack necessities, but also we are creating a society which

equates progress which the acquisition of the symbols of social position, like luxurious houses, big cars and expensive electronic equipment" (Fr. Arrupe: "Hunger for bread and evangelization", address at the 41st International Eucharistic Congress Philadelphia, USA, 2 August 1976).

- Be attentive not to succumb to the criterion of the world which "makes the superfluous convenient, the convenient necessary and the necessary indispensable" (PP).
 - It is necessary for the world that we show it other values besides wealth, power and prestige (necessity of a new Francis of Assisi—"communitarian").
5. "... Avoid any semblance of luxury, excessive wealth and accumulation of property" (PC 13). This criterion which the Council presents for religious is also right for the whole institutional Church (Synod 1971; Justice in the World, III).
 6. Eliminate all inequalities within the Church (Synod 1971): between parishes, communities, priests of the same diocese; between dioceses of the same nation; between the various countries...

7. With regard to the different vocations of the Church

- a. the lay-people share all their potential (health, work, talents etc.) putting it at the service of the construction of justice and fraternity; their poverty must be therefore a commitment rather than a renouncement, creativity rather than self-denial.
- b. the diocesan priest, "spurred on by pastoral charity" (PO 17), shares all that he is, has and can do in the service of the community; he puts everything at the disposal of the people, considering nothing his own...
- c. the religious, as a witness of what will be, places all things in common (in an institutionalized fraternity, sociologically visible); his own is a vocation to not having, not possessing for building up fraternity and community of life; a vocation to total availability in the freedom and provisionality of everything: functions, tasks, works, institutions, life-style, etc.

8. Accept and promote a real pluralism of experiences, initiatives rhythms and kinds of commitment in this field, both at personal and institutional level.
9. Live in an attitude of permanent discernment, dialogue and revision, under the guidance and the action of the Spirit:
 - at personal level
 - at family and community level
10. Poverty demands an **attitude of generosity**, and can be understood and lived ever more coherently and fully only by contemplating and following the example of Christ in his total “kenosis” for the kingdom.

Conclusion: In order to be credible as a sign of the kingdom:

- “... in a world in which two thirds of men are hungry, the Church should give an answer of austerity and poverty; in a world where the working masses live away from Christ and God, the Church should reclothe herself in evangelical poverty; finally, it seems that one should face prudent but fearless and uncompromising reforms, and make sure that all the members of the Church, individuals and institutions **look and are poor**”. These words of Card. Lercaro during the II Vatican Council—6 November 1962 —Still have today a surprising up-to-dateness and validity,
- “It is absolutely necessary for the Church, which does not want to be rich, to divest herself of the **appearances of richness**. It is necessary that the Church **appear** to be what she is: the mother of the poor...” (Card. Gerlier, Vatican II. 6 November 1962).
- “Poverty is for the Church a question of life or death” (Patriarch Maximos IV, on the same date).
- One may also read and comment on some of the following texts that can be helpful for personal reflection:
 - Is 58, 1-12
 - Mt 6, 24-34.
 - Lk 12, 13-34
 - Acts 2, 42-47; 4, 32-37
 - Jas Ch. 2 and 5
 - Gs 72,88

- 2.3. Motivation for the time of "desert" or interiorization.
- 2.4. Communitarian celebration of **Reconciliation and Eucharist**. Theme: "The Church, sacrament of fraternity and poverty".

PART THREE: COHERENT PASTORAL OPTIONS

The Church reflects and projects how to evangelize today.

Objective: in the dynamics of communitarian discernment, review the pastoral options of one's local Church and discover the new options which the Church must take today—as an "evangelizing community"—in order to evangelize the poor and witness to unity.

Themes:

- 3.0. INTRODUCTION: Need of carrying out conversion through pastoral options in order to evangelize today
- 3.1. REVIEW OF THE PASTORAL OPTIONS OF OUR LOCAL CHURCH
- 3.2. OPTIONS THAT SHOULD BE MADE TODAY TO EVANGELIZE THE POOR AND WITNESS TO UNITY
- 3.0. INTRODUCTION: Need of carrying out conversion through pastoral options in order to evangelize today

Like the introduction to Part Two, also this one represents a sort of connection between the second and third part. It can be given as a talk followed by a clarification dialogue. We point out the following ideas as an indicative outline:

1. No conversion is possible unless there is a change of mentalities and attitudes. Moreover, the test of an authentic conversion is always the coherent commitment.
2. The Church is a **community of mission**. She exists for the world for offering it the Good News of the Kingdom. Her whole life and pastoral activity must be oriented to this
 - the **whole** Church is bearer of mission (EN 60.14-15)
 - diversity of tasks and ministries (EN 66; LG 10-11.13.17-18 30-32)
 - this diversity must be coordinated by pastoral action (GS 43; CD 3-7; PO 7-9)

3. Necessity of **working according to planning and strategy**. Neither Spirit without planning and strategy, nor planning and strategy without Spirit.

a) **Planning** (recall, if necessary, basic points concerning planning what is an objective, what is a target etc.)

b) **Strategy** (*idem*)

N.B. Stress the fact that planning and working with a strategy, in a coordinated and co-responsible way, belongs to the spirituality of our time, and implies an ascetism, may be, more austere and demanding than all corporal penances of the past.

— **WHAT** is it to evangelize (EN Ch.II, III, IV; especially nn 17-19)

— **WHO** evangelizes (EN 13 and ch.VI)

— **WHOM** does one evangelize, or the beneficiaries of evangelization (EN ch. V)

— **CRITERIA** of evangelization (EN ch. VI)

— **HOW** to evangelize (ways, methods, processes of evangelization) (EN ch. IV)

— **WHY** evangelize (EN 8: the Kingdom is the only absolute)

3.1. REVIEW OF THE PASTORAL OPTIONS OF OUR LOCAL CHURCH

3.1.1. **Link:** The dynamics of Part Three consists of reviewing and sharing experiences. It is not a matter, therefore, of Planning activities, but rather of making a review of our evangelizing action in the light of what has been presented in Part One and Two.

3.1.2. **Objective:** In the light of previous reflections, to attain a critical awareness about what is mostly absorbing, at present, the energies and resources of our local Church in her apostolic action.

3.1.3. **Procedures:**

a. **Motivation** (insist on the necessity, during the review, of not allowing oneself to be carried away by either a defensive, or exaggeratedly negative attitude, or too optimistic attitude.

b. **Personal reflection** (on the questions for group work)

c. Group work. Two proposals are given according to the kind of participants, the aim one seeks, and the time available

1. Which main issues or pre-occupations are taking up the energies and resources of our local Church now? (this can be done with a Philips 6/6)

2. Which are the options directing the apostolic action of our local Church, community or group, today? Why?

d. Assembly:

— reports

— dialogue: findings emerging from the answers of the groups and/or critical challenges (by means of ever more probing questions put by all — team and participants)

— conclusion

3.2. OPTIONS THAT SHOULD BE MADE TODAY TO EVANGELIZE THE POOR AND GIVE WITNESS TO UNITY

3.2.1. **Link:** It is not enough to review; the course especially requires determination of new options, even though one does not reach a precise planning.

3.2.2. **Objective:** Taking into account the local (or national) Church as a whole, to search together—in an atmosphere of communitarian discernment—for options that should be taken at such level, in order that a more effective presence be had among the poor and effect a stronger summons to fraternity in one's surroundings.

3.2.3. Procedures:

a. Motivation

b. Group work according to interest centres:

. evangelization of the poor, or

. building up of different types of communities

1. **Regarding the evangelization of the poor**

a. **who** are the poor for you, **here and now?**

b. **why** the preferential option for the poor?

c. **how** to carry out this preferential option in our milieu, that is:

— which **options** should be made at the local level in order to evangelize the poor?

— what kind of **commitment** does this require of each of us?

2. Regarding building up of different types of communities

- a. what **kind** of Christian communities are needed **here and now**?
- b. which **options** should be made, at local level, so as to give witness to unity?
- c. what sort of **commitment** does this require of each of us?

N.B. The whole afternoon is dedicated to the group work;
Eucharist is celebrated in the same work groups;

The reports should be written on posters.

c. Assembly: Reports
Dialogue

d. Complementary synthesis:

1. Regarding the evangelization of the poor

- as to the “who”, fill in possible gaps, in the light of the local documents and analyses, and/or emphasize concrete aspects
- as to the “why”, set forth strongly again the evangelical motives of the example of Christ and of his special incarnation among the poor
- as to the “how”, remind the criterion that evangelization is not only **for** them, but primarily **with** them

2. Regarding the building up and/or animation of Christian communities, recall that a Christian community is authentic insofar as these essentials are realized in it

- communion and universality
- contemplation and commitment
- corresponsibility and subsidiarity

Recall also the necessity of **pluralism** in the way of organizing Christian communities.

Call for creativity, in a listening attitude to the Spirit and to the urgent needs of the present-day world.

4.0. EVALUATION

Questionnaire:

Taking into account the general objective of the course and of each of the three parts, Please comment on the following:—

1. were the objectives achieved?
2. what was the greatest help towards achieving the objectives?
3. what were the main difficulties you experienced in trying to reach them?
4. Please give your opinion on the themes presented.
5. Please give your opinion about the methods we used.
6. Have you any suggestions for improving the retreat in the future?

EVANGELIZING IN TODAY'S WORLD

(Fraternity and Poverty: Ways of Evangelization)

INDICATIVE PLAN FOR A ONE-WEEK COURSE

1st Day INTRODUCTION: Presentation of the participants and of the team
Expectations and Fears (Philips 6/6 or small papers)
Introduction of the retreat (re: 0)

2nd Day PART ONE: AWARENESS: The Church feels herself challenged

- (7:30) — Morning Prayer: "Our own attitude to the world"
(8:00) — Breakfast
(9:00) — 1.1. THE CHALLENGES OF OUR WORLD: SEARCHING FOR AN IMPOSSIBLE FRATERNITY?
a. Motivation (1.1.1.)
b. Personal reflection (1.1.4.)
c. Group work (1.1.4.)
(10:30) — Break
(11:00) d. Assembly (1.1.4.):
. reports
. clarifications
. dialogue searching for a consensus on
— the fundamental characteristics
— the key-problem
— 64 —

- (12:30) — Lunch
- (15:30) e. Complimentary theme (1.1.3. and 1.1.6.)
f. Audiovisual about today's world (if it is possible).
- (16:45) — Break
- (17:00) g. personal reflection
- (17:30) — Eucharist: "Praying today's world" (1.1.4.)
- (18:30) — Supper. Recreation. Evening Prayer.
- 3rd Day** (7:30) — Morning Prayer: "The Kingdom of God is within you"
- (8:00) — Breakfast
- (9:00) — 1.2. THE KINGDOM OF GOD, A NEW FRATERNITY IN CHRIST
- a. Motivation (1.2.1.)
- b. Personal reflection (1.2.4.)
- (10:00) c. Communication of life, in small groups
- (10:45) — Break
- (11:15) d. Input (1.2.3. and 1.2.6.)
e. Dialogue in assembly
- (12:30) — Lunch
- (15:30) — 1.3. THE CHURCH, SACRAMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD
- a. Input (1.3.3. and 1.3.6.)
- b. Dialogue (in assembly or in small groups)
- (16:45) — Break
- (17:00) c. Personal reflection and preparation for Eucharist
- (17:30) — Eucharist: "Your Kingdom come"
- (18:30) — Supper (Free evening)
- 4th Day PART TWO: CONVERSION OF ATTITUDES**
- The Church renews herself in fraternity and poverty**
- (7:30) — Morning Prayer: Sharing the Gospel in small groups
- (8:15) — Breakfast
- (9:00) — 2.0. INTRODUCTION: Need of conversion to fraternity and poverty in order to be "sacrament" today (20 mins)
- 2.1. TOWARDS A CHURCH, SCOPE OF UNIVERSAL COMMUNION

- a. Motivation (2.1.1.)
- b. Group work or Philips 6/6 (2.1.4.)
- c. Assembly:
 - reports
 - dialogue searching for a consensus on the most important aspects
- (10:30) — Break
- (11:00) d. Input (2.1.3. and 2.1.6)
- (11:45) e. Personal reflection (2.1.4)
- f. Dialogue in assembly
- (12:30) — Lunch
- (15:30) — 2.2. TOWARDS A CHURCH-POOR, SHARING AND STRUGGLING FOR JUSTICE
 - a. Motivation (10 mins.)
 - b. Group work or Philips 6/6 (2.2.4.)
 - c. Assembly: reports and dialogue
- (16:15) — Break
- (17:00) A. TOWARDS A CHURCH, FREE AND COMMITTED TO JUSTICE
 - a. Input (2.2.3. and 2.2.6., 1 to 4)
 - b. Dialogue
- (18:3) — Supper
- (20:00) — Eucharist, in small groups, with communication of life about one's personal experience of poverty ("What does it mean to me to be poor?")
- 5th Day** (7:30) — Morning Prayer: "Happy are the poor of heart"
- (8:00) — Breakfast
- (9:00) B. TOWARDS A CHURCH SHARING EVEN NECESSITIES IN HER SERVICE TO THE KINGDOM
 - a. Input (2.2.3. and 2.2.6., 5 to 7)
 - b. Personal reflection
- (10:30) — Break
- (11:00) c. Assembly: dialogue about the implications of this theme and sharing experiences
- 2.4. Motivation, and starting of the INTERIORIZATION time or DESERT.
- (12:30) — Lunch (in silence)

DESERT (Contin.)

- (17:00) — 2.5. Communitarian celebration of the Reconciliation and Eucharist. Theme: "The Church, sacrament of fraternity and poverty"
- (18:30) — Supper. Evening Prayer.

6th Day PART THREE: COHERENT PASTORAL OPTIONS

The Church projects how to evangelize today

- (7:30) — Morning Prayer in small groups
- (8:00) — Breakfast
- (9:00) — 3.0. INTRODUCTION: Need of carrying out conversion through pastoral options in order to evangelize today
- a. Input (20')
 - b. Dialogue
- 3.1. REVIEW OF THE PASTORAL OPTIONS OF OUR LOCAL CHURCH
- a. Motivation
 - b. Personal reflection
 - c. Group work (3.1.3.)
- (10:30) — Break
- (11:00) d. Assembly: Reports
Dialogue
Conclusion
- (12:30) — Lunch
- (15:30) — 3.2. OPTIONS THAT SHOULD BE MADE TODAY TO EVANGELIZE THE POOR AND GIVE WITNESS TO UNITY
- a. Motivation
 - b. Group work (grouping according to interest:
 - "evangelization of poor" or
 - "building up of different types of communities") (3.2.3.)
- Eucharist in the groups
- (19:00) — Supper. Recreation. Evening Prayer

7th Day

- (7:30) — Morning Prayer: "The Holy Spirit, principal agent of evangelization" (EN 75)
- (8:00) — Breakfast
- c. Assembly: report critical challenge
 - d. Complementary synthesis
- (10:30) — Break
- (11:00) — 4.0. EVALUATION
- (11:30) — Final Eucharist "Witnesses of the Kingdom"
- (12:30) — Lunch

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