

PROMOTIO JUSTITIAE

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Michael Czerny, S.J.
Editor

INTRODUCTION

How many Jesuits live and minister in major cities and mega-cities? Probably the majority, and even those in rural and remote places constantly run into artifacts of today's urban (= global, market, media) civilization. Reading "Our Mission and Culture," Decree 4, n.26:

"Ignatius loved the great cities;" they were where this transformation of the human community was taking place, and he wanted Jesuits to be involved in the process.

This Ignatian notion of the city conveys a deep desire to offer the best we have.

The "city" can be for us the symbol of our current efforts to bring fulfilment to human culture.

But disillusionment and misgivings also arise regarding "the city":

that the project, in its present form, is seriously flawed, no one doubts;
that we are more sceptical now than we were even thirty years ago, is true;
that there have been massive dislocations and inequalities, is clear to all;
that the totalitarian experiments of this century have been brutal
and almost demonic in intensity, none will dispute;
that it seems sometimes to resemble the Babel and Babylon of the Bible,
is all too evident.

So our current efforts include hard questions, critical and self-critical questions. In this issue of *Promotio Justitiae*, for example, we inquire into population trends and the promotion of social development as well as question how to enculturate the Gospel and the Church, encourage Christian vocations, or renew the social apostolate in Latin America.

Our aim is the confused but inescapable attempt to cooperate in the creation of that community which, according to the Book of Revelation, God will bring about — and God will bring it about — in the form of the holy city, the radiant New Jerusalem: "By its light shall the nations walk; and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it, and its gates shall never be shut by day — and there shall be no night there. They shall bring into it the glory and the honour of the nations" (Rev 21:24-26).

The Jesuit mission and Ignatian spirituality want to find traces of the God who, despite everything, dwells in this city and is at work here.

Until that day arrives, our vocation is to work generously with the Risen Christ in the all-too-human city where there is poverty of body and spirit, domination and control, manipulation of mind and heart; and to serve the Lord there until He returns to bring to perfection the world in which He died.

So in "the city" new anthropological reflections, rich theological concepts, innovative apostolic experiments all converge, and also often simply prayer:

**A PRAYER
over the CITY**

We await the Kingdom of God to come,
both as a gift
and thanks to the active help of many;
in the meanwhile we make our appeal:

O God!

Your Kingdom come,
your Lordship over men and women
over the world you created,
not the caricatures we have made;

Come the Kingdom of your Word,
not the reign of endless words
devoured in ads
on television;

Come the Kingdom of your Gospel,
peace, reconciliation and fraternity,
the Kingdom of good news today
and the possibility of new life;

Come the Kingdom of humanity
upon the men and women of this city:
may they become new creatures,
a new people, a new city;

Come the Kingdom of your Jerusalem
city of peace, salvation, light,
luminous epiphany of your presence
shining on a city freed from shadows;

Come your Kingdom upon this city
which we love and want to make
more livable, welcoming and splendid
in all its aspects;

So that Hope never fail.

Amen!

+ Michele Cardinal Giordano
Naples

**A PRAYER for CITY-DWELLERS
with THIRST for GOD**

Have mercy on us, O Lord Jesus,
on us poor inhabitants of the cities,
on us suffering ascetically at the wheel
on Sunday afternoon in a total traffic jam.
O Good and Sweet Lord Jesus,
teach us your gentleness in the Metro,
when we're crushed and shoved
at rush hour every day.
Your peace, O Lord, for mothers
at seven in the morning
and six in the evening,
when they have to dress and undress the kids,
prepare breakfast, lunch and supper,
leave the children at school and
not be late for work.
Your peace, O Lord,
for all who don't sleep at night
in hospitals because of the pain,
in buildings and garages working security;
for so many employed who work without rest
and unemployed who languish in boredom:
your peace, O Lord, for them all
in the midst of their struggles.
For them all, O Lord,
the 'them' who're us
because we're all One in You, your Only Body,
for them all, O Lord,
the gift of Your Holy Spirit
who makes us long for you.
Have mercy on us all, O Lord Jesus.
Let neither the weariness of the city
nor its loneliness embitter us,
but on the contrary let it
make us more good, more loving,
through the silent and ceaseless
invocation of your Holy Name.
O Lord, O humble Master, O hidden Inhabitant
of every corner of our every noisy street:
may we find in everyone and everything
the chance to recognize you so as to love you,
giving ourselves simply, as You do,
like the Bread which is broken.

Javier Melloni, S.J.
Barcelona

ECHOES of COPENHAGEN

Peter Henriot, S.J. Bernard Lestienne, S.J. Salvador Orara, S.J.

Dear friends and colleagues,

Here are some brief reflections on the Copenhagen Summit of March 1995 on Social Development, written by the three of us who represented the Social Justice Secretariat as an accredited NGO at the Summit. A list of the brothers who were at Copenhagen has already been published, as well as the letter we sent to Father General and the delegates at GC 34 and the reply which we received from Father General.¹ Thanks to Internet, we were able to send out nine bulletins to some 500 addresses on the Congregation network and receive a few reactions.

Let's underline first of all the **significance of such world meetings**. Some doubt whether they are useful, but they do express the evolution of the world, for we are entering upon the planetary era. The great problems, which from now on challenge and concern all countries of the world, have to be treated together. The problems of some are also more and more the problems of others. Of course many aspects of these "great solemn liturgies" have to be questioned, still there will probably be more of them. If they are well prepared and have follow-up, they will also be more and more useful. Since our least Society and our mission are universal, it is good that Jesuits participate in such meetings.

Considerable **boldness and courage were needed to choose as complex and delicate a subject as social development**. This would not have been possible before 1989, but given the rapid evolution of the world and the great poverty in which more than a third of humanity lives, it became more and more urgent to do it. Credit is due to men like Boutros Boutros Ghali, the UN Secretary General; to Juan Somavía, the Chilean president of the Summit and in some sense its "conscience," who both promoted the idea and brought it off; and to quite a few other senior U.N. officials who have a world vision of the future of humanity and whose contribution has a quality which sometimes reminds us of the very spirit of the social teaching of the Church. Until now, the U.N. usually treated development from an economic point of view, so to introduce the social dimension at a world conference represents a very important change. To raise the social dimension of development is to give it its true dimension: development centred on man and woman, on family and on community.

This was the **first world conference on Social Development**. The breadth and depth of the theme and its challenges, its technical and political dimensions, guaranteed that the Summit would be interesting. The various articles which we have written since then (see the list at the end of this letter) all underline its importance. Never before have so many Heads of State and Government come to participate at a U.N. Summit. Regarding Social Development, one might think that everything has already been said and that everything remains to be done. It is true, but it is not so simple. What is needed are explanations, exchange of points of view, definition of priorities. Political will, which is essential, does not fall from heaven, but can arise from

¹ *Promotio Justitiae* 60 (May 1995), 42-44. Please add Xabier Gorostiaga of Nicaragua to the list, that makes twelve, nearly a mini-Summit!

dialogue. Then it all has to be translated into concrete measures, and that is when the difficulties start.

The theme of Social Development was treated from **three specific viewpoints: poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion**. These three worldwide problems concern not only the South but all countries, rich and poor. They are where the very future of humanity is at stake. As Somavía underlined, the question of security today is not primarily military but human and social. In fact the debates centred especially on North-South relations. That is the heart of the question of social justice, which is raised more and more on the world level.

So Copenhagen was above all a **great debate among actors and decision-makers** from all sides, a debate joined by experts, governments, international institutions, NGOs, etc., and well-relayed to world public opinion by an army of journalists. There were some 15,000 representatives of States, international institutions and NGOs. The latter represented civil society, and their role on the great international stage is growing steadily. It is too bad that a **third sector was absent**, some say the most influential, namely, the private sector of large and small businesses and especially the multinational banks and corporations, which one knows control between 60% and 80% of international trade and financial transactions, and whose role is decisive in conceiving and building a new, durable economic and social order.

What is striking straightaway is the **diversity of situations and their interdependence**. The old bi-polar division gives way to a world rapidly evolving and recomposing. Differences assert themselves in a global world. We are involved in a common adventure. No country or even continent enjoys undisputed leadership or alone holds the key to problems. The world's diversity, yesterday hidden from view by the East-West confrontation, now shines through. Neither the North nor the South is homogeneous, and the East-West division may well re-emerge in other unexpected cultural or religious splits. The "new world order," an idea launched by George Bush during the Gulf crisis, does not exist. The differences are growing, especially between the rich countries, the middle ones where hope of improvement can exist, and the poor or miserable ones (about fifty of them now, most of them in Africa) without any apparent future prospects, in which no one is interested any more except when they pose a threat. Poverty, unemployment and exclusion exist in all countries, more or less acutely. Neither the rich nor, still less, the poor have their own solution. The challenges which threaten the future are common ones. But the rich have more means than the poor for changing the so tragic course of events.

Humanity both one and different. There is no single model or unique solution valid for all. We must learn together to analyze, to listen to one another, to speak, to take the viewpoints of others into account. All this is difficult. The conflicts of interest are strong, both individual and collective egoisms always reappear under other forms, today those of nationalism, racism or other types of intolerance. It would also be idealistic to think that the solutions will spring up spontaneously out of some people's good will. At Copenhagen it was interesting and normal to observe the noticeable differences even among the NGOs come from the four corners of the world, doubtless sharing basic aspirations and common values, yet involved in the defence of quite different and even opposed causes. We must learn how to renounce our own interests so as to open up to those of others, but this does not always take place light-heartedly. During the Summit a group of NGOs published an alternative declaration to the official one, and it won the assent of only 500 NGOs out of the 2000 present. There is nothing unusual about that.

On the last day the Heads of State and Government signed **the Summit documents**, the political declaration and the plan of action. These documents represent a step forward. With those of other world conferences (New York, Rio, Vienna, Cairo and Beijing), they provide an important reference for all those who want to continue fighting for social development, a bit like the social encyclicals for Christians involved in the transformation of society. The declaration sets forth ten frankly positive commitments without, unfortunately, imposing any obligations on the signatories. At least they remains a kind of touch stone in the collective struggle towards greater world justice and solidarity. The programme of action enumerates policies and initiatives to concretize objectives and commitments. Such a long list of generous recommendations takes one's breath away ... doubtless it would have been better to have fewer but better defined targets, precise calendars, well-distributed responsibilities, specific measures for putting into practice, and instruments for measuring the results. It is the task of the NGOs, along with other social actors, to monitor the commitments made. If those of Rio (1992) on the protection of the world's environment have gotten stuck, we will have to redouble our zeal to try to obtain some results after Copenhagen.

The great difficulty of the Summit was not having an integral and harmonious vision of sustainable economic and social development, as an alternative to the current model which seems to bring rich and poor to an impasse. In the document, the description of the under-development, poverty and misery in which a majority of the world population lives, along with the dangerous consequences of this situation for the entire population of the globe, is often precise and stark enough. But courage is lacking to push the analysis to the deep structural causes of the situation. Therefore we would in effect need to question the very model of development, as well as the attitudes and mentalities of the wealthier nations. Having failed to reach the root of the problems, the solutions proposed are therefore insufficient for resolving them or for pointing out new directions for social development. Do we really want to get there? Despite the declarations, one is limited throughout to an economicist view of development. There is fear of stating the real problems at the social and political, ethical and moral levels, even if this is where we need to be and act. But who is really ready to show interest in the poorest as a priority, to consider development first as a struggle against poverty, to renounce part of their own interests in order to favour those of others? Politics and morality are often not easy to combine.

The remedies prescribed are often **the very measures which have been at the source of enormous failures**. The neo-liberal model, which spread everywhere during the 80s, has not been entirely successful — on the contrary! The poorest are even more excluded while the rich increase their welfare and their economic, political and cultural power. The market, difficult to control and now absolutized and worshipped, has unleashed a destructive dynamic of exclusion. Ignored is the fact that the market is a set of socio-political relationships and that all are not equal before the market.

The Bretton Woods Institutions prescribe **structural adjustment, a new panacea** for development which emerged in the 80s. It would be a matter of reestablishing the major fiscal and budgetary balances of poor countries and of creating an economic climate (open borders, privatization, withdrawal of the state, etc.) so that they could participate in the world market. After a decade, some results had been obtained only in countries which already boasted the material, social and human infrastructure sufficient to support such drastic remedies. The results have been dramatic in the poorest countries: fiscal balance not re-established, increase of debt, material and social infrastructures disorganized, investment slowed-down or stopped and, above all, very high social costs: a growing part of the population no longer has access to basic

necessities and social services. Structural adjustment is the latest manifestation of economic imperialism: the poor must adapt to the new conditions and embrace the economic models, norms and criteria of the rich countries. Everyone knows they haven't the means. So it'll be necessary, they say, to introduce palliative measures to reduce the social costs. Structural adjustment is hard to reconcile with the objectives of a struggle against poverty and for the improvement of people's living and learning conditions, the basis for social development.

The NGOs and those responsible for various U.N. agencies demand **a much stricter and more democratic control over the Bretton Woods Institutions**. Their place and role within the U.N. system needs review. "The most authoritarian States in the world are more representative than the Bretton Woods Institutions," declared the historian Eric Hobsbawm during a debate. Again the idea came up of creating an Economic and Social Security Council which could replace the current Security Council or at least play an analogous role. As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the venerable organization, everyone unfortunately acknowledges that, whatever the achievements of certain specialized agencies, the institutions of the United Nations have not allowed the principal challenge of development to be overcome. They are no longer equal to the challenges and needs of the world today. A deep reform should give considerably more weight to the two-thirds of humanity who live in poverty or on the edge.

The Center of Concern² pointed out **six points at the basis of authentic social development**, on which it would be good to focus lobbying. The points are also useful criteria for evaluating our own attitudes and the work of the projects in which we are involved:

- 1) human rights (especially women, children, migrants and refugees);
- 2) more adequate indicators and instruments for measuring development centred on people;
- 3) active participation in civil society;
- 4) access of the poorest to elementary needs and to means of production;
- 5) reduction or cancellation of debt, and reorientation of programmes for economic reform;
- 6) review of forms of mal-development among rich nations: excessive consumption, arms trade, mal-distribution of wealth, etc.

Copenhagen was more than a simple rerun or review of the development theme. **The social dimension of development does renew the prospects**. As Boutros Ghali expressed it, this Summit can be a new step in the pursuit of greater justice and solidarity at the world level. These are fashioned on a daily basis, well we know, with the participation of the greatest number. The documents of GC34 encourage and help us to remain faithful to this central dimension of our mission.

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² The Center of Concern (Washington) served as a consultant for CIDSE (the network of European Catholic solidarity agencies with headquarters in Brussels) and Caritas Internationalis (headquarters at Rome), helping them to prepare for and participate in the Summit.

Articles written by members of the team at Copenhagen:

Xabier Gorostiaga, S.J., "The potential success of a failure," *Envío* 158 (April 1995), 53-59 (English, Spanish).

Peter Henriot, S.J., "Forward steps at the Social Summit," *America* (22 April 1995), 3-5.

Peter Henriot, S.J., "Reflections on the Social Summit," *Hekima Review* (1995).

Jim Hug, S.J., "U.N. Summit a natural arena for Society's social mission," *National Jesuit News* (May 1995), 2.

Bernard Lestienne, S.J., "Copenhagen: The Mermaid's Tears," *European Vision* 35 (February 1995), 33-40 (English, French, German).

Henry Volken, S.J., "Le sommet de Copenhague," *Progressio* 2 (1995), 14-16.

Henry Volken, S.J., "L'altra Copenhague," *Popoli* (July-September 1995), 26-28.

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OUR MISSION and CULTURE

Josep Miralles, S.J.

1. Why a document on culture?

In trying to understand Decree 3, "Our Mission and Culture," the first question which arises is, why write a document on culture? The answer to this question must be that Decree 3 responds to very real, diverse and urgent problems.

In the first place: the experience of Jesuits working with indigenous peoples in traditional cultures. With awe these Jesuits attest to the immense human and religious value of the cultures of these peoples. But they, together with their cultures, are threatened by the pressure of powerful countries which moreover impose their own culture. For these Jesuits, the defense of the existence of such peoples (which comes from our commitment to justice) cannot be separated from the acceptance and promotion of their cultures. Moreover the Gospel has to be inculturated so that evangelization not serve in fact to destroy their cultures. These peoples are very numerous in the Americas, Asia, Africa and Australia.

In second place, Asian Christians and Jesuits live in a contradictory situation: they live in their own culture, but the Christianity they profess (marked by Western forms of theology, symbolism and Church organization) separates them from their fellow citizens and makes them strangers in their own country. They want to give a strong impulse to the inculturation of Christian faith. Only based on such inculturation can they be authentic "prophets" who denounce "from within" the injustices which their own culture allows and legitimates (such as the caste system in India).

In the third place, European Jesuits, impressed by the extent and growth of unbelief, also insisted on the theme of inculturation. The postulates intuited that an evangelization of Europe requires, as a prior condition, a new inculturation of the Gospel which, also from within, assumes the deep cultural changes in the West ... and perhaps in the whole world.

2. But what is culture?

The word 'culture' can be understood in very different ways. It can mean a person's level of knowledge, or the sum of human activities dedicated to the arts and sciences. The novelty of the decree is that the Society analyses the relationship between its mission and culture as understood in anthropological and sociological terms:

'Culture' means the way in which a group of people live, think, feel, organize themselves, celebrate and share life. In every culture, there are underlying systems of values, meanings and views of the world, which are expressed, visibly, in language, gestures, symbols, rituals and styles (Decree 4, note 1).

Taking the definition and deepening it a little, we realize that culture constitutes "the system" which we could call "the programmer" of the values, behaviours, forms of organization and knowledge accepted by a society. What is foreign to the culture of a people, simply **cannot** form part of its real experience. For this reason, if the Gospel or if appeals for justice are not expressed in an inculturated manner, they remain unintelligible and irrelevant.

The Congregation does not underline, but in a certain sense takes for granted, the existence of a **reciprocal** relationship between the cultural system and the socio-economic and political systems. The latter would not stand without the cultural "programming" which legitimates and motivates them and makes them plausible. But at the same time these systems first generate and then practically legitimate the cultural system which happens to be functional for them.

3. Keys to understanding

a) What is "inculturation"?

The Gospel should become incarnate, be "translated" (without betrayal) into the different cultures in order that the Good News can be brought **from within inside** each culture; but the cultures, in this process, **supply** their own richness to the historical incarnation of the Gospel. This means that the Gospel, in concretely becoming incarnate, undergoes powerful transformations regarding the forms in which it was formerly inculturated; the cultures for their part are also challenged by the Gospel to be transformed. The process of **inculturation** of the Gospel is a process of **dialogue of cultures, of mutual relation and transformation between one concrete and historical form of living and incarnating the Gospel and another form of culture, also concrete and historical**. The underlying theological models are those of the "seed" which is buried, of the Incarnation and of Death-and-Resurrection. All of them speak of "losing oneself" in order to "live," and this is just as valid for the historical forms of the Church in her attempt to "incarnate" the Gospel, as it is for the cultures which receive it.

b) The articulation "**faith-justice**" — **inculturation**

The Society has not given up its option for faith and for justice, but rather makes a dimension explicit which until now has not been sufficiently underlined. In effect "as Jesuits we live a faith directed towards the Kingdom, through which justice becomes a shaping reality in the world" (n.6). The relation and the interaction between "the integrating principle of our ministries" and the "integral feature" of culture was more extensively treated in Decree 2, "Servants of Christ's Mission."

The intuition of GC 34 (which no doubt needs to be deepened) is that justice cannot be realized nor faith properly announced unless one is **at the same time** working the cultures and the socio-economic and political structures, because all these elements are mutually related and, together, they model the concrete lives of peoples.

At a more concrete level the Congregation commits the Society to work "to keep this relation between traditional cultures and modernity from becoming an imposition and try to make it a genuine intercultural dialogue" (n.11). The Society recognizes the errors and sins it has committed in the past in this field (n.12). The final proposals tend in the same direction (nn.26,27).

c) Double key to unbelief

Paragraph 24 recalls that widespread unbelief has two principal sources: it can be due to an inadequate inculturation of the Gospel, but also to modern society's resistance against accepting the deep conversion which the Gospel demands. For this reason, the effort of inculturation is also critical and prophetic because "one of the most important contributions we can make to critical contemporary culture is to show that the structural injustice in the world is rooted in value-systems promoted by a powerful modern culture which is becoming global in its impact" (n.24). For the same reason, the dialogue of believer with non-believer must "be based upon a sharing of life, a shared commitment to action for human development and liberation, a sharing of values and a sharing of human experience" (n.23).

d) Inculturation in critical modernity

Taking what we have said as granted, it is no surprise that the Congregation developed a long section on critical modernity, since it wished not to produce a decree which was interesting only for Asians and those who work with traditional indigenous cultures. The inculturation of the Gospel is an inescapable dimension of all evangelization and so it has to be thematically handled in the "west," that is Europe, North America, Australia.

The Congregation first takes for granted the rupture between the Gospel and contemporary secular culture (n.19). It not only notes this fact but also encourages each Jesuit to live it in his own flesh and to make of it, in a certain sense, the condition for a significant apostolate (n.20).

The GC's diagnosis of this culture's capacity for spiritual experience is difficult but not impossible: "People's spiritual lives have not died; they are simply taking place outside the Church" (n.21). To face this situation, GC 34 suggests we "not ignore the Christian mystical tradition" (n. 21). Why this appeal to **mysticism**?

In fact, in a secularized context, a man or woman who seeks God cannot turn to structures which would support their faith from without. Ecclesial authority is not meaningful and so the person is necessarily sent back to their own **experience**.

On the other hand, in a secular culture, authentic religious experience cannot easily use language and symbols which are explicitly Christian because these have become in large part unintelligible. The religious experience of many men and women outside the Church is something real but for them it is in a certain sense "ineffable" (unspeakable) because they do not have the language to express it.

For this reason, the decree insinuates that the religious experience of many of our contemporaries is more likely to understand and harmonize with mystical experience than with belief expressed in ecclesial language. The mystical is "experience" of the "ineffable," of what cannot adequately be said....

e) Theological and spiritual style

The theological models mentioned earlier can, when taken seriously, lead to deep changes in theology and in the Church. The bold key to the decree consists in the deep conviction which runs through it: God is present and active in all history; the Risen Christ radiates His influence to all peoples. This is a theme which continually surfaces in the decree. It is rooted in the mystical and spiritual tradition of the Society (n.7), causes consolation when we progress along the right way (n.9); it makes us servants and witnesses of what the "creative and prophetic Spirit" is doing in our culture (n.13). Paragraphs 14-18 develop and articulate the underlying theology, which allows us to understand our mission within the great movement of the Church opening herself to the plurality of cultures. Finally, the "practical orientations" underline that this trust has to permeate all our apostolic works (n.27).

4. Conclusions?

The theme of justice and the theme of culture are really at different levels. The first springs from what is most intrinsic to the Gospel, the second appears as a deeper and more complex consideration of reality. The first is motor, the second is "instrument." Keeping the cultural dimension of reality in mind is both essential and at the same time secondary, just as the cup is both secondary and essential with respect to the wine: it is its concrete form or "incarnation." For this reason the decree on culture does not open up a new field of action, nor should it reinforce a "culturalist" tendency in the Society (which would stem from the other meanings of the word 'culture' mentioned at the beginning). **It only invites us to remember that persons, socio-economic and political realities, and pastoral approaches should always take into account the cultural underpinnings upon which they operate and upon which their hearers live.** As we assimilate this perspective, we recognize the immense importance that it has and the blunders we commit when we neglect it.

Obviously this perspective entails new questions: Is it possible to intervene in culture like one can intervene in the economy or in politics? I think it is possible, but we still do not know much about it and in any case the processes are slow ones. Probably they go along the line of building up groups which can be a "seed" or a point of reference for other groups; probably a good handling of communications at all levels is involved; and surely other things, too. In any case it will continue to be important to work on more "material," socio-economic and political structures, because these certainly **also (but not exclusively)** build up culture.

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IGNATIUS and the DECREE on VOCATIONS

Victor Betancourt, S.J.

How would Saint Ignatius react upon reading Decree 10 of our recent General Congregation on the promotion of vocations? He would, I think, be a bit surprised. Let's note his various reactions.

In the first place he seems quite pleased that 223 Jesuits met in order to answer the question, "How should the Society of Jesus face the third millennium?"¹ The Society thus respected the only two reasons for which Ignatius would have convoked a General Congregation: the first was to elect a new General and the second was to treat matters which the General cannot resolve by himself.

Now Ignatius seems a little pensive, surely he is trying to assimilate the Decree. He reads and re-reads the Spanish version, since he doesn't know English, and finally he finds a way of grasping it: he will "separate" or "divide it up" in order to understand it better, that is, he wants to "discern" it. He thinks that the right thing to do is to reflect first on the "subjects" who are present in the Decree in order to note their various relationships, and then he divides the text as he usually does when treating important matters, that is, into "ends" and "impediments" and means.²

1. The Subjects

Ignatius notes with great interest that in the Decree there are three subjects — the **Holy Spirit**, the **Society of Jesus**, and the **one called** (*el vocacionado*) — relating to each other. According to the General Congregation, "a vocation is a gift of God," and this means the "action of the **Spirit**" which no human effort can replace.³

¹ "Your General Congregation certainly understands the particular importance of this present historical moment, since it is essentially dedicated to discerning the specific contribution your Institute is called to make to the new evangelization, on the brink of the third Christian millennium, as well as to updating the internal organization and legislation of the Society of Jesus so that it can render ever more faithful and effective service to the Church" (John Paul II, "Allocution to the Delegates of the 34th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus," Rome, 5 January 1995, n.2).

² "In everything which he put into order, our Father paid a great deal of attention to the means which would be used, to the ends which were being aimed at and to the disadvantages which could result, especially when it was a question of matters that were public and exposed to the view and the judgment of outsiders..." (*Memorial*, n.15).

³ "Clearly, a vocation is a gift from God, and no human effort can replace the action of the Spirit. Nonetheless, God uses human instruments. Each Jesuit and each Jesuit community must take responsibility for ensuring that we can carry out our mission in the years to come" ("The Promotion of Vocations," D.10, n.1).

For its part the **Society of Jesus** has an apostolic purpose (*fin*) or mission. Each community and each Jesuit has to employ the human means needed in order to "assure that our Society can carry out its mission." These human means are oriented toward the growth and preservation of the body of the Society, and this is the "responsibility" which Jesuits must take up in simply cooperating with the "gift of God."

The third subject, the **one who is called**, can be called by God out of various cultures, including minority cultures. The Society cannot neglect this "gift of God" who also calls immigrants or indigenous people to His service.⁴ In this regard the General Congregation is following the wish of Ignatius to promote indigenous vocations to the Society.⁵

2. The Ends

Once Ignatius has finished reflecting on the three "subjects" in general, his face lights up as he pauses and stays with only one of them, contemplating God, and discovers three perspectives for doing so. From the point of view of the Society, God is its **apostolic purpose**: in serving the neighbour the Society fulfils its mission because God is present in the neighbour. On the other hand, from the perspective of the one who is called, God is his **spiritual purpose**: young people today want to find meaning and purpose in their lives because God gives them a hunger for Himself. Moreover for the one who is called, the Society should be his **mystical purpose**: it is the divine sacrament whereby God manifests Himself through specific Jesuits. Ignatius notes that the General Congregation very briefly treats these purposes of vocation promotion.

The **apostolic purpose** of the Society becomes concrete in the mission. Vocations assure the Society of fulfilling this purpose. Accordingly, the lack of vocations goes in direct and proportional detriment to the purpose which the Society seeks. Out of the clear awareness of this reality comes the encouragement to work vigorously and decisively for vocations. That is, the very apostolic purpose today requires an urgent promotion of vocations as a means for the apostolic mission.⁶ The very mission of the Society in fact turns Jesuits today into vocation promoters.⁷

The **spiritual purpose** is, for the one who is called, the movement which directs him towards God as his ultimate purpose. This vocational movement is stimulated by the Spirit who speaks to human hearts. The one who is called should respond to this call in order to reach out for his human fulfilment. Promoting vocations therefore means helping the one who is called, to

⁴ "We must promote vocations as widely as possible, so that we might reflect the culture and experience of those we seek to serve. With special sensitivity and encouragement, we need to seek possible vocations among minority cultures, immigrants, and indigenous people" (n.4).

⁵ See *Letters* n.5925 to Miguel Torres, Rome, November 21, 1555, volume X, pp. 170-178.

⁶ "The Society of Jesus cannot fulfil its mission without further vocations. General Congregation 34 therefore calls on all our companions to work vigorously for vocations" (n.1).

⁷ "Our mission and spiritual heritage make us all promoters of vocations" (n.2).

respond to God and to encounter Him.⁸ And so vocation promotion has to show real and deep respect for the different calls of God for service in His Church. Among them can be the specific call to serve Him in a given institution: the Society of Jesus.⁹

The **mystical purpose** for the one who is called is the Society of Jesus as a sacrament of God, true to the degree in which the very life of the Spirit shines through. And so this mystical purpose should be known and loved if it is to attract the one who is called. Vocation promotion for the Society would therefore have each Jesuit and community shine-forth the living presence of God in their lives, in their community life, in their apostolic work ... in brief, actively showing themselves to the one who is called and allowing themselves to be known so that the Society can be loved by others.¹⁰

3. The Impediments

When Ignatius arrives at the moment for discerning the impediments to vocation promotion, he cracks a little smile. He remembers that, when he wrote the Constitutions, the impediments which the Society would see in a candidate were always in relation to the apostolic purpose. He is really happy and satisfied that the last Congregation has changed the perspective 180 degrees. Now the impediments or obstacles are whatever those who feel called see in the Society as they try to respond to their call. In this sense the human image of Jesuits is decisive for anyone who is called.¹¹ And there follows the absolutely certain conviction that, if Jesuits really hope for vocations, the first thing is to analyze the quality of the lived experience, personal and communitarian, which they have of God and of their neighbour.¹²

Then the General Congregation mentions the concrete impediments which it sees in the Society as viewed by a young man who may possibly have a vocation. The way the Congregation does this is to ask some rhetorical questions which generally sketch the impediments in the Society on the one hand, and then swing pendulum-like to offer the means for promoting vocations on the other.

⁸ "Vocation promotion simply means helping young people hear and respond to the stirrings of the Spirit in their hearts" (n.2).

⁹ "Naturally, vocation promotion does not necessarily produce a vocation to the Society of Jesus. It leads to various types of a Christian response, and we must carefully respect the particular way in which the Spirit calls each person" (n.2).

¹⁰ "At the same time, young people can only choose what they know and love. Every Jesuit and every Jesuit community must do everything possible actively to present the Society of Jesus to others in such a way that those whom God calls will know and appreciate who and what we are" (n.2).

¹¹ "The quality of our lives as Jesuits gives a human image to God's call" (n.3).

¹² "If we really expect vocations we must examine whether our relationship with God, our communities, and our apostolates are what we profess them to be" (n.3).

The first impediment consists of **negative Jesuits**. This would be an absolute impediment which the Society poses to one who is called. The symptoms of a Jesuit who is negative and thus damages or destroys the mission of the Society are the following:

Destructive criticism, bitterness, and even contempt for our way of life and the vows is devastating for those who might be considering a Jesuit vocation (n.3).

The second impediment are **timid Jesuits**. Here is a relative impediment the Society puts before one who is called. Doubt and timidity are signs of little vitality.¹³

The third impediment for one who is called and wishes to follow-through, are **secret Jesuits**. This point would be a relative impediment, too. The beauty of Ignatian prayer is hermetically sealed away in an alabaster flask so that it becomes a secret for the very Jesuits who are carrying the flask.¹⁴ But such Jesuits are an impediment not only individually but above all in communitarian form, and this leads to the next two impediments.

The fourth impediment consists of **mysterious communities**. This impediment, also relative at the community level, shows up as "zeal for cloister." So-called love for community suddenly becomes jealous and narcissistic and makes the community a mystery to all mortals, a mystery accessible to Jesuits alone.¹⁵

The fifth impediment are **individualistic communities**. This impediment is also relative and can be overcome. The symptoms are a vigorous protection of one's own work from any possible interference. It is also an egoistic apostolic zeal.

4. The Means

Finally, Ignatius shows that his expectations were not quite satisfied regarding the means of vocation promotion which unfortunately are left undeveloped in this Decree. Instead Father General is asked to study the experiences of vocation promotion throughout the Society and to write a letter listing the practical recommendations.¹⁶ Nevertheless Ignatius is a bit consoled because, given the pendulum style of paragraph 3 of the Decree, one can deduce some means.

The first means would be **positive Jesuits**. The living example and witness of Jesuits is one of the most important means for vocation promotion.¹⁷

¹³ "Even so, many of us are too hesitant and too timid in offering what we have to others" (n.3).

¹⁴ "Does our prayer remain a secret except to ourselves...?" (n.3).

¹⁵ "Do our communities remain mysterious to all except Jesuits...?" (n.3).

¹⁶ "We recommend that Father General, after studying the experience of vocation promotion in the whole Society, write a letter on the practical aspects of promoting vocations to the Society" (n.5).

¹⁷ "Fortunately, most Jesuits are positive and lead lives of great fidelity" (n.3).

The second means consists of **courageous Jesuits**: courage in giving witness of their own prayer without fear of the difficulties typical of life in the spirit and without fear of showing ourselves prayerful men before "others" and before "brother Jesuits."¹⁸ This is an excellent means for promoting vocations.

The third means consists in **open and welcoming communities**. Ignatius is very happy about this point because in the early Society it was one of the principle means, whereby he himself won many a young man or person of importance for the Society.¹⁹

The fourth means are **communities of solidarity**. The witness and example of communitarian solidarity is a very important means of vocation promotion. Given the concerns of a young man today, team work, community prayer, spiritual communion in apostolic achievements and failures, serving others in community, are all means which in themselves make the Society's trinitarian mysticism manifest, a Society one in the diversity of persons.²⁰

5. Conclusions

After having made this discerning analysis of the Decree on the promotion of vocations, Ignatius writes down the following conclusions in a notebook:

"The **apostolic purpose** is reaffirmed as the mission of the Society, and so the promotion of vocations in function of this mission becomes indispensable today. The **spiritual purpose** of each vocation is to encounter God, in this sense the Society undertakes the apostolic work of helping the one who is called to find his place in the Church and not necessarily in the Society. The **mystical purpose** is intimately linked with helping one's neighbour to develop, that is, the decree shows the Society that its lived experience of God is an indispensable means for promoting vocations.

"The **impediments** which the Society places in the path of the one who is called are considered both individually and in their communitarian form. The **impediments** which **each Jesuit** places in the way of those who are called, include existential negativity, timidity in letting oneself be known, keeping personal prayer a secret. The **impediments** which **each community** places in the way of those who are called, are zeal for cloister and individualist apostolic work.

"The **means** are scarcely sketched but can be deduced thanks to the pendulum style of the rhetorical questions in paragraph 3 of the decree. The **means** would be equally considered in both an individual and a communitarian manner. The **means** which **each Jesuit** can use for promoting vocations for the Church, would be good example and

¹⁸ Our prayer: "Do we talk about our experience of God, including its difficulties, with others and with our brother Jesuits?" (n.3).

¹⁹ Our communities: "Are they open and welcoming to those who seek us?" (n.3).

²⁰ "Do young people see us working together, sometimes struggling but still supporting one another, praying together? Does our apostolic zeal communicate itself to others, so that they, too, will want to commit themselves to God's service?" (n.3).

courage in giving witness of life. The **means** of vocation promotion which **each community** can employ, are openness, hospitality and solidarity."

At this point Ignatius dips his quill in the ink and writes in his notebook energetically, as if wanting to emphasize something. We read as follows:

"Evidently Decree 10 is too short, given the importance of the topic. The most serious lack is the document's silence on recommendations of explicit means for vocation promotion based, not only in 'the experience of vocation promotion in the whole Society' such as it asks of my successor, but fundamentally in the experiences of vocation promotion which I myself have had.

"For example, it does not recommend as a practical means something which for me was essential: to pray for vocations, each Jesuit no less than each community, and so I wanted this done at definite dates and times.²¹ I also used to pray for an individual person's vocation by name.²² Nor does it mention that the Constitutions make the Provincial responsible for vocation promotion.²³ Nor does it suggest that a plan for vocations be drawn up and worked out by each Province. I remember encouraging Jesuits who were going on mission to look for the best means of attracting young men to the Society and, besides, I suggested some to them — all of which means, in modern language, that I asked them to draw up a plan for vocations.²⁴ Nor does it mention that scholastics in formation were for me a rather effective means for attracting vocations to the Society.²⁵ Finally it doesn't say anything about lay people cooperating in the promotion of vocations to the Society."²⁶

So, after reading the Decree on the promotion of vocations of our last General Congregation, dear reader, how would you react?

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²¹ See *Constitutions* n.812; see *Letters* n.6327, to Alfonso Ramírez de Vergara, Rome, 30 March 1556, volume XI, pp. 184-85.

²² See *Letters* n.6647, to José Ramírez, Rome, 4 July 1556, volume XII, pp. 71-73; see *Letters* n.146 to Francisco de Borgia, Rome, 9 October 1546, volume I, pp. 442-44; see *Letter* n.6177, to Juan de Mendoza, Rome, 7 February 1556, volume X, pp. 650-51.

²³ See *Constitutions*, nn.138, 141-43.

²⁴ See *Letters*, n.18, to the Fathers sent to Germany, Rome, 24 September 1549, volume XII, pp. 242-43; *Letters* n.1898, to Juan Pelletario, Rome, 13 June 1551, volume III, page 542; *Letters* n.24, to the Fathers sent on ministries, Rome, 8 October 1552, volume XII, pp. 251-252.

²⁵ See *Letters* n.1898, to Juan Pelletario, Rome, 13 June 1551, Volume III, pp. 544-45.

²⁶ See *Letters* n.60, to Juan III, King of Portugal, Rome, 8 March 1543, volume I, pp. 243-46; see *Letters* n.149, to Ferdinando of Austria, King of Romans, volume I, pp. 450-53.

In *Promotio Justitiae* 58 (November 1994), Dr. Fernando Riaza wrote a most insightful and challenging reflection on the preparatory Essays, *The Jesuits: Towards GC 34* (CIS 75, 1994). Invited to provide a similar reading of the GC 34 Decrees in their provisional version, he introduced the present article as follows: "Of course in the face of an institutional document drawn up upon much reflection and prayer by many Jesuits representing the universal Society, my contribution, partly external and certainly personal, remains at the level of personal impressions and perhaps of well-intentioned critique."

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS on the DOCUMENTS of GC 34

Fernando Riaza Pérez

In general I find the documents of GC 34 very attractive. In them I have found a style and some approaches with which I was already familiar in decrees of earlier General Congregations. For example, on the one hand, allusions to the Constitutions, the Spiritual Exercises, quotations from Popes and Fathers General; on the other, a reflective, serene and intelligent quality; by way of conclusion, attempts to apply some of the ideas concretely and practically. But I also found new ideas and attitudes of which I was unaware in the direction of the Society and which reveal its internal evolution and show it making a qualitative leap in taking a collective position and in clarifying its collective awareness. To this I shall refer later.

Now, in order not to leave the negative criticisms until the end, I will first mention the most striking deficiencies which I find in the documents of GC 34. The first is a **blandness of attitude** which runs through it all. Perhaps what I see as a defect is deliberately assumed and should not be called an attitude of blandness but rather the desire for understanding and, therefore, something considered of value by the editors. It is an approach of focusing above all on the positive aspects, not only in the world which surrounds us, but also regarding the current situation of Christianity and the Church and the internal situation of the Society. The dark aspects which I see scarcely appear, least in the question of justice. My impressions of such aspects include European decadence, drowning in an egocentric and luxurious life style; a growing and rampant neopaganism; an inquisitorial attitude in many official positions of the Catholic Church, internal tensions between clergy and hierarchy ever more distant from the faithful, a growing obsession of the ruling strata with orthodoxy of faith and morals above all else, a clericalism which scarcely relinquishes any power over laypeople, the split between "right's" and "left's" in the ecclesial and Jesuits worlds, etc. All these dark shadows which I perceive hardly appear in the decrees.

The concern for justice is there in terms of denouncing and apostolic courage. But courage and denunciation seem to obtain only regarding justice and not, on the other hand, specifically the Church's or the Society's.

I also seem to find an excessive spirit of **collectivism** which does not take the individual Jesuit sufficiently into account. Nearly all the documents are "Society." Orientation towards justice,

inculturation of faith, attitude of dialogue, reflection on the vows, the brothers and lay people: all these are stated from a collective viewpoint. Missing is the explicit acceptance of the margins of criticism and dissent which exist and should exist amongst individual Jesuits. It seems, and hopefully I'm wrong, as if some of that tacit but effective mistrust still persists in the institution towards the Jesuit as an individual left to his own knowing and understanding. Though a reality, such ideas and experiences of not a few Jesuits, often critical and even harshly critical regarding the current state of the Society, do not appear anywhere. And they should have appeared in order wholly to reflect what is really happening. To this I was referring in part when speaking of the bland spirit and the rose-coloured picture which I occasionally perceived in the decrees.

On the other hand, this approach of underlining positive factors in nearly all areas, this blandness in opinions and judgments, may be hiding something other than mere understanding in the face of the modern world. They can also reflect a certain **fear** of "what is about to hit us" and an attitude of not wanting to face this storm which is already upon us, for fear of making it worse by making it seem normal in an official document which will doubtless have considerable influence upon the lives of Jesuits.

It is as if the documents of GC 34 shared the style of Walt Disney movies which are sweet and mild even when they trace the toughest story-line or treat the radical evils of our society. I have nothing against this, as long as there is some prior evidence or acknowledgement, at least by allusion, that one knows how deep are the tragedies amongst which one lives, how small the forces of the Church in this new world, how unresolved the problems within the Society, and how growing the religious indifference.

I also perceive at certain points in the decrees an exaggerated admiration, which I used to notice in some Jesuits and still do, regarding "science," "the modern world," "the critical spirit," "the new society," etc. I would have much preferred had these contemporary topics been demystified since, seen up close, like giants with feet of clay they contain quite a bit of myth. But since their diffusion and acceptance are of interest to the **media**, the media created and maintain a climate of dominant ideas before which we all more or less succumb.

The documents usually locate the Society within the socio-cultural horizon of committed lay people and of agnostics who are critical of but respectful towards religion. That is, an elite socio-cultural horizon contemplated in part from an ivory tower. But the numerically far more typical horizon is that of common, sociological but not committed Christians who are religiously ignorant, who sometimes go to Mass, who expect from the Church an impulse to live with a bit more hope so they can overcome their difficulties, but who will never commit themselves to Church tasks and who have some nearly exclusively journalistic ideas about the Church — if, that is, they read the newspaper at all. And the majority of agnostics and atheists are also sociological agnostics and atheists, usually with a religious childhood behind them but now superficial and proud in their un- or anti-religious attitude. They repeat what they pick up from their environment and without further ado defend abortion, euthanasia, the elimination of religious education, the privatization of religion. In other words, in the decrees I see some idealization of, but not much attention to, the "simple people of God" and "the simple people without God," unless they are found among the economically oppressed.

All that I have said so far, nevertheless, does not reduce my very positive opinion and my sincere admiration for the ideas in the documents of GC 34 and for the attitude which informs them. I have not followed closely enough how the official ideas of the Society have evolved internally

to be able to locate precisely the place which the decrees occupy in the Society. But looking at them as I do, even with the previous reservations, there seems to be something qualitatively new in the Society.

Let me explain. Habermas says of scholastic thought in general and especially the Catholic attitude towards existence, that we live encased in our rigid world of convictions and always will, without significant capacity to participate deeply in human adventures and tragedies, because our ideology always makes us live at the edge of the changing and convulsed social reality. This critique contains, in my judgment, some element of truth. Well, what I have perceived in the documents of GC 34 begins to respond to this critique. I mean a document committed to people here and now, committed in the sense of considering them as valid interlocutors in a dialogue in depth and not — this has nearly always happened — as exclusive objects of apostolate and, if they are Catholics, only as *Ecclesia dicens* ('church saying yes'). I think that the attitude which appears here is really new, fruitful and Christian, and this is what Pentecost was for the apostles: an experience of Christ risen which was born in the depth of the spirit and which convinced them, simply, of the truth of their beliefs. The decrees show decision and determination to penetrate into the cultural, religious and economic reality of the humanity whom the Society finds, into this reality which is beyond our ideas about it. This gives the ideas of the documents a weight of truth which comes up out of their very selves or, better, out of their closeness to and respect for the realities from which they have been taken. Given the hundreds of religious documents (theology, Magisterium, official documents...) in which *a priori* truths are repeated, *a priori* with regard to the changing experience which they seek to illuminate, by contrast in the decrees these truths appear to flow out of quite disinterested analyses of the reality in which we live today and which constitutes us — "within" this reality is where one tries to encounter the presence of the Gospel and of the Spirit. Never before have I read an official document — personal confessions of Christians there are, and quite a few along this line — which reflects on a living ecclesial reality such as the Society, and does not mainly adduce what everyone already knows and what has been repeated over and over again in previous documents.

Moreover I think that the documents manifest some collective experiences in which are inextricably woven the human and the divine, repentance and hope, discouragements and faith, critique of the Society and love for it. Many adult Jesuits whom I have known and know, great personalities and great Christians, used to speak like this and still do about the Gospel, the Church and the Society. They have reached a stage in life where they are no longer afraid to say what they really feel or to describe experiences with which one can disagree, but which are charged with humanity and woven with the grace of God. This is the tone which the decrees have, and I think that it is very new and highly hopeful that the collective consciousness of the Jesuits show this sort of sincerity and clarity.

The world of the theatre speaks of "stepping over the footlights," of getting beyond the barrier of light which prevents the actor from seeing the public there in the shadows of the theatre. When the actor feels identified with the public and the public with him, is when he has "stepped over the footlights." Great orators have also had this experience of identification with their listeners. This is what I sometimes notice in the documents of GC 34, which do not try to press the truth of the things they say, but express them in a sincere and horizontal communion attentive to the interlocutor, because they really desire to interchange points of view with the other and are ready to learn from the other's ideas. This approach of critical realism is new, this way of making the lived attitudes of Jesuits and those around them objective, this attitude of listening to the Word of God in and from within the dense and ambiguous realities of today. I perceive a

confidence in today's reality, sad and tragic as it is, but also hopeful and brave. I see a progression towards the encounter with God in the 'today' of humanity and not only in the 'always' of a faith lived dis-incarnately.

I have also been especially alert to three aspects which I consider very typical of the Society. The first is the spirit of prayer, the second the cultivation of the sacred and profane sciences in an intensive form, and the third the life of community. I have certainly seen them reflected in the decrees of GC 34 but, given the importance of these three forms of Christian witness, an importance which I have seen increasing in these recent years, I would have liked to see them more underlined. For they are three forms in which the Society serves in the exercise of her mission.

In these reflections, as the reader can easily see although I cannot, there will doubtless appear the defects and errors of the one who has written them. This stops me from worrying about any unfair criticisms I may have made.

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MOROCCAN and WORLD POPULATION LESS than FORESEEN

Lluís Recolons, S.J.

By the year 2010, the most recent calculations of population in the medium-variant projection foresee that Morocco will have 34.2 million inhabitants, instead of the 39.6 million formerly projected. By the year 2025 the reduction becomes 6.9 million inhabitants, compared with what was formerly foreseen.

Every two years the Population Division of the United Nations publishes the current data of population in the world and in each of the member states of the U.N. Recently the 1994 version (UN-94) appeared with data and projections running from 1950 to 2050. This replaces the 1992 version (UN-92) which served as the basic reference until now.

Regarding the entire world population but especially Morocco and the whole Magreb region, the data and, especially, the population projections in the UN-94 edition represent a significant change compared with the basic points of reference used by scholars and politicians until now.

The correction of the total population projected for Morocco is due in part to the initial population upon which the projections for the following years were based. These have been revised downwards. The new calculation (UN-94) reckons the total population in 1990 at

24,334,000 Moroccans — a reduction of 827,1000 inhabitants compared with what was supposed to be the 1990 total in the previous edition (UN-92).

Even greater consequences flow from the revision of the trends of the total fertility rate between the UN-92 and UN-94 editions. Thus, on the basis of the medium variant projections, the rates for Morocco for the five-year period 1990-1995 come down from 4.37 to 3.75 children per woman. And in Algeria the revision means a total fertility rate, in the same five-year period 1990-1995, of around four (3.85) instead of five (4.87) children per woman in UN-92.

Among other consequences, this advances by five years the arrival of a total fertility rate of 2.1 children per woman, the level which, over the long run, allows a population to keep its numbers stable. The new revision foresees that both Morocco and Algeria will reach this rate of generational stability in the five-year period 2010-2015 instead of in 2015-2020. Another novelty is that, in the coming years 2000-2005, both countries will already remain below the rate of three children per woman: 2.55 for Morocco and 2.97 for Algeria.

Where these modifications have the greatest and most significant repercussions is in the younger generations of the population. The UN-92 projections pictured the average rate for Morocco in the year 2010 like a normal pyramid: the younger the generation, the more numerous its members. By contrast, for the sector of the population under 15 in the year 2010, the UN-94 edition proposes the image of an inverted pyramid: the younger the generation, the fewer the members of its population.

The population 0-14 years of age in Morocco in 1995, according to the UN-94 calculation in the medium-variant projection, is 9.8 million persons, with a reduction of 1.1 million compared with that calculated by UN-92 for the same year. By the year 2010 the difference increases considerably. Instead of 12.8 million inhabitants of 0-14 years of age as in UN-92, the UN-94 edition calculates some 9.5 million inhabitants 0-14 years of age. This youngest sector of the population would represent some 27.8% of the total population in the year 2010, instead of the 36.1% they are in 1995.

Significantly, the proportion as well as the total volume of population calculated for Morocco in the year 2010, maintains a notable equivalence with figures which obtained in Spain thirty-five years earlier in 1975 (9.8 million inhabitants 0-14 years of age, or 27.8% of the total Spanish population). In the same year 1975, in France the population at these ages was some 12.6 million or 23.9% of the total population. As a reference it becomes significant that the calculations for 1995 of inhabitants 0-14 years of age was 6.5 million in Spain, some 16.5% of the total population; 11.4 million in France, some 19.6% of the total population; and 7.6 million in Italy, some 13.5% of the total population.

Based on the new version (UN-94) of data and projections of the world population, the review *POPULATION* of the Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques (INED, Paris), published a note by the demographer Youssef Courbage entitled, "The end of the demographic 'explosion' in the Mediterranean?" which concludes with the following:

The 1994 revision and the demographic predictions of the United Nations for the Southern shore of the Mediterranean has introduced important modifications in the perception of the demographic transition. For the Magreb the change of perspective is deep.... [translated from the original French text, p.191]

The quantitative data concerning world population offered in the draft final document of the UN International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, September 1994, have been corrected downward in the finally approved report of that Conference in the light of the new data provided by the revision of 1994. Where the draft final document said: "The growth of the world population exceeds 90 million persons annually and is likely to remain above 90 million per year until the year 2015" (paragraph 1.3), the finally approved document says instead:

The world population is currently estimated at 5.6 billion. While the rate of growth is on the decline, in absolute terms there has been an increase, currently exceeding 86 million persons per annum. Annual population increments are likely to remain above 86 million until the year 2015.

The world population calculated on the average for the year 2015 is lower by 140 million inhabitants in the UN-94 version (7.469 million inhabitants) than the UN-92 version (7.609 million inhabitants).

The projections provided by the most recent figures are also naturally subject to further revisions and, logically, the foreseeable corrections will be so much the greater insofar as the year to which one refers lies more remotely in the future. The political, economic and cultural contingencies and even natural causes can cause the trends to change. For example, the effect which the recent events taking place in Algeria will actually have on the size of the future infant population remains to be seen, depending on whether they affect the tendency in the evolution of the fertility rate.

The novelties provided do not substantially change the problematic regarding world population, but they do confirm the global tendency to accelerate steps in the world demographic transition. Regarding this transition, a great part of public opinion seems to perceive only the data regarding the rate of accelerated increase, and not the data regarding the slowing-down of the increase in which the world population currently finds itself.

In some countries, as is the case of Morocco and the whole Magreb, this revision reveals a much more significant velocity in taking the steps of the demographic transition than what earlier calculations showed. The demographic potential of northern Africa does not cease to be a real pressure, less mechanical than sometimes thought, upon the possibilities for sustained economic development in the area and upon the volume of possible emigration.

The forecast is that this exceptional demographic potential will be at play for a considerable period, but not for an unlimited one. And the latest update of demographic projections worked out by the United Nations foresees a rather significant shortening of the time left before Morocco and the Magreb reach the final stages of their demographic transition.

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SOCIAL APOSTOLATE in LATIN AMERICA

Jesuits in Latin America are grouped in two assistancies, called *meridional* (south) and *septentrional* (north), stretching from Tierra del Fuego all the way to the Río Grande and including nearly twenty provinces and regions. Since 1991, delegates of the social apostolate in both assistancies have been meeting together annually, and the fifth such meeting took place in early July on a splendid site overlooking Río de Janeiro, surely one of the most beautiful cities in the world. The following report is adapted from a letter which the participants sent to their fellow-Jesuits in Latin America:

In May of 1968, the Provincials and Vice-Provincials of Latin America met, together with Father Arrupe, in the retreat house of Gávea, Rio de Janeiro. A fruit of that meeting was the so-called *Letter of Río*, addressed to all Latin American Jesuits, one of the constituent documents of the social apostolate in the two assistancies. Twenty-seven years later, from July 5th to 11th, 1995, the same house of Gávea welcomed the Social Justice Delegates of all Latin American Provinces (except Uruguay) and Regions (except Cuba and Haiti), including the new region of Amazonia. The Social Justice Secretary of the Society, and Jesuit students from the Brazilian Provinces, also took part. The purpose was to review the social apostolate, reflect upon it in the light of the 34th General Congregation, and consider its implementation in the context of Latin America.

Fr. Francisco Ivern, a participant in the 1968 meeting and now Provincial of Central Brazil, welcomed the delegates and recalled that the main reasons which motivated the *Letter of Río* still persist in the reality of Latin America: populations and regions marked by injustice, ethnic or racial discrimination, violence and sinful structures. Twenty-seven years later, despite the perduring situations mentioned, it was with happiness, hope and profound conviction that the delegates reaffirmed our vocation to be Servants of Christ's mission in the promotion of justice and in dialogue with cultures and religions.

The meeting unfolded in an atmosphere of deep friendship and great spiritual consolation. The reflection around our mission beginning with GC 34 only reinforced a sense of gratitude to the Lord for the grace granted us to be able to follow Him from out of a specific option: the service

of faith and the promotion of justice. GC 34 confirms that the blood shed and the suffering undergone by our companions made and make sense in the quest for the justice willed by God. The Congregation also reaffirms that the reason for our happiness and hope comes from our friendship with the poor and their possibilities of a worthy present and future. They are, without any doubt, the ones who show us the way so that, as Church and Society, we may rightly go deeper in our mission.

The challenges, nevertheless, are greater now. The globalization of the economy and the hegemony of the neo-liberal ideology require us to examine reality afresh in order to have alternatives of justice to propose; the challenges of inculturation and inter-religious dialogue equally require greater boldness and creativity in a plural complex world for which, perhaps, we are not sufficiently prepared. What paths can we follow in response to the new challenges? We merely note a few markers along the way:

- a. The need for a **method** for analyzing reality which incorporates the socio-cultural and socio-religious dimensions. Socio-economic and socio-cultural approaches, despite the advances made, are not sufficient by themselves.
- b. The importance of paying attention to the overall **democratizing** movements of society. The configuration of non-governmental public space, the strengthening of civil society and democratic governability, the emergence of new economic and social actors, must be elements in our analyses and our efforts at social promotion. We should pay similar attention to the growing role in shaping society played by ethnic movements, gender, sub-cultures and those newly "excluded" from the official scene.
- c. The courage and creativity to confront the challenges of our mission in the new context will prove hard to come by if we do not **evaluate** our social apostolate works, research centres and promotion programmes. Do these really respond to the new situation?
- d. We are aware that social ministries depend on exchanges with **other sectors** within the apostolic plan of each Province. Such relations with formal education, spirituality, pastoral work, communications, formation, etc., seem the highest priority. If it's true that the social dimension ought to characterize all our works, it is just as true that each sector's unique contribution helps to guarantee the implementation of our mission. Joint work linked by communication and exchange would, doubtless, strengthen the whole.

The great challenge, nevertheless, is the ability to live our mission in the promotion of justice and in cultural and inter-religious dialogue according to "our way of proceeding," and this entails themes of community life, spirituality, our life of prayer, our capacity for team work. The Latin American reality with its poverty and injustice, the 34th General Congregation with its challenges and indications, call us to deep conversion to the Lord.

Río de Janeiro, 11 July 1995