

# PROMOTIO JUSTITIAE

## EXCHANGES ECHANGES INTERCAMBIOS

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**\* A GOOD BIT of LUCK**

**\* CONVERSION and OUR MINISTRIES**

Joe Owens, S.J., Honduras

**\* The SOCIAL DIMENSION in the SPIRITUAL EXERCISES**

Paul Caspersz, S.J., Sri Lanka

**\* INTERFAITH DIALOGUE**

Malcolm Rodrigues, S.J., Guyana

**\* TOURISM AWAITING the GOOD NEWS**

James J. Spillane, S.J., Indonesia

**\* INCULTURATION in a POST-MODERN AGE**

Andrés Tornos, S.J., Spain

Geoffrey Williams, S.J., Canada

**\* The CELIBACY of the LORD JESUS and VOCATIONS**

Gabino Uríbarri, S.J., Spain

**\* REVIEW**

Fr. Christopher Prowse, Australia

**\* LETTERS and COMMENTS**

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**Michael Czerny, S.J.**  
**Editor**

Jesus made the paralytic walk, the blind see, the deaf hear ... while we, in our littleness, what can we do? Especially when we are plunged into the void, like Christ on the cross, being nothing anymore, having nothing anymore, possessing nothing anymore ... then let us be like Him: a great heart and hands open. So that everyone who chances to meet us might always loudly declare: oh what luck...!

This is the spiritual experience of a Jesuit who spent nine years in prison and re-education camp. He took part in the 34th General Congregation, and the following prayer, which he wrote in the re-education camp, is the witness he gave.

## A GOOD BIT of LUCK

**Lord**, do with me as You will.

Let me become feet for the lame and hands for the amputee,

eyes for the blind,

ears for the deaf,

a mouth and tongue for the mute,

a voice for those oppressed by injustice.

**Lord**, send me into the rice-paddies.

Let me bring nourishment to the hungry,

water to the thirsty,

medicine to the sick,

clothes to those who go naked,

blankets to those who shiver in the cold.

**Lord**, send me out onto deserted highways.

Let me be a lamp shining upon the steps of those who wander in the night,

a fire warming those grown numb.

Let me witness compassion to those who roam in loneliness,

let me restore dignity to those who are oppressed,

let me offer liberty to those loaded with burdens.

**Lord**, send me off into the farthest reaches of our world.

Let me spread peace among those caught in discord,

serenity to those living in anxiety,

consolation to the brokenhearted,

joy to the aggrieved,

and good fortune to those who lack it.

**Lord, let me be a good chance**  
and bring happiness to all the miserable I encounter on their way.  
**Let fear not hold me back**  
as forward I go on the ocean of life,  
with a heart like a volcano  
and gentle hands like a mother's.

**Lord, make me your instrument to do all this,**  
winning peace and joy in happiness for everyone.  
**As for me, I leave everything in your hands,**  
for You are my God, my Love, and my Reason for living.  
**You give me the fullness of hope in You,**  
so that I may joyfully dwell all my life trusting in You.

**Amen!**

# CONVERSION and OUR MINISTRIES

Joe Owens, S.J.

As we slouch towards the twilight of the second millennium, we find ourselves living in a one-dimensional, monopolar world where all the major decisions seem to have already been made and our main task is simply to work harder to make the prevailing system function better. Under the benign tutelage of the imperia of the United States, Europe and Japan, liberal democracy and free market economy are proposed as the guarantors of a society which will insure justice and prosperity for all. The only remaining enemies are rampant nationalism, raging terrorism, rabid fundamentalism and the increasingly rare resistance put up by fanatics who believe the system is irredeemably depraved.

How are Jesuits to respond today when on a world-wide scale we witness the collapse of living standards, the demise of the public sector and the deterioration of the environment, all of which are contributing to immense human suffering and staggering national and racial tensions? Under what standard do we place ourselves if we want to reject that banner raised high over today's world as "the only reasonable alternative," that of the brave new world order which globalizes and homogenizes everything into a universal market ideology, even while leaving intact the gross inequalities and the forces that irresistibly exacerbate them?

Ever since GC 32 and Decree 4 Jesuits have been struggling with the challenge of making the promotion of justice "the central, permeating and integrative function" in all our ministries. In Latin America, where the bishops have made the preferential option for the poor an important criterion of authentic church work, Jesuits have been further impelled to orient their ministries towards the promotion of justice. A Jesuit working in Central America put the case with utmost urgency:

Today, more so than twenty-five years ago, the main apostolic challenge facing the Society of Jesus is the one which flows from the major fact of our times, the growing impoverishment of our brothers and sisters the poor, which is already tending to become their historical, structural exclusion. I mean the plunder of their lives, the obvious failure of their historic projects, and consequently the fatal assaults upon their hope, their solidarity and, at the same time, their faith. This is the greatest 'desolation' which confronts us.<sup>1</sup>

Jesuits working in Third World countries or involved in direct social action are sometimes able to see clearly the connections between their work, the promotion of justice, and the struggle of the poor. Nonetheless, for many Jesuits who live in developed countries and work in educational or pastoral ministries that do not deal directly with the poor, the justice imperative has often been problematic and perplexing. Those ministering in schools or parishes with a mainly middle-class membership are often strained to relate their work to the plight of the inner-city poor or the starving masses of Africa. Valiant efforts are made in many places, but the inner relationship between the immediate ministry and the larger justice often remains poorly articulated.

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<sup>1</sup> Juan Hernández Pico, S.J., in *PJ* 52 (August 1993).

In July 1992, the "César Jerez" Seminar brought together for the first time Latin American Jesuits working in what are considered the three major apostolic traditions of the Society:

- educational ministry,
- social research and action, and
- pastoral and retreat ministry.

Reflection on the relationship among these different kinds of ministry and the relation of all of them to Decree Four has inspired the present essay, which seeks to explore how these three types of apostolate might be related to the three kinds of **conversion** which Bernard Lonergan, S.J., delineates in *Method in Theology* (1972), and how the whole concept of conversion might help us to overcome some of the confusion and controversy concerning the relation of our work to the promotion of justice.

### Conversion

As described by Lonergan, conversion is essentially a person's withdrawal from inauthenticity and growth in authenticity. It is the result not of gradual development, but of an abrupt change of course or direction. Conversion involves an upheaval in one's outlook, a radical change in the way one regards reality, morality and religion. It is a fundamental and momentous change in the personality, bringing about a profound transformation of the subject and his world. Conversion involves a deliberate determination about whom or what we are for and whom or what we are against; it requires a fully conscious decision about our horizon and our worldview. Conversion is an about-face and a new beginning which is existential, intensely personal and utterly intimate, but which is not solitary; in fact it may be shared and become communal, even historical. Further, despite its drastic effects, conversion is a prolonged process, a life-long task which is never permanent, always precarious.

For Lonergan conversion occurs on three different planes: the intellectual, the moral and the religious. Each can be given independently of the others, though there is naturally a dynamic tendency for each to call forth the others. All three types of conversion involve a transcendence of self.

Intellectual conversion is cognitional self-transcendence, a radical openness to understanding and truth. For Lonergan it consists essentially in rejecting the inauthenticity of the millennia-old epistemological myths concerning reality, objectivity and knowledge. His major work *Insight* (1957) is a prolonged in-depth exploration of how to overcome these myths and develop a transcendental method which allows all persons of good will to engage in a common universe of discourse — an ideal from which the modern world seems to be receding at an increasing speed.

Moral conversion is ethical self-transcendence, a radical openness to values over mere satisfactions when these conflict. It requires discernment of the truly good and brings about the clear realization that it is we who must decide what to make of ourselves and our world. From the viewpoint of the promotion of justice, this kind of conversion seems to be critical. It might even be called "social" conversion, since it endows us with an unshakeable conviction about the inestimable beauty and value of human beings no matter what their state or condition, and it energizes us to seek to create a world where that beauty and value are allowed to develop in untrammelled and equitable fashion.

Religious conversion is for Lonergan the efficacious ground of all self-transcendence, a radical openness to what he calls being-in-love unrestrictedly. It involves being grasped by ultimate

concern, and it moves towards complete transformation of all one's living and feeling. It is a transcendental falling-in-love that entails a dynamic self-surrender to the experienced goodness of the ground of the universe and, specifically for Lonergan, God's gift of love.

### Threefold Conversion for Threefold Ministry

It would not do violence to Lonergan's three types of conversion to consider them as corresponding to the threefold classification of apostolates (educational, social and pastoral) which served as a parameter for the 1992 meeting of Latin American Jesuits:

- 1) Our educational ministry would be geared toward intellectual conversion, radical openness to truth.
- 2) Our social action and research would be oriented towards moral conversion, especially in the sense of total commitment to the struggle for justice.
- 3) Our pastoral work, especially giving the Exercises, would be aimed at helping people towards religious conversion, complete openness and availability to God.

Clearly, each type of ministry would ultimately seek to promote all three kinds of conversion, since there are organic ties between them all. Thus, a university would necessarily seek not just intellectual conversion in its members, but moral and religious conversion as well. What is important is that conversion be considered a conscious goal of our work, not just formation. The principal measure for the success of our educational institutions should not be so much the platoons of well-trained professionals they produce, but the companies of radically prophetic servants of God and His people.

Within the omniscient world order that relentlessly imposes itself upon the planet, what do Jesuits hope to achieve as we run our many schools, parishes, retreat houses and social apostolates? Do we seek to form minds that are at the ready service of society's dominant forces, or do we try rather to nurture intellects who radically question the very grounds of society's structure? Do we strive to fashion charitable folk who are kind to neighbours and animals, or do we dare to inspire bold souls who will traverse oceans and continents for the cause of the forsaken and forgotten? Do we labour to cultivate pious church-goers who are devout and dutiful, or do we seek first to awaken impassioned spirits who are willing to abandon all to work for the community of the coming kingdom?

### Conversion, not just Formation

When we speak of educational or pastoral work, we often describe its goal as "formation": formation of good citizens, committed Christians, competent professionals, solid families, strong communities, etc. No doubt formation is an essential aim of all our work, but another goal which gives meaning to formation and may even be said to make it effective is **conversion**. While formation is a slow building process, conversion is a radical change of mind, heart or spirit. Although formation is necessary and good, accumulation of formation does not guarantee conversion. We have all known persons who have been exquisitely formed but hardly converted.

Making **conversion** a primary goal of every ministry, rather than just formation or education or training, puts a radically Ignatian edge on our perspectives and efforts. Especially as applied to

educational work, where the relationship to promotion of justice is often least clear, the notion of conversion gives a focus to our efforts which is not had with vaguer categories. If in our schools and universities the overarching goal of all activity is the intellectual, moral and religious conversion of all who make up the school community, then we might make better progress in our attempts to put to rest the perpetual queries about what it means to be Catholic, to be Jesuit, etc. Without doubt, many Jesuits working in educational ministry already operate implicitly within this perspective — the argument here mainly concerns the need to make it more explicit and dynamic.

A particular liability of the notion of formation is that it encourages the idea that a school is where the "formed" impart formation to the "formees." The teacher/student dichotomy is exaggerated in a way that might be avoided if conversion were taken as the ultimate aim. As much as we might desire the conversion of those to whom we minister, most of us would be slow to claim that our role as teachers or pastors or researchers is to "convert" other people — we prefer to leave that formulation to the "born again."

Rather, we believe that every person is responsible before God for their own conversion; the most we can do is lay the ground, prepare the way, provide some helps. Further, we realize that the greatest aid that can be given towards conversion is the real-life example of a converted person, so that anyone who would seek the conversion of others must be concerned as well with his own. Perhaps this would be a different way of conceptualizing the original Ignatian ideal of saving our own souls by seeking the salvation of others: we are called to achieve our own conversion by seeking the conversion of others.

### **Faith that does Justice**

The logic which often seems to prevail in our educational endeavours is that if we educate people well, they will behave morally and become religiously devout. Lonergan, working from the viewpoint of conversion, tends to see the process in reverse: religious conversion is ultimately a gift of grace and, when lived out fully, gives rise to moral conversion, which in turn gives rise to intellectual. But the progression from being-in-love with ultimate reality to corresponding moral values and intellectual understanding is not automatic or inevitable; many are granted a vivid experience of the absolute but, through inner resistance or lack of resources, never undergo a corresponding re-orientation on the other planes.

The summons of Decree 4 to make service of faith and promotion of justice the primordial goals of all our ministry impels us to strive above all for religious and moral conversion, in ourselves and in those to whom we are sent. Intellectual conversion is not to be ignored, to be sure, but neither should it be seen as a prerequisite or even the surest way to the others. The ideal, of course, will be the person who has undergone all three types of conversion — or rather, who is undergoing all three, since no one is ever converted once and for all on any plane.

While religious and intellectual conversion perhaps correspond more neatly to concepts that we have inherited from our training, I believe there is a need to refashion our ideas about moral conversion. My own experience of many years of grass-roots organizing work has made me aware of how many non-believers have a passionate concern for the welfare of their fellow human beings. Whether they are old-time socialists or new-fangled activists, they give of themselves in ways that are truly sacrificial; their altruism is exemplary and often puts the attitudes and actions of believers to shame. Many have undergone a deep moral or social



conversion which has opened them to the ineffable beauty and worth of human creatures and consequently endowed them with a passion for solidarity and social justice.

When we speak of the importance that the promotion of justice should have for us Jesuits, we are basically proposing for ourselves moral/social conversion. Such conversion happens when we are so suffused with that "major fact of our time, the increasing impoverishment of our brothers and sisters the poor," that all our efforts are inexorably oriented in their direction. Whether we are teaching math, building dormitories, sweeping floors or begging for funds, our supreme goal is always and unavoidably the search for that world, that Kingdom, where there will be peace and justice for all.

With conversion as an ultimate desire of all our ministries, we would constantly be asking ourselves: Of the hundreds of thousands of professional folk that our schools have graduated, how many have become serious advocates and agents of social change? How many lawyers are questioning the biases of the legal system or challenging the atrocities which are our nation's prisons? How many doctors are fighting for universal health care or for lower health cost? How many business people are seeking to control the insane consumerism and rampant waste in our economy? How many clergy are seeking more participation and democracy within the church itself? How many politicians and government officials are risking their positions to fight corruption and empower the common folk? How many teachers and professors are daring to make the norm of education the breadth and depth of their students' questioning rather the correctness and completeness of their answers?

#### **A Clear Call**

Much concern has been expressed for reaffirming service of faith and promotion of justice as keystones of our ministry. Could the notion of conversion, in its threefold variety, allow us to approach the faith/justice imperative with new language and fresh vigour?

In the text sent from the Curia to stimulate our reflection on the Constitutions as "A Pathway to God," we are told that "in order to keep an organization fully alive, and effective in the attainment of meaningful goals, it is not enough to rethink objectives and update structures; what is important and decisive is to secure the constant renewal of the mental structure of the personnel, to keep their vision bright and alert, and their spirit young." A clearer call for perpetual conversion could hardly be made.

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## **The SOCIAL DIMENSION in the SPIRITUAL EXERCISES**

**Paul Caspersz, S.J.**

This presentation<sup>1</sup> is addressed to three types of persons: (i) those who have already taken the option for the poor and are substantively involved in the struggle for national and international justice; (ii) those whose work is not in the field of justice (for instance, cloistered Carmelites, school or university teachers), but who consciously (also by prayer) play a role supportive of those actually working for justice; (iii) those who are not involved at all in the struggle for justice, neither directly nor supportively, and this for either of two reasons: (a) they hold that the service of faith is on one plane and the struggle for justice on another and the two do not mix or meet, or (b) they have not given thought to problems of justice either in their own spiritual life or in their work.

### **Importance of the Social Dimension in the Exercises Today**

The basic reason is the importance the social dimension has acquired in our times through the progress of the industrial revolution, the more modern revolution in the mass media and communication systems, the tremendous surge in populations, the influence of Marxism both as ideology and as a method of social analysis, the postwar rapid emergence of a vocal Third World, the theology of liberation, the social teaching of the Church from *Rerum Novarum* onwards. We may say that the "social" hits us in the face, no matter where we turn.

Hence to make the Exercises in our times without reference to their social dimension would be to truncate them, to make them irrelevant to the re-ordering of our existence in society and to introduce a certain schizophrenia into our life: one part, concerned about human beings, militating against the other, concerned about God. No, in our times, it should not be possible to make the Exercises well without reference to their social potential.

But would the insertion of the social dimension into the Exercises be legitimate?

The basic argument for an affirmative answer lies in the eighteenth Introductory Explanation (Annotation): "The Spiritual Exercises should be adapted to the disposition of the persons who desire to make them, that is, to their age, education, and ability." George Ganss explains:

Since [Ignatius] intended his brief remarks to set exercitants on the way to thinking things out for themselves, there is wide room for directors, exercitants and students to enrich his texts by the knowledge they bring to it, for example, from updated writings in systematic, spiritual, or biblical theology. In general, the more such knowledge one

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<sup>1</sup> Summary of a talk given at a Seminar on the Dynamism of the Spiritual Exercises, April 4-9, 1994, at the Jesuit Retreat House, Lewella, Kandy, and developing indirectly the themes contained in the articles by M. Amaladoss, S.J. in *PJ* 48 (October 1991) and Daniel M<sup>a</sup> Agacino, S.J. in *PJ* 50 (November 1992).

brings to his text the more one gets from it. Many exercitants have found treasures in Ignatius' book of which he himself was unaware; and precisely that was his hope.<sup>2</sup>

To updated theological writings add the modern findings in social psychology, in the history of the poor, in sociology, and you are immediately bringing to centre stage the social dimension in the Spiritual Exercises. "It is necessary that the legacy which [Ignatius] left to the Church and to the Society of Jesus should be made to live on with all the passion and power which he gave to it. I pray that Ignatius will favour and guide this latest attempt to open up his Exercises for the men and women of our times."<sup>3</sup> Such an opening up with "passion and power" will simply not be possible in our times unless the Exercises are made with the social dimension continually in mind and heart.

But if legitimate, is the insertion necessary?

The affirmative answer is based on Decree 4 of GC 32:

The Exercises also help to form Christians who ... can play a constructive part in the reform of social and cultural structures. Thus, the ministry of the Spiritual Exercises is one of the most important we can undertake today. We should by all means encourage studies, research and experiment directed towards helping our contemporaries experience the vitality of the Exercises as adapted to the new needs which are theirs (nº 58).

If the light of the demands of the social dimension does not fall on the Spiritual Exercises, they will be in danger of being irrelevant or, at least, a luxury which those who have seen the importance of the social dimension simply cannot afford; they will be four or six or eight or thirty days of escapism and unreality.

The rest of this summary article will examine very briefly how the social dimension may, without violence to the original vision of the Exercises, indeed with an intensification of the original vision, be inserted into the various parts into which the Exercises are usually divided. The so powerful compelling internal logic of the Exercises as they proceed will be in no way be misdirected or weakened by internalized references to the social. Indeed, for the men and women of our time, priests, religious and lay Christians, even non-Christians (to these last, with due adaptation), the internal coherence of the various parts of the Exercises with one another will only be further validated by the introduction of the social perspective.

### **The Principle and Foundation**

As the text stands, few will want to contest that the social dimension is, to say the least, not explicit, but is individualist and even elitist. Ganss — how consciously one cannot tell — is aware of the individualism when he changes the usual rendering, 'Man is created ... to save his soul' (Puhl) to 'Human beings are created ... to save their souls'. The change, though insufficient, is still significant and points in the correct direction.

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<sup>2</sup> George E. Ganss, *The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius: A Translation and Commentary*, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> David L. Fleming, *A Contemporary Reading of the Spiritual Exercises*, p. xv.

In the Principle and Foundation there are three cardinal realities: God, the World, and the God-World relationship. The exercitant should explore intellectually and prayerfully the social content of each of these realities.

(a) **God:** Who is this God? As God reveals the Godhead in the Bible, God is seen to be One who has a partiality for the poor and the oppressed. How do we come to know God?

Your father ate and drank like you  
but he practised justice and right; this is good.  
He defended the cause of the poor and needy; this is good.  
Is it not this what it means to know me?  
It is the Lord who speaks (Jeremiah 22:15-16).

We know God, therefore, through the practice of justice and righteousness (two words found often in the Bible and often used synonymously), through upholding the cause of the poor, the needy, the oppressed and the marginalized.

(b) **The World** and (c) **the God-World relationship**

In the Bible and in the Exercises it is easy to discern two views of the World: the World as dragging us away from God and the World which is our only way to God. Similarly, two attitudes are discernible in the God-World relationship: the instrumental and the sacramental. The second view and the second attitude lost ground to the first quite early in the history of Christianity and, by so doing, concealed the social dimension of the Principle and Foundation. In our times its full worth must be recognized. This recognition will lead the exercitant from the very beginning of the Exercises to give them a powerful social thrust.

### **The First Week**

The Exercises as they stand in the Ignatian text point to personal sin: of the angels, Adam and Eve, the person "who has gone to hell because of one mortal sin." Introducing the social dimension, we shall have to introduce the concept of structural sin. In our colloquies we shall ask for strength to fight against the political and economic principalities and powers that crush the poor, poor persons and poor nations, that so powerfully allure the non-poor (and ourselves) to the values of self-indulgence, selfishness and limitless consumerism. God takes the present world socio-economic order seriously and is prepared to place the divine power squarely on the side of the exercitants who are prepared either alone or in groups to do all they can to change it. In the Principle and the First Week we encounter God, divinely concerned about justice-love. From there the exercitant moves effortlessly and almost imperceptibly to the Second Week.

### **The Second Week**

The exercitant has sought to internalize, in the consideration of the Principle and the First Week, God's own option for poor. He now sees that the same option is unmistakably taken by Jesus:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me  
because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovering of sight to the blind,

to set at liberty those who are oppressed,  
to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19).

Making the Exercises with the social dimension in mind, the exercitant should carefully reflect on the place of conflict in the life of Jesus: his passion for justice which led him to tear down the mask of piety and obedience that covered hard-heartedness and injustice, came into conflict with the vested interests of his foes in maintaining the status quo. Hence meditations on the famous Sabbath cures are to be preferred for our purposes to meditations on the Nativity, the Flight into Egypt, etc., unless the chief fruits sought in these latter meditations are justice and courage to struggle for justice rather than the fruits of poverty, humility, acceptance of hardship. This method of proceeding will lead the exercitant in the powerful exercises on the Two Standards, the Three Classes, the Three Degrees of Humility to make, or to renew, the fundamental option for the poor.

There is a little card entitled *The Gandhi Talisman*. It ends with the signature of M.K. Gandhi. It reads:

Recall the face of the poorest and most helpless person whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to the person, will the person be able to gain anything by it? Will it restore the person to control over personal life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to *swaraj*, self-rule, for the hungry and also spiritually starved millions of our countrypeople. Then you will find your doubts and your self melting away.

This was Gandhi's fundamental option for the poor and his criterion for decision-making. Gandhi came to this option in a process of much reflection and prayer. Would that more exercitants emerge from the Ignatian Exercises with the same fundamental option!

### **The Third and Fourth Weeks**

Jesus did not die a natural death. His option cost him his life. The exercitant has been led to the Third and Fourth Weeks.

In Christ and in Mary, his Mother, the lived dialectics of justice burst forth at their death to complete fulfilment, and they rose from the dead. The resurrection of the dead is a mystery only in its mode. The fact itself is beyond all doubt. Marxism does not see the fruition of the dialectic in death. To death it has nothing to say, except "take place." The Ignatian exercitant emerges from the Exercises with the conviction that justice will ultimately triumph and be crowned with love. We shall all be there to celebrate it.

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## INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

Malcolm Rodrigues, S.J.

I was struck by the comment of M. Amaladoss, S.J., "Dialogue with other religions, for example, becomes mission when there is an element of challenge in the name of the Gospel."<sup>1</sup> From which context does the challenge arise, from the other religions or from surrounding the world?

I believe that the more immediate challenge comes from this modern or post-modern world. The *Human Development Report 1993* reminds us,

Although the achievements in human development have been significant during the past three decades, the reality is continuing exclusion. More than a billion of the world's people still languish in absolute poverty.<sup>2</sup>

Poverty on this scale is a real challenge to the Gospel message, and hence prophecy involves both negative and positive aspects, both proclamation and denunciation. We need to concretise the exclusion referred to in the UNDP Report in order to focus any interfaith dialogue in this context. First we note that the world's richest 20% of the population increased its share of the world's income from 70.2% to 82.7% between 1960 and 1990, while the poorest 20% saw a decrease in its share of the world's income from 2.3% to 1.4% during the same period.<sup>3</sup> Moreover this wealthy 20% controls 81% of world trade, 95% of its loans, and 81% of its savings; it consumes 70% of its energy, 75% of its metals, and 60% of its food.

When one recalls that the Lord, in order to teach a number of salient truths about the Kingdom, chose a child as the prime analogue (Matthew 18:1-7), one can only be appalled at the effect of world poverty on children. This effect is particularly captured in the following statistics on the growing phenomenon of street children. New Delhi has over 100,000, Bangalore 45,000, Manila 75,000, and Nairobi 16,000. In Brazil, over 1.4 million children under 14 years old are estimated to be working even though there is a law prohibiting this.

Another cause of global poverty as reflected in the statistics is the way bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA) is allocated. In 1991, for example, when the world was entering the post-cold war period, over half of ODA from the United States was earmarked for five strategically-important countries: Israel, Egypt, Turkey, El Salvador and the Philippines, all high military spenders. In fact only 25% of all ODA goes to the ten countries containing 75% of the world's poor, and most of the \$15 billion world-wide in technical assistance is spent on equipment, technology, and experts from industrial countries.

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<sup>1</sup> "Evangelization and Cultures," *PJ* 57 (September 1994), 10.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report*, New York: Oxford, 1993, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Human Development Report*, 1992.

What does this have to do with interfaith dialogue? Well, I believe that all the foregoing facts pose a serious threat to all religions, and to the derivative cultural and social values of the poor. At a recent forum, "Troubling of the Waters," on theological perspectives for the Caribbean, I was asked to contribute something on Interfaith Dialogue and the Concept of the Victim.

The process of exclusion from the material benefits of the world is only one side of the coin; in the dominant philosophy of competition and marketability, value systems other than those which fit in with this philosophy are excluded. This means that such values as service, commitment, and sacrifice common to most faiths are excluded as irrelevant to the market. The supreme value is production and consumption, notwithstanding that millions are perishing to produce.

The present world situation challenges all faiths, and hence offers us both the chance for true dialogue-in-action (solidarity) and the promise of listening, hearing and learning from other faiths. In other words, I am advocating that interfaith dialogue is best launched as common action grounded in faith from which can develop areas for talking. In fact Decree 4, placed in the context of the new evangelization with its emphasis on the preferential option for the poor, demands of us great sensitivity to the plight of the poor, their struggles, their hopes, and requires of us an openness and willingness to learn from their faith, however that is expressed. Put another way, it is in "doing" justice as interfaith dialogue-in-action that we can discover the deep truths of our faith and that of other faiths.

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## TOURISM AWAITING GOOD NEWS

James J. Spillane, S.J.

A relatively new phenomenon which merits our apostolic attention is tourism. Tourism is now the second biggest industry in the world in terms of employment and, by the year 2000, it may well be the world's most important economic activity. In 1994, there were 204 million jobs in tourism according to a report of the World Travel and Tourism Council. This amounts to 10.2% of world employment. In Spain in 1994, one worker in five was employed in the tourist sector; in Ireland, Denmark and U.S.A., one in ten. Taxes produced by tourism for governments amount to about US\$ 655 billion in 1994. According to UN estimates, tourism earned poor countries about \$312 billion in 1991. That makes it their second biggest earner of foreign exchange after oil (\$700 billion) and it is still booming. The *Economist* Intelligence Unit reckons that spending on international tourism, fares excluded, will grow by 4.5% - 5% a year, in real terms, for the rest of the century. The Third World's share is sure to grow even faster.

Positively, tourism makes better relations possible between people and between different peoples, it offers leisure time which can be used for encounter with oneself, with others and with God, it encourages mutual human and cultural enrichment as well as contact with nature, it promotes hospitality and tolerance at the same time as providing material progress and well-being.

But tourism can also be depersonalizing, a source of hedonism or exaggerated consumerism, the occasion of economic abuses at the expense of the tourist, of culture- and customs-shock between the indigenous and the visitor, of the exploitation of those employed in the various services offered by tourism.

Today more than 20 million people from rich countries spend holidays in the Third World. Will these visitors do the poor countries they visit any good? Some critics emphasize that tourism corrupts the local culture, encourages prostitution, despoils the environment, provokes inflation — and most of the dollars it sucks in flow straight out again. In sum, it is a new form of colonialism. Others, however, laud the positive aspects of international tourism in that the industry generates foreign exchange, provides direct and indirect employment, helps to promote the (receiving) country's image abroad, creates a new international understanding and helps to preserve traditional art and culture.

Most of the literature on the costs and benefits of tourism is written in the language of economics. Nevertheless, this topic can and should be addressed from other angles, especially those of philosophy and anthropology. Certainly tourism is a complex reality, subject to many forces which are difficult to control. These include the same economic, social, political and cultural influences that shape modern life. Like all human experience, it is an occasion of grace and of sin, and a practical area to apply the central Ignatian principle of *tantum quantum*.

But Christians ought not to dream of quitting the ever-growing reality of tourism or even hesitate in its face. They should not be suspicious or distrustful, for its aims include authentic values: the possibilities for necessary relaxation, widening one's culture, contemplation and spiritual progress (above all when tourism takes the form of pilgrimage). Christians must no longer ignore the dehumanizing, caused by the way in which tourism operates, both of visitors and of countries which receive them. Jesuits should help our contemporaries to make the best out of it. Christians must be educated to the use of that leisure time which will constitute an ever more important slice of their lives. The witness of the faith must enter in, thus making tourism a field of evangelization. This obviously requires the concerted efforts of lay, religious, and ordained members of the Christian community.

Our apostolic activities can help us find an adequate response to the challenge of tourism. In communities affected by tourism, we need to help genuine religious and human values be preserved, to strengthen the Christian virtues of welcome and hospitality, to insist on the practice of justice and respect in dealings with everybody, and to ensure as far as possible a presence of the Church in the various important issues related to tourism.

### **An Apostolic Commitment**

To clarify its entrée as a true apostolic penetration into the realm of tourism, here are possible areas of involvement for the Society of Jesus:



1. At the service of the formation of tourists in their home communities, especially Christian formation for the healthy and useful enjoyment of tourism.
2. At the service of tourists in the receiving communities.
3. At the service of those who work in tourism.

The Church must unceasingly study the growing and continually changing reality of tourism. The best means with which the Society should equip itself is the serious study of the tourism phenomenon at all levels, including at Catholic universities. With lucidity and sympathy, it is necessary to expand the knowledge of the economic, political, sociological and psycho-sociological aspects of present-day tourism. A rational and competent promotion of the true values of tourism and a gradual establishment of an ethics of tourism in public opinion can only be based on sound knowledge.

Such study, involving many disciplines, should constantly be revised. Catholic universities should offer suitable training to all who wish to commit themselves, temporarily or permanently, to the apostolate of tourism, and this approach may overflow into the high schools. The Society can also foster a good use of the mass-media in promoting responsible tourism. Our international network allows the Society's various Provinces, based in countries which both send tourists and receive them, to cooperate appropriately.

#### Conclusion

International tourism, the second biggest industry in the world in terms of employment, frequently involves a direct encounter between developed and developing countries. The Society should try to cooperate with those who work professionally in this growing field and herald a positive religious interpretation of tourism, helping to diminish its negative aspects. Tourism, like every other human reality, has to be redeemed and sanctified. The apostolate of tourism can become a part of its overall apostolic mission.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Anyone interested in pursuing this topic further, please write to Fr. Spillane, or to the Social Justice Secretariat and ask for his paper, "Recent Developments in Tourism Research."

## **INCULTURATION and the SOCIETY TODAY**

**Andrés Tornos, S.J.**

The reflections which follow are a bit impassioned. I have been taken by the idea of inculturation ever since GC 32, which proposed it to the Society. Then, suddenly, this idea turned into a key concept for our apostolic mission today. To a great degree I owe this to my African friends who have been taking my classes in theology-culture since the early 80s, and to the Latin Americans and Spaniards who, during all those years in the same theology-culture courses, worked out cultural analyses of concrete apostolic contexts and, adapted to them, proposals for reformulating the Gospel.

Why would the idea or proposal of inculturation be key for our apostolic mission?

At first we perceived in this idea a recognition of the dignity of men and women with their own ways of thinking and of understanding the world, different from the European ways in which we have been understanding the Gospel for centuries. Through these forms of dignity and of understanding the world, many millions of persons — as good as us Europeans or better — were now getting access to Jesus. One clearly saw how absurd it would be to force these people to abandon their culture in order to become good Christians. A Christianity that was authentically African, Japanese, and so forth had to become possible.

Then, the ideal of inculturation expanded considerably. For not only the cultures of Asia and of Africa need a new reading of the Gospel. All to the contrary, the Jesus who really becomes present in our work, in our life-style, in the exercise of authority, and so forth, is just as culturally foreign to the contemporary ways of understanding life in Europe and North America. I believe he is as much a stranger as in Africa or even more so. It seems that we cannot make our young people good Christians without at the same time making them odd birds among their companions — at least in Spain, France, or Germany. The same obtains for intellectuals: they do not understand us. I recall a Spaniard, professor at a German university, who invited me to supper in order to have me explain to him how I could continue being a Christian, something he could not bring himself to understand.

For sure: in a good number of cultural settings today, the forms of thought which we use to think about Jesus and make him present through our words and works do not correspond with the forms of thought of ordinary people. On the one hand, it is a question of making Jesus present, the best and most worthwhile we can bring to people whom we love, whom we admire, and with whom we sympathize. On the other hand, it is a matter of respecting these people and the modes of thought with which they are constantly refashioning their dignity and their responsibility.

Perhaps what most struck me in the idea of inculturation was what this requirement brings along with it: to respect the other and undertake to learn from him his way of looking at the world and understanding life, before undertaking to tell him how we see it through Jesus. To me it seemed that this put into practice, in a radical but necessary way, what I had learned during my formation: that a fruitful encounter with others begins by listening to them.

"To undertake to learn, to undertake to learn who the others are and how they are, before trying to give them lessons or advice." This became almost an obsession with me. And following upon

it a discovery: to attempt this only at the level of individual dealings would be a gross and lamentable error. Lamentable, because for someone to see and feel himself accepted by me is no big deal; in apostolic action it is a matter of seeing and feeling himself accepted in the Church, in the great river of faith and hope which flow from Jesus. And likewise, it is of little import that he feel his individual person accepted there; he is connected with friends and colleagues who represent a whole manner of being in the world (this is the culture), and if the believing community does not accept this way of being in the world, what's the use of someone finding a private understanding for himself alone?

I also think that individual acceptance, rather than cultural, can even be perverse. For when I accept someone individually, I am the protagonist. How I love playing this leading role! And I communicate my superiority and sufficiency to the other: "You see, I accept you and that is enough for you." And here we are playing the game of mirrors: you are important and I am important — narcissism that I project on you and narcissism that I grant myself.

In a project of inculturation, no one in particular can be the protagonist. In the other or, rather, in the others I look for what they share with their own. But I do so as a member of a Christian community which has Jesus and which nevertheless has him according to certain usages and certain limited, insufficient forms of thinking — but they are the ways of understanding Jesus proper to this community and valid for it. I go out "*ad extra*" (outwards); I try to make this Jesus present who is much greater than my words and my traditions and, as a consequence, I have no need to change these; there they stay. I respect them and indeed I live from them, but I go beyond, towards the non-said even, towards the non-explicit. This Jesus who is more than words, if I do carry him within me, is he who will win over in the new milieu. They will name him with perhaps new names, they will imagine him with different features, they will explain him with symbols and lines of reasoning which belong to their community. The features and symbols of Jesus which take shape in that milieu will be those of the inculturated Jesus. As Paul VI already said in the encyclical *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, it will be the local group, become the local Church, which will finally bring the inculturation about.

Today we speak a lot about dialogue and at times I get the impression that in some circles dialogue with religions and with culture is proposed as something which can replace inculturation. To me, dialogue with the great religions seems most important — especially, thinking in Europe, the dialogue with Islam. It is also important to become capable of dialoguing with representative members of science, art, politics, and so forth. But I don't think this substitutes for what the ideal of inculturation brings about. And this is so for three reasons: the fields of application for the ideas of inculturation and dialogue are diverse; the spirituality which enlivens the one and the other is different; and in the case of the Society of Jesus, a different manner of being in the Church and in society enters into play, a manner of being which we should take into account.

First, the fields of application are different. Above all, according to the countries: in the countries where the great religions are found and where the problem for evangelization is the weight of those religions in which millions of our brothers and sisters seek and find God, we cannot neglect these religions and we must dialogue with them. But in the so-called West where what weighs heavily are not the great religions in which one seeks God, but rather the problem that the Gospel has distanced itself from the culture and therefore becomes systematically misunderstood. A "faith-culture dialogue" is not possible if it is not conducted with attention to an inculturated Gospel. And I put "dialogue with culture" in quotation marks because I believe that the concept of dialogue with culture is a misleading one.

Let me explain. It happens that among different cultures, each with its different forms of thought, it is doubtful that one can achieve an exchange of well-articulated ideas that one could call dialogue. Here the great problem is intercultural communication; surely cultures interchange with each other only at their borders and limits, some picking up from others in a confused fashion whatever attracts their attention, without having understood it thoroughly. As far as I can tell, this would not be dialogue at all, but rather a half-blind interchange. And in addition culture when understood correctly (as an anonymous and shared way of understanding the world) does not have spokesmen who speak adequately in its name and with authority, nor objective contents on which to base an interchange. For culture is not primarily a collection of bits of knowledge, convictions and opinions about which to dialogue; it is primarily the way in which we are reasoning, without being conscious of it, when we want to dialogue — a familiar and implicit way of interpreting the everyday world, within which so many opinions fit.

But now there are also distinct levels at which dialogue and inculturation take place: dialogue takes place between competent persons who represent something; inculturation consists in incarnating oneself in how the anonymous masses think and feel. The former is principally a matter of elites, while the latter is paying attention to what is shared and popular. In the so-called West, we should not overlook this, given the distance between the people and the elites.

I said in second place that the spirituality that enlivens dialogue is different from the one which enlivens inculturation. In effect, we get inculturation going when we apply ourselves to learn from the other, to learn from the other not only what is his, but also what could be new dimensions of the faith, new ways of understanding God, which enrich the entire Church. One of my African friends rightly said that, as long as Africa has not reformulated the Gospel, we will continue to miss much of what it means.

On the other hand, we begin a dialogue on the assumption that, speaking from within the faith, we know pretty well what the faith is about. During the dialogue we may learn something, but the point of departure in dialogue is the sense that we represent the faith and speak as if we were already completely within it. Dialogue would begin for someone who assumes that he is within the faith, while inculturation would begin with *kenosis*, the annihilation and stripping of someone who recognizes that, in the new cultural context, he does not know what it is to believe and does not represent believers well.

In the third place, I said that both notions mean two different ways for the Society to be in the Church and in society. Indeed, when we take up the task of dialogue we confer upon ourselves a certain ability to represent the Church. We are even pleased with the fact that, in contrast with other groups of believers, "we are interlocutors," and "they recognize us as interlocutors." By contrast one enters upon the task of inculturation without attributing knowledge or representation to oneself — although this much, yes, the confidence of bringing a Jesus along who is more than words and more than his culture. There is no room for personal or collective self-sufficiency, for our point of departure is the idea that the lay people with whom we work are the ones who will bring the inculturation about fully. It makes me uneasy to hear a companion speak of our Jesuit capacity to dialogue and the inability of others to do so, as if behind these claims I could hear a melody incompatible with the simplicity and humility of Jesus and with what St. Ignatius was thinking of when he insisted on calling the Society *minima*.

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## **WITNESSING in a POST-MODERN AGE**

**Geoffrey Williams, S.J.**

We live in a post-modern age. It is characterised in general by decenteredness, fragmentation, pragmatism, and a focus on image. Any adequate witness would need to address these characteristics from within that post-modern framework. Decenteredness is a secularised poverty of spirit, fragmentation can be overcome by community, pragmatism and image integrated into the flexibility of vision.

The decenteredness of a post-modern world is manifest in a suspicion of those established forms of authority which act as cohesive forces unifying a culture. Such authority used to be found in religion, cultural traditions, the political ideologies, dominant world views, social mythologies, or in such overarching strategies as family, education, life-style, or even grammar, previously used to map experience into meaning.

This loss of a common focus has led to fragmentation. Countries are divided up into mutually antagonistic splinter groups in every part of the world. The same situation can be observed within dominant religious traditions, in the East and in the West. Within each special interest group within those traditions are sub-sets of diverse ideological persuasions. This post-modern situation is not one of a proliferating marginalisation; rather it is one in which, in effect, there are no marginalised because everyone is marginalised.

Today one's life, unless one lives in a rigidly defined ghetto, cuts a path through these many intersecting, divergent, contradictory planes of action. Each demands support and commitment. One copes, often, by an unreflecting schizophrenia. One holds opposing sets of values without any attempt at integration. One operates under the delusion of tolerance and within the range of what is possible for the time being within the often undefined boundaries of a fluid situation. One becomes immersed in the politics of pragmatism.

In such a milieu the lack of a commonly-held reality makes the reading of signs radically ambiguous. Before, signs were generally considered a symbol of presence. But with the rise of those processes of decentering such as constant wars, world-wide mass migrations, and the corruption of those social entities whose function was to ensure the stability and intelligibility of the sign, the sign was exalted precisely because there was a lack of substance to validate the sign. One can consider the practical significance of such terms as "nationalism," "currency," or of "family values," in the contemporary world. The post-modern pre-occupation with image emerges from this absence of a substantial reality to ground signs. The image has the power formerly guaranteed to presence. For a post-modern sensibility all is sign. Signs refer back to other signs. It no longer has meaning, it has effect. This substitution for meaning by sign is post-modern. The witness of the sign in any particular instance is a matter of image. Here one lives not in the imagined reality of the modernist, subsuming experience into theory, but in the imaginary reality of the post-modernist for whom all is illusion. That virtual reality fosters the narcissism of self-referential, the excessive concern with self-image.

To be sure one can observe that this analysis looks at the secular world. But that distinction of secular and sacred, comforting though it may be intellectually, no longer applies in the world of the ordinary. That distinction while often used to elevate the sacred has done a disservice to the

act of the Incarnation which finds itself precisely in the world the "sacred" denies. Besides, it is the observation of this reflection that the avenues of the sacred have become today indissolubly interwoven with the secular. What is considered sacred is today defined by the secular. New Age religion with its emphasis on the magical and the occult, two secular ways of approaching the divine, is considered the avenue to the spiritual today. The vocation crisis occurs because of the difficulty in distinguishing between a secular and a sacred life style. Some might think that the wearing of a clerical costume is the answer, yet such a response maintains the reduction of the witnessing in a Post-Modern Age to the question of image. They forget that spirituality is a lifestyle which encompasses all areas of one's presence in the world.

An approach to the question of witnessing adequately in a post-modern age might apply the Ignatian exercise of the *Two Standards*. How does one live in a post-modern age? In this context one might move from confusion through alienation to despair; or one might move from acceptance through community to creativity. It is in the light of this dynamic that a discernment can occur which can render a contemporary witness possible. The multiple perspectives engendered by decenteredness and fragmentation create confusion. The ensuing quest for an identity resonant with one's own needs and perspectives alienates one from oneself, from others, and from a spiritual life. This alienation questions everything from the solipsism of self in a debilitating anxiety which leads to pragmatic action in the world based on image.

To appreciate how the Standard of Christ operates in the post-modern world one needs to look more closely at what forms of conversion the *magis* calls one to. The present, and where one finds oneself in it, cannot be rejected. First there needs to be a transformation of the perspective with which one views the present. What follows is the transformation of the way in which one situates oneself in the present. This, in turn, transforms that present in which one finds oneself situated.

First some critical understanding of contemporary culture is necessary. But before that can occur one needs to ask oneself, what world-view does one live out of. For someone living out of a mediaeval world view, a Thomistic approach to reality sees post-modernism as casuistry; from an Enlightenment perspective one's commitment to today's world is in the struggle to provide education; for the Romantic it is to help articulate the voice of the oppressed; for the Modernist it is to establish such critical structures that could embody a mythic way of life. The Post-Modernist finds a self-conscious sense of self in the description provided in the beginning of this reflection.

One's perspective shapes the way in which one inserts oneself in the environment. Contemporary critical analysis suggests that there are three areas of significance in witnessing today. Those self-conscious assertions of self are in the areas of community, apostolate, and spirituality. The question is just how are these areas to be interpreted. In what dominant metaphor does one live out these crucial aspects of religious existence? Is community a tribal interpersonal unity, an institution, a political solution of pragmatic compromises, or a mutual dialogue, forgiveness, and support? Is apostolate the economically viable, the established, a return to the roots, or is it an application of the Spirit of those roots to present exigencies? Is spirituality embodied in the rituals of settlement or is it a relationship discovered and maintained through an on-going pilgrimage?

In the areas of community, apostolate, and spirituality, witnessing in a post-modern context requires the movement from narcissism to community; from professionalism to prophecy; and from religion to spirituality.

Narcissism tends to form tribal communities of people who have the same interests and lifestyles focused on the maintenance of the self. The narcissistic community lives in one world; any others serve as a source of curiosity and critical comment and not of wonder which is an invitation to exploration and self-transcendence. The energies of the narcissistic community tend to be expended on self-preservation. There is usually a lot of anger directed against what are perceived to be forces moving towards its dissolution and depression in the face of that inevitable dissolution. Those same energies in a post-modern community tend to be creative and welcoming. Its pains are the ones of growth, of acknowledging the presence of the Beatitudes in its very life and those of its members. That profound sense of emptiness at the root of its life is not read as a secular decenteredness but as the poverty of spirit out of which a deep sense of Divine Providence emerges and a profound gratitude for the invitation to be of service even in the least way of building up the people of God. The sense of tolerance, and the implicit co-dependency which facilitates this tolerance, in a narcissistic group has, at the opposite end of the continuum of community, the spirit of mercy which struggles for liberation against any forms of bondage within itself and its individual members. It struggles to maintain the spirit of mutual forgiveness which allows brokenness to be manifest and the possibilities of the resurrection contained in that brokenness to be manifest. While narcissism tends to sincerity — the being true to oneself, post-modern community tends to authenticity — the call to imagine and image itself as God calls it. Such imaging and such imagination is only possible through an asceticism which maintains a poverty of spirit and the constant practice of spiritual conversation which creates a cosmopolitan milieu among its members at once hospitable, simple, and focused on the *magis*.

It is that *magis* which carries one in the apostolate from the professionalism necessary in the modern world to the prophetic stance needed in the post-modern world. Professionalism places its values in identity through competence; prophetic witness is possible only by the daily living out of one's poverty of spirit so that one becomes an open door through which the energies of God pass into the world and through which the pain and disorders of the world can encounter the healing and reconciliation which comes only from God. Here, the workplace elicits the same sense of presence as the community. Professionalism maintains itself by skills and *techne*, prophecy maintains itself by prayer. The former justifies itself by accreditation, the latter practices humility. Professionalism can fragment itself into a public and a private life, prophecy strives for an integration of those areas of individual and communal life. To be sure one can be a professional prophet. Jeremiah talks about these (14:13-16). Post-modernism, however, asks that one be prophetic not only in one's professional competency but in all the areas of one's life. The prophetic stance in post-modernism realises that understanding is not wisdom and wisdom is not liberation. Professionalism restricts the process of liberation to competence within a given system. The prophetic stance sees such an adherence to a system as ideological and idolatry. It realises that, while one cannot do without systems, yet one uses systems as indicators or doors to liberation and that often one needs to use systems against themselves to create those open spaces in which discernment and freedom are possible. Out of those open spaces vision comes.

To live in such a way is to live spiritually and to place one's dependence radically upon the Providence of God. The *magis* asks that one go beyond religion to spirituality, just as the Christ moved beyond the Old Covenant to allow His Spirit to be present to the world. Religion presents a closed system outside of which it claims there is no salvation. Spirituality would hold that, as

well as security, there are gaps in every system, and that the gaps, as well as the security, are necessary for a contemporary relationship with the divine. Religion would hold the vowed life as contractual; spirituality would hold that same life as a mutual engagement between God and us. That life grows and deepens through mutual dialogue in prayer and in community, and the way it manifests itself comes about as a result of that dialogue. Thus, while religion is institutional and generally static, spirituality is a pilgrimage, a dynamic process of discovery and passion. In religion what is required of the subject is conformity; in spirituality, given the diversity of gifts, there is required instead orchestration. One needs to be attentive and to orchestrate the different energies within oneself as well as within the community. Superiors are not seen as manifestations of the law — like policemen or politicians — but rather as creative artists drawing forth and focusing and challenging the gifts of the members of the community they are called to serve. The rituals of such a community — meals, liturgies, meetings, and other forms of sharing a life in common — are not tools of oppression creating passive, individualistic, indifferent, and interiorised sensibilities, but rather are moments of affirmation where one's spirituality can be acknowledged and shared in the communality of daily living.

The post-modern world is fragmented, chaotic, and alienated. Post-modern witness stresses community, vision, and spirit. That witness is a call to be creative with what one has been given in this age of ruins. There is the story of Picasso making a bull's head out of an old bicycle discarded in a ditch. He used the handlebar for the horns and the saddle for the face. He saw what was possible in what others had discarded. A post-modern witness is asked to do the same thing. He is asked to discover the holiness in all that exists. Ignatius calls this "finding God in all things."

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## **The CELIBACY of our LORD JESUS and VOCATIONS**

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The celibacy of our Lord Jesus may not be front and centre in the awareness of believers today. Many committed Christians give the impression that, in their basic experience of the faith, their picture of the Lord Jesus would not change at all had he not been celibate. I would even venture to include a certain number of priests and religious in this group. Thus, are we able spontaneously to explain our celibacy? Do we love it as a precious gift, as a marvellous gift



granted out of the immeasurable love with which God has specifically chosen each one of us?<sup>1</sup> Or do we live it as a "functional surcharge" attached to the package called religious life or priesthood?

Celibacy is one of the clearest identifying signs of the religious life. It turns out to be counter-cultural and counter-natural. No one can overlook the fact that one of the most central problems of religious life is the crisis in its meaning and significance (*identidad*), and this crisis is having a decisive effect on vocations. Vatican II eliminated the theology of the "state of perfection." With it vanished the traditional way in which the Christian people understood priests and religious. We still have not found a satisfactory substitute for that theology. As a result it has become very difficult to get across the meaning and significance of religious life when promoting vocations, and precisely this element is of paramount importance when promoting them. If there is no clarity in what is being offered, how can someone who may possibly be interested discover that there's something there for him or her?

I propose a series of reflections on the celibacy of Jesus himself as a small step, far from definitive, toward rebuilding our identity as religious on the basis of a theology which does not bypass the Council. These are hesitant, exploratory steps. With a certain embarrassment about doing so in public here, I would like to examine my own relationship with God and my notion of Jesus, supposing that quite a few points might coincide with what other religious and priests would feel.

### The Celibacy of Jesus

The celibacy of Jesus must have necessarily been something very central for him. In the culture in which Jesus grew up and lived, fecundity was one of the signs beyond all measure of God's blessing.<sup>2</sup> There was no prior tradition linking virginity with holiness. Quite to the contrary, sterility was considered a divine curse and punishment.<sup>3</sup> Jesus as a eunuch appeared all of a sudden, very much against the current and scandalously so in that cultural and religious context. Therefore, Jesus' celibacy could not be something incidental to his faith, or reducible in our eyes to a casual or incidental matter. On the contrary, here we find one of the most pondered, firmest, clearest, most provocative, innovative and decisive options of Jesus. For this reason, at the root of his option for celibacy, there has to be something very central for Him — his sense of the Kingdom and his sense of God. The celibacy of Jesus flows from the centre of his life and of his message.

### Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom, and celibacy

"The time is at hand and the Kingdom of God is near; be converted and believe the Good News" (Mark 1:15). This is how, according to Mark's gospel, Jesus begins his ministry. What does this have to do with his celibacy? To understand it, let us turn to the Old Testament.

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<sup>1</sup> "He went up the mountain and chose those whom he wished" (Mark 3:13); "You did not choose me, it was I who chose you" (John 15:16); "Jesus, fixing his eyes upon him, loved him" (the rich young man in Mark 10:21).

<sup>2</sup> Deuteronomy 28:11; Psalms 127:3f; 128:3.

<sup>3</sup> Genesis 15:2; Jeremiah 22:30.

We know about the existence of the levirate marriage.<sup>4</sup> It had a profound religious meaning within the faith of Israel.<sup>5</sup> The Israelite forms part of a larger community, the people of Israel. The recipient of God's promises, with whom the Lord has sealed his holy covenant, is not an isolated individual but the people. Because of this, the whole people, without excepting a single family, is called to live out the fulfilment of the promises. The levirate is rooted in this context.<sup>6</sup> It is an institution which seeks to assure that no part of the people, recipient of the promises, should disappear.

The celibacy of Jesus then is something strange and abnormal. It is, moreover, **irreverent**. It goes against a holy tradition by which the whole people realizes the longed-for fulfilment of the promises. Within the Israelite tradition, the celibacy of Jesus could seem to flaunt and to provoke, making Him appear in the eyes of many as a braggart and a snob. The celibacy of Jesus says clearly to the Jews: we are in the **already** of the promises: "The time is at hand and the Kingdom of God is near" (Mark 1:15). Jesus does not explain his celibacy as a function of announcing the Kingdom. He is not celibate in order to be freer to travel around from place to place, or to dedicate himself with greater freedom to prayer. He is celibate because the time has come, because his proclamation of the Kingdom is eschatological, not because of the need to dedicate more and better energies to this proclamation. This is how I understand the saying of Matthew: "... and there are those who made themselves eunuchs because of the Kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:12). They are eunuchs in order to express in their life and in their flesh the presence of the Kingdom among us as the greatest reality and the most worthwhile, defining and relativizing everything else.

Looking at this from the opposite point of view, if Jesus had not been celibate, He would not have been aware that the Kingdom was already in our midst (see Matthew 12:28), erupting with power. In that case He would have invited people to pray, to repent, to turn back to God just as John the Baptist and other great prophets did. But Jesus felt everything about the Kingdom in a qualitatively different way. And this way of sensing the Kingdom led him inexorably to be a eunuch for the Kingdom.

#### Jesus' sense of God, and celibacy

Jesus underwent a seduction by God that filled his life and his soul, that absorbed Him radically, that took possession of his heart and made Him existentially incapable of bringing the mission received from God, his tender and affectionate relationship with his Abba, into line with other good and healthy aspects of life. God took mystical possession of his whole being and all his desire. And from this source his love welled up to overflow and spread out to peoples of all stripes.

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<sup>4</sup> Mark 12:18-27 and parallels refers back to Deuteronomy 25:5-10. From the latin *levir*, "brother-in-law," the levirate required a man to marry his brother's widow if she were childless, and a son born of this union was to bear the name and be the heir of the dead brother.

<sup>5</sup> What follows is based on R. Martin-Achard, *De la muerte a la resurrección según el Antiguo Testamento*, Madrid: Marova, 1967, pp. 42f.

<sup>6</sup> See Genesis 38:6f; Deuteronomy 25:5f; Ruth 2:20; 3:9; 4:1f.

# **The Celibacy of the Lord Jesus, and our Faith**

Do we pray to a celibate Jesus, or does this never happen in our prayer? Do we preach a celibate Jesus? We certainly insist on a Jesus committed to the poor and to sinners.<sup>7</sup> So we speak with emotion and enthusiasm, for example, about Jesus eating with sinners.<sup>7</sup> But do we recognize that it is his sense of the Kingdom and his sense of God that lead Him to act in this way? Do we find a close and inevitable connection between the meals with sinners and his option for celibacy?

If we consider the celibacy of Jesus as merely an incidental and marginal detail in the Gospel, it'll be difficult for us to integrate our celibacy well or appreciate the existence of celibates in our Church positively. Moreover, we will not present religious life, the celibate option in the Church, as something attractive and linked with the spiritual experience of Jesus himself. We will not propose it from the very guts of an intense affective relationship with God — that of Jesus — which, astonishingly, is reproduced in some way within ourselves. If indeed we do speak of celibacy and refuse to reduce it to functionality, then our life should quickly give the lie to any functional assimilation, and thus non-christian aspects, of celibacy.

As religious we have received the charism of imitating the Lord Jesus "more closely" (Sp.Ex. 167) in his way of life. So, while there are differences, the concrete forms in which Jesus sensed his relationship with God and what the kingdom involved are reproduced in the poor vessels that we are. Radically to follow Jesus is every baptized person's call. Actual imitation is a particular vocation within the Church, a way of actualizing — with a fascinating, absorbing and overwhelming intensity, verging on mimetic identification — this radical following.

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## **REVIEW**

**WASSEAN DANDA '93** (Let there be new light): The Society of Jesus and its Mission Among Indigenous Peoples: The Past-The Present-The Future.\*

The Society of Jesus has a missionary tradition to indigenous peoples that dates back to St. Ignatius of Loyola himself. To have presented in this valuable volume the experiences and reflections of the Society regarding this apostolate in our present times is, therefore, no great surprise. Yet, the contributions presented at the first ever international meeting of Jesuits

<sup>7</sup> For example, Mark 2:15 and parallels.

\* *MISSION: Journal of Mission Studies* 1:2 (1994). Available by writing to Anishinabe Spiritual Centre, P.O.Box 665, Espanola, Ontario, Canada, P0P 1C0. Remittance of US\$ 5 per copy to cover costs would be appreciated, but is not necessary if onerous.

working among indigenous peoples offer a freshness and missionary creativity that seem most recent. By this publication, a much wider audience is now given the privilege of quarrying into what is a virtual gold mine of theological reflection into this ministry to the approximately 300 million aborigines in more than 70 countries that represent one of the most marginalised groups of people on Earth.

This entire volume of *MISSION* is given over to the proceedings of the conference, entitled, *Wassean Danda*, Ojibway for "Let there be new light." It was conducted in October 1993, at Anishinabe Spiritual Centre, Espanola, Ontario, Canada. About 40 Jesuits participated from 16 countries, including the Superior General, Rev. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach.

A large part of the volume consists of regional essays, summary papers, group reports, interchange, reflection questions and homilies. The extraordinary histories, missionary triumphs and deplorable mistakes of so many encounters with aboriginal peoples are briefly and sensitively presently with amazing frankness. The contributions are divided into three categories: past (from first contact to Vatican II), present (from Vatican II to the present time) and future (5-10 year projection into the future). Each reflection presents the general situation and is followed by a particular segment which surveys the Jesuit response. The lamentable misery and suffering that has been and is so much a part of these tormented cultures is captured in "glimpses" from around the world. Despite this solidarity in suffering, the survival of these ancient cultures in some form up to the present is recounted with respect and lights a beacon of hope in the future.

It was perhaps the six recommendations towards the end of the volume that most caught my eye (pp. 343-47). These postulates are submitted for consideration at the 34th General Congregation in 1995. They include recommendations to raise the priority of collaboration of the Jesuits with indigenous people, to issue some public apology and reconciling statement in the light of past "sinfulness", to scrutinise Jesuit structures and attitudes to make them more accessible to peoples from different cultures and tradition, to realise better the long-term nature of this demanding apostolate and to locate this apostolate of cultural dialogue more firmly within the wider world. From all this, it would appear as if these Jesuits want to challenge all Jesuits to be more faithful to one of their original charisms. It is a challenge, however, for the entire Church and beyond.

We are living at a time of an exciting native resurgence. Rising up like a phoenix from the ashes of a protracted cultural and historic calamity, indigenous peoples challenge us to awaken from a myopic cultural slumber. They have already helped church and state to jettison, according to a homily given by the Superior General, the assumption "that native people simply had to assimilate into the dominant society and would sooner or later but inevitably go out of existence" (p. 325).

This publication makes it abundantly clear that indigenous people are not about to go out of existence. They have survived and want to grow. Given a prevailing spirit of true dialogue within all the arising complexities, the rest of society will ultimately be better for that renaissance. *Wassean Danda* has helped us see a "new light" more clearly.

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## LETTERS and COMMENTS

The situation described during our meeting a year ago, regarding our preferential option for the poor, has disturbed my heart. I have continued my reflection regarding faith and justice. Why do we, as a Society, grow weary in our effort to carry out Decree 4? In my prayer, I come to a conviction that it might be because we are too proud with our own preferential option to the poor — that we don't dare to leave behind our intellectual pride, as though we know the way to salvation better than the poor. I am not saying that we don't need social analysis or any intellectual effort to understand our world. What I am questioning is our basic attitude towards the poor. I believe that unless a Jesuit experiences deep conversion and dares to accept that it is the poor who will show him the way to salvation, he will only become the victim of his own good will. The poor are the ones who have taught me about faith, love, and hope. Is it not also the same difficulty in interreligious dialogue or inculturation?

Ordination was a deep faith-experience for me. I could only echo what Father Arrupe said: "This is the life that I wished to be mine since my youth, and will always be mine."

[Name withheld]

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*Promotio Justitiae* n° 56 readily evokes the sort of reactions which turn *PJ* into what, according to its subtitle, it claims to be: a forum for the **exchange** of ideas.

In a world as tense and violent as ours, Jesuits don't lack for opportunities to exercise the ministry of "reconciling the estranged (*dissidentium reconciliatio*).<sup>1</sup>" Everything that Fr. Michael Hurley says seems very appropriate, as long as this ministry is not solely understood as an apostolate "*ad extra*."

It's surprising that "*ad intra*," that is, within our Jesuit communities, there are not a few cases of estrangement. Whether it's due to the passions awakened by an unhealthy ideological pluralism; whether it's due to psychological disorders of our members; whether it's due to an insufficient interiorization of evangelical values as basic as forgiveness (see Matthew 18:21-22); whether it's due to whatever other reasons: the fact remains that some Jesuits show such heartfelt antipathy towards (or rather, against) one another, that they never speak.

GC 34 ought to pay attention to the community problem in the Society. The false impression exists that because we don't have "choir" we are not a communitarian institute, an impression reinforced by the ambiguous expression "*communitas ad dispersionem*" become fashionable in recent years. It would be better to take the expression of St. Francis Xavier, who called the Society "*Societas amoris*," and work on making it real.

A Jesuit who finds himself in all-out war against those in the house cannot dedicate himself to reconciling those outside. They could easily tell him: "Physician, heal thyself — *Medice, sana teipsum*."

Fr. Michael Buckley describes with great objectivity that Jesuits have been very unlikely to read their Constitutions. He remembers those times of the *Epitome* and the *Summary*, and applauds the current efforts "to restore a vitality to the *Constitutions* comparable to what has happened in the *Spiritual Exercises* over the last thirty years."

If, in the four long centuries of life which the Society has enjoyed, the Constitutions have been little read, can we promise ourselves that GC 34 will manage to convert today's Jesuits into avid readers of their Constitutions?

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"Fundamental Options of Decree 4" (*PJ* n° 53, November '93) by Alejandro Tilve, S.J., presents the fundamental postulate formulated by the 32nd as crucial twenty years ago. Today we are to review and at the same time correct it, for it is ambiguous (this is so, according to Paul VI).

There is a subtle ambiguity about the word "justice." In the primary sense of Justice with a capital letter, God alone is the eternal judge. Integral Justice for man is to love God alone. But there issues from God Himself a second sense: to love all others, not as God does, but fairly as oneself, infinitely secondary. Earthly justices are sparks of the divine fire.

Decree 4, then, chooses and promotes in the name of God and on a par with faith an earthly justice understood in a current, secularized, third sense which encompasses the faith of man who knows not God. This is a question of today's struggle for the poor and a question of modern development as a kind of crusade. This is an option which polarizes (as Fr. Fennessy observes), which divides the make-up of the Society into shameful integralists and proud modernists. The resolution of this division would be in an upward discernment towards God.

Today GC 34 ought to reformulate its general formula. The world is looking for a New Age. Marx is dead, but Kant is only the more virulent and reigns in the West (against the Third World). The assault of doubt — witness the Church — goes from bad to worse.

And here is the very day when there appears a sensational three-fold response from the Pope himself: a rousing summons to the New Evangelization; the encyclical *Veritatis Splendor*, which confronts doubt in the faith; and the Catechism of Unity.

It is here that Father General echoes the summons of the Pope and poses for us a fundamental question. What ought this new Evangelization be for us? It is clear that the new formula of the decree *Promotio Fidei et Justitiae* comes from the first Formula of St. Ignatius to Pope Paul II in 1540: "enlistment for the service of God alone and of His vicar on earth," that is, for evangelization and catechizing. That envisages admirably the modern situation and two-fold difficulty of the modern Jesuit: God the first known, and the rock of Rome, a proclamation that will bring joy to the Pope and to our King Jesus.

Half the Jesuits dare to see the crisis of the age concerning God and Catholicism — I do not see anyone who dares to formulate it. It seems to me that the future of the Society of Jesus is at stake, that the basic vitality of Africa and Asia is surely from God and rejects our Europe which is without knowledge of God. In my old age, I would be happy to give my life that this postulate passes and yields room to the vocation of youth who are mistrustful of a faith in crisis.

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I enjoyed reading Adolfo Chercoles' article on the *Examen* (PJ 57). However the shock value of any statement only resonates positively when its truth value is not sacrificed. Thus to affirm that "Sin, in the New Testament, is not a place of rupture with God, but of encounter with Him" is shocking but not true. Surely it is, as Ignatius affirms in the second point of the *Examen*, the knowledge of my sins which can be an encounter with God, not the sin itself. To go further and conclude that "Sin is a grace" is to extend the shock wave, but move completely away from the truth. It is Peter's realisation and knowledge (head and heart) of his sin of denial of the Lord that is the grace which led to his deep encounter with the Lord and his brothers.

I am prompted to excuse Adolfo the looseness of his language, and perhaps put the fault down to what Derek Walcott, 1992 Nobel laureate in literature, calls the *bétrayal* in translation, but "*El pecado es una gracia*" is just as shocking but also untrue.

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This morning was a beautiful, still, cool and clear dawn and I said Mass for GC 34. I am sure your well-worked issue of PJ 57 (September 1994) is one of the last steps in the preparations, which have lasted over two years. I am grateful for all the exertions and hard work of many, and consoled that the Society is managed so efficiently, but I have to add that here at the "grassroots" in an elegant college, I hear very little interest in GC 34. I feel the undertow of "holding on," keeping quiet, looking after oneself, and noticing a continuous decline in not only numbers, but also ideals and sensible initiatives.

"Behold Our World" — yes, but conditioned by the media, and also our perception within our work and interests. The Ignatian contemplation to obtain love is indeed good. The challenge to do more is now the option of provincials. But will people follow? Some comment that, no matter what GC 34 says, people go their own ways. True to a point, it needs to be said. Many people do not "close," they wait until they are forced to change!

Adolfo Chércoles shows how important is the *Examen*, to be grateful and able to love and serve. Faced with defence mechanisms and self-justification, we are to divest ourselves and take nothing for granted. Sin can be an encounter with God — an encounter with self, truth and others. I also know the narcissism that comes with giving thanks. To ask for the grace to know where I have failed! And how easy it is to tell lies when everyone wants to hear them!

M. Amaladoss speaks of the Church in its mission and service to the covenant — the kingdom that is already but not yet. Evangelisation as dialogue of God and His Word with God's people. The missionary as messenger of an intercultural encounter between his own culture and that of the culture to meet. Then to dialogue — if it means how we ordinarily live, then what resources have we better than prayer and charity? To live enlightened, not dragged down by a consumer culture and by the trend to get more and be more secure financially. It is a matter of choices, dealing with attitudes, value systems and world views which is difficult.

Gustavo Gutiérrez speaks of his past and luminous points — every one matters, but in reality most are "in-significant." I feel it as a teacher — those who do not work hard and are not intelligent are not significant. And as for the "poor," there are so many of them and it is so impossible to do anything, so let's have another dinner and read the newspapers and watch TV — or take a holiday by air. We are living in the affluence of Hong Kong, where no one is supposed to be unemployed, and the culture seems to say: If you have it, use it and show it, but make sure you can get more of it and, at all costs, make sure of stability and prosperity.

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**Fr. Hermann Bacher**, Swiss-born and member of the Poona Province in India, has received the highest 'Order of Merit' of the Federal Republic of Germany. Through years of persistent efforts he succeeded in helping the governments of India and Germany to redefine development cooperation so that it directly supports the self-help initiatives of the rural poor. Thus Fr. Bacher is today acknowledged as the initiator and moving spirit of the Indo-German Watershed Development Programme, expanding in dry areas of Maharashtra. Experienced NGOs assist village communities in designing and implementing comprehensive development programmes which prevent scarce rain water from running down the hills, resulting in erosion and prolonged drought. This makes possible the conservation, regeneration and management of all resources — land, water, vegetation, animal and human. The aim is to bring about an optimal equilibrium in the eco-space between natural resources, man and grazing animals.

The ceremony of granting Fr. Bacher the award — in the presence of government officials from both India and Germany — took place in Medhwan, one of the successfully-transformed villages in the Ahmednagar District of Maharashtra. Three years ago Medhwan was one of the most miserable villages in the District with only one scarce crop, no drinking water after the rainy season, so that people migrated to the towns to find work. Today it is a relatively prosperous village with clean drinking water all year round and plenty of water for irrigation so that two