

**A RENEWED CHURCH IN ASIA:
PASTORAL DIRECTIONS FOR A NEW DECADE**

**A PASTORAL REPORT OF THE SEVENTH PLENARY ASSEMBLY
OF THE FEDERATION OF ASIAN BISHOPS' CONFERENCES,
SAMPHRAN, THAILAND
JANUARY 3-12, 2000**

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**I. THE MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER, POPE JOHN PAUL II,
TO CARDINAL JOZEF TOMKO**

The Holy Father was pleased to learn that you will be attending the Seventh Plenary Assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, to take place in Samphran, Thailand, from 3 to 12 January 2000. With vivid memories of his recent visit to New Delhi for the conclusion of the Special Assembly for Asia of the Synod of Bishops, His Holiness asks you kindly to convey to those taking part his warm greetings and the assurance of his prayers for the success of the Assembly. His Holiness is confident that the bishops will find fresh ways of meeting the challenge of proclaiming the saving message of Jesus Christ in Asia, and he prays that their communities will always be aflame with missionary zeal to make Jesus

known, loved and followed (cf. *Ecclesia in Asia*, n.19). Entrusting the Assembly to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the first agent of mission, the Holy Father cordially imparts his apostolic blessing to all the participants.

Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Secretary of State

II. A RENEWED CHURCH IN ASIA : A MISSION OF LOVE AND SERVICE

by

CARDINAL JOZEF TOMKO

INTRODUCTION

I wish to begin by expressing a word of deep gratitude to Archbishop Oscar Cruz and the other members of the Bishops' Preparatory Committee of this Plenary Assembly for extending to me an invitation to participate at the opening of this important Assembly. In the name of the Holy See and of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples I take this opportunity to thank the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences for the work accomplished in favor of the Church in Asia over the last twenty-six years since your first Assembly in 1974.

The present Assembly is important, not only because it is taking place at the beginning of the Great Jubilee Year, but more importantly, because you have gathered so soon after the publication of the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Asia*.

Exulting in the goodness of Asia's peoples, cultures, and religious vitality, and conscious at the same time of the unique gift of faith which she has received for the good of all, the Church in Asia cannot cease to proclaim: Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his love endures for ever (Ps 118:1).¹

And we do give thanks to Almighty God as we shout courageously and proclaim with joy and conviction in this Great Jubilee Year: "*Ecce natus est nobis Salvator mundi*, Behold the Savior of the World is born to us, born in Asia!" (EA, n.2) (He has the right of citizenship in Asia.) Be not afraid small flock! For God has redeemed us; God loves us; "God has so much loved the world that he gave us his only Son, that whoever believes in him may not die but have eternal life" (Jn 3:16).

We give thanks to God, especially during this momentous time in human history as we celebrate the dawn of the Third Millennium, because "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we have seen his glory: the glory of the only Son of God coming from the Father, filled with enduring love" (Jn 1:14).

A few days ago, the world witnessed the deeply moving and symbolically rich ceremony of our Holy Father opening the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica and inaugurating the Great Jubilee Year. The beauty of that rite was accompanied by the haunting melody of a Japanese koto playing the Sakura, and by the decoration of the portals of the Porta Santa with garlands, scented water and incense, done by representatives of Asian nations, all evocative of ancient rituals which have deep roots in Asian soil.

How significant, then, that representatives of Asia were those chosen to take part in these initial ceremonies, while representatives of the other continents followed, perhaps suggesting yet again what has been reiterated so often: "It was in Asia that God revealed and fulfilled his saving purpose from the beginning!" (EA, n.1) Yes, the "Church in Asia sings the praises of the God of salvation" because God "sent his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ the Savior, who took flesh as an Asian!" (EA, n.1) Asia has every right to be joyful at the dawn of this new era, this new Millennium. You will have an opportunity in the coming days to exchange pastoral experiences and reflect more deeply on the richness of the Synodal experience of almost two years ago, as well as this post-Synodal period where our hope is "that in (this) Third Christian Millennium a great harvest of faith will be reaped in this vast and vital continent" (EA, n.1). Let us pray that the future millennium, and indeed the century we have just entered, will be a time of special grace for Asia.

A Renewed Church in Asia : The Task of the New Millennium

The worldwide Catholic Church, together with all of humankind, has just crossed the threshold of the Third Millennium, with the rich experience of 2000 years of life in the light of Christ. Our identity comes from this experience of God the Father, revealed through his incarnate Son, Jesus Christ, by virtue of the Holy Spirit.

Your own rich patrimony of faith has been enriched in the recent past by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, by the Catechism of the Catholic Church, by the collection of recent papal teachings and of those of the various Synods of Bishops, by the documents issued by your own Federation, and most recently by the Post-Synodal Exhortation *Ecclesia in Asia*. The concrete implementation of this last document is now the task of the churches in Asia. The analysis of *Ecclesia in Asia* is the main duty of this Seventh Plenary Assembly of the FABC. The example of the churches of the other continents, such as in Africa and the Americas which preceded the Synod for Asia, can be an inspiration also to you.

In this spirit, I invite you today to listen:

- To listen to all the churches in Asia, living in many different cultures;

- To listen to the churches in other continents;
- To listen to Peter; to listen to the Universal Church, presided over and guided by the Successor of Peter in Rome.²

In this way, your Assembly will act in the spirit of communion of the churches and with the churches throughout Asia. This Assembly will also act in a spirit of communion with the Universal Church through communion with the Successor of Peter.

At the same time we must constantly keep in mind that the Church is *communio et missio* - communion and mission, communion for mission. “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” (Jn 20:21). May our common reflections on *Ecclesia in Asia* move us towards the “great harvest of faith”(EA, n.1).

The experience of the Synod of Asia brought out more clearly the complex realities and diversities of the many civilizations and cultures of this continent. As was noted, “we cannot but be amazed at the sheer size of Asia’s population and at the intricate mosaic of its many cultures, languages, beliefs and traditions which comprise such a substantial part of the history and patrimony of the human family” (EA, n.6). This intricate mosaic presents to the Church in Asia a challenge to both proclamation and dialogue leading to evangelization in all possible ways and means. During the Synod, we noted in our reflections the contrasting faces of this immense land: a continent marked by religious and cultural realities, one noted for economic and social realities often at wide divergence with each other, and a continent with its own particular political realities.

Asia is the birthplace of the major religions of the world, including Christianity, a point which we must continue to recall in the face of certain affirmations that the Church is a “foreign religion.”

All of these varied realities offer new and exciting challenges to the Church in fulfilling the missionary mandate she has received from Christ: “Go there and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and know that I am with you always, until the end of time” (Mt 28:19-20). The fortuitous coming together of the conclusion of the Synod for Asia and the celebration of this Great Jubilee offers to us a special graced moment to reflect on the question: “Why the Savior of the world, born in Asia, has until now remained largely unknown to the people of the continent?” (EA, n.2). More importantly, the Church in Asia, the theme chosen for these days together offers an opportunity to seek new ways to renew the Church in Asia, while renewing your commitment to the mission of making Jesus Christ better known to all. For as *Ecclesia*

in Asia states: "If the Church in Asia is to fulfill its providential destiny, evangelization as the joyful, patient and progressive preaching of the saving Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ must be (your) absolute priority" (EA, n.2).

The experience of the Synod showed clearly that there are a variety of pastoral situations in this continent. Because of this variety, we must also understand the need for a variety of methods employed to proclaim the message of Jesus Christ. The need to address the challenges offered by these various pastoral situations with a variety of methods in dialogue with different cultures and religions is an urgent priority because "the Church in Asia finds herself among peoples who display an intense yearning for God. The Church knows that this yearning can only be fully satisfied by Jesus Christ, the Good News of God for all nations" (EA, n.9).

This is the unique contribution which the Church has made and continues to make for the peoples of Asia, to proclaim faithfully and courageously that "Jesus Christ, (is) true God and true man, the one and only Savior for all peoples," as you have once more proclaimed in the Synod for Asia. (EA, n.10). The uniqueness of this, of the Incarnation of the Son of God made Man, is the central mystery of our faith, and at the same time is of the utmost importance for human history. The event of the Incarnation, which we celebrate so joyously during this Jubilee Year, must be preached, manifested and announced to all men and women, in every age, at every time. This is God's precious and inestimable gift to humanity; and through faith, we carry this gift within us. It is a precious gift, and one which is meant to be shared with others out of selfless love.

Therefore, the gift of faith inspires us to carry out the missionary task of the Church which is "to bring to the world the true light, Christ the Lord."³ For without faith, a faith which is not only intellectual, but also which is alive and rooted in our daily life, our ability to fulfill this missionary mandate will be weakened.

The Proclamation of Our Faith

In a special way during this Jubilee Year, our faith in God the Father is marked by the loving embrace he gives to us as children. It is a faith anchored in God's immense and unconditional love for us, a love which is inclusive of all, especially the poor and marginalized. It is a faith marked by God's mercy, exercised through acts of charity towards our neighbor. Therefore, our faith in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, is one which is all-embracing, unconditional, inclusive, and realized through mercy and charity.

“The whole of the Christian life is like a great pilgrimage to the house of the Father, whose unconditional love for every human creature, and in particular for the prodigal son, we discover anew each day. This pilgrimage takes place in the heart of each person, extends to the believing community, and then reaches to the whole of humanity.”⁴ And so our faith, which is a pure gift from God to us, given out of his immense love, is a gift which we in turn place at the disposition of our neighbor, in example of Jesus Christ: “As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you!” (Jn 15:9).

The Good News of Salvation is found in this phrase from the Creed: the Good News is that God, in his infinite wisdom and love, sent his only Son “to redeem those who were under the law, so that they might receive adoption as sons” (Gal 4:4-5). The Good News is that God has visited his people, that the Word became flesh (cf. Lk 1:55, 68; Jn 1:14). What is most important for our faith in Jesus Christ is the recognition that he became man for us and for our salvation, as we proclaim each time we recite our Profession of Faith: “*Qui propter nos homines [note here - for all men, not just for those who are Christians] et propter nostram salutem descendit de caelis. Et incarnatus est.*” He took on our weak human nature in order to reconcile us to the Father. The Word became flesh so that “we might know God’s love”; the Word became flesh “to become our model of holiness”; the Word became flesh to make us “partakers of the divine nature.”⁵

Chapter II of *Ecclesia in Asia* offers a magnificent exposition on Jesus the Savior: A Gift to Asia. We are reminded that this gift of faith in Jesus Christ is one which we not only received and interiorize, but it is one which we must share. As we were reminded in *Redemptoris Missio*: “Those who are incorporated in the Catholic Church ought to sense their privilege and for that very reason their greater obligation of becoming witnesses to the faith and to the Christian life as a service to their brothers and sisters and as a fitting response to God.” (RM, n.11). As again was so beautifully expressed in the opening of the Holy Door on Christmas Eve, Jesus is the door through which we must pass to meet God (cf. Jn 10:7). “As the Father’s definitive Word, Jesus makes God and his saving will known in the fullest way possible. No one comes to the Father but by me, Jesus says. He is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life” (EA, n.12).

Our task as bishops, pastors, and missionaries is to be just as strong and convincing in our own confession of faith in Jesus Christ, the one, unique and universal Savior of humankind. “Jesus is the Good News or the men and women of every time and place in their search for the meaning of existence and for the truth of their humanity” (EA, n.14). The mission of the Son of God on this earth, the incarnation of God, is a unique fact, wholly singular, a mystery central to our faith and deeply important in and for the history of humankind. St. Paul boldly describes Jesus as “the only media-

tor between God and man" (1 Tim 2:5). Further we are told explicitly in the Scriptures that there is no salvation in any other name, "for there is no other name in the whole world given to men by which we are to be saved" (Acts 4:12). "Even for those who do not explicitly profess faith in him as Savior, salvation comes as a grace from Jesus through the communication of the Holy Spirit." (EA, n.14). The challenge before us is to have the courage to preach our faith in Jesus Christ with conviction, manifest it with sincerity, and proclaim it humbly with clarity and forcefulness. Any weak christology weakens the roots of mission.

The event of Pentecost underscores the centrality of the Holy Spirit in fulfilling the Church's mission. It is and through the power of the Spirit that the Apostles received the courage and ability to preach the Good News, to proclaim the message of Jesus Christ, and to manifest openly their faith that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Messiah, the fulfillment of the Scriptures (cf. Acts 2:22,39; 3:12,26; 4:9-12; 5:29-32; 13:16-41). Not only do the Apostles preach the Good News of Jesus Christ, but they call their listeners "to accept Jesus in faith, and to let themselves be transformed in him by the Spirit" (RM, n.24).

"Under the Spirit's guidance, the history of salvation unfolds on the stage of the world, indeed of the cosmos, according to the Father's eternal plan... The Incarnation of the Son of God is the supreme work of the Holy Spirit" (EA, n.16). The presence of the Holy Spirit in Asia has marked the history of our faith from the Old Testament times, through the life of Christ and the ensuing two thousand years of missionary activity. Our hope and confidence is that the power of the Holy Spirit continue to en-kindle in us the fire of faith, making us ever greater evangelizers, witnesses and faithful collaborators in the Church's missionary activity, guided always by the Holy Spirit, the principal agent of mission!

Above all, we are confident that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, will guide the Church in Asia as she faces the challenge of inculturation and dialogue with other religious traditions and cultures. We commit ourselves to a dialogue of life with these religions and cultures, confident that the Spirit builds the Kingdom of God, preparing peoples' heart for the seeds of faith (cf. TMA, n.45) "The Spirit's presence ensures that the dialogue unfolds in truth, honesty, humility and respect" (EA, n.21).

A Renewed Missionary Spirit from Within Asia

One of the greatest challenges to the Church in Asia is a renewal of her missionary spirit, especially as we stand on the threshold of the Third Millennium. For if we speak of a renewed Church in Asia, we should recall what I quoted earlier, that "missionary activity renews the Church, revital-

izes faith and Christian identity, and offers fresh enthusiasm and new incentive. Faith is strengthened when it is given to others” (RM, n.2).

In recent years, during meetings with many of you during your ad limina visits to Rome, as well as in various meetings during my travels throughout Asia, I have spoken openly about the need of seeking new evangelizers, new missionaries from among the peoples of this vast continent. Already there are many wonderful and hopeful signs, in the growing number of local Missionary Societies of Apostolic Life, such as those in India, Thailand, Korea and the Philippines, as well as Asian members of international missionary institutes, and the dedication shown by the first priest volunteers as *Fidei donum* missionaries to other dioceses or countries, without forgetting the precious work of so many women Religious.

I am humbled before the image of hundreds of dedicated men and women, priests and Religious, catechists and lay missionaries from your nations who work under often impossible conditions to preach the Word, not only in their own villages and towns, but also willingly moving to neighboring areas where there are greater needs — even willing to cross borders into countries where the Word has yet to be preached! They undergo hardship, trial and, even the fear of open persecution, out of the love of Jesus! They have followed a long line of local and foreign missionaries who, over the centuries, suffered the same hardships and faced martyrdom in order to bring the light and love of the Gospel to India, China, Japan, Korea and throughout Southeast Asia.

I watch with deep admiration the silent preparations being made by some local churches concerned with their sister Church in Mainland China, preparing young men and women filled with faith to be prepared to be evangelizers to this particular church, when, God-willing, the doors of this great nation will again open to missionaries. We all felt the absence of representatives of the Church in Mainland China at the Synod for Asia, and we pray fervently for that day when we can again be together.

The Witnessing Church has been present throughout the history of missionary activity in Asia. Christians both yesterday and today have offered the witness of their lives in harmony with the message they preach; and through this eloquent witness exercised in and through their lives and their actions, they have brought many to the full truth of the Gospel. As the Apostle Paul, inspired by the prophet Isaiah, wrote: “How blessed are the feet of those who announce good news! (Rm 10:14-16). The challenge for the Church in Asia is to continue to inspire from your ranks, and especially from your youth, new bands of disciples filled with this same missionary spirit, ready to “proclaim nothing other than the power of the Lord’s Cross” (EA, n.49).

Human Rights and Religious Freedom

Perhaps one of the most difficult challenges to the Church in fulfilling her missionary mandate in Asia concerns the exercise of religious liberty and the right of any human to follow his or her conscience. The missionary activity of the Church, especially in Asia, unfolds among nations where other world religions are present, and - with the exception of the Philippines - where the community is often a small minority. Repeatedly since the Second Vatican Council, this missionary work takes place in a spirit of respect for and dialogue with other religions and cultures, "The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions."⁶ Therefore, the principle of dialogue becomes important when it is "taken as an attitude of respect and friendship... directed at mutual understanding and enrichment, in obedience to truth and respect for religion."⁷

While recognizing that "Asia has often demonstrated a remarkable capacity for accommodation and a natural openness to the mutual enrichment of peoples in the midst of a plurality of religions and cultures," (EA, n.6) recent history also shows in some areas a growing tendency towards intolerance, hostility and open violence against the Church, her personnel and institutions in an attempt to silence, if not completely obstruct, any form of proclamation and witness of the Good News, at the expense of denying religious freedom to many people.

Religious freedom or liberty is considered today on an international level as among those rights which are fundamental to all human beings. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights,⁸ which is a civil non-denominational international document, recognizes that the right to religious freedom includes the right to manifest personal beliefs, whether individually or with others, in public or private, and even the right to change one's religion without risking any negative consequences (Art.18). This important statement is developed in the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief of 25 November 1981, and in the work of subsequent monitoring agencies which have helped to focus the attention of the international community on the inalienable right to religious freedom.

Often enough this fundamental human right of religious freedom is ignored or even denied in some States under the guise of maintaining public order and of avoiding social and civil discord. At the same time certain key words surrounding the evangelizing mission of the Church, such as conversion - which is the ultimate goal of proclaiming the Good News - are presented as harmful and violent. This overlooks the fact that, in her missionary activity, the Church approaches men and women in total respect of their freedom: "The Church proposes, she imposes nothing. She respects

individuals and cultures and she honors the sanctuary of conscience,” as was reiterated in *Redemptoris Missio*.⁹

After presenting *Ecclesia in Asia* in New Delhi two months ago, in his address to representatives of other religions and other Christian churches, the Holy Father underlined the close connection between freedom and peace. “Religion and peace go together: to wage war in the name of religion is a blatant contradiction. Religious leaders in particular have the duty to do everything possible to ensure that religion is what God intends it to be — a source of goodness, respect, harmony and peace! This is the only way to honor God in truth and justice!”¹⁰

This teaching is built upon that which was already stated so eloquently in *Dignitatis humanae*, which states: “The human person has a right to religious freedom ... all should have immunity from coercion.”¹¹ The Church categorically refutes the concept of proselytism in the original meaning of the word, whereby one can use illicit or coercive forces, rather than offering faith. As was stated in the Second Vatican Council: “The Church severely forbids forcing anyone to embrace the faith, or to persuade or attract him by unbecoming pressures, just as it upholds the right a person has not to be deterred from embracing the faith by unjust harassment.”¹² At the same time, the Church affirms as a fundamental human right the freedom of each person to confess publicly one’s faith and to be able to propose it to others. To this religious freedom comes also the right to embrace a religion, or even to change one, or “to be converted,” meaning to change one’s religion. On the part of the Church, conversion is simply this: the offering or proposal of faith in Jesus Christ, whereby the one who is converted is free to accept that faith.

In the same meeting with religious leaders in New Delhi, the Holy Father went on to explain: “It is vital to recognize that there is a close and unbreakable bond between peace and freedom. Freedom is the most noble prerogative of the human person, and one of the principal demands of freedom is the free exercise of religion in society. No State, no group has the right to control either directly or indirectly a person’s religious convictions, nor can it justifiably claim the right to impose or impede the public profession and practice of religion, or the respectful appeal of a particular religion to people’s free conscience ... Religious freedom constitutes the very heart of human rights. Its inviolability is such that individuals must be recognized as having the right to even change their religion, if their conscience so demands” (n.4).

I have quoted this passage at length because it encapsulates so perfectly the heart of religious freedom, religious liberty.

As pastors of local flocks, your special call is to protect the right to freedom of conscience and religion of all those under your care, as well as defending other basic human rights (EA, n.34). I would take this opportunity to express the gratitude of the Holy See for the courage and strength shown by so many of you in recent years in upholding these basic human rights in troubled areas throughout Asia. Some of you have withstood threats to your personal security, and attacks against yourselves, all out of a deep love and faith in Jesus Christ. Many local communities of those who are persecuted for their faith are hidden pillars of the Church. Be not afraid!

The Church in Asia: Symbol of Hope for the New Millennium

My reflections today have touched upon many aspects for a true missionary renewal of the Church in Asia. Above all, during this momentous time of the Great Jubilee, our attention is symbolically and spiritually drawn to the Holy Door, the door through which we pass to receive salvation. As we journey together in this special pilgrimage, our mission of love and service is the invitation of the Church and of the Holy Father to the peoples of this vast continent: "Open wide to Christ the doors of Asia!"¹³

Asia, this is your time!

Asia, the Lord Jesus stands at the door of your hearts and knocks!

Asia, God opens before you the horizons of a new humanity more fully prepared for the sowing of the Gospel; respond to this promise with a new spirit and dedication!

Asia, may the eloquent witness of your martyrs be the seed of ever new life for the Church in every corner of the continent! Asia, as we cross the threshold of the Third Millennium, may the love of Jesus Christ the Savior be yours, and "may Asia have life, and have it abundantly!"

FOOTNOTES:

- ¹ Pope John Paul II, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Asia* (EA) (6 November, 1999), n.1.
- ² Irenaeus of Lyons, *Adversus Haereses*, 3.3: *Ad hanc enim ecclesiam propter potentiorum principatitatem necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam, hoc est eos qui sunt undique fideles, in qua semper ab his qui sunt undique, conservata est ea quae est ab apostolis traditio.* (For with this Church [of Rome], because of its more powerful preeminence, all churches must agree; that is, all the faithful in the whole world; for in her the apostolic tradition has always been preserved for the benefit of the faithful everywhere.)
- ³ Pope John Paul II, "Bull of Indiction of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000," *Incarnationis Mysterium*, (29 November 1998), n.1.
- ⁴ Pope John Paul II, *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (October 11, 1992), nn. 458, 459, 460.

⁵ Ibid., nn. 458, 459, 460

⁶ Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, *Nostra Aetate*, (1965), n.2.

⁷ "Dialogue and Proclamation": Reflections and Orientations on Interreligious Dialogue and the Proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Vatican City: 1991), n.9.

⁸ *Recueil d'Instruments Internationaux*, ONU, New York 1988, p.4.

⁹ Pope John Paul II, Speech to Representatives of other Religions and other Christian Churches, Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, (November 7, 1999), n.3

¹⁰ Ibid., n.3.

¹¹ Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Declaration on Religious Liberty, *Dignitatis humanae*, (1965), n.2.

¹² Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, *Ad gentes*, (1965), n.13.

¹³ EA, n.4. Cf. Pope John Paul II, Address to the Sixth Plenary Assembly of the FABC, Manila (January 15, 1995), 10.

III. A RENEWED CHURCH IN ASIA : VISION AND CHALLENGE

by

ARCHBISHOP ORLANDO B. QUEVEDO, O.M.I.

INTRODUCTION

**"GLORY TO GOD THE FATHER AND TO THE SON, KING OF THE UNIVERSE.
GLORY TO THE SPIRIT, WORTHY OF PRAISE AND ALL HOLY."
(ST. GREGORY NAZIANZEN, D.389)**

At the beginning of this new Millennium, the doxology of the great 4th-century Asian theologian-saint, Gregory Nazianzen, comes to mind. The Church in Asia is rooted in the communion of the loving Father, Son and Spirit. The Church is here precisely to journey together with all the peoples of Asia, to the One and Triune God, from whom all communion, all unity and harmony, all love and peace spring.

On this common Asian journey, the Church's "only joy is that which comes from sharing with the multitude of Asia's peoples the immense gift which she herself received - the love of Jesus the Savior. Her one ambition is to continue his mission of service and love, so that all Asians 'may have life and have it abundantly'" (*Ecclesia in Asia* [EA], 1999, n.50).

In the brief moments that I am privileged to speak in this VII FABC Plenary Assembly, I wish to reflect with you on the vision of a renewed Church in Asia and the challenge that it poses to all of us.

The Vision of a Renewed Church

Since their first meetings in 1970 (Manila) and 1974 (Taipei), the Asian

bishops have been convinced that God is speaking through the social, religious and cultural situations of the peoples of Asia, that God is calling the Church to renewal. That is, if the Church is to fulfill her mission of evangelization.

What might this vision of a renewed Church in Asia be? Allow me to recall seven images or movements toward a renewed Church that the Asian bishops have indicated.

1. To renew the Church in Asia is to move from passivity and anxiety to active integral evangelization, hence toward a renewal of the sense of mission (see V FABC Plenary Assembly, Bandung, 1990). We evangelize because we believe that the Gospel is a leaven of social transformation. We evangelize because we believe in Jesus as Lord and Unique Savior, and we must witness to him and the Kingdom he proclaims. We evangelize because we believe that "the Lord is the goal of human history, the focal point of the desire of history and civilization, the center of humankind, the joy of all hearts, and the fulfillment of all aspirations" (GS, 45; see *For All the Peoples of Asia* [FAPA], Rosales and Arevalo, eds., 1992, pp. 279-81).

To evangelize, the Church cannot be uninvolved in the joys and sorrows of Asian peoples. She cannot be triumphalistic. She has to be a humble companion and partner of all Asians in the common quest for God, in the struggle for justice and harmony, for a better human life. The Church has to be a lowly servant of the Lord, and of Asian peoples, in the journey to God's Kingdom. She has to be a Church of compassion for the weak and the oppressed (FAPA, pp. 283-84).

2. To renew the Church in Asia is to move from an abstract and non-involved universalism to the building of a "truly local Church," that enfleshes the "Body of Christ in a given place and time," a church "incarnate in a people, a church indigenous and inculturated." It has to be a church "in dialogue with the great religious traditions of our peoples," in "dialogue with the people, especially the poor" (I FABC Plenary Assembly, Taipei, 1974; FAPA, pp. 14-16).

3. To renew the Church in Asia is to move from institution to deep interiority. With interiority the "experience of God's presence and action is intensified and deepened, the heart opened to the fresh outpouring of love, goodness, gentleness - of all the fruits of the Holy Spirit" (II FABC Plenary Assembly, Calcutta, 1978; FAPA, p. 32). The Church has to become "fully a true community of prayer - a deeply praying community whose contemplation is inserted in the context of our time and cultures of our peoples today" (FAPA, p.31). Integrated into everyday life, "authentic prayer has to engender in Christians a clear witness of service and love" (FAPA, p. 34).

4. To renew the Church is to move from individualism toward an authentic community of faith (III FABC Plenary Assembly, Bangkok, 1982). Its communion is rooted in the life of the Trinity. It has to be a community of authentic participation and coresponsibility, one with its pastors, and linked "to other communities of faith and to the one and universal communion" of the holy Church of the Lord (FAPA, p. 56). The movement in Asia toward the Basic Ecclesial Community expresses the deep desire to be such a community of faith. At the parish and the diocesan levels, the Church has to be a "community of communities."

5. To renew the Church in Asia is to move from clericalism to lay empowerment (IV FABC Plenary Assembly, Tokyo, 1986). Empowered by the gifts of the sacraments and by their own personal talents and skills, it is the laity that can ably bring the Good News of Jesus to bear upon the fields of business and politics, of education and health, of mass media and the world of work. This is their common vocation - to be a Gospel-leaven in their own milieu. It requires a spirituality of discipleship.

6. To renew the Church in Asia is to move from comfortable and uncritical relationships with the rich and powerful to a "Church of the poor" and a "Church of the young" (Manila, 1970; FAPA, pp. 5-6). "If we are to place ourselves at the side of the multitudes in our continent, we must in our way of life share something of their poverty," "speak out for the rights of the disadvantaged and powerless, against all forms of injustice" (FAPA, *ibid.*). In this continent of the young, we must become "in them and for them, the 'Church of the young'" (FAPA, p.6).

7. To renew the Church in Asia is to move toward active involvement in generating and serving life in Asia societies (VI FABC Plenary Assembly, Manila, 1995). Asia is barraged by death-dealing forces of injustice, conflicts, and unauthentic economic, political, and cultural developments, inexorably pushed by the forces of globalization. The Church responds and offers a vision of authentic life, life with integrity and dignity, life with compassion, and sensitive care of the earth; a vision of participation and mutuality, of a reverential sense of the mystery and the sacred, of peace and harmony, of solidarity. It is a vision of full life promised by Jesus, to be shared with the multitudes of Asia through our authentic discipleship in service to life. All these dimensions of renewal should make the Church what she claims to be - a true prophet, a countersign to the prevailing situation in Asia, a pointer to the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, a sign of God's Kingdom, now here and yet to come. Credibly, the Church must embark on a journey of renewal so as to live a "new way of being Church."

The Challenge of the Vision

This is the vision of Church that the FABC has developed in the past 30 years. Is the vision still valid for the third Millennium?

In the light of the Holy Father's post-synodal exhortation, *Ecclesia in Asia*, the FABC vision remains valid and urgent. Without any shadow of doubt, the FABC has been very clear and consistent about its confession of Jesus as the One Lord and Savior. It has also been quite clear that its confession of Jesus is to be proclaimed in Asia through the mode of respectful conversation in faith and love, the mode of dialogue. Has not the Holy Father himself acknowledged this when he observed: "The actual celebration of the Synod itself confirmed the importance of dialogue as a characteristic mode of the Church's life in Asia" (EA, n.3)?

Imperative and urgent, the FABC vision of a renewed Church poses a challenge to the entire life and mission of the Churches in Asia. With the resources that God gives us, we shall resolutely and patiently pursue our mission of evangelization, of which the main agent is the Holy Spirit. With our Asian brothers and sisters of other faiths, we shall continue to help transform our Asian realities and bring them closer to the Kingdom of God. But we must continually discern what image of Church we are projecting to our Asian brothers and sisters. Do they see us embodying the compassionate self-emptying and self-giving of Jesus the Lord, who became a humble servant for our sake? To what extent is the Church in Asia inculturated? Are we bringing a Gospel of Life meaningful and understandable to Asian peoples and cultures? Are we a Church of dialogue? Are we a participatory Church, where the laity actively play their role of coresponsibility in the life and mission of the Church? Are we a Church of the poor? Do the youth find a home in the Church? Are we, finally, communities of prayer, men and women of God-experience, Spirit-led people, whose lives bear witness to communion and transcendence?

In the Third Millennium the ultimate challenge is, in the final analysis, the vision of a renewed Church as an authentic disciple-community. The Church in Asia cannot be an effective sign and proclaimer of Jesus and the Kingdom of God, unless she follows the radical footsteps of the humble Jesus in his own redeeming servant-journey of the Paschal Mystery.

We cannot credibly and effectively do the tasks of proclamation, inculturation, interreligious dialogue, ecumenical dialogue, human promotion in the light of the complex realities of Asia, unless words are translated into action, belief into life. Or in other words, unless mission stems from profound communion with the Triune God, apostolic action from the well-springs of a profound spirituality of following Jesus-in-mission.

A formidable challenge, indeed. But the Holy Father himself reassures us with the words of Jesus: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom" (Lk 12:32). The Pope continues: "Those who believe in Christ are still a small minority in this vast and most populous continent. Yet far from being a timid minority, they are lively in faith, full of hope and vitality, which only love can bring" (EA, n.50).

In this VII FABC Plenary Assembly we pray that we may, indeed, be so.

**IV. A RENEWED CHURCH IN ASIA:
A MISSION OF LOVE AND SERVICE,
CHALLENGES FOR A PASTORAL ORIENTATION**

by
ARCHBISHOP OSCAR V. CRUZ

The Key Questions

The FABC has made many different pronouncements about the Church in Asia and about Asian society on the occasion of its plenary assemblies, the workings of its Offices, the publication of its FABC Papers. The Special Assembly for Asia of the Synod of Bishops also gave its rich and enriching Asian ecclesial vision and socio-moral insights. Lately and significantly, the Holy Father himself, John Paul II, delivered his Post-Synodal Exhortation *Ecclesia in Asia*.

What now? What pastoral directions should the Church in Asia take during these propitious times at the start of the Third Millennium ushered in by the Great Jubilee Year 2000? In other words, what definite and defined ecclesial agenda should the membership of FABC draw up and implement as its contemporary pastoral priorities?

To help somehow our plenary assembly answer this question, though briefly and not exhaustively, it might be good to go to some prime pastoral concerns - the more salient truths pointed at and the more signal themes developed by the aforesaid three basic sources.

Primary Pastoral Concerns

1. The proclamation of Jesus as the one Savior of the world, as the central pastoral agenda - a proclamation with no uniform pattern, and thus receptive of variant approaches, such as in terms of an "initial proclamation," to be completed by a "fuller catechesis" about Jesus Christ as true God and true man.

2. The Asian approach to mission and evangelization, catechesis and theology, and other ecclesial programs, beginning with life and its accompanying concrete realities and particular circumstances.
3. The FABC perspective of and focus on the “new way of being Church as a communion of communities,” taking into account that the Basic Ecclesial Community is precisely one “new way of being Church in Asia.”
4. The triple dialogue with the poor, with cultures, and with peoples of other religions, envisioned by FABC as a mode of evangelization, viz., human liberation, inculturation, interreligious dialogue.
5. The encouragement of the work of inculturation, including explorations in inculturated theology and liturgy, in the formation of the clergy and the religious, in spirituality and popular religiosity, and the like.
6. The emphasis on authentic witnessing of life and the true God-experience, nurtured by prayer, in the task of proclamation.
7. The integral and integrating role of formal education in evangelization in the Asian context, urging a rethinking and reprogramming of the apostolate of education in relation to service of the poor.
8. The imperative of a solid foundation in the social doctrine of the Church, to be given to all Catholics and all those willing to listen, for an integral human development.
9. The full engagement of the Church in the work of human rights, human promotion, justice and peace, taking into account the evangelizing character of such work.
10. The urgent and consequent requirement wherefore of a holistic and contextualized formation of the laity, seminarians, and religious, a spiritual renewal of priests, and a more authentic witnessing of persons in consecrated life.

Synodal Interventions

A quantitative survey of the interventions made by the members and participants in the Special Assembly for Asia of the Synod of Bishops may be of interest for purposes of recall, and to indicate the prevalence of interest thereon:

1. Numerical Counts

Inter-Faith Dialogue (23 Interventions); Local Church/Communion/Participation (18); Inculturation (16); Church of/with the Poor (11); Globalization (10); God-Experience/Asian Spirituality (10); Youth (7); China (7); Ancient Apostolic Churches of the East (6); Personal Homily on Christ (6); Witness of Life (6); Asia as Cross-Cultural Missionary Churches (5); Women (5); Laity (5); Social Communications (6); Ecumenism (4); Indigenous Peoples (4); Family Life (4); Education (4); Clerical and Lay Formation (4); Holy Spirit (4); Christology (3); Asian Methodological Approach (2); Christian Social Doctrine (2); Human Rights and Peace (2); Migration (2); Universal Church (2).

2. Single Interventions (14 topics)

Health Care, Priestly Identity, Cultural Patrimony, African-Asian Contact, Biblical Association, Religious Life, Law and Freedom, Non-Need for Inculturation, Abortion, Pontifical Mission Societies, Mongolia, Laos, North Korea, Siberia.

The total number of interventions was 192.

3. Proportionate Counts

Seventy-six percent (76%) of the interventions (146) dealt with four main topics: the Asian churches in dialogue with other faith traditions (43 interventions); the Church becoming Asian by dialoguing with living cultures (41 interventions); the churches learning to dialogue with the poor (33); and the Asian church as a church of the laity (29 interventions).

Note: The majority of the Synodal participants considers the threefold dialogue with other religions, with cultures, and with the poor, as the context, approach, and content of the New Evangelization.

CONCLUSION

1. The Plenary Assembly may wish to undertake the overall task of reading “the signs of the times” of the new century - such as the reality, the positive elements and negative factors of globalization, liberalization and urbanization - in order to pray, reflect, and plan together contemporary and timely responses to the challenges made to the Church in Asia within the context of the Church’s mission in Asia, and to launch and carry forward this pastoral blueprint.
2. The workshops of the Plenary Assembly may want to recognize an

Asian solidarity that could be effectively brought about by the phenomenon of globalization in human, social and cultural realities, in financial, industrial, economic concerns; and to seek, discover and encourage contemporary and realistic pastoral responses from the many social entities in the Church. The Assembly then may also opt to establish cooperative efforts with non-Catholic and/or secular Asian and world groups having similar or compatible concerns.

3. The Plenary Assembly may desire to take one step beyond the Special Assembly for Asia of the Synod of Bishops by building on those particularly Asian main themes formally brought to the fore thereat, by setting up manageable goals, through identified persons or entities in discernible sequence of steps, with proposed time-targets, subject to periodic evaluation, and the like.

Do the goals of this Plenary Assembly appear clear?

What next then? What shall we look into now? What will the Plenary Assembly resolve? Where will the Church in Asia go from here in this decade?

V. A PASTORAL VISION FOR THIS DECADE : RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKSHOPS OF THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY A SYNOPSIS

FOREWORD

From the outset, the plenary assembly preparatory committee accepted as a working principle that the Seventh Plenary Assembly would be a participatory happening for the member bishops' conferences and associate members, with a pastoral input representing as many Asian resources as possible. All the workshops, considering the many pressing pastoral topics, would also be representative. The preparatory committee would also be open to proposals for additional workshops on topics not first included, but now considered to be worthy of special treatment.

The immediate input for the workshops is to be found in the Assembly's two position papers and the discussion guides prepared for each workshop. These papers hopefully were to be made available to the workshop participants long before the Plenary Assembly. However, many of them were still arriving at the printer until shortly before Christmas. (And then, a fire in the printer's shop destroyed the entire printings, and they had to start anew! We bless the Hong Kong Caritas Press for their untiring cooperation!)

The reports of all the workshops were presented in the Assembly Hall for comment and for addition and alteration, verbally or in writing. In this FABC Paper only the main pastoral recommendations of each workshop are provided. (The complete texts of the two position papers, the workshop discussion guides, and the workshop reports, and other resources, are available on the web site of UCANEWS:

www.ucanews.com/html/fabc-papers/fabc-o.htm and also at fabcol@ms8.hinet.net).

In accordance with the FABC Statutes all resolutions and proposals of FABC meetings are offered to the FABC membership as recommendations for their consideration, and are not binding upon the individual bishops' conference, diocese, or ecclesiastical constituency. The Plenary Assembly is a moment of joint reflection, sharing and mutual support in the life of the Church in Asia.

* * *

1. CHURCH AND SOCIAL COMMUNICATION IN ASIA

Reference: Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92a

VISION

Social Communication comprises all ways of communicating in human society. It includes the mass media as well as other communication forms. In its deepest sense, it is "a giving of self in love" (*Communio et Progressio*, n.11). The varied communication channels accessible to some parts of Asia today make the questions of "choice" and "selection" crucial. In areas where access is limited to only a few, the disparity between the rich and poor becomes ever more pronounced.

CHALLENGES

On the other hand, new communication technologies provide opportunities and challenges extending beyond national and continental borders. Bishops and Church leaders should not neglect this. Neither should they neglect the fact that the whole life of the Church is communication. In all of its ministries, communication is central.

We commend the various communication enterprises working for the Church in their struggle to promote Gospel values and human development, despite limited resources and political restrictions. Some examples are

Catholic publishers, radio stations, news agencies, institutions involved in training and production, especially those serving the faithful in remote areas.

Radio Veritas Asia, an FABC project that has served as Asia's "missionary voice" for 30 years, needs special mention. We ask the bishops of Asia to renew their commitment to support this continental radio station. (cf. *Ecclesia in Asia*, n.48)

We also commend the FABC-Office of Social Communication for its efforts to clarify concepts and develop understanding of "social communication" among Asian bishops. We commend its initiatives to encourage and facilitate research through the Asian Research Center (ARC) for Religion and Social Communication.

RECOMMENDATIONS

At the same time, we urge the Office to :

- * Develop closer collaboration with and facilitate networking among Catholic media professionals and young media users so as to enrich the Church's understanding of social communication with their input;
- * Take initiatives to demonstrate innovative communications that can inspire and encourage local Churches of Asia to develop their own effective communication activities;
- * Provide useful practical referrals to the local Churches as they try to develop their social communication activities.

We hereby recommend the following :

1. Bishops and other Church leaders should be trained in communication skills and media relations. New bishops, in particular, may be trained in conjunction with the leadership seminar conducted for them by the FABC.
2. The Church should make use of all means of communication available at its disposal. Beside Radio Veritas Asia and the other mass media, it should explore the possibilities of utilizing cyberspace, as well as traditional forms, such as dance, songs and poetry in which the cultures of Asia are so rich.
3. Communication training should be an integral part of the formation of priests and religious. An appropriate syllabus should include the theology, theory and practice of communication.

4. The Church should recognize and encourage media productions that promote Gospel values and human development, as well as the active involvement of Christians in the secular media.
5. Central to all communication is the “witness of life.” The more we are in communion with God in prayer and in action, the more effective is our communication. Because God himself communicates through us, we are better able to dialogue with the world.

All these proposals seek to answer the challenge posed by the Holy Father in *Ecclesia in Asia* (n.48) and *Redemptoris Missio* (37c), that it is necessary to integrate the Gospel message in the “new media culture”:

It is not enough to use the media simply to spread the Christian message and the Church’s authentic teaching. It is necessary to integrate that message into the ‘new culture’ created by modern communications.

2. THE WITNESS OF CONSECRATED LIFE IN ASIA TODAY

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92b

VISION

We, pilgrim people, experience a call to continue God’s saving action in Jesus Christ for the fulfillment of God’s Kingdom of life, with a renewed focus on personal and community faith life, in order to provide effective witness to Gospel values, through a personal relationship with Christ and openness to be evangelized by the poor and marginalized. We also realize we are entering a new stage in the journey to God which challenges us to seek new understandings, expanding relationships and a spirituality adequate to this moment in Asia.

CHALLENGES

1. Mission

- * Religious life refuses to accept boundaries. It is a dynamic life-giving and life-sustaining movement. It remains a primary agent of change in the Church.
- * A need for wider participation in the life and mission of the Church in Asia (EA, n.45).
- * Request FABC, religious congregations and other bodies to monitor the work of religious working in difficult situations in certain Asian countries, and find new ways of giving affirmation, practical assistance and effective solidarity.

2. Community Life

- * Encourage, recognize new ways of being community for mission (EA, n.44).
- * A life of prayer and contemplation that is genuinely Asian must be the wellspring for meaningful presence within community and in community outreach.
- * A sense of hospitality, an openness to people of other walks of life.
- * Stewardship of community resources: accountability, transparency, ethical aspects of investment policies, requirements of justice, structural solidarity.

3. Formation - Initial and Ongoing

- * Update resources and opportunities for spiritual growth "in response to cultural forces which tend to marginalize the religious dimension of life, if not actually to deny it" (VC, 103).
- * A spirituality of justice in an interdependent and suffering world.
- * Formation be in line with the triple dialogue advocated by FABC, include adequate exposure to Asian realities, namely, the poor, cultures and other living faiths.
- * Train formators in the Asian context, with an emphasis on evangelical feminism.

4. Relationships Between Religious and Diocese

- * The call to integrate with the pastoral plan of the diocese is based on a respect for the particular charism, and:
- * An understanding of the pastoral plan which includes outreach services beyond the Christian community.
- * Communion with the laity.

5. An Appeal

- * We encourage religious to view their vocation within the wide context of Asian religious traditions.
- * In the case of male religious communities of brothers and priests, we urge the members to rediscover the religious dimension of their vocation.
- * We urge efforts be made to deepen their appreciation of the role of religious brothers.

6. Closer Collaboration

- * With FABC, and existing Asian associations of religious, e.g., SEAMS, AMOR.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Religious life refuses to accept boundaries. It is a dynamic life-giving

and life-sustaining movement. It must remain a primary agent of change in the church.

Therefore, we recommend :

New styles of formation in an Asian spiritual context, a formation that includes solid grounding in scripture, theology and anthropology; exposure to forms of prayer and contemplation that are genuinely Asian; that will provide a wellspring for meaningful presence within community and in community outreach; and a spirituality of justice in a suffering world. We suggest a climate of feminism that flows from the Gospel values of love, compassion and service.

Integration with the pastoral plan of the diocese, based on a respect for the particular charism, and on an understanding that the pastoral plan include outreach beyond the Christian community; and the sharing of the particular charism and spirituality with lay partners, even those of other faiths.

3. A RENEWED CHURCH IN ASIA - IN SOLIDARITY WITH WOMEN

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92c

VISION

We reiterate our past endorsement of the recommendations of the 1993 FABC Consultation on Women, and of the Bishops' Institute for the Lay Apostolate I and II on Women.

CHALLENGES

Among which we would like to specify that priority be given to facilitating the implementation of our vision of a participatory Church by :

- * Setting up a women's commission/desk in each country; and efforts be made to have a corresponding commission/desk in all dioceses and parishes.
- * Ensuring women constitute at least 30% of all Church councils, committees, or bodies.
- * The formation of priests should include:
 - A healthy interaction with women
 - Gender sensitivity training
 - Rereading, reinterpreting and rediscovering the Scriptures to include the women's perspective
 - Courses of theology and study of the papal teachings on women
 - The presence of women professors and women students in seminaries

RECOMMENDATIONS

- * In the Church's mission for justice, dioceses and parishes should encourage initiatives to form women's groups for education, empowerment and social advocacy. Net-working with women's groups, both secular and of other faiths.
- * Since the Church has powerful resources in its women membership, these should be identified and utilized, as is already being done in all spheres of secular society.
- * Bishops cannot know the signs of time unless they dialogue with women. There is a need for bishops/pastors to dialogue with, listen to, and understand women.
- * Women need to be heard in all associations within the Church, to enable their experiences of life to bear on decisions taken. Therefore, there is a need to create an atmosphere for dialogue also at the levels of the diocese and parish.
- * In the parish and in rural areas, women should be organized into groups for empowerment, through the imparting of knowledge of their rights, awareness of their dignity, and development of skills for participation in social, economic and political life.
- * Social advocacy on behalf of women domestic workers, migrant workers, and other unorganized workers, for humane laws regarding their rights and their dignity.
- * Marriage preparation courses should stress the role of complementarity, mutuality, coresponsibility, and the covenant bond in the marriage relationship. It should include a catechesis of the sacrament of marriage, and the teaching of the papal documents on women/marriage, to enrich and support married and family life.
- * Networking with other groups to promote advocacy for upholding the sanctity of human life, especially that of the girl child, from conception to death.
- * Educational institutions should include curricula that impart an education for life, where girls are educated in self-confidence, self-respect, to discover their personal dignity; and boys are taught to respect women, develop correct attitudes, and educated in gender sensitization.
- * Sex education given to boys and girls in schools should be revised to include the sacredness of women's capacity to be cocreators with God.
- * Our educational institutions should make available their facilities to provide education, income generating skills, professional training, and personal development for girls/ women.
- * The student's catechesis should provide for a social outreach through field experiences.

4. FORMATION FOR PRIESTHOOD IN ASIA

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92d

VISION

The Priest as an Ecclesial Man

To carry out the ministry and mission of Jesus in Asia, the priest must be an ecclesial man: well-grounded in his individual Church (Latin or Oriental Rite); able to form a communion of communities within the Church (parishes, renewal groups, etc.); open to solidarity with other communities (other Churches and ecclesial communities, other religions, people of good will and the poor).

CHALLENGES

The Priest in the Asian Context

To realize the mission and priestly ministry of Jesus in Asia today, in addition to realize the traditional understanding of priestly formation according to its human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral dimensions, we look also to the more Asian images of the priest as the man of mature personality, man of the sacred, man of dialogue, and man of humble service. By man of the sacred is meant that the priest deeply experiences the salvific love of the Triune God and is dedicated to following Jesus. By man of dialogue is meant an openness and skill for dialogue with communities both within and outside the Church. By man of humble service is meant that, through a loving attitude, the priest generously serves the Church and all human beings in the Spirit of Christ. These four dimensions must be integrated as they are mutually interdependent.

Although all these four Asian images are important and mutually dependent for in priestly formation in Asia, the man of the sacred is critically important. In other Asian religions, holiness is given great value; holy men receive great respect. Priestly holiness is intrinsically linked to and developed through priestly ministry; dedicated ministry enhances holiness and holiness enhances ministry. Further, this holiness, which is a love for God, for men and women and for nature, is nourished by prayer, deep meditation upon the word of God, sacramental life and service.

Formation should keep a focus on Christ as the model of holiness for the priest. We also need role models of zealous, holy priests on the formation staff. In leading the seminarians toward human maturity and holiness, freedom, discipline and responsibility should go hand-in-hand.

In face of the plurality of religions and cultures of Asia, the priest in Asia needs to develop the ability for polite, respectful dialogue with the vast majority of Asian people who are not Catholic, as well as with people of his own Church communities. Further, because of the economic and social difficulties of Asian peoples, the priest should approach them as humble servant, concerned for the true development and human promotion of Asia's different nations, with a special concern for the poor. This dialogue and service should remain open to evangelization, sharing Christ with other communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Process of Formation

In the process of formation, the following areas should receive important consideration.

1. The selection of candidates should ensure that each has the proper motivation, human qualities and basic faith-life necessary for a future priest. Modern methodologies of discernment can aid in this selection process.
2. The process of selection of formators should involve a holistic approach - spiritual depth, pastoral/evangelical experience and effectiveness, and academic competence must all be considered.
3. All those involved in seminary training, including the teaching staff, should be considered part of the team of formators. In this context, the leadership role of the rector and his immediate formation staff is of critical importance in creating an atmosphere of sacredness, dialogue, service. The priests and people with whom the seminarian does his pastoral work should also be enlisted as formators.
4. Formation should be given in small groups for better personal guidance (with the moderator system). And for the sake of fostering human maturity, guided exposure programs should be introduced.
5. We need an effective program to develop a contextualized curriculum, with a continuing system of evaluating this curriculum.
6. In order to be properly rooted in his own individual Church, seminaries should be provided for each individual ecclesial rite.
7. We need effective ways of evaluating both seminarians, and the whole seminary system. Evaluation of seminarians should include evalua-

tions of the seminary faculty by self, peer, staff, and people ministered to. The spirit of such evaluation should be positive.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A "spiritual year" may be helpful in some areas. The timing of this year would necessarily be according to need, i.e., after the minor seminary, before theology, during theology, etc.
2. In order to have an opportunity outside the seminary to grow and reflect upon his vocation, a regency period between philosophy and theology may be profitable for some.
3. As has already been suggested by the Special Assembly for Asia of the Synod of Bishops, an institute for seminary formators in Asia, in a place which is accessible to all participants from Asia, should be established within three years.

(A question only. Is it not possible to reduce the number of courses in the syllabus; and also to revise and adapt them to the Asian context?)

5. CONTINUING FORMATION FOR PRIESTHOOD IN ASIA

Reference: Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92e

VISION

Becoming fully human and fulfilled priests of God to his people is an on-going and life-time process. What is of fundamental importance is that the individual priest himself must desire and want to appropriate his continuing formation. This attitude needs to be inculcated in seminary formation. Programs for ongoing formation will be linked to and will flow from seminary formation programs.

CHALLENGES

In view of the Second Vatican Council's emphasis on church as community, and the call of the FABC for a "New Way of Being Church," a primary role of the priest is that of builder of communion. Thus, his primary role is one of a person on a journey to fullness of life in communion with God, the bishop, the presbyterium and the people.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to achieve these goals we propose the following the following

periods of service, which span a priest's life.

Apprenticeship

The first three to five years of priestly ministry.

The first year: In the first year of his priestly life the young priest needs to have a happy experience of his ministry. Hence, the following steps are recommended:

- * He is appointed to serve only with a carefully selected, experienced parish priest.
- * He should not be overloaded with pastoral assignments.
- * He should have regular reviews with the parish priest and his own peer group.
- * The bishop should encourage him by personal contacts with him, and by affirming him in his work.

The Other Years of Apprenticeship

- * Regular review programs covering all areas of pastoral life are to be drawn up, especially by the apprentice-priest himself, with the help of a program director.
- * He should develop links with his fellow priests in deanery and presbyteral meetings.

Midlife

In midlife there should be programs to help promote the human growth of individual priests. These programs should look into areas of a deeper spirituality, not forgetting the fear and trust issues which can disturb the commitment of the clergy. Moreover, during the regular annual retreat and other gatherings of priests, the clergy should be given the opportunity to review their priestly lifestyle. A longer and more intensive program should be devised (according to the needs of the diocese), with the help of outside experts, aimed at going more deeply into basic questions (related to personal commitment, fear, trust), and leading to personal conversion.

The Golden Years And Senior Clergy

This should be a happy period, when one can enjoy the fruits of past endeavors. These priests should be considered an asset in the diocese - their rich experiences should be appreciated and shared; their advice and guidance sought.

Special attention should be given to their security needs.

Retirement

In his retirement a priest continues to contribute to the diocese through his wide experience and priestly lifestyle. It is the duty of the diocese to value their presence and to enhance their sense of belonging. Much care must be taken that the elderly clergy be given the full support they deserve (emotional, material, etc.). Also, where necessary, insurance programs should be created to support the retirement plans of elderly priests who are in need.

Programs for Priests with Special Needs

In cases where therapeutic help is needed, experts in the field of psychology and spirituality must be employed. In fact, the opening of a center to attend to these special cases is often called for.

Rehabilitation of erring priests (alcoholism, infidelity to priestly vows, etc.) must naturally be conducted by well-trained and prudent experts.

Programs for the Development of Pastoral Skills

Besides ongoing formation regarding the human development of the priest, attention is to be paid to pastoral skills. Some areas which need attention are:

- * Preaching the Word of God in an attractive style, and feeding people with the Word of God.
- * Attention to the healing ministry
- * Liturgy celebrated with decorum and as a community celebration
- * Personal prayer-life, developing in an ongoing relationship with God
- * Capability for the "three-fold dialogue" (culture, poor, religions)
- * Discern, encourage, and guide personal charisms in his community.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Keeping in mind what is said above with regard to the different stages of priestly life, we propose the following:

- * Each diocese should have a clearly defined program of ongoing formation.
- * Apprenticeship programs, especially for the first year, should be adopted in each diocese.
- * Clearly-defined sabbatical programs: rest, spiritual renewal, updating courses.
- * Introduction to new ecclesial movements, and training in how to guide them.
- * An institute at national or regional levels where the priest may go for :
- * Short courses of spiritual renewal, ashram experience, etc.

- * Updating sessions on human sciences, globalization, bioethics, etc.
- * Before appointment as parish priest-or any special assignment, or a chaplaincy, a short course on the required skills, expectations, e.g., administration, accounting, etc, be provided.
- * Develop, and make known, centers for priests in special needs, e.g., the ASSIST program, Affirmation House, etc.
- * Priests should be helped to develop and enhance their preaching skills to become more charismatic in their preaching (programs, seminars, etc.)

6. A MISSION OF LOVE AND SERVICE TO MIGRANT WORKERS AND REFUGEES

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92f

VISION

Worldwide, 145 millions of people are living and working in countries they cannot call their own. On top of these are some 50 million forced to flee their homes. Asian migrant workers number 15 million at least.

These alarming figures and the emerging issues certainly demand a response from the Church, which, by her nature, "is in solidarity with the world of migrants ... who remind her of her own condition as a people on pilgrimage from every part of the earth to their final homeland." (Pope John Paul, 1999 World Migrants' Day Message)

CHALLENGES

The Church, in a multiethnic, religious and cultural setting, thereby also enlivens the message of hope and life amidst death-dealing forces by "...follow(ing) Jesus in his 'preferential journey' with the poor and (will) assist(ing) in the liberation of the materially poor, of indigenous peoples, displaced persons, of

In view of the magnitude of the problems, and faced with the distinct triple realities of Asia-material poverty, variety of cultures and rich religious traditions manifested in the persons and conditions of migrants and refugees, dialogue is imperative in the Church's pastoral and social care of these disadvantaged and displaced peoples. This should be undertaken in the context of : 1) ecumenism and interreligious dialogue, and partnership with other Christian Churches and religious traditions; 2) the universal personhood and rights of migrant workers on land and at sea, refugees and displaced persons (IDPs) taking primacy over creed, race, nationality, political orientation and culture (IDPs), as well as over their legal status in countries of origin and destination.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following goals for action were drawn up and need to be considered in the planning and implementation of regional and diocesan pastoral programs for people forced to move:

- * Structure: Setup an office for migrants on land and at sea, refugees and itinerant peoples within FABC, to serve the program planning, implementation and networking needs for of the national bishops' conferences in their responses to the migration and refugee issues/ concerns, in cooperation with the religious congregations and lay organizations with charism for migrants and refugees.

(This was first advocated in 1992 during the Symposium on the Filipino Ministry and has been reiterated in subsequent meetings/consultation (Hong Kong, 1993; 6th FABC Plenary Assembly, Manila, 1995; 1996 Consultation, Manila). The most recent move for the establishment of this office was aired during a regional meeting of episcopal commissions on Migration of the Catholic Bishops' Conferences of Asia and the Pacific (Kaoshiung, September 1999). This need has been expressed by pastoral workers all over Asia, secretaries and national directors of episcopal commissions on migration of Asian Bishops' Conferences, and the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerants itself.

- * Integration: Evolve integrative schemes to respond to the need for: a) comprehensive pastoral and social care work program; b) community dynamics that facilitate and promote the participation and 'belonging' of the migrant/refugee, as well as the nurturing welcome of the host/refugee community; c) family dynamics that bridge the intergenerational gaps and socio-cultural differences between migrant worker parents & their children, and their respective psycho-social needs.
- * Formation: Provide formative inputs to: a) migrant workers on land and at sea, refugees and IDPs to being faithful to the Gospel, and to witnessing this in their lives, as well as living out the nurturing values of primacy of the family, joyful and compassionate relationship with God and neighbor; b) church workers to effectively provide culturally and gender sensitive pastoral and social care for migrants and refugees and IDPs.
- * Conscientization: Sensitize migrant workers; employers; sending and receiving governments, recruiters; and local Christian communities to respond to the dehumanization of migrant workers. For refugees, this will address states and communities of origin and refuge, UN agencies, international and local NGOs on the multiple disadvantage of refugees in terms of : ethnicity, religion and political rights.
- * Reintegration: Develop and promote reintegration schemes between and among Churches of origin and destination to enable migrant workers and

their families to manage the economic benefits from overseas migrant work experience, and discourage the making of overseas labor migration as a family strategy for survival. For refugees and IDPs, this involves repatriation/reintegration/ resettlement schemes between and among churches of origin, and refuge to enable returnees to rebuild their lives in peace and security.

- * **Networking:** Establish linkages between and among churches of origin and destination, as well as with other Christian churches and religious traditions for program planning and implementation.
- * **Advocacy:** Pursue policy advocacy with sending and receiving governments, UN agencies, the international and local NGOs, other Christian churches and religious traditions for the rights of migrant workers (land and sea-based) refugees and IDPs regardless of their legal status.
- * **Education:** Provide sensitizing education to children of migrants through existing educational institutions, as well as informal education groups.
- * **Staffing:** Appoint qualified church workers who, as much as possible, are of the same nationality or are familiar with the language and culture of the migrant workers on land and at sea, refugees and IDPs.
- * **Affirmation:** recognize and support efforts of church workers in providing pastoral and social care to migrant workers, refugees and IDPs. These pastoral and social initiatives range from sacramental care to medical services, legal aid, policy and human rights advocacy and counseling.

7. A RENEWED MISSION OF LOVE AND SERVICE TO INDIGENOUS/TRIBAL PEOPLES OF ASIA

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92g

VISION

A large proportion of the Catholic Community in Asia belongs to the indigenous peoples of the great continent. They form the most important groups that have responded to the Gospel. Hence, they deserve the special attention of the Church.

The major effort of the Church in the field of inculturation and dialogue has been, until recently, with the great cultural and religious Traditions of Asia, quite unaware of the sturdiness of the little Traditions that are related to the cultures of indigenous peoples.

There are national situations in which tribal land is protected by law, and tribal people are given subsidies and official assistance. In other situations, they suffer from various forms of injustice. Their forests are cut down. They are economically exploited. They are politically excluded. Opportunities for education and health-care are limited. They themselves are considered second-class citizens.

Nearly all the tribal communities suffer from economic disadvantages, inexperienced in a "money-economy," and totally unused to saving and investing habits. Their cultures are under pressure from the dominant national cultures and from strong modernizing trends. This leads to a process of detribalization.

CHALLENGES

These communities need to be helped to preserve their identity and the core values of their cultures. They should be assisted to retain their dignity and pride in themselves. They should be helped to regain their self-confidence and shake off their inferiority complex. Their languages need to be promoted. Their culture symbols should be preserved and brought back into use in their changing contexts.

The Catholic Church has been working among many of these tribes for a long time. The Evangelical Churches has been ahead of us in many areas. Many tribal languages have been given a written script and a literature developed. Their cultures have been studied and described by missionaries. Their children have studied in missionary schools, and given shelter in missionary boarding houses. Their sick have been cared for in missionary hospitals. Missionaries also have taken up cases of injustice against the tribes, their lands, their rights, and their interests.

Tribal cultures and tribal values can offer correctives to the culture of the dominant communities, and to the materialistic worldview of the emerging global community. With their casteless, egalitarian and democratic characteristics, and their spirit of sharing, nearness to nature, spiritual vision of the world, simplicity, fraternity, hospitality, and human touch, tribal communities can remind more advanced societies of certain precious values they stand in danger of losing.

Simple as they are, tribal communities are vulnerable, not only economically and politically, but in many other ways too. Their members, especially the young are quick to imitate changing fashions, are victims to tempting economic offers and short-term advantages, and act against the long-term advantages of their own communities. The first persons to be educated from among them can become exploiters of their own people. Even church leaders can take advantage of their docility and spirit of cooperation.

Thus, even those actively engaged in the service of the tribal people should avoid being overdominating, and retain a participatory style of functioning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The first to be educated among the tribal people can become bridge-builders between their communities and the larger society. Church personnel too can fill such a role. The Church must continue to help the tribal people in the preservation and development of their languages and cultures, support education, health and social activities, and defend their identity and their interests. Church personnel will do well to keep in touch with the teachers, poets, artists, and writers among the tribal people who assist in the collective thinking of the communities and who give new directions to their common destinies. It is precisely such people who enable their communities to discover their identity and their potentialities and urge the on to new heights and possibilities.
- Every society has a right to develop at its own pace and in the manner it wishes to do so. It is not for the missionary to press them in any direction. He/she offers the gift of the Gospel in a manner in keeping with the genius of the tribe. He/she tries to integrate their rich symbolism into Church life. Inculturation should be the common responsibility of the pastors, experts and especially of the believing community. The sensibilities of the believing community should never be ignored.
- There is still a long way to go to presenting the Eucharist in a meaningful manner to the tribal people, while being faithful always to the main structures of the Mass as pre-served for us in the ancient Christian traditions.
- The Bible may be studied and presented as a tribal document. Theological reflection in tribal contents can be very fruitful for the promotion of Church life. Centers of studies should be set up in tribal areas for the promotion of such inculturation and theological reflection. More superficial inculturation will be found inadequate Gifted tribal people should be given opportunity the pursue higher studies.
- Tribal people have to confront external pressures of various degrees. Some still live in total isolation. Others are in danger of being swamped by the non-tribal. Tribal people should be helped to a process of cultural analysis to rediscover who they are, how they have become what they have become, what their problems are and how they may confront them. Study of their history and reflection on their collective experiences are preserved in their oral tradition, myths and stories, will help them to build up a legitimate pride in their identity and their collectives selfhood.
- Many of the reflections above have come up during the Hua Hin meeting of September 3-8, 1995, organized by the FABC Office of Evangelization. The recommendations made in that meeting should be followed up. The national commission or office of every bishops' conference should coordinate activities, reflection and studies on behalf of tribal peoples.

Such a commission should plan and promote evangelization among tribal communities. From time to time meetings of missionaries working in tribal areas should be organized at local, national and international levels. Special training programs should be devised to empower tribal people for the apostolate. Tribal people should be helped to enter into an ongoing dialogue with the larger society, and with the universal Christian heritage, for common benefit of both.

8. THE RENEWAL MOVEMENTS AND SMALL CHURCH COMMUNITIES

Reference: Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92h

VISION

We rejoice in the recognition made by the Special Synod for Asia of the role of renewal movements "in building communities, in providing opportunities for a more intimate experience of God through faith and the sacraments and in fostering conversion of life" (EA, 25).

Likewise, we rejoice that "the Synod Fathers underlined the value of basic ecclesial communities as an effective way of promoting communion and participation in parishes and dioceses, and as a genuine force for evangelization" (EA, 25)

CHALLENGES

The Holy Spirit impels the churches and Christian communities of this continent to move forward in these two areas, which indicate a new way of being Church in Asia. For this to be achieved more effectively we would like to share the following observations.

1. There are many renewal movements that are active in the continent, the "Charismatic Movement" being only one of them. To make room for all of them, some pastors prefer to designate what is happening as a "renewal of Christian life in and through the power of the Holy Spirit." What all these renewal movements should emphasize is the personal encounter of people with God, which is sometimes referred to as a "baptism in the Spirit" in the context of a "Life in the Spirit seminar." It is the interior substance of the renewal that should be emphasized rather than the external form.
2. We urge the different renewal movements to identify their special charism or the particular concerns of Church life that they wish to address, so that pastors may more easily know what to expect from them

and how they can collaborate with other groups or associations. While all renewal movements have the right to keep their identity, they should take to heart the guideline set down by Ecclesia in Asia that they "should offer their support to the local church and not present themselves as alternatives to diocesan structures and parish life" (25). Elitism or a superiority complex should be avoided at all cost. Instead, in the churches and communities of Asia, the Asian value of harmony should prevail.

3. The Word of God is to be given a central place in both renewal movements and basic ecclesial communities. Care must be taken that Bible study will be not only an intellectual exercise but something that is enriched by life experiences and directed towards day-to-day Christian living. All renewal movements in the Church are to give importance to the Petrine and Marian dimensions of Christian life, and are never to forget that the Eucharist is the source and apex of Christian life.
4. Pastors alone will not be able to renew churches and communities; they need the laity, just as the laity need them. Seminarians and religious men and women in their years of formation are to get acquainted with the renewal movements, preferably from within.
5. Movements that have obtained Church approval should not be regarded with suspicion, even when imperfections are observed, but should be guided and encouraged by the pastors, so that "they may be well integrated into the life and mission of the parish and diocese." (EA, 25) They should keep in mind the "Criteria for Ecclesiality," enunciated in the Apostolic Exhortation *Christifidelis Laici* (30).
6. Basic ecclesial communities are to be schools of Christian discipleship, which should flow from the personal conversion of people who have been renewed. In places where Christians live with people of other faiths, these communities should collaborate with them to form basic human communities.
7. As for all the renewal movements, so also for basic ecclesial communities, seminarians and religious men and women under formation should be prepared by their actual participation in basic ecclesial community life. Much importance is to be given to the initial and ongoing formation of all who will have positions of responsibility in the communities, from the parish priest to his associate clergy to lay ministries and lay leaders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Organize a secretariat within one of the Offices of FABC that will promote: a) exchanges between the many renewal movements; and b) inform the churches and communities of the availability of these services. As an initial project, the secretariat may organize an Asian congress of the renewal movements after the example of the world congress held in Rome in 1998. Thereafter, congresses could be held periodically.
2. Circulate a list of Asian resource persons and resource materials.
3. Circulate a translation of the document of the Pontificium Consilium pro Laicis: "Atti del Congresso mondiale dei movimenti ecclesiali," Rome, 27-29, Maggio, 1998, "I movimenti nella Chiesa."
4. Promote the publication or circulation of "success stories" and personal testimonies coming from renewal movements and basic ecclesial communities.
5. Promote the wider circulation of the Pope's statements regarding the renewal movements and the basic ecclesial communities, in *Redemptoris Missio*, in the May 1998 Congress of Renewal Movements, and in *Ecclesia in Asia*.
6. Catholic universities, colleges and schools should encourage professors, students, administrators and personnel in their campus to become active in renewal movements, and to live in small communities.
7. Basic ecclesial communities in Asia can link up with worldwide cooperative movements in order to establish and manage faith-based cooperatives in both rural and urban areas. This can remedy, to some extent, the evils of globalization.
8. Basic ecclesial communities are encouraged to include in their programs fellowship and recreational activities which foster communion.

9. GOSPEL-BASED COMMUNITIES AS AGENTS OF CHANGE : A PARTICIPATORY CHURCH

Reference: Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92i

VISION

The Second Vatican Council again proclaimed the original image of

Church as the “people of God.” Post-conciliar theology sharpened this image by strengthening the concept of church as “communion.”

The FABC vision of Church is: the Church in Asia is a communion of communities where lay religious and clergy recognize and accept each other as sisters and brothers. The basis of this communion is participation in the life of the Triune God, initiated by the sacrament of Baptism, which entitles and empowers them for mission. This communion is effectively manifested in a participatory church, which is a sharing in the life, friendship and mission of Christ. This is what a new way of being church in Asia means.

CHALLENGES

Small Christian Communities

Small Christian Communities (SCCs) ARE an ideal way to realize this vision of Church in Asia. The SCC is a “home for everyone.” They are neighbors who gather regularly around the Word of God, to be nourished by it; to share, reflect and live in their daily lives. They act and do things together, inspired by the Word of God and in response to the life situations and problems they are facing. In communion with other SCCs, all the characteristics of the Universal Church are found in SCCs. SCCs are agents of renewal, bringing about the new evangelization and making way for God’s kingdom be realized in our world.

Basic Human Communities

The reality of Asia demands that the Church dialogues, collaborated and lives harmoniously with peoples of other faiths which comprises majority of Asians. Basic Human Communities (BHCs), an aggrupation of neighbors belonging to different religious traditions, gather to respond to life issues that affect them and to celebrate together certain national and cultural feasts. The Church journeys with our brothers and sisters of other faiths, sharing their joys and sorrows, hopes and aspirations, towards the fullness of life.

Sectoral Groups

Appreciating certain contexts, opportunity must be presented for sectoral groups to gather around the Word of God and the Sacraments so that they may reflect and respond to the challenge of discipleship in their particular secular fields (e.g., professionals, workers in free trade zones, etc.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The realization of this vision demands urgently that clergy and religious be oriented, exposed to and trained on SCCs as part of their ongoing formation.
- Likewise, the same goal is to be inserted into the seminary formation of clergy and religious.
- An SCC Team should be organized and trained at the diocesan district and parish level.
- AsIPA (Asian Integral Pastoral Approach) materials which promote a Gospel-based, life-oriented, participatory method, should be greatly encouraged, translated and circulated.
- While acknowledging that the youth of Asia is the hope of the Asian Church, we recognized the presence of the young elderly (retired, aged 55-75 years) or “Third Age” who should be challenged, actively listed and trained for Church mission.

To attain this, the group felt the need of a “Pastoral Program” fitting their situation and mission, to motivate them spiritually and to incorporate them effectively in volunteer services in Church and society.

10. LAY MINISTRIES IN THE RENEWED CHURCH IN ASIA

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92j

VISION

Right at the beginning we acknowledge that in the last 30 years, through the various renewal movements, the Asian Church has seen the emergence of various forms of lay ministries. These movements continue to increase the participation of the lay faithful in the mission of the Church in manifold ways. Though the number of such committed laity is not very large, it is already an indication that the Church of the third millennium is one of the laity.

The sharing in this Assembly on lay ministries by different countries reflects that there are some efforts being made everywhere in Asia to involve lay people in the mission of the Church. However, the percentage of lay people actually participating in Church activities is relatively by far too small. It is also noted that the levels of lay involvement in Church mission vary from country to country.

In the secular fields of Asia today many gifted and talented Catholic men and women are effective agents of change in their fields of competence. The Church has not succeeded enough in finding sufficient person-

nel to serve the Gospel in such fields as these, despite the pronouncements made in the various Church documents regarding the dignity and the indispensable role of the laity in the mission of the Church.

The Church organizations and committees rely mostly on the rich and influential sections of the community; the poor, who make up the majority, have little chance to contribute their mite to these structures.

While some countries can freely pursue and develop ways and means of lay participation, in other countries there are political and cultural constraints for organizing such religious activities.

CHALLENGES

According to Vatican II, there is a common dignity of the members in the Church, and all vocations, though distinct, are equally important in building the Body of Christ (LG 32). "Lay vocations and charisms, ministries and contributions are complementary, and strengthen the unity and enrich the resourcefulness of the Church, because the same Spirit is always the dynamic principle of diversity and unity in the Church" (CL 20).

All states of life and ministries of the baptized Christians, empowered by the Spirit, contribute to the one and same mission of the Church of Christ.

Communion and mission are profoundly interconnected with each other. Communion gives rise to mission which is accomplished in communion" (CL 32).

Therefore, in the renewed Church of Asia we visualize that :

- The mission of the Church can be accomplished only through a mutual partnership of all the sections of the faithful. Both, the clergy and laity, need to be convinced that they are sent together as a community of disciples, to collaborate together responsibly in fulfilling the mission of Christ in this Asian continent.
- Furthermore, lay ministries are meant to help the Asian lay faithful to rediscover the one Christian vocation and to grow in faithfulness to it.
- The lay faithful have the primary responsibility, by the virtue of their status in the world, to bring the Gospel to the secular realities of life.
- Effective lay ministries, like all other ministries, are not mere products of human efforts or skills, but of the power of the Holy Spirit.
- It is crucial for the future of the Church in Asia to enable the laity through adequate formation to come to the forefront of the Church's mission together with the clergy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ongoing Formation

The local Church must design and develop formation programs for the laity, which will lead them to an awareness of their Christian dignity, gifts and roles, and to equip them with the skills they need to fulfill their missionary role within their life contexts.

1. Support Structures for sustaining lay ministries in dioceses.
The local Church needs to find ways and means to affirm and support lay initiatives, wherever they are found; and to give the necessary pastoral guidance to bring them to maturity.
2. Theological-Pastoral Reflection on lay ministries by both clergy and laity together.
Theological-Pastoral reflection done by clergy and laity together is the way to clarify roles, to grow in the spirit of partnership, mutual trust; and to make the various expressions of ministry serve the local needs effectively.

11. INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE : TOWARD FULLNESS OF LIFE IN ASIA

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92k

VISION

Interreligious dialogue is a process of partnership with others toward the pursuit of communion and a full life in Asia. The greatest contribution that the Christian can give to this common pursuit is the sharing of the mystery of Jesus as the Life, the One who promised abundant life.

The love of God in Jesus and the love of neighbor are the dynamic motivations for the Christian believer, with the realization that the Spirit of Jesus is the primary agent of dialogue.

CHALLENGES

The task of interreligious dialogue proceeds with a particular pedagogy toward a full life, and has certain imperatives or dimensions. Among these are:

- mutual listening and learning;
- mutual challenging and correcting in pursuit of Truth;
- mutual deepening of spirituality;
- building relationships of fellowship and communion, of mutual respect and understanding, of mutual trust;

- finding common grounds, such as in Kingdom-values (e.g., justice, peace, love, etc.), for engaging in cooperative action;
- building in Asia a culture of life, a culture of human rights, and a culture of peace and harmony.

Above all, for the Christian the task of interreligious dialogue can only be credible and effective when one's word in the dialogue is backed up by the authentic witness of a life, imbued with God-experience.

For such a vision to be realized, the ground for interreligious dialogue has to be prepared within the Church itself by being a Church of dialogue. Co-responsibility, consultation and participation have to be operative in the Church. This calls for a new way of being Church, and for a new way of leadership, as well as of membership in the Church. The way of leadership is the way of Christ as Shepherd-Servant, sensitive to the needs of the flock and its situation. The way of membership is the way of the discipleship, participating fully in the mission of the Lord.

5. At the beginning of the Third Millennium, a symbolic act of asking forgiveness for acts of intolerance and aggressive proselytization in past ages would build the trust and respect that the Church needs in order to embark on a journey of interreligious dialogue to a full life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We encourage more formation programs for dialogue. These include the goals, principles and approaches to dialogue. They encompass a culture of dialogue and a spirituality of dialogue. Our schools, seminaries, house of formation and pastoral centers should help carry out this formation of young as well as present leaders (bishops, priests, BEC leaders, religious superiors, etc.) for dialogue.
2. Local churches, at the national or diocesan levels, are encouraged to observe a Week of Interreligious Dialogue (akin to the Church's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity). This could take place in October, to coincide with the Assisi World Day of Peace initiated in 1986. This is one way to encourage religious leaders of various traditions to come together to pray for peace, and to discuss common concerns, in a symbolic gesture of solidarity and communion of hearts.
3. At the local levels, we encourage interreligious conferences, symposia, and other forms of dialogue to explore the common ground among religious traditions, particularly in helping promote a Culture of Life, a Culture of Human Rights, and a Culture of Peace and Harmony.

4. We should explore the possibilities of e-mail and the Internet in our ongoing interreligious dialogue in the region.

12. A CHURCH IN UNIVERSAL HARMONY AND SOLIDARITY THROUGH JUSTICE AND PEACE

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92/

VISION

At the beginning of the Third Millennium, the Church in Asia should consider the promotion of justice and peace as a constitutive part of integral evangelization. With a renewed consciousness of the dignity conferred by baptism and of the responsibility for the mission of love and service to the people of Asia, the Church is striving to embrace the divine mandate, joyful in having found a treasure, and filled with a desire to share it with others.

CHALLENGES

In its service of human development, the Church in Asia should pay special attention to preserve spiritual foundations in such a way that the social development would be authentic and credible, by making use of the pedagogy of Jesus. The Church in Asia is respected by the people, not only because of all its innumerable services for human promotion, but is particularly loved by the people because of its authenticity in living out the Gospel of Jesus in and through an integral Christian life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In response to this call, the Church in Asia is to be encouraged to be ready and willing to renew its way of thinking and its methodology and pedagogy of implementing development works, particularly in the area of justice and peace:

Therefore the Church in Asia needs:

- To encourage and support a model of human development which is based on the culture of life and the civilization of love; by developing life-giving Christian perspectives based on the Gospel and the Social Teachings of the Church on behalf of the human family. The social teachings of the Church must be put into practice, speaking to the most prevailing injustices in the Church and in the world.
- To promote and participate in elaborating a system of social development which is people-centered, financially transparent with accountability and ecologically sustainable, with an ethics of solidarity and justice that leads to harmony and peace. In view of this it is essential that the Church

- should give priority to education for justice and formation in social spirituality at all levels of its pastoral concerns.
- To encourage collaborative actions through genuine multi cultural and interreligious dialogue in order to develop a global alliance of solidarity and hope on behalf the people, especially the poor, marginalized and those deprived of their human rights. This is to be implemented in collaboration with the other Offices of the FABC, episcopal conferences and dioceses.
 - To disseminate the social teachings of the Church, especially among lay women and men as Christian foundations for a more meaningful living out of their vocation and mission in the Church and in the world.
 - To search for new and creative approaches in inculcating Gospel values in the works of human development. This needs to be done in all our apostolic endeavors for enhancing human dignity and defending human rights.

13. THE CHALLENGES OF RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM IN ASIA

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92m

INTRODUCTION

It is the considered opinion of the workshop that the term “religious fundamentalism” is equivocal and needs to be defined. It was agreed that “fundamentalist” could simply mean people who strictly adhere to the fundamental principals of their religion. Such people are not necessarily offensive towards followers of other religions or sects. However, religious fundamentalist groups that become totally intolerant, and make all-out efforts to thrust their religious beliefs on other sects or religions, even through violent means could be better termed “Religious Extremists.” These are the groups that are disrupting the peaceful coexistence of various religions in Asia and, pose a serious threat to the Church in certain countries of Asia.

VISION

The aim of this workshop is to propose a vision and set goals for action for a renewed Church in Asia.

The vision of a renewed Church should be to integrate the Christian community into the wider community of the peoples of other religious traditions rather than to isolate them, to inculcate in the community a spirit of nationalism and patriotism, to encourage them to participate fully in the social and cultural activities at the local as well as the national level. The Church will thus have a multiplicity of cultures, even within the same country.

The Church should have the vision given by Vatican II of a return to roots to draw nourishment, and build a new society where Christians share the national ethos with people of all religions. In Asia Christians live in multireligious societies; and in all countries of Asia, except the Philippines, they are a small minority. The Church should share with other religious leaders this vision of a return to roots, and help them to draw nourishment from their own roots in this time of globalization which is causing widespread chaos and confusion among people.

CHALLENGES

Causes of the Rise of Religious Extremism

The Global Context. With the breakup of the USSR, coupled with the Gulf War, a change took place in the Muslim perception of world polarization. From an East-West bipolar world, the perception changed to a North-South polarization. The North happened to be Christian, while the South, in their perception, is Muslim. The extremist Muslims immediately took advantage of this emerging global situation to project Christianity as a threat to Islam, and resorted to violence against the Christian minorities in Muslim countries.

Christians have become the targets of such extremist groups because, despite being a small minority, they are a very visible community because of an active and dedicated participation in development work, especially in the fields of education and health care in Asian countries. In countries like India, the upper caste Hindus feel threatened by the work of the Church in developing the low-caste dalits and tribals, who are being exploited by the upper castes for their own selfish motives.

The causes from within Christianity. The following situations prevailing among Christians are contributing toward the animosity extremists feel towards Christians:

1. Recently small non-denominational Christian evangelical groups have cropped up in many Asian countries. These Christian fundamentalists openly condemn the majority religions, like Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, in their attempts to convert people to Christianity. The majority thus reacts violently against the Christian community as a whole.
2. Christians have isolated themselves from the local cultures and traditions and do not participate in the festivities and celebrations of the majority. The majority thus view them as aliens rather than as citizens, and therefore feel that the Christian minority have no right to live in those countries.

3. The Catholic Church often tends to concentrate in social uplift work among its own community, thus isolating it from the mainstream.
4. Within the Catholic community, fundamentalist groups strongly oppose any change towards a renewed Church. They want to revert to a pre-Vatican II Church. Quite often they become vocal to the extent of dividing the community and thus paralysing the local Church, preventing it from adapting to change in conformity with the needs of the times.

Means of Religious Extremism

Religious extremists resort to the following means to persecute Christians:

1. Pre-planned violence. In most cases of violence, it turns out to have been a pre-planned action, even supported by certain extremist or state functionaries, as in the case of India and Shantinagar in Pakistan.
2. Hate Campaigns. Literature, with a complete distortion of historical facts and packed with lies, is often distributed to justify acts of violence.
3. Discriminatory Laws. Religious extremists, in collaboration with fundamentalist political parties, often manage to corner weak governments to promulgate laws that discriminate against religious minorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Introduce courses on culture and religions in formation houses, training centers and schools.
2. Diocesan and parish communities should work with leaders of other religious and social groups to develop common platforms of working together.
3. Participate in each other's festivals and join hands with them in solving common problems.
4. Build bridges between different Christian denominations through common prayer services, joint action for the promotion of human rights and development activities.
5. Develop and strengthen pastoral and parish councils within the next five years, thus empowering various groups such as women, the youth, etc., and promoting vocations to the priesthood and the religious life.
6. Promote human rights of all people, regardless of caste, color, creed or religion by raising our voices against all such violations.

14. FORMATION OF CHRISTIAN VALUES IN ASIA THROUGH EDUCATION

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92n

VISION

The new way of being Church in Asia calls for a new evangelization.

CHALLENGES

This challenges us to inculcate and promote human and religious values in our educational programs. Media education is needed for formation in values. Learning should be participative and lead to making choices. This can be promoted through interdisciplinary studies. There is a need to develop learning communities. Education should be ongoing. Creativity should be fostered by means of appreciation of beauty through different art forms. This would promote a sense of mystery. There is a greater openness to others that lead a greater respect for other religions as well. Need for interreligious dialogue is also felt.

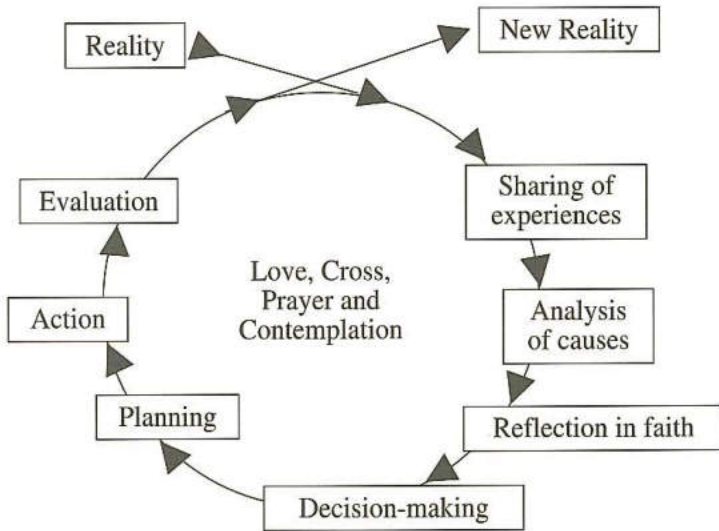
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Values to be fostered are, first of all, self-awareness. The senses, imagination, EQ and IQ should be developed. There must be training in critical thinking in the search of truth.
2. Social awareness must also be fostered by the critical use of media. Option for the poor and solidarity must be promoted.
3. So also, respect for creation and ecology must be taught. The culture of life must be instilled. This includes a respect for life and human dignity, peace, justice and human rights.
4. Community building is necessary. This calls for self-transcendence, a spirit of service, training for a leadership which works for the common good. We must stress the need to share resources, and especially to provide adequate finance for education programs.
5. Openness to the transcendent must be fostered through appreciation of beauty which leads to a sense of mystery and respect for creation and life. In this, the use of symbols and images finds a place.
6. Spirituality will result and lead to prayer and contemplation, in silence and solitude. Respect for other religions and interfaith dialogue will help us journey together in our quest for God. This will enable us to find the meaning of life and discover our God-given vocation. A simple lifestyle will then be appreciated.
7. The methodology to be adopted in the formation of values must be a multilevel approach: formal, non-formal, informal. It should be ongoing.

ing, as well. The strategies should be inter-disciplinary and embrace the total person (mind, heart and will). The Pastoral Spiral must be used.

THE PASTORAL SPIRAL

Analysis of causes (personal and structural)
 Sharing of experiences
 Reflection in faith
 (Silence, prayer, contemplation)
 Decision-making
 Planning
 Action: personal and social
 Evaluation
 At the heart of the Pastoral Spiral:



We recommend to the FABC - OESC the organization of a seminar that will prepare participants in the implementation of the afore-said methodology.

15. ASIAN LOCAL CHURCHES IN MISSION AD GENTES

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92o

VISION

- The concrete mission reality of individual countries provides a contemporary opportunity to begin an overall reevaluation of mission *ad gentes* and *ad exteros*: Mongolia, Vietnam, Philippines, Thailand, India, Bangladesh, and Taiwan.
- There is a wide variety of new challenges, successes, and difficulties.
- There is a new and constant challenge to create an evangelizing and missionary local Church.
- There is an acceptance of the reality that missionary activity *ad gentes* is waning, demanding a new analysis of the reasons why evangelical fervor is lessening (e.g. materialism, unauthentic witness of church members, seminary orientation, etc.).

CHALLENGES

- The theological-missiological factors which affect commitment in Asia to mission *ad gentes*.
- The concrete life experiences of mission in Asia.
- Elements for the renewal of *ad gentes* mission:
 - * Renewed conviction, courage, and daring needed
 - * Inner renewal and conversion is all needed
 - * Better attempts at Christian life-witness
 - * Need to actually GO OUT and meet people where they are
 - * Explore new forms of *ad gentes* mission

RECOMMENDATIONS

The fact that “missionary activity specifically directed “to the nations” (*ad gentes* and *ad exteros*) appears to be waning” (*Redemptoris Missio*, 2), should be acknowledged and recognized to be true also in Asia. In order to invite the local Churches to renew their missionary commitment, we propose these specific recommendations:

- Each and every Christian to strive actively to reach out to all people (both Christians and non-Christians) in their areas of responsibility (e.g., parish, school, hospital), avoiding a “Christians-only” approach to ministry, or a “maintenance” (not missionary) view of being Church in Asia.
- Each local Church to engage in theological-missiological renewal to understand more clearly the meaning and implications of key elements of theology (proclamation, dialogue, Kingdom, Jesus, Holy Spirit). Should ambiguities and contradictions remain, these adversely affect missionary

effectivity. Some ordinary examples are: counterposing Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit's role in salvation history; opposing the Kingdom of God and Jesus' Kingdom; viewing dialogue and proclamation as opposing elements in the Church's one mission of evangelization.

- Bishop's conferences and local bishops to promote the establishment of missionary associations/societies that recruit, train, send and sustain missionary personnel (men, women, laity, youth) specifically dedicated to ad gentes mission. Asian local churches are invited to implement Ecclesia in Asia, 44d, concerning missionary societies.
- All church resources (personnel, institutions, structures) need to be renewed and placed at the service of mission. They must again focus on their original charism and foundational purpose, emphasizing the centrality of evangelization.
- Various concrete initiatives for sharing personnel and resources, as well as new forms of missionary cooperation (e.g., short-term missionaries, Fidei Donum priests, "twinning" of dioceses) should be explored.
- The study of missiology is essential in all seminaries.

16. HUMAN VALUES AND THE PURSUIT OF A FULL HUMANITY IN ASIA

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92p

VISION

In the fragile cultures of marginalized peoples, both rural and urban, we encounter human integrity at its most pristine. And yet, tribal values are fragmenting in the clash with global capitalism. Market Globalization is the final triumph of economics over human culture the victory of the market over humanism.

It would seem that in many of our Churches, we have joined the mainstream of society and been strongly influenced in accepting globalized values without much resistance (more is better, big is better, fast is better, beautiful is better, youthful is better...) in the name of efficiency, high profile, and being with the people. In this process we have tended to neglect the more basic human values of traditional, rural communities: solidarity, concern with each other in sharing resources and harmony with nature.

Intercommunal conflict revolves around economic injustice and political authoritarianism among marginalized peoples, whose root-identities are fragmenting. As traditions weaken, so only those values we actively opt for and promote will flourish.

There is at the moment reasonable good relationships among religious leaders. However, there are no grassroots interreligious projects based on

human values which are universally accepted. We need to come together, think together and work together to create an atmosphere of informality and genuine personal friendships between various religious groups.

VISION

To survive the commodification of society and the reduction of human values to the utilitarian, the Church needs to reposition itself, not so much as a religious institution with a set of prescribed laws and regulations, but rather as a spiritual movement, a dynamic expression of the deepest values within the human heart and Asian cultures. In our life and work, we need to draw out - and draw together - the core, inspirational values of the Gospel and of marginalized peoples.

We need to become interreligious and human communities working together for human causes, and thus appreciating the religious beliefs and sentiments of one another, thus breaking down the walls of suspicion, prejudice and conflicts, and so better serving human needs.

We need to become learning communities based on respect for basic human dignity, and the development of the power to reflect critically on the self, the situation and future growth and take responsibility for this growth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Formation in Values: (Linked to workshop No.92n, "Education and Imparting Christian Values.") That people learn to reflect critically on formation programs within the parish (BECs), using the three levels of evaluation, namely, the material, the intellectual and the spiritual.
2. Tribal Values in a Globalized World: (Linked to workshops No.92f "Migrant Workers and Refugees"; No.92g "Indigenous/Tribal Peoples"; No.92l "Justice and Peace")
That dioceses consistently support those working for greater freedom, democracy, and a compassionate humanity, in particular those participating in movements where a majority are followers of other faith-traditions (interfaith humanism.)
3. Human Values and Inter-religious Collaboration: (Linked to workshop No.92k "Interreligious Dialogue").
That we stress common human values in all branches of catechesis and other formation programs (No.92p).

"... and the Word was made flesh" (Jn. 1:14). God, in Christ, through his humanity, sends the Spirit to work in human realities.

17. THE ASIAN IMAGE OF JESUS: BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL, CATECHETICAL AND LITURGICAL RENEWAL

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92q

VISION

The task of presenting the Asian image of Jesus involves both the life and mission of the Church. It is the image of Jesus reflected in the face of the Church, which will be an authentic and integral face for Asia to behold. The Church needs to be seen as a community that discovers the presence of God and God's Spirit in the realities of Asia. Asia wants to see Christ as affirming the Asian identity and fulfilling the Asia aspirations. Christ should not appear to come to cancel the mysterious action of the Spirit in the rich cultures and religions of Asia. Christ and his Church should be presented as God-centered and Kingdom-centered, in solidarity with the struggling masses of Asia. Such an image will be in tune with Asia's deep quest for experiencing the Divine and the resultant interiority, and appealing to the sensibilities of Asia.

CHALLENGES

The challenge for the Church in the third millennium is HOW to proclaim Jesus in a way that is respectful of Asia sensibilities and religious traditions as well as relevant to the rapidly changing socio-political and economic realities of the Asian countries.

Presenting the Asian image of Jesus boils down to applying rigorously the principle of inculturation to every area of Church's life. In this process, the entire people of God must be involved (EA, n.21).

The Asian image of Jesus demands a shift in our pedagogy. The evocative pedagogy used by the (Asian) Jesus should be preferred to the doctrinal and abstract. Stories, images, symbols, parables, myths, chanting of sacred texts etc., should become the primary medium, as is emphasized in *Ecclesia in Asia* (20), with a clear focus on the experience of life and of God. In this connection, the story of Jesus and the image etched in those stories should get priority. Then, Jesus' God-centered (or Abba-centered) and kingdom-centered life and ministry will become attractive to the Asian heart, in which the inner-religious and the socio-cultural dialogue will better converge.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This vision of the presentation of Jesus Christ bearing an Asian countenance appealing to the minds and hearts of our peoples demands that we

take certain concrete steps with immediate effect. We believe that the following proposals will prove helpful to promote the Asian image of Jesus Christ strongly recommended by the Holy Father in *Ecclesia in Asia*.

1. The Post-Synodal apostolic exhortation should be circulated among the faithful in their own languages. Helpful study guides and commentaries should also be provided. This will help communicate the vision of a Jesus with an Asian face to all the peoples of Asia.
2. At national and diocesan levels pastoral plans should be drawn up to implement the programs and recommendations proposed in *Ecclesia in Asia* in the immediate future.
3. Appropriate formation should be imparted to those engaged in the apostolate in the pastoral ministry of the Church and in the promotion of evangelization.
4. The role of the priests being of pivotal importance in the promotion of the Church's evangelical ministry, priests and seminarians need to be equipped with suitable training. This will facilitate the process of theologizing in the context of the people and their lives.
5. The establishment of a center for the promotion of Asian culture under the aegis of the FABC will give a momentum to the process of shaping an inculturated Church truly in line with the ethos of the people of this continent so rich in its ancient, and enduring, cultures and spirituality.
6. Experiential, meditative and prayerful reading of the Bible should be assiduously promoted at personal, group and community levels. Such a dialogical-collective reading of the word of God will lead to an enriched appreciation of God's revelation in his word and world.
7. Asia is known for the family values, respect for elders, and for the transmission of religiosity and faith through parents and grand-parents. Therefore, in the present times when the family is increasingly being threatened, prayers, devotions, meditations, catechesis be encouraged in the home of our people.
8. Inculturated celebrations, festivals, reading of the word of God in small Christian communities be organized.

A concerted effort should also be made to promote basic human communities to share spiritual experience and undertake common activity for justice, peace and integrity of creation, and particularly for the upliftment of the needy and the poor.

9. To give a fillip to the process of inculturation, it is necessary to provide models. For this, pilot projects should be undertaken. Besides, experimentation centers should be set up at the diocesan and national levels.

18. THE CHRISTIAN DUTY OF ADVOCACY FOR TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIETY

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92r

The members of the workshop made it clear that the workshop deliberations took into account the nature of FABC, with one of its characteristics being a reflection body of the Church. Also that when something is being considered for advocacy, those who are the subjects of advocacy should be informed/educated concerning the stance taken. This avoids any kind of arbitrary approach to advocacy. Moreover, advocacy is always preceded by an enquiry that enables the producing of a precise formulation of the contents of that which is being advocated, as well as of the means adopted.

VISION: THE CONTEXTUAL REALITY

Political Reality

Asia is free of external colonizers, with a clear shift towards democracy and democratic forms of governance in most of the Asian countries. All these countries do not follow one model of democracy but a number of variations. But as democracy has spread, it has also thinned. There is the tendency towards centralization of power and decision-making. There is the reality of pervasive corruption at various levels of governance.

Social Reality

Under the influence of globalization, urbanization is accelerated with important consequences. There is an exodus of women and young people toward mega-cities, emptying the rural areas. On the other hand, mega-cities with their own demands are creating divided societies, with the poor servicing the formal economy through informal channels and creating/expanding slums. Often they face eviction, upsetting their precarious livelihood. The global economy is also causing an increasing migration of women and men both within Asia as well as to the West. This causes the multiplication of one-parent families in which the children bear the brunt of this social desintegration.

The growing notorious behaviour of elite youth was noted in some of the Asian countries, who are a law unto themselves, devoid of any moral values. The role of the professional was also given consideration at the social level, particularly their practices, often lacking ethical values at the

level of policy-taking. There appears to be a dichotomy between the religious practice and work ethics. At times, their practice of religion seems to be devoid of social concerns.

The emergency of civil society in the social space, providing a framework for advocacy at distinct levels of society, including the political realm of governance. There is demand for good governance that is accountable, democratic and transparent. The civil society has provided the space for negotiation between the government and the market. It has the potential towards expanding the democratic space, thereby influencing governance.

Economic Reality

Policies dictated by the IMP and WB are devoid of a human face and a social dimension. Increasing commercialization of basic services to their own people are devoid like health, energy, education, transport, etc; an ever-widening inequality in terms of wages, labor conditions, human security, etc.; national economies cannot survive independently, or design their own development. Some of the Asian countries are already giving up food security in exchange for global trade. There is a growing exploitation of cheap labor with very limited channels for rectifying the injustices. There is growing unemployment, especially among the youth without any form of social safety nets.

Under the supervision of WTO, markets are dumping any number of consumer goods, creating demands. Increasingly, these demands are consciously promoted through the mass media, developing certain kinds of consumer tastes, and at times creating wants which may even be harmful to health.

Ecological Reality

There is a steady deteriorating trend towards degradation of our environment through a whole combination of factors like uncontrolled pollution, poverty, deforestation, etc. Some of the Asian countries are dumping grounds for toxic wastes, production platforms of hazardous industries and industrialization without environmental standards.

Common Good

Keeping in focus can the Church's social teaching with specific reference to the common good, become the natural premises for advocacy? It has to focus around the importance of the human person. The God-experience in all its social dimension, especially when that God has to be Asian. What kind of relationship is there between God and Asian societies? Where does society ground its claims? How do we communicate the Catholic Social Teaching in an applicable format? How do we interpret the Good Samaritan in our contemporary situations?

CHALLENGES

Face to Face with Democracy

It is necessary to develop a deep awareness of civil society and its role within the contextual reality, articulating the rights of human persons. Could our BBCs and BHCs as well as Catholic professionals be involved in these processes?

Democracy and Development

How can we promote another model of development which is not market-driven, rather people-centered? We are challenged to re-think development within the Asian context.

It would be worthwhile for the FABC-OHD to re-think more contextually what constitutes development in the Asian reality. This would involve study, research and expertise. How to bring together democracy and development in this sense? What kind of social teaching could be formulated that is Asian and relevant? Whether this could generate a culture of solidarity, fostering new partnerships within civil society? How to construct a society that is not ruled by market forces alone?

Building Up Peace

Disarmament becomes as a priority issue beginning with banning landmines and preventing the increasing proliferation of small arms. A critical challenge would be conflict prevention as well as conflict resolution that would lead to peace building. A central question to be faced would be whether the Asian religions, including Christianity are contributing toward building up peace?

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Strategies for Advocacy

Advocacy is understood as pleading for or speaking on behalf of someone, something rather very specific, depending upon the subject of advocacy, the issue and the recipient audience. It also addresses the related questions of where and how, as well as the stages involved. In this connection, it is a collective process, where you are not standing alone. It can also be done, individually, where other voices are silent. It is also understood as shared responsibility, depending upon the level from which it originates. Bishops can have a key role in advocacy, being at the leadership level. Necessarily, it includes formation, acquisition of skills, pooling of resources and forward-looking strategies.

- At the level of FABC, advocacy for transformation, in the contemporary reality of Asia, occupies a central role, demanding concerted ef-

fort. It is an integral component of evangelization. The bishops' conferences that constitute the FABC should take up the role of advocacy for the common good, depending upon the prevailing circumstances.

- The seven Offices of FABC should synchronize themselves closely in an interconnected way in carrying out advocacy for transformation of society.
- Particularly, it would be important for the Office of Human Development to look at advocacy and its many implications in order to organize the program on advocacy that would enable bishops to be aware of various channels and mechanisms available for advocacy at the national, regional and international levels, such as UN, IMP, World Bank, WTO, etc. Various existing Church advocacy bodies, such as justice and peace commissions and Catholic lay organizations, which has expertise in advocacy are to be invited to get involved in the organization process.
- Similarly, just as the mass media play a pivotal role in civil society, the Office of Social Communication has an assistant role in canvassing and disseminating that which is being advocated. Here, given the conditions in Asia, particularly the large numbers below the poverty line, the printed media occupies an important slot in building up popular opinion. This is essential to advocacy.
- Advocacy is not a mono-channel process. Let the FABC and its constituents pool their resources - personnel/infrastructures - are available. There are the specific roles that can be exercised within this common strategy by the international Catholic organizations, as well as by the BCCs/BHCs. Advocacy is not a single option process.
- Some essential elements go toward building up advocacy for transformation. In that sense, it is a learning and listening process calling for renewal. It also revolves around the mediational reflection of "will the Church dare to advocate?" This essentially means formation with specific goals and skills, the choice of language used, a awareness of mechanisms available to speak for an intensive collaboration with like-minded groups that make up civil society.
- Advocacy should be brought into the formation for priesthood in seminaries, and in religious houses of women and men.
- Advocacy is especially effective at parish and diocesan levels, along with others. Being rooted locally, advocacy acquires much greater credibility.

- In today's globalized order, what is local is equally global. Both State and non-State actors are sensitive to various forms of advocacy. In fact, nation-states are very much vulnerable to the emerging global human rights' mechanisms, message, to which national governments pay attention increasingly.
- Concluding, the workshop draws the attention of FABC to what is being advocated in *Ecclesia in Asia* "the service for human promotion," particularly "the dignity of the human person." And equally important is religious freedom, within the framework of human rights.

An Immediate Pastoral Recommendation

Taking into account the reflection and suggestions above, we recommend that the competent bodies of the FABC, such as OHD, organize the "Bishops' Institute for Christian Advocacy (BICA)," to implement the proposals made at this workshop.

19. A NEW ECUMENICAL VISION FOR A NEW MILLENNIUM

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92s

VISION

Unity and Mission

In his Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Asia*, Pope John Paul II not only urges the Churches in Asia to work together to build Christian unity, but he also presents the underlying theological motivation for ecumenical engagement. "Ecumenical dialogue," he states, "is a challenge and a call to conversion for the whole Church, especially for the Church in Asia where people expect from Christians a clearer sign of unity. The division among Christians," the Pope continues, "is seen as a counter-witness to Jesus Christ by many in Asia who are searching for harmony and unity through their own religions and cultures (EA, 30)." Thus, ecumenical dialogue aims at "unity for mission." The divisions among the Churches prevent the unity of love and action which Jesus Christ desired for his disciples from being visible to neighbors of other faiths or to people of no religious commitment. In order to carry out effectively the mission which Christ handed on to his disciples, the Churches must seek to express their unity in bearing witness to the mandate of the Risen Lord.

CHALLENGES

What is involved in the Movement for Christian unity? Although the Churches in Asia have not usually experienced open conflict among them-

selves, nevertheless, deeply-rooted prejudices and feelings of estrangement and animosity too often characterize their relations. A first step toward Christian unity is to seek to overcome, through study and personal contact, negative preconceptions inherited from previous generations. At the same time, Christians need to discover common elements of their one faith in Christ as a basis for common action and witness in Asian societies. These efforts should lead to reconciliation and healing of the historical divisions among the Churches.

At its Sixth Plenary Assembly in Manila in 1995, the FABC approved the creation of the Asian Ecumenical Committee (AEC) as a joint project with the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA). In the same year, the CCA ratified the agreement at their Tenth General Assembly in Colombo, and the AEC was given the mandate to organize joint programs to promote Christian unity in Asia. The Seventh FABC Plenary Assembly supports the following proposals of the AEC which identify three areas to which priority must be given in the context of Christian life in Asia today.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ecumenical Formation. If ecumenism is to become a part of community life of the Church in Asia, and not merely the concern of theologians and specialists, ecumenical formation must be considered a first priority. For this reason, the Pope encouraged the bishops of Asia to “provide adequate formation for ecumenical dialogue in the curriculum of seminaries, houses of formation and educational institutions” (EA, 30). In order to reach the grassroots, ecumenical formation programs should be carried out in every diocese and locality. As a concrete step towards fostering such programs, the AEC proposes a series of regional formation programs aimed at preparing animators who can facilitate national and diocesan ecumenical formation programs.
- Theological Study. One of the pressing needs of the Churches in Asia is theological reflection. In recent years, the Catholic Church has signed important theological statements together with other Churches. Well known are The gift of Authority with the Anglicans, and the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification with the Lutherans and others with Methodists, Evangelicals, Pentecostals, and Orthodox. However, most of these documents had not been much studied in Asia. The AEC proposes that the Theological Concerns Offices of FABC and CCA provide an opportunity for Church leaders and theologians to study these documents in greater depth and reflect together on their implications for ecumenical realities in Asia. Ecumenical programs for theological students and jointly-sponsored Biblical conventions should be promoted as opportunities for common theological reflection.

- New Ecumenical Associations for a New Millennium. A key obstacle to ecumenical unity is the lack of effective ecumenical associations between the Catholic Church and other Christian Churches. In *Ecclesia in Asia*, the Pope called upon the bishops of Asia “to join in a process of prayer and consultation in order to explore the possibilities of new ecumenical structures and associations to promote Christian unity” (EA, 30). The Christian Conference of Asia, in their 1990 General Assembly in Manila, committed themselves to work for ecumenical association with the Catholic Church that would take concrete form in continental, regional, and national structures. The FABC Ecumenical Desk and the CCA propose to respond to these appeals by holding an Asian consultation to explore models of ecumenical association for the new millennium. The consultation, entitled “The Third Asia Movement for Christian Unity” (AMCU III), which is to be held in early 2001, is meant to provide the bishops and leaders of other Churches with information about various models of ecumenical association, and to evaluate critically the advantages and disadvantages of each. In this way, it is hoped that the bishops and Church leaders will be able to make well-informed decisions about the most appropriate forms of ecumenical association at the national and diocesan levels.
- Week of Prayer. As the Pope emphasized in his 1994 encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*, true unity is a gift of the Spirit which can only be obtained through prayer in common. For this reason, the Apostolic Exhortation encourages the bishops of Asia to promote the week of prayer for Christian unity and to “set up and oversee ecumenical centres of prayer and dialogue.” (EA, 30)

20. WORKING PROFESSIONALS IN SECULAR DIALOGUE

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92t

VISION

The Church in the Secular Dialogue for a Humane and Just Asia. The Church’s magisterium has underlined “the need of authentic and integral development of the human person” (EA, 32). And all those who are directly or indirectly involved in human development as professionals of whatever category or business persons must be made to understand that development “is never a merely technical or economic question; it is fundamentally a humane and moral question” (EA, 32).

CHALLENGES

Specialization in various fields has left most of the Catholics profes-

sionals only with the minimum knowledge of catechism learnt in school, and have not afforded them with opportunities to deepen their faith, leave alone becoming conversant with the Social Doctrine of the Church. Therefore, there is a felt need, especially for lay men and women with responsibilities in public life, for an adequate formation in these teachings (social doctrine), so that they can inspire and vivify civil society and its structure with the leaven of the gospel" (EA, 32).

The Church's task of promoting justice, peace and human development, as well as safeguarding human rights, will be effective when the root-causes are discovered and removed. Development must also be given a human face. All these stand a chance of being realized to a greater degree only when policy makers and planner and executives are properly informed and motivated about the human and moral side of professional careers or service. It is here that the Catholic professionals, politicians, business persons, technocrats, executives and others have their mission.

The first obligation as Catholic professionals is to allow their faith to bear upon their career, thereby bearing witness among their own ranks and counterparts, and their clients, customers or beneficiaries.

The secular world can be effectively renewed from within by those who are engaged in secular affairs. Being men and women recognized in society, they must also transcend their own limited professional areas and make a contribution towards betterment of the society by taking up social and moral issues. Their voice will be heard specially when it comes to lobbying in higher circles for justice, peace and human development.

The pastors must also allow the professionals to enrich the Church by their expertise, guidance and experience.

Let the Catholic professionals realize that they need to open the doors of their board rooms or chambers to Christ the Lord of humanity to renew or sanctify the temporal order. (Vat II. AA. and CFL).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That dioceses and the bishops' conferences take special interest in organizing Catholic business persons and professionals in order to help them live their vocation and mission in the Church and world.
- That the FABC Office of Laity open up a desk for Catholic professionals for formation and animation

21. PRAYER AND CONTEMPLATION AS THE SOURCE OF RENEWAL OF THE CHURCH AND ITS MISSION OF LOVE AND SERVICE IN ASIA

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 92u
FABC Paper No. 72a

VISION

Asia is the continent where all the great religions were born. Its “peoples manifest the sense of spiritual values dominating the thoughts of their sages and the lives of the vast multitudes” (Pope Paul VI, Manila 1970).

Owing to rapid industrialization and the widespread use of media, secularization is on the increase, and we are witnessing the promotion of the secular without the sacred, of reason without faith, of the human without the divine, of nature without grace and freedom without responsibility. “Peoples tend to lose their sense of God, the sense of his presence in the world, and his providence over their lives.”

Yet on the positive side we see a hunger for God and a renewed interest in religion and traditional cultural values and identities which are endangered by the global, homogenizing culture.

CHALLENGES

The Church is challenged to answer this hunger for God and the renewed interest in traditional values and cultural identities. It is “most important ... to restore and create spaces for silence and worship in the lives of believing men and women ... within contemporary (Asian) society” (FABC 72a, 1995). “The Church in Asia must become more and more fully a true community of prayer, a deeply praying community, whose contemplation is inserted within the context of our time and the cultures of our (Asian) peoples today” (FABC II Calcutta 1978, n.22).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Prayer is the breathing of the Church, and just as we need to breathe continually in order to live, so also we need to pray without ceasing. The Jesus prayer, practiced by the early Desert Fathers, helps to unite us with God and also to heal. Though it is a private prayer, it helps us to pray liturgically with devotion.
- The spirit of contemplation should pervade all aspects of Christian life. Contemplation is prayer par excellence. The contemplative life is tes-

timony that God alone suffices. It has an absolute value in itself. Centers of contemplative life should be promoted. They help society. Many people approach contemplative communities for light and strength..

- In the liturgy the sense of mystery and richness of symbols need to be rediscovered and retained. There should be no question of separation of liturgy from life. Besides the liturgy, due importance should be given also to popular devotions, communitarian and individual prayer. To foster a sense of reverence in worship, sacred places and objects (books, vestments etc.) should be treated with respect.
- One reason why prayer is neglected is that modern mindset tends to ignore its bases or foundations. We need to foster the attitude of wonder at the mystery of God and a sense of His transcendence. It includes feelings of gratitude to God for His gifts on which we depend. Even suffering should be understood as a gift to draw us closer to God.
- A strong religious experience of encounter with God can convert us to a life of faith and a love for prayer. This could come from inspiring examples of individuals or communities who pray, be they religious or lay. In some places, bishops spend one night each week in prayer with the people. Behind the people's power (called the EDSA Resolution) in the Philippines is the power of prayer and the strong belief of the faithful in the presence and protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary in all their struggles. Such models should be held up for inspiration so as to nourish faith and bring us near to God. Our Pope John Paul II serves as a very good model of a man of prayer.
- We recommend the use of the psalms. The various situations of prayer (joy or sorrow, intercession or gratitude, repentance or forgiveness) may not always resonate with our personal needs, but we still pray them for the whole community or Church. It helps to make us social and less selfish.
- Prayers and devotions done as duties during one's seminary years or in formation houses may not last, unless we experience the love of God for us and enter into a deep, growing, personal, intimate relationship with Him. We must feel that God is alive and present, and that we can meet Him in prayer, Scripture reading, and the liturgy. God should be experienced as the source of our being and our work.
- Mere human effort or human love cannot compete with God. We must instead be open to receive his Grace. He should be sought within, as he lives in our hearts. We must surrender ourselves completely to him. Sometimes, when we are defeated, we are led to prayer. Then, in this

self-surrender, we encounter God, and our life will not remain the same. We need this grace or “visit from above.” Some people have no personal relation with God and therefore live in a secular way, with no thirst to prayer or life of faith. We should enable people to encounter God so that they may be motivated to do pastoral work in various ministries, with the Christlike spirit of love and service.

- In the 1960s and 70s social activists had no time for prayer, and excused themselves by saying, “My work is prayer.” The other extreme was found in people who were closed to the world and saw no reason to be involved in it. There should be a balance in integral mission, giving due importance to both prayer and work. For those engaged in social action, we recommend the use of Pastoral Spiral (FABC Paper No. 92n) the heart of which is love, the cross, prayer and contemplation. The sequence of steps is: the sharing of experiences, analysis of causes (personal and structural), reflection in faith, decision-making, planning, action (personal and social), and evaluation.
- It is recommended that we encourage small groups for prayer and study of the word of God. Here people can find close personal relationship and sense of belonging and participation.
- Scripture should be taught in our seminaries in such a way that it nourishes future priest’s prayer life and his love for Scripture reading. Even lay people, who study the Scriptures in a simple, practical way (AsIPA, Joy of Discovery, etc.), tend to love the bible and nourish their prayer with it. Two bibles found useful by lay groups are the Philippine Community Bible and the African Bible.

During formation years, too much pastoral work should be avoided. It could be kept for the holidays so as to give more time for formation in prayer and contemplation. It is important that the students make the journey from the head to the heart.

CONCLUSION

Inspired by Mary Our Mother and our model of contemplation (Luke 2:19, 51), we should strive to develop an appreciation of the fundamental dimensions of Christian prayer. Rooted in communion with the Triune God, in close fellowship with his people, we draw our nourishment from the Eucharist, so as to reach out in love and service to all our brothers and sisters, especially the least of them.

22. YOUNG ADULTS IN THE RENEWED CHURCH OF ASIA

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 72f

VISION

Youth is a complex reality who needs to be understood against the background of the present social, economic, political, environmental, cultural, and spiritual realities which affect youth and which are affected by all the realities of life. Last few years, our world has been experiencing a swift and drastic changes that imagined before. The impact of globalization, political changes, media influence, featuring Internet technology, greatly affect youth lives, no matter how and where we live. Urban and rural, poor and rich, educated and uneducated, employed and unemployed as well as organized and unorganized, youth are on the front line, washed by the new wave. There is a cry for help from the youth to the church and we need to response to it urgently because youth are the reality of today, not only the hope of tomorrow!

Youth is a source of energy and vitality of the society as well as in the Church and at the same time, youth are the most vulnerable part, who are always victimized by the structural sins:

Individual Level

- * Insecure and uncertainty

Media Level

- * Overwhelming effect of media on youth

Social Level

- * Communication gap that lead to isolation and alienation
- * The family ties broken down.
- * Poverty
- * "necessary" evils (e.g. prostitution)

Economic Level

- * Unemployment
- * Economic crisis
- * Industrialization

Political Level

- * Misuse of religions
- * Ethnic and religious conflicts
- * Victimized (used) by power struggle

Spiritual Level

- * Absence of role models
- * Lack of post confirmation formation
- * Lack of vision on on-going and life-linked faith formation

Cultural Level

- * Identity crisis
- * Tension of continually & change
- * External (alien) influence & pressure

Educational Level

- * Privatized and commercialized education
- * Competition and pressure
- * Value crisis
- * Profit oriented

CHALLENGES

It is absolutely essential not only to do something for youth but to be with the youth because the challenges of the New Millennium are stupendous. They need to be tackled collectively, along with the youth leaders themselves. We also feel hopeful that the New Millennium awaits for us with hope, openness and optimism coming from the very resources of our own youth themselves, especially to deal with the concerns of evangelization, leadership, unemployment, women, empowerment and communal harmony, in order to establish the Kingdom of God based on justice and peace.

The principle of partnership lies in trust, mutual respect, and giving scope to each other for utilizing the capacities and capabilities of the partner. If the Church journeys with youth, then so many new horizons of love and service can evolve and emerge of the partnership in our Mother Asia. The objectives of the Youth Ministry, i.e., fellowship, formation and service, can be realized.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Church (e.g., FABC, episcopal conferences, etc.) has made several statements on the urgency of the youth ministry to promote the spiritual welfare of the youth to respond to the challenges faced by our youth immediately and consistently. Therefore, we recommend FABC establish an Office of Youth, with proper resources and personnel (lay youth animator as a full-timer). This can help:
 - * To support the sub-regional youth networks which are now operative, especially from August 1999 on, i.e., in East Asia, South Asia and South East Asia.

- * To organize sub-regional formation programs on “Youth Leadership for the 3rd Millennium” for youth leaders; and on “Youth Ministry Skills” for youth animators during 2001.
 - * To help prepare an Asian Youth Pastoral Plan based on the National Youth Pastoral Plans.
 - * To do follow-up of the proposals of World Youth Day (WYD) and Asian Youth Day (AYD) until the next FABC Plenary Assembly.
- Many of the youth programs and activities cater mainly to the urban, semi-urban and the church-going youth. However, we have to pay a special attention on youth in all sectors especially, the unorganized youth. So, there is a greater need for networking among the youth commissions, youth organizations, movements, groups and different sectors of society. The youth ministry should involve and be aware of the different concerns of society and the Church, such as the poor, women, indigenous people, migrant workers, refugees, young professionals, the youth of different faiths and the victims of injustice.
 - We need to foster and form more vocations and lay youth animators for building and renewing the Church. The Church needs to encourage more youth to participate in the decision making process at the parish, diocesan and national levels.
 - Church documents (Vatican II, encyclicals, pastoral letters, etc.) need to be simplified for the laity, and especially for the youth.

23. MISSION OF LOVE AND SERVICE IN THE FAMILY

Reference : Workshop Discussion Guide FABC Paper No. 72f

VISION

The Renewal of the Family

- Renewal of the family means: calling the family to a deeper understanding, living and responding to its sublime vocation and pristine duty which is to give, nurture, protect, foster and enrich life at the very sanctuary of life itself.
- That the family is the heritage-bearer of humanity, for the future of humanity passes by way of the family.
- The family is the school for training and imparting human-Christian values and virtues.
- The family is the cradle for faith-formation.
- The family is the first arena for socialization and development of the child.
- The family is the milieu where love and generosity are given expression to.

- It is in the family that sexuality and spirituality offer for the normal and healthy development of the individual - a school for a deeper humanity.
- The family is the potent agent for evangelization.
- The family is the primary milieu when the Gospel is first lived, experienced, shared and witnessed to.
- The family is the only institution that directly cooperates with God in the creation of new life, i.e., couples participate in God's creative power.

CHALLENGES

The Family in Contemporary Asian Context

Threatened by an array of forces such as individualism, hedonism, materialism, consumerism, interference by the state, contraception and technological lifestyle, these forces adversely affect the stability of marriage and family life. Oftentimes, as a result of and an inability to handle these forces, there is a weakening in faith, resulting in the breakdown of relationship within the family, and thereby causing an alarming increase in spousal infidelity, separation between husband and wife, divorce, chemical abuse, violence, broken homes, dysfunctional individuals and, consequently, dysfunctional family life.

The Goal of the Apostolate

- The goal of apostolate is to build God-centered, stable marriages and healthy happy family life.
- This implies engaging in pro-active approaches that help the member of the family and the family as a unit to be rooted in God.
- It is in this rootedness that the family will derive the strength to withstand the pressures, problems and tensions inherent in contemporary society.
- The family will then be able to contribute positively to a genuine understanding and appreciation of the sacredness and dignity of its vocation, which will in turn enhance the quality of its own life and contribute to the renewal of life in the Church, and also enhance the quality of life in the larger society.
- This can be implemented through programs and projects:
 - Prior to marriage:
 - Family life Education, Family catechesis
 - Education in human sexuality
 - Premarriage preparation (remote and proximate)
 - In marriage and family life:
 - Parenting
 - Marriage Enrichment
 - Natural Family Planning
 - Family Spirituality

- Conselling: Pastoral Counselling
Marriage and Family Counselling
- Special Needs of Family
Ministry to divorced and single parents

RECOMMENDATIONS

- We recommend that the proposal made in the Sixth Plenary Assembly of FABC (Manila 1995) to constitute an “Office for the Family,” be considered.
- That wherever it does not exist, each conference of bishops and each diocese, should consider with utmost urgency the effective functioning of the commission for the family at the national and diocesan levels, and that full-time trained persons be appointed to the task.

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FABC Papers:

- No. 90. Emerging Demands of Mission of the Church at the Turn of the Century; the Church as a Servant of Hope for the Peoples of Asia, by Soosai Arokiasamy. A Position Paper for the Seventh Plenary Assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, 2000.
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92. Seventh Plenary Assembly: Workshop Discussion Guides
 - a. Church and Social Communication in Asia, by the FABC Office of Social Communication.
 - b. The Witness of Consecrated Life in Asia Today, by Sr. Julma C. Neo.
 - c. A Renewed Church in Asia: In Solidarity with Women, by Virginia Saldanha.
 - d. Formation for Priesthood in Asia, by Vicente Cajilig.
 - e. Continuing Formation for Priesthood in Asia, by Vicente Cajilig.
 - f. A Renewed Church in Asia. A Mission of Love and Service to Migrant Workers and Refugees in the Third Millennium, by Jigger S. Latoza.

- g. A Renewd Mission of Love and Service to the Indigenous/Tribal Peoples of Asia, by Sebastian Karotemprel.
- h. The Charismatic Movements and Small Church Communities, by Antonio B. de los Reyes.
- i. Gospel-Based Communities Becoming Agents of Change, by Cora Mateo.
- j. Lay Ministries in the Renewed Church of Asia, by Thomas Vijay.
- k. Interreligious Dialogue in Pursuit of Fullness of Life in Asia, by Edmund Chia.
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- m. The Call to a Renewed Church in Asia and the Challenges of Religious Fundamentalism, by John Locke.
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- o. The Church in Mission *ad Gentes*, by Saturnino Dias.
- p. Human Values and the Pursuit of a Full Humanity in Asia, by John Mansford Prior.
- q. The Asian Image of Jesus: Theological, Biblical, Catechetical and Liturgical Renewal, by Jacob Theckanath.
- r. Christian Duty of Advocacy for Transformation of Society, by R. J. Rajkumar.
- s. A New Ecumenical Vision for the New Millennium, by Thomas Michel.
- t. The Role of Working Professionals in Building a Just World, by Anselmo Lee.
- u. Springtime of Holiness: A Continuing Call to Spirituality in Asia, by Arturo M. Bastes.

Additional Workshops:

- 72 f. Young Adults in a Renewed Church, with Jun Hashimoto and Aloysius Tan.
 - g. A Mission of Love to the Family, with Sister Catherine Bernard Haliburn.
- 93. A Renewed Church in Asia: A Mission of Love and Service. The Final Statement of the Seventh Plenary Assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops, 2000.
 - 94. Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia*. The Church in Asia. The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, 1999.
 - 95. A Renewed Church in Asia: Pastoral Directions for a New Decade, a Pastoral Report of the FABC Seventh Plenary Assembly, 2000.

* FABC PAPERS is a project of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC), designed to bring the thinking of Asian experts to a wider audience and to develop critical analysis of the problems facing the Church in Asia from people on the scene. The opinions expressed are those of the author(s) alone and do not necessarily represent the official policies of the FABC or its member Episcopal Conferences. Manuscripts are always welcome and may be sent to: FABC, 16 Caine Road, Hong Kong. *
