Jesus the Missionary

"Jesus was a missionary" begins a Pastoral Statement on World Mission by Catholic bishops in the U.S.A., and the rest of their declaration can be seen as an outworking of that simple but often overlooked truth. Although this affirmation of December 1986 was overshadowed in the public media by the Catholic bishops’ pastoral letter on the United States economy, the text of the mission statement is given here in full for the insights it contains on the present and future of Christian mission.

The twofold purposes behind the writing of the declaration are important for all Christians to reflect upon. First, it is “to provide a theological and pastoral instrument for mission animation in order to stimulate interest in and a personal sense of responsibility for the church’s mission to other peoples. Jesus’ great commission to the first disciples is now addressed to us.” But that is not all. A second purpose is “to affirm missionaries in their efforts to proclaim the gospel and promote the reign of God. Jesus Christ, the Lord of all, is with them as they go forth in his name.”

Following Jesus the missionary in one’s own life is the theme of the next two articles. Sr. Barbara Hendricks tells of her pilgrimage as a Maryknoll Missioner, which took her back and forth many times between the United States and the far reaches of the world. Christopher Lamb then tells of Stephen Neill’s legacy as an Anglican bishop in India but also as a writer on mission with a worldwide readership. Although these articles were written separately for two continuing series in the International Bulletin, they may profitably be compared here for remarkable similarities in these two lives dedicated to following Jesus in mission service.

Howard A. Snyder and Daniel V. Runyon share with us ten significant trends in the Christian churches in recent years that will have continuing impact for Christians in mission everywhere. James A. Cogswell gives a closer analysis of the particular challenges that relief and development have brought to the churches in the years since 1945, with a view toward the future in the light of New Testament models.

The Catholic bishops’ Pastoral Statement concludes with a statement and an exhortation that all Christians might profitably consider: “Jesus is ‘the missionary of the Father’; each Christian is his witness. Let his voice proclaim the gospel through us as we bring the good news of salvation to the ends of the earth.”

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Introduction

1. Jesus the Missionary: Jesus was a missionary. As the word of God, he is the light of all nations. As the word made flesh, he brought God's own life into our midst. Before returning to the Father, he sent the church to continue the mission given him by the Father and empower her with his Spirit: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (Jn. 20:21).  

2. A Missionary Church: The church, therefore, is missionary by her very nature. She continues the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit by proclaiming to the ends of the earth the salvation Christ offers those who believe in him. We are faithful to the nature of the church to the degree that we love and genuinely promote her mission. As teachers and pastors we are responsible for keeping alive a vibrant Catholic missionary spirit in the United States.

3. Purpose of Statement: Our purpose in writing this pastoral letter is twofold: First, to provide a theological and pastoral instrument for mission animation in order to stimulate interest in and a personal sense of responsibility for the church's mission to other peoples. Jesus' great commission to the first disciples is now addressed to us. Like them, we must go and make disciples of all the nations, baptize them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them everything that Jesus has commanded. This mission to the peoples of all nations must involve all of us personally in our parishes and at the diocesan and universal levels of the church.

Second, to affirm missionaries in their efforts to proclaim the gospel and promote the reign of God, Jesus Christ, the Lord of all, with them as they go forth in his name. So must the entire church in the United States be with them as they carry out our common mission under difficult and often dangerous circumstances. Our focus in this pastoral is the proclamation of the gospel to peoples outside the United States. While we are acutely conscious of our continuing need to evangelize in our own country, that challenge, as great as it is, must never cause us to forget our responsibility to share the good news of Jesus with the rest of the world.

4. Documents on Mission: Over the centuries, the church has frequently reflected on our founding by Christ as a missionary community with a vision of God's reign that stretches beyond the horizon of history. Our own time has seen the promulgation of the Second Vatican Council's "Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity" (Ad Gentes) and Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Exhortation "On Evangelization in the Modern World" (Evangelii Nuntiandi). These important documents stress the essential missionary nature of the church and outline a contemporary charter for her mission through sensitive adaptation to new conditions.

5. World Mission: We commemorate Ad Gentes and Evangelii Nuntiandi with this pastoral letter on the mission of the church in the United States to other lands. We do so as members of the college of bishops, all of whom "are consecrated not just for one diocese alone, but for the salvation of the whole world." Our concern must be for the whole church, but especially for "those parts of the world where the word of God has not yet been proclaimed."  

6. Mission and "The Challenge of Peace": Concern for world mission springs from the same principles we set forth in our pastoral letters "The Challenge of Peace" and "Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy." These letters offer substantial help for understanding our church's mission to other peoples and nations. As we said in "The Challenge of Peace":

The theological principle of unity has always affirmed a human interdependence; but today this bond is complemented by the growing political and economic interdependence of the world, manifested in a whole range of international issues.

When the church brings Christ's message to the ends of the earth, she helps foster this unity. As we stated:

The risen Lord's gift of peace is inextricably bound to the call to follow Jesus and to continue the proclamation of God's reign. Matthew's Gospel (Mt. 28:16-20; cf. Lk. 24:44-53) tells us that Jesus' last words to his disciples were a sending forth and a promise: "And know that I am with you always, until the end of the world!" In the continuing presence of Jesus, disciples of all ages find the courage to follow him. To follow Jesus Christ implies continual conversion in one's own life as one seeks to act in ways which are consonant with the justice, forgiveness and love of God's reign. Discipleship reaches out to the ends of the earth and calls for reconciliation among all peoples so that God's purpose, "to be carried out in the fullness of time: namely, to bring all things in the heavens and on earth into one under Christ's headship" (Eph. 1:10) will be fulfilled.

7. Mission and "Economic Justice for All": Our pastoral, "Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Econ-
I. The New Missionary Context

9. NEW CONTEXT: In their publications and personal communications, missionaries emphasize how greatly the missionary context has changed since the Second World War, and even since the promulgation of Ad gentes and Evangelii Nuntiandi.11 It is important that we understand this change.

Historical Background

10. MISSIONARY ROOTS OF U.S. CHURCH: From the earliest days, European missionaries served immigrants to the New World and the native people they found on these shores. Many journeyed from Spain, France, England and other countries to give heroic witness to the gospel in colonial America. Missionaries such as Isaac Jogues and Junipero Serra made major contributions to shaping our identity as Catholics with a mission.

11. MISSIONARIES AND IMMIGRANTS: Missionaries accompanied the millions of poor and destitute people who vitalized our growing nation in the 19th and early 20th centuries. At this time, too, heroic witness was not uncommon. Two of these missionaries, Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini and Bishop John Neumann, are celebrated as saints.

12. MISSIONARIES IN OUR TURN: In God’s providence, our own people have accepted the challenge of sharing the gift of faith we have received. Especially in this century, but even in the last, missionaries were sent to announce the gospel to other nations and peoples. Religious congregations and missionary societies, some of them founded in our own country, played a prominent part in this work. The bishops of the United States underscored their commitment to world mission when they established Maryknoll as the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America in 1911. Dioceses also sent priests, religious and laity to mission lands. This proud tradition continues at the present time.

13. PONTIFICAL MISSION AID SOCIETIES: People young and old encouraged these missionaries with prayers and sacrifices, assisted them financially and welcomed them on visits home. The Society for the Propagation of the Faith and the Association of the Holy Childhood—the Pontifical Mission Aid Societies—have been principally responsible for fostering this popular support, performing the central role in universal missionary cooperation that the Second Vatican Council has affirmed:

It is right that these works [i.e., the Pontifical Mission Aid Societies] be given first place, because they are a means by which Catholics are imbued from infancy with a truly universal and missionary outlook and also as a means for instigating an effective collecting of funds for all the missions, each according to its needs.13

The church has commissioned these organizations to awaken and deepen the missionary conscience of the people of God; to inform them about the needs of universal mission; and to encourage local churches to pray for and support one another with personnel and material aid.

Contemporary Developments

14. A NEW VITALITY: A significant contemporary development in world mission is the shifting of the church’s center of gravity from the West, from Europe and North America, toward the East and South. In Latin America, Africa and Asia the church is experiencing either profound revitalization or enormous growth. Indeed, the Christian energy of these local churches has begun to overflow into missionary service of the gospel.14
A deeper understanding of the theology of mission leads us to recognize that these distinctions no longer apply. Every local church is both mission-sending and mission-receiving. A New Self-Understanding

16. CHURCH IS MISSION: These changes have brought about a new self-understanding, both for the former “mission countries” which have taken the missionary mandate of the church as their own, and for those which have long ceased to think of themselves as “mission countries.” Together we are coming to see that any local church has no choice but to reach out to others with the gospel of Christ’s love for all peoples. To say “church” is to say “mission.”

17. BASIC TASK OF MISSION: Missionaries have always seen their principal tasks as preaching the gospel to those who have not heard it, baptizing them with the waters of salvation, caring for their physical well-being and forming Christian communities. These missionaries were also sent to lend pastoral assistance to other established churches in need. The magnificent work of these men and women has been an invaluable service to the church, and today’s missionaries build on their achievements.

18. INFLUENCE OF COLONIAL ATTITUDES: At times in the past, missionaries brought not only the strengths but also some of the weaknesses of Western civilization. It often happened that they labored in lands where their own country had political and economic interests. In areas where their home country was the colonial power, those to whom they were sent sometimes found it difficult to distinguish the church’s missionary effort from the colonizing effort, which proved critical when the colonial empires were dismantled after the Second World War.

19. SOLIDARITY WITH LOCAL CHURCH: Today missionaries work primarily in established local churches, to whose life and vitality they want to contribute. The need to cooperate with diocesan bishops and authorized pastoral workers requires adaptation to local institutions and culture. When missionaries come from a country like the United States, which has great political and economic interests throughout the world, their participation in the life of the local church can place them in conflict with the policies of their own government or, indeed, of their host government. Nevertheless, they must be in union with the diocesan bishop and the local church which they have been sent to serve.

20. OVERCOMING COLONIAL ATTITUDES: In the post-colonial era, missionaries inevitably confront the effects of long Western domination in the Third World. As they work with others to promote the reign of God, they face the challenge of clearly distinguishing their Christian mission from colonial and neocolonial practices. Missionaries sometimes work in countries where freedom of conscience, freedom of religion and other basic human rights are either overtly or subtly restricted. These, especially, need to know that we are one with them and understand the very difficult situations in which they labor.

21. HEROIC WITNESS: Mission work still calls for heroic witness to the faith. We are proud of Jean Donovan, a lay woman; Ila Ford and Maura Clarke, Maryknoll Sisters; Dorothy Kazel, an Ursuline Sister; James Miller, a De La Salle Christian Brother; William Woods, a Maryknoll priest; Stanley Rother, an Oklahoma diocesan priest; and many others who have died violent deaths serving their brothers and sisters in Christ. Nor can we forget missionaries like Bishops Francis X. Ford and James E. Walsh who have suffered imprisonment or exile because of their Christian witness. May their courageous response to the gospel inspire us to expand our missionary commitment to all peoples.

II. Today’s Missionary Task

22. MISSION AND THE TRINITY: The missionary task of the church is rooted theologically in the Blessed Trinity. The very origin of the church is from the missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit as decreed by the Father, “the fountain of love,” who desires the salvation of the whole human race. To continue his mission in time, Christ gave the missionary mandate to his followers to “make disciples of all the nations” (Mt. 28:19), and he sent the Holy Spirit, the promised one of the Father, who impels the church to share the gospel with the world. Like all good news, the gospel of salvation is irrepressible. The spontaneous need to communicate it comes from the quickening presence of the Holy Spirit in every aspect of church life. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of universal mission and reconciliation. The same Spirit who accompanies and quickens the missionary activity of the church likewise precedes that activity, offering those beyond the church’s visible limits a participation in the paschal mystery of Christ.

23. URGENCY OF MISSION: We must pray for and earnestly desire a sense of urgency regarding our missionary task. This sense of urgency flows from the demands of being faithful disciples of Jesus, from our responsibility to share his gospel and from a concern that all our brothers and sisters participate as fully as possible in his life and saving mystery. We see this urgency in the life of Jesus, God’s beloved Son, who was sent to proclaim the good news of the kingdom: “This is the time of fulfillment. The reign of God is at hand! Reform your lives and believe in the gospel!” (Mk. 1:15).

24. COMING OF THE KINGDOM: When the people of Capernaum tried to restrict Jesus’ mission to themselves, he answered, “To other towns I must announce the good news of the reign of God, because that is why I was sent” (Lk. 4:43). In his very person, in all that he said and did, especially in his death and resurrection, that kingdom was already breaking into the world. It will be perfectly established, however, only in the fullness of time.

25. FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH: Jesus called a small number of men and women to be his disciples, to share intimately in his life and his vision of God’s reign, and to spread his word to other times and places. He selected twelve of them to be his apostles, promised them the Holy Spirit as an abiding presence, and commissioned them to be his “witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, yes, even to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). These apostles were established as the foundation of the church, which was divinely constituted as the effective sign, the herald, the seed, and the promoter of the kingdom, indeed its initial budding forth on earth.

26. CHURCH CONTINUES JESUS’ MISSION: Nearly twenty centuries of Christian history have elapsed, and Jesus’ prayer: “Your kingdom come!” (Mt. 6:9-13; Lk. 11:2-4) is still our prayer. The mission he gave his apostles and disciples continues to be the church’s mission. As we read in the preface to the decree Ad Gentes:

Having been divinely sent to the nations that she might be “the universal sacrament of salvation” (Lumen Gentium) the church, in obedience to the command of her Founder (Mk. 16:15), strives to preach the gospel to all men.

Like the men and women who first responded to Jesus’ invitation, those who respond in our time develop a personal relationship with Christ that sustains them in their mission.

27. HOLIEST DUTY OF THE CHURCH: St. Paul expressed the urgency of mission when he wrote to the Corinthians: “Preaching the gospel is not the subject of a boast; I am under compulsion and have no choice. I am ruined if I do not preach it!” (1 Cor. 9:16). And preach the gospel he did, not only in neighboring towns and cities, but to every nation he was able to reach. Like St. Paul, we are called to share the gospel by the
witness of our lives and the explicit proclamation of salvation in Jesus Christ.

28. **NEEDS OF OTHERS**: The human and spiritual needs of peoples beyond our borders call us to the urgency of mission. Mission always expresses a concern for the life of others. Moved by the Spirit, we ardently desire that our brothers and sisters have life, and in abundance, 28 and that they be saved by faith in Christ through the grace of God. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

29. **ECUMENICAL COOPERATION**: We rejoice that Christians of other churches share and participate in the mission of our Lord. John Paul II has urged that those who share Christ's mission "must show forth his unifying love in action." 29 Today the dangers from proselytizing are real. Nevertheless, where there can be mutual respect among the different religious traditions, there are increasing opportunities in mission work for collaboration in prayer, good works, the use of media, community service and social action. Such collaboration is itself a witness to the reconciling spirit of God.

### Hungry for the Word

30. **SPIRITUAL AND MATERIAL POVERTY**: Often those who have not heard the gospel are doubly poor, doubly hungry, doubly oppressed. They are materially poor, lacking possessions; they are spiritually poor, lacking that hope which springs from the knowledge and love of Christ. Their hunger is not only for bread and rice, but also for the word that gives meaning to their existence. They are oppressed not only by social injustice but also by the sin at its root.

31. **MISSION TO THE WHOLE PERSON**: By the same token, people are saved not only as individuals but also as members of sociocultural groups. They must experience the redemption not only of their souls but also of their whole bodily existence, not only in a world to come but also beginning here on earth. They must participate in the mystery of Christ not passively or minimally but rather as fully as possible, with intelligence, freedom and a lively sense of responsibility. Those who rejoice in the life poured into their hearts by the Spirit of Christ must be not only receivers of the word but also missionaries to others.

32. **PLANTING IN HOLY GROUND**: Mission is characterized not by power and the need to dominate, but by a deep concern for the salvation of others and a profound respect for the ways they have already searched for and experienced God. The ground in which we are called to plant the gospel is holy ground, for before our arrival God has already visited the people he knows and loves. 30 In this ground, sown with the seeds of God's word, a local church is born, a church that expresses its vitality in the language of its own culture, a church also called to be missionary beyond its own borders.

### Mutuality in Mission

33. **UNITED WITH HUMAN FAMILY**: As soon as a local church is established, Christ calls it to share the gospel it has received. Such sharing is essential for the church's vitality, since those who give life to others find it for themselves. So it was with Jesus throughout his life, and especially in his death and resurrection. Sharing is essential to every level of church life; it applies to dioceses and parishes as well as families and individuals. The local church cannot live in isolation, unenlightened for other peoples. As human beings created by the Father of all, as disciples of the risen Jesus who is Lord of all, and as Christians who have received the Holy Spirit, we are united with the entire human family. This union shapes our attitudes and moves us to respect other peoples and their cultures, to make their concerns our own and to share with them the gospel riches we have received. 31

34. **MISSIONARY INSTITUTES IN OTHER LANDS**: The church has now been planted on all the continents and in most nations. It has grown and matured in countries once thought of as mission territories. Local churches in these countries recognize the importance of sharing the unique insights which accompanied the gospel's flowering in their cultures. Several, like Nigeria, South Korea, Mexico, Colombia and the Philippines, have established their own foreign mission societies. Moreover, missionary institutes, orders and congregations are drawing members from former mission countries and sending them to other peoples.

35. **SHARING THE GOSPEL**: Each new incarnation of the gospel must be shared, even if the growth of the local church is as yet modest. As we have seen, mission is mutual, not one-directional. Christian peoples and local churches will share the gospel with one another in various ways, from each according to its special gifts and abilities, to each according to its needs. 32

36. **OPENNESS TO OTHERS**: Even as we go out to other nations to announce the good news, we must remain open to the voice of the gospel speaking to us in a myriad of cultural and social expressions. We must be willing to welcome new immigrants into our parishes, to respect the cultural treasures of these newcomers and allow ourselves to be enriched and strengthened by their witness to the faith. In this we come to see more clearly how the local church expresses the life of the universal church. As Pope John Paul II said in a message to the curial cardinals, "The church is a communion of churches, and indirectly a communion of nations, languages and cultures. Each of these brings its gifts to the whole." 33 Mission involves mutual ministry and dialogue among the local churches of the world.

37. **SENSITIVITY IN MISSION**: Each local church must carry out its mission to other nations and cultures with great sensitivity. Peoples inevitably communicate out of their historical experience. Nevertheless, we must constantly strive to transcend culturally based limitations in our manifestation of the church's life. If we fail to link Christian values with what is already good in a culture, we merely export an expression of faith foreign to that culture, one the people cannot fully accept. It expresses someone else's faith experience, not their own. 34 Mission must therefore humbly imitate the example of Jesus, who did not cling to his divine privileges but became like us in all things save sin. 35

38. **COMMON ELEMENTS**: There are, it is true, expressions of faith and morals in the Scriptures that are meaningful in every cultural milieu. The Lord's Prayer, the Beatitudes, the commandments, the story of Jesus, and the sacraments all tend to bond human beings together in one faith and one church. 36 Cultural differences remain significantly important, however.

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invitation. In the same way, the church does not coerce others to accept
the gospel and join her ranks. Mission presupposes love for those being
converted to the Lord under the action of the Holy Spirit who opens
their hearts so that they may adhere to him (Ad Gentes, 13). 44

Mission and Dialogue

40. ROLE OF DIALOGUE: The way we extend Christ’s free invitation
to others differs according to local circumstances. The context of mission
in Japan or India, for example, is vastly different from that in Bolivia or
the Philippines. The recent document on dialogue and mission of the
Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians emphasizes the role of dialogue
with adherents of other great religions. While dialogue takes many forms,
Before all else, dialogue is a manner of acting, an attitude and a
spirit which guides one’s conduct. It implies concern, respect, and
hospitality towards the other. It leaves room for the other person’s
identity, his modes of expression, and his values. Dialogue is thus
the norm and necessary manner of every form of Christian mission.

"Cultures, like individual human beings and societies, need to be
purified by the blood of Christ.”

as well as of every aspect of it, whether one speaks of simple
presence and witness, service, or direct proclamation. Any sense
of mission not permeated by such dialogical spirit would go against
the demands of true humanity and against the teachings of the
gospel. 42

41. OTHER GREAT RELIGIONS: Dialogue goes beyond collaboration and
discussion with members of other great religions. It includes the sharing
of faith, religious experiences, prayer, contemplation. In such sharing, all
parties are mutually enriched.

The sometimes profound differences between the faiths do not
prevent this dialogue. Those differences, rather, must be referred
back in humility and confidence to God who “is greater than
our hearts” (1 Jn. 3:20). 43

42. CONVERSION THE GOAL OF MISSION: Though dialogue is a vital
characteristic of mission, it is not the goal of missionary proclamation.
The Secretariat for Non-Christians goes on to say:

According to the Second Vatican Council, missionary proclamation
has conversion as its goal: “that non-Christians be freely con-
verted to the Lord under the action of the Holy Spirit who opens
their hearts so that they may adhere to him” (Ad Gentes, 13). 44

43. CHURCH OFFERS THE FULLNESS OF REVEALED TRUTH: Pope John
Paul II emphasized this same point in his homily in Calcutta:

While esteeming the value of these (non-Christian) religions, and
seeing in them at times the action of the Holy Spirit who is like the
wind which “blows where it will” (Jn. 3:8), the church
remains convinced of the need for her to fulfill her task of offering
to the world the fullness of revealed truth, the truth of the re-
demption in Jesus Christ. 45

The fact that the Holy Father spoke these important words in India, a
predominantly non-Christian country, makes them especially significant.

44. TRUE INCULTURATION: In this work of dialogue and evangelization,
the church must be a leaven for all cultures, at home in each culture.
True inculturation occurs when the gospel penetrates the heart of cultural
experience and shows how Christ gives new meaning to authentic human
values. However, the church must never allow herself to be absorbed by
any culture, since not all cultural expressions are in conformity with the
gospel. The church retains the indispensable duty of testing and evalu-
ating cultural expressions in the light of her understanding of revealed
truth. Cultures, like individual human beings and societies, need to be
purified by the blood of Christ.

A Holistic Approach

45. RESPONSE TO SUFFERING: Solidarity with others and faithfulness
to the gospel demand that we respond to people’s genuine needs and
hunners, even those of which they may be unaware. As noted above,
human hunger takes two forms. While spiritual hungers reflect our highest
aspirations, physical hungers can be so great as to blunt or even block
them. Some social hungers may indicate the presence of oppression,
preventing people from developing in an atmosphere of peace and justice.
In a human being, in a society, in the world, when one member suffers
all suffer.

46. MISSION OF JESUS WAS LIBERATION: A holistic approach to mission
recognizes that humanity’s hungers are so interwoven that the spirit
cannot be satisfied without attending to the body. As we read in a recent
instruction from the Holy See:

Liberation is first and foremost from the radical slavery of sin. Its
end and its goal is the freedom of the children of God, which is
the gift of grace. As a logical consequence, it calls for freedom from
many different kinds of slavery in the cultural, economic, social
and political spheres, all of which derive ultimately from sin and
so often prevent people from living in a manner befitting their
dignity. 46

The church’s seriousness about responding to all genuine human
needs is further stressed in a subsequent document:

The church is firmly determined to respond to the anxiety of con-
temporary man as he endures oppression and yearns for freedom.
The political and economic running of society is not a direct part
of her mission. But the Lord Jesus has entrusted to her the word
of truth which is capable of enlightening consciences. Divine love,
which is her life, impels her to a true solidarity with everyone who
suffers. 47

47. JESUS’ MISSION IS NOW OURS: Clearly, then, neither the church as
a whole nor the church in the United States can remain indifferent to the
suffering, inequities and oppression that afflict so much of the world’s
population. These evils openly contradict Christ’s gospel. Jesus came
to bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives, give sight to
the blind and release prisoners. His mission became that of the church,
and it is now ours. 48

48. LIBERATION REQUIRES ACTION: Had Jesus merely said that his mis-
ton was to set people free from sin and all forms of oppression, his
words would have fallen on deaf ears. He had to work at this task of
liberation. He not only talked about freeing the poor and oppressed but,
understved by criticism, actually welcomed the poor and sinners to share
at his table. Like Jesus, we must be able to accompany others in their
suffering and be willing to suffer with them.

49. SPECIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR: In its openness to all, the church’s
mission makes a special option for the poor and powerless. “The
special option for the poor, far from being a sign of particularism or
sectarianism, manifests the universality of the church’s being and
mission.” 49 This special option is deeply rooted in the mission of Jesus, who
rejected no one but was especially sensitive to those who needed him
most. The poor, destitute and powerless of the world help us see and evaluate the evils of our society and the evils that one society or nation inflicts on another. Accompanying the poor assures us of the relevance of our message of salvation.

50. EVANGELIZING THE POWERFUL: The option for the poor also implies the need to evangelize the powerful and influential. If the gospel call to conversion can reach their hearts, they will help construct a new society. In our option for the poor, we join our aspirations and commitment to those of our brother bishops of Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania as expressed in their pastoral statements. *54

III. A Mission Spirituality

51. SPIRITUALITY IS CENTRAL: Central to the church's missionary task is a mission spirituality. This is true for those personally engaged in bringing the gospel to other nations as well as those at home who pray, work and sacrifice for the world mission of the church. Mission spirituality begins with the gospel, a commitment to following Christ, and openness to the Holy Spirit. We need to hear the gospel and be continually formed by it. When we listen to the word we experience Christ present to us, calling us to a new life and giving us the Spirit who transforms us into missionaries. In order to share the gospel with others, we must love it deeply and have a profound appreciation of its values. Equally important is a loving relationship with the person of Christ and his church. Faithfulness to Christ in communion with the church is the cornerstone of the entire missionary edifice.

52. BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION: In baptism and confirmation, where human commitment and divine grace become one, we respond to Christ's invitation and are empowered to join in his mission. Through these sacraments, the church, a missionary community, welcomes us and pledges her support. We need this support to take the risks required for our mission to the whole human family. Baptism expresses in word and symbol our readiness to die and be buried with Christ in the hope one day of rising with him. *59 Confirmation, in which all share in the Spirit of Pentecost, expresses our eagerness to take part in the church's mission to all nations.

53. MULTIPLICATION OF LOAVES: The connection between Christian discipleship and Christian mission is well expressed in the ancient tradition of the multiplication and sharing of loaves. *56 Although each Gospel presents the tradition in its own way, all of them emphasize the missionary implications of the passage. The disciples are overwhelmed by the demands of the mission, and ask Jesus to send the people away to provide for their own needs. Jesus replies that the disciples themselves should give the crowd something to eat. He then takes bread, blesses, breaks, and gives it to the disciples to distribute. When they share the little they have, everyone is wonderfully nourished. Through these accounts, some of the most beautiful and moving in Scripture, the New Testament relates mission to the Christian experience of hospitality and Eucharist. Like the disciples in Mark's Gospel who gathered in small communities of fifty and a hundred, we must be willing to share Christ's nourishment with other parishes and dioceses. *57 We must also be willing to bring this nourishment to other lands and gather all nations, all peoples, at the table of the Lord. *58

54. ACT OF SHARING: Hospitality and food-sharing are important symbolic events in all cultures. Like the disciples, we must be prepared to share what we have and to accept what others offer us. In the simple act of sharing, we join others in their joys and suffering and accompany them on their life's journey. *59

55. MISSION AND THE EUCHARIST: The Eucharist sustains and nourishes each Christian's commitment to the church's mission. In the Eucharist where Christ shares his very person with us, we learn to share the gospel, prayer, our resources, our very selves. We thus imitate the ideal of Christian sharing which Acts 2:42-47 attributes to the early Christian community in Jerusalem. *60 Maturity in that sharing fosters the impulse to reach out to the whole world with the good news of salvation.

56. COST OF DISCIPLESHIP: The universal sharing inspired by the Eucharist is very demanding. This is why the New Testament authors emphasized it in their accounts of Jesus' Last Supper. Before the multiplication of loaves, the disciples protested that sharing with all would be costly. They thought in material terms. Financial sacrifice, however, is nothing compared with the real cost of discipleship with Jesus, which requires the gift of our lives. Sometimes this gift means the shedding of blood. For most people, however, it means daily giving, a sharing which requires the dying with Christ that we pledge in baptism.

57. UNITED WITH CHRIST AND ONE ANOTHER: To share in Christ's glory, each person must be willing to be baptized in Christ's passion and drink his cup of suffering. *61 That is Jesus' message to his disciples. *62 By this willingness to suffer with Christ and with one another in him, we commit ourselves to the new covenant, to new relationships which transcend every consideration of race, sex, family, nationality, economic or social standing.

58. EUCHARIST NOURISHES MISSION SPIRITUALITY: The Eucharist is the primary proclamation of the love Christ showed by his death and resurrection. It is the heart of the gospel. Like those who first ate and drank at the table of the Lord, we who gather today at that table have no choice but to proclaim his gospel to all. *63 The Eucharist nourishes our mission spirituality and strengthens our commitment to give of ourselves and our resources to the development of the diocesan and universal church as a people aware of our responsibility for, and interdependence with, all peoples of the earth. The Second Vatican Council clearly equates the renewal of local churches with the degree of their gracious sharing and loving concern for those beyond their borders. This sharing and concern should not be limited to prayers and financial assistance, but should include sharing personnel as well. *64

59. SELF-DENIAL: Spirituality is lived in a specific culture. The environment in which American Catholics are called to witness their faith is strongly marked by individualism, consumerism and materialism. Thus our mission spirituality must embrace a developed asceticism, the virtue of self-denial that fosters life and authentic freedom. If we lack the spirit of mortification and sacrifice, we cannot hear Jesus' call to follow the narrow path. Our natural inclination toward avarice and greed will dominate and hold us in bondage. Jesus' call is clear: we are not only to pray and give alms, we are also to fast. *65

60. PRAYER AND MISSION SPIRITUALITY: Prayer is likewise a key element in mission spirituality. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed that the Father take away the cup of suffering, but only if it were according to the Father's will. He also asked the disciples to pray that they might be spared the test. Without prayer, our commitments risk remaining mere words. In prayer we join Mary in her Magnificat, and show ourselves to be a people of hope, confident that God's promises will be fulfilled. With Mary and the apostles and disciples, *66 we pray to be empowered by the Holy Spirit as we pursue the church's mission to all nations.
Conclusion

61. MISSIONARY VOCATIONS: In concluding this letter, we challenge young people to consider following Christ as missionaries. There is no doubt that Jesus is calling many of you to serve the church as priests and religious in foreign lands. We pray that you will have the courage to respond to that call with the complete gift of yourselves. Your brothers and sisters in mission lands are counting on you to share the riches of the gospel with them. The church is counting on you, too.

62. NEED FOR MISSIONARIES: While some of you are called to dedicate your whole life to Christ in another culture, others are called to devote a few important years. It is true that secular agencies accomplish much, but the church's mission extends beyond earthly reality and requires heroic sacrifice for the sake of the kingdom. 67

63. LAY MISSIONARIES: We are inspired by the increase of committed lay missionaries who answer the call to serve the gospel in other lands. You bring important expertise and enthusiasm into missionary activities. Your growing number is a sign of great hope for the future of world mission. We recognize the special difficulties lay persons face in missionary work and your enormous trust that God will provide for you and your families.

64. GENEROSITY OF U.S. CATHOLICS: We are grateful to the Catholics of the United States for your continued concern for the missionary activity of the church, for missionaries themselves and for the young churches of the developing world. You have responded generously to missionaries who visit your parishes through the Missionary Cooperation Plan to explain their work and needs. Many of you also belong to parish mission societies, and others participate in special programs of daily prayer and regular sacrifice for world mission. Your tradition of prayer and generous giving is a strong witness to the missionary vitality of the church.

65. PARENTS AND FAMILIES OF MISSIONARIES: We are grateful to families of missionaries, especially to parents who have encouraged their sons and daughters to serve the church. The need has not diminished. We pray that young families will continue to follow this example of generosity.

66. SUPPORT OF PONTIFICAL MISSION AID SOCIETIES: We renew our prayer that all will continue to support missionary activity in every way, especially through the Pontifical Societies, namely the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and the Association of the Holy Childhood. We commend the work of the directors of these societies for their continued efforts to educate the faithful to the mission challenge. The Secretariat for Latin America, established by the bishops of the United States to assist the church in Central and South America, also merits continued support. Like Paul, we rejoice “at the way you have all continually helped promote the gospel from the very first day” and pray that “he who has begun the good work in you will carry it through to completion, right up to the day of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 1:3–6).

67. U.S. CHURCH LEADERS: We also express our gratitude to you in the service of the church in the United States. Whether as lay leaders, religious, educators, deacons or priests, you share the service of leadership with us. In this time of transition from one missionary context to another, you have worked hard to preserve unity in our missionary efforts even when our faith was tested and many were confused. We ask that you join us in praying for an increase in missionary vocations, in supporting those involved in mission education, and in helping to make others more aware of the needs of the universal church and their role in meeting these needs.

68. MISSIONARY CONGREGATIONS: We extend special thanks to religious congregations and societies of men and women who educate, form, and give so many of their members to the missionary work of the church. Much of your work goes unrecognized. We commend you especially for the sensitive care you give those missionaries who return home because of illness or age, or who have been exiled from their missions by political oppression.

69. DIOCESAN MISSION PROJECTS: We are encouraged by the large number of dioceses that send priests, religious and laity to staff special mission projects. We hope their example will inspire other dioceses to undertake similar programs.

70. EDUCATION FOR MISSION: We appeal to all educators to help give Catholics a better understanding of the task and demands of mission today. Theological studies should include a strong missionary emphases, so necessary for the formation of future priests and leaders. Further, authors of catechetical texts should highlight the missionary responsibility of every Christian so that young people may be educated from an early age in this essential aspect of the church's life.

71. WORLD MISSION SUNDAY: We urge the fullest celebration of World Mission Sunday in every parish. The church has designated this day for Catholics worldwide to recommit themselves to the missionary task and to support the church financially in its outreach. World Mission Sunday, under the aegis of the Propagation of the Faith, uniquely celebrates the unity and universality of the church. It gives us, in the words of Pope John Paul II, “an excellent occasion for an examination of conscience with regard to our missionary obligation, and for reminding all the faithful . . . that each one is involved in this duty.”

72. GRATITUDE TO MISSIONARIES: Our gratitude to you, the missionaries, is especially profound. You have left home and family, even risking your lives for the sake of the gospel to the nations. Moreover, this time of transition has imposed an additional burden: the challenge of adapting your missionary efforts to a new context.

73. SUPPORT FOR MISSIONARIES: As missionaries you are sent to place yourselves at the service of the local church in union with its bishop. Your role is a humble and difficult one. We affirm our solidarity with you and pledge you our support. You make visible the universal commitment of the church in the United States, sometimes at the cost of misunderstanding or indifference from those who lack your experience.

74. LEARNING FROM MISSIONARIES: We ask that you share with us your experience as well as the faith experience of the people you serve. On your visits home, you are a missionary from another local church to ours. Our faith is deepened and broadened as we learn from you. You enrich us in our understanding of the problems and challenges of the universal church.

75. JESUS THE MISSIONARY: Jesus is “the missionary of the Father”;7 each Christian is his witness. Let his voice proclaim the gospel through us as we bring the good news of salvation to the ends of the earth.

Notes


2. See Jn. 1:1–5, 10–12, 16.

3. See also Jn. 17:18.


8. Christus Dominus, no. 6.


10. Ibid., no. 54.


See Pope Paul VI, Evangelii Nuntiandi (“On Evangelization in the Modern World”), Dec. 8, 1975, no. 60: “If each individual evangelizes in the name of the church, who herself does so by virtue of a mandate from the Lord, po evangelizer is the absolute master of his evangelizing action, with a discretionary power to carry it out in accordance with the individualistic criteria and perspectives; he acts in communion with the church and her pastors.”

See Evangelii Nuntiandi, nos. 13–15; Ad Gentes, nos. 2–3.


See Acts 2:1–11.

See Jn. 20:19–23.

See Mk. 1:16–20.

See Acts 6:12–16.

See Eph. 2:20.


Ad Gentes, no. 1.


Ad Gentes, no. 29.

See Jn. 10:10.


Evangelii Nuntiandi, nos. 20, 65.

Ibid., no. 79.

See Mt. 28:16–20.

See Mt. 10:16–42; 12:16–24; Jn. 6:61–70.

Ad Gentes, no. 6.


“Ad Gentes” nos. 29.

Ibid., no. 35.

Ibid., no. 37.


Evangelii Nuntiandi, no. 33.


See Lk. 4:18.

“The evil inequities and oppression of every kind which afflict millions of men and women today openly contradict Christ’s gospel and cannot leave the conscience of any Christian indifferent” (“Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation,” no. 57).

Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation,” no. 68.


See Rom. 6:3–5.


See Mk. 6:34–44.

See Mk. 8:1–9.

Gaudium et Spes, no. 1.

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ instruction and the communal life, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. A reverent fear overtook them all, for many wonders and signs were performed by the apostles. Those who believed shared all things in common; they would sell their property and goods, dividing everything on the basis of each one’s need. They went to the temple area together every day, while in their homes they broke bread. With exultant and sincere hearts they took their meals in common, praising God and winning the approval of all the people. Day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved” (Acts 2:42–47).

See Rom. 8:17.

“Can you drink the cup I shall drink or be baptized in the same bath of pain as I?” (Mk. 10:38).

See Acts 10:34–43.

“The grace of renewal cannot grow in communities unless each of them expands the range of its charity to the ends of the earth, and has the same concern for those who are far away as it has for its members” (Ad Gentes, no. 37).

See Mt. 6:1–18.

See Acts 1:14.

Evangelii Nuntiandi, no. 33.

“University and seminary professors will instruct the young as to the true condition of the world and the church, so that the need for a more intense evangelization of non-Christians will be clear to them and feed their zeal. In teaching dogmatic, biblical, moral and historical subjects, they should focus attention on their missionary aspects, so that in this way a missionary awareness will be formed in future priests” (Ad Gentes, no. 39).


Evangelii Nuntiandi, no. 60; See the Eucharistic Prayers of the Mass.

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My Pilgrimage in Mission

Barbara Hendricks, M.M.

The call of Jesus to global mission always implies and demands a gigantic leap into the unknown—into a new reality that invites and intrigues us, yet at the same time fills us with fear and anxiety. The “other,” beyond our own cultural and national barriers, confronts us with a relentless questioning about ourselves: “Who are you? Why have you come here? What is your way of life? What kind of God do you believe in?”

In the mid-1950s in Arequipa, Peru, I was teaching catechism to a group of children, preparing them for First Communion. In the previous session we had covered the seriousness of attending Mass on Sundays. Just as we began the class, an Indian woman appeared at the door, hesitated, and then walked in. The whole group of children gave her their attention. Some knew that she was the mother of José Maria, a little boy in the class. She said to me, and to all the listening ears, “Madrecita, it is not a sin to be absent from the church on Sundays! Many of us must go to the market at 4 a.m. and we cannot return home until late in the afternoon. I take my children to Mass on Mondays. God does not ask us to do what we cannot do.” She was my first theology teacher in Latin America and I treasure her memory.

But mission in Latin America in the second half of the twentieth century has meant not only a plunge into a new cultural and spiritual reality. It has also meant for the missioner from the first world a deeper awareness of massive poverty and oppression. To continue the mission of Jesus has led missioners into the world of misery. Here naked humanity appears in its starkness and vulnerability. The once silent and now cacophonous questions of the “other” take on new dimensions that have to do with the division in our planet between those who have plenty and those who have less than necessary for survival. It is no longer a matter of rich and poor, but of who can live and who will not survive.

I came to Latin America in 1953 with a clear idea about the mission task. We were sent to teach Christian truths, to give moral instruction, to perform charitable works, and to revive the sacramental participation within a church long in decline. But unexpectedly and most powerfully it has been the voices of the poor during the last three decades that have urged us missioners to reinterpret the vision for our missionary activity. The evangelizing message of the poor has communicated to us an urgency to stand in solidarity with them. The invitation is to accompany a people in an exodus of liberation, to announce Jesus as Lord and Liberator, and to continue his mission of bringing to light a kingdom of justice, peace and brotherly/sisterly love. All over Latin America, small Christian communities of poor, uneducated, believing people reflect on their experience in the light of Scripture and their own faith, share prayer and, in so doing, have begun a radical renewal of their own local church and of many missionaries. The very gospel that the missionary has come to share is being directed back to him or her through the power of the Spirit groaning in the lives and aspirations of the poor.

The cry and exodus of the poor lead us to an examination of our divided world: the small, closed world of “plenty” and the large, wide-open world of “misery.” The question of the inequitable distribution of the material and human resources in our planet confronts the missioner, not in newspapers and magazines, but in faces with names and histories. This confrontation is an invitation to assess the cultural values of one’s own society and nation and to judge critically previously unquestioned approaches to life—competition, efficiency, consumerism, individualism, pride, provincialism, reliance on technology, secularism, might, and power. What many missioners have discovered in their journey in mission in Latin America is a poor man or a poor woman deep inside themselves greatly in need of conversion. In this discovery one begins to perceive the spiritual bankruptcy that the dominant technological societies and the need for a reverse evangelizing movement from the world of the poor to the world of the rich, a movement that, in fact, has already begun.

But let me begin my pilgrimage story at the beginning. I was born in 1925 in Detroit, Michigan, the third child in a family of four raised by Marguerite Reynolds and Charles Hendricks. My mother came from a Catholic family in an Irish parish in old Detroit; my father had been raised in the Baptist church in Philadelphia. I was baptized and grew up in the Catholic tradition during the last three decades that have urged us missioners to reinterpret the vision for our missionary activity. The evangelizing movement from the world of the poor to the world of the rich, a movement that, in fact, has already begun.

“IT IS NO LONGER A MATTER OF RICH AND POOR, BUT OF WHO CAN LIVE AND WHO WILL NOT SURVIVE.”

Barbara Hendricks, former president of the Maryknoll Sisters, is a missionary in Cochabamba, Bolivia.
into our parish life. From first grade on I remember the “Novena of Grace” in honor of St. Francis Xavier, nine days of prayer during the month of December. The statue of Xavier was placed in the sanctuary and enshrined in my heart as my favorite saint.

From first grade on, I remember the “Novena of Grace” in honor of St. Francis Xavier, nine days of prayer trying to live in the same neighborhood and adjust to a completely new culture. These two symbols were embedded in my consciousness since childhood, the statue of Xavier with the cross held aloft and the vigil lights for the lepers in China.

As I look back on my high school and college years, it seems to me now that only a miracle of grace kept my call to mission alive and growing despite my neglect. During those years my main goal seems to have been to have as much fun and social life as possible and enough study to get by the exams. Yet, at the same time that I was dedicating most of my energy to my social life, there was a strong current of spiritual search going on inside me. I went to daily Mass and Communion most of the time, was involved with sodality activities and never lost my interest in mission. It was in my second year at the University of Detroit that a concrete option to become a missionary sister emerged.

Each student has a scholastic adviser for monthly consultations on study progress. My adviser was the same Jesuit whom I had for religion professor, Fr. Francis Wilson, S.J. He bore with my ups and downs for the first year at college, my overcutting of classes and my obviously dispersed energies, until one day he asked me, “What will your major be, Barbara? For what are you preparing yourself?” In one blast of startling clarity, his words cut through my indecision. My response was something I had never shared with anyone. I hardly believed it myself. “My major will be religion, Father. I want to be a foreign missionary.” He not only encouraged me, but his words had the quality of a mysterious confirmation: “I have been waiting for you to tell me that.”

I entered Maryknoll in September 1945, just as World War II was coming to a close. After three years of formation I was assigned to “Chinatown” in New York City, where I taught school and did religious instruction among the Chinese and Italian immigrants. My five years there were meant to be a preparation for China, so I took as many courses at the China Institute as I could manage in the evenings. But I was also learning from the people there what it meant to survive as an immigrant in my own country. Here were people, vastly different from each other, trying to live in the same neighborhood and adjust to a completely new culture. They each had a rich religious heritage—the Chinese with thousands of years of ethical/religious traditions, and the Italians with almost two thousand years of Christian faith. Both were thrown together in a secularized society, robbed of their cultural supports, struggling to keep their identity and become at home in an alien land. I made it a point to visit all the homes of my students, small, cramped, railroad apartments with poor electricity and cold water.

The borders of China were closing off in the late 1940s. Many missionaries, including my own Maryknoll sisters and brothers, were forced to leave; some were under house arrest and some were actually in prison. It seemed that I might never get to China and I began to settle in, now convinced that my own country had places of foreign mission. The foundress of the Maryknoll Sisters, Mollie Rogers, had described a missioner as “a contemplative in action” and these words were often in my mind and heart. I began to read the works of St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross, the Spanish mystics, searching for the inner resources which seemed so necessary to me in the face of the challenges I was meeting. They have been lifelong guides.

Suddenly, out of the blue, in the spring of 1953, I was assigned to Lima, Peru. I left Chinatown that same fall, convinced of two things: (1) the so-called Christian West needed missionary activity, and (2) a contemplative prayer life was absolutely necessary for me if I were to become an authentic Christian missioner. Thirty-four years later, I am even more certain of those convictions.

Latin America, in the 1950s, held a slumbering giant of a church. There were, in fact, two faces to an ancient church. There was an official, medieval-like, Spanish colonial church, which existed among the educated, upper classes, and a poor, spontaneous, uneducated and often syncretistic church, which prayed, celebrated, and believed in its own popular way. We missioners in the 1950s knew we had come to shore up a church whose structures were crumbling. Maryknollers had set to work to do this since the early 1940s by building parishes, schools, hospitals, social service centers; establishing cooperatives, rural and urban technical programs; training catechists; and designing and implementing religious instruction programs for children and adults. I arrived in the middle of this pre-Vatican II and pre-Medellín era and was immediately caught up into the secure, energetic, and enthusiastic mission movement of the mid-twentieth century.

As I look back over the years from 1953 to 1986 I could describe the many ministries, projects, and programs in which I have been involved; teaching and sometimes directing in grammar and high schools in Lima, Arequipa, and Puno, Peru; working for the formation of youth in the “Young Christian Worker” movement in Arequipa; participating in the early development of the “Conference of Religious of Peru”; promoting the insertion of religious women and men into the everwidening slum areas of Lima; collaborating with the Nunciatura in Lima to facilitate and coordinate the arrival and insertion of a large influx of missionary personnel from North America during the decade of the 1960s; serving as the president of the Maryknoll Sisters Congregation from 1970 to 1978; and, in these last four years, being responsible for the orientation of newly arrived missioners at the Maryknoll Language Institute in Cochabamba, Bolivia. However, it might possibly be more revelatory of the missionary dynamism of the church to reflect on the most significant influences in my missionary pilgrimage. When all is said and done, and we look back over our lives, a clear, basic, and remarkable truth emerges:
Christian commitment is communicated through people. Scripture, doctrine, and other tradition can be lifeless without the living, breathing, inspiring, challenging, and loving gift of friendship experienced in a willingly shared responsibility for the transformation of people and of our world.

As the decade of the 1950s came to a close and we moved into the 1960s, it became clear to me that we could no longer transplant pastoral models from the North American churches. Penetrating the neglected and remote areas of Peru made missionaries more and more aware of the enormity of the poverty and dehumanizing conditions of the vast majority of the people. It also made us less and less sure of our pastoral approaches. It was evident that church institutions, structures, and programs that would continue to need outside funding and personnel were not valid for the church of the poor that was struggling to be born. A Peruvian bishop once said to me, “What will we do with all these things when you people go home?”

The impact of Vatican II in Latin America joined forces with strong currents of renewal already at work, the progressive thought from Europe, the spirit of the new missionaries, but above all, the heart-rending cry of the masses of the poor. There was great enthusiasm and hope among those who were working with the poor or involved in the formation/training of pastoral agents for ministries in poverty sectors, but there was a growing awareness of the opposition from the powerful who saw no need of change or who feared the conscientization of the poor. Few of us understood that an era of martyrdom lay ahead.

It was the faith-vision and pastoral creativity of a small group of Peruvian priests, who had been trained in Louvain, that brought light and guidance to the local church and to many of us missionaries. I count it one of the great blessings of my life to have known, studied under, and collaborated with people such as Frs. Gustavo Gutiérrez, and Jorge and Carlos Alvarez-Calderon. Gustavo became national director of the Catholic Action in the university; Jorge was made pastor of a large urban slum parish and director of Pastoral Planning in Lima; Carlos was national moderator for the Young Christian Worker movement. All three of these priests became outstanding figures in the spiritual and pastoral renewal both of the Peruvian church and of missioners from Europe and North America. They were able to articulate authentically the experience of the poor and marginalized and were forerunners in the movements that would converge in a new vision and structure for church at the grassroots—the Basic Ecclesial Communities. Gustavo was already developing a pastoral theological methodology that was enabling Christian reflection on the actual reality for both the small communities and the pastoral agents. His first work, A Theology of Liberation, was published in 1971.

Toward the end of the 1960s, I was working with the Young Christian Workers in Arequipa, Peru, amazed that factory and market workers would spend several hours on a Saturday night doing simple but effective forms of social analysis, revision de vida, and searching Scripture to interpret their faith experience and to respond to the problems of grave injustice that they were facing. This was one of my most impacting experiences during my twenty years in Latin America.

In my work during the 1960s as a member of the Peruvian Conference of Religious Women, I soon realized that one of the most dynamic energies for renewal in the Latin American church was this group of women who quickly responded to the renewal called for by Vatican II and by Medellín. In my experience the religious women were far ahead of the men, priests and religious, in their willingness to evaluate their works and attitudes and to face the urgency of the situation. Two women stand out in my heart and memory for their strong influence on my understanding of women’s role in the mission of the church: Sor Jeanne Paul, a French St. Joseph of Cluny, was the president of the Peruvian Conference and provided a prophetic leadership, which was responsible for the growing focus among the women on the option for the poor; and Sr. Gretchen Berg, a Franciscan Sister from Rochester, Minnesota, who founded the Center for the Formation of Peruvian Sisters and designed programs that relied on the best of the Peruvian theologians for lectures and courses. Both had a delicate sensitivity to the culture and a remarkable ability to respond to the needs of women.

As president of the Maryknoll Sisters Congregation from 1970 through 1978, I would continue to recognize this growing strength of women’s creativity in the church and I would also find it again palpable in the Leadership Conference of the Women Religious (LCWR) in the U.S.A., and among my own missionary sisters working in twenty-two countries of the world.

To the women I worked with on the Global Ministries Committee of LCWR I owe great gratitude for the support, challenge, and vision-sharing, especially to Sr. Virginia Unsworth, a Sister of Charity of New York City, who as a dear friend helped me to become acculturated to my first culture. For Fr. Tom Clarke, S.J., I have a heart filled with gratitude. His wisdom and guidance gave light and direction to my missionary wanderings and leadership struggles of the 1970s, and he continues to be the “King’s Messenger” in critical times.

Visiting my Maryknoll Sisters around the world on six continents gave me direct contact with local churches and missionary personnel in many parts of the world, including Rome and Geneva. It became clear to me that those of us involved in overseas mission bear a crucial responsibility for the future of our planet, the bringing to light of God’s kingdom. We stand with one foot in two different yet related realities: our sending church and its reality, and the receiving church and its reality. This is a boundary situation for us, difficult at times but pregnant with possibilities for justice- and peace-building among nations. We see and touch the products of both of these realities—poverty and nuclear arms! It is most apparent to us that these are two different sides of the same coin. We have, therefore, both a challenge and a call.

Our challenge is to speak and act prophetically to a world on the verge of disaster because of the personal and structural sins of our age—power and greed. Our call is to make manifest God’s reign of justice, peace, and love—and to witness to the perfect embodiment of that reign, the Lord Jesus, from whose Spirit all mission proceeds. For me, at this point in life, I am convinced that global mission, once at the periphery of Christian life, is now clearly in the flaming center.
The Legacy of Stephen Neill

Christopher Lamb

Stephen Charles Neill (Dec. 31, 1900–July 20, 1984) was a scholar, theologian, and missionary thinker of outstanding gifts and comparable influence. A man of unflagging intellectual energy, he published some fifty books, three of them in the last year of his life. A letter I received from him within a month of his death at the age of eighty-three hoped “that there may be some time left for things that I still want to be allowed to do.” In particular he wanted to finish his projected three-volume History of Christianity in India, of which the first volume was published a few months before his death, and the second came out a year later.

The octogenarian ambition reflected perhaps a sense that he had never fulfilled the superlative promise of his youth. The reasons for that are not yet fully clear, though his (so far) unpublished autobiography speaks of internal struggles commensurate with the powers of mind that everyone recognized in him. The Neill family came originally from Ulster—“there were two kinds of Neill character, cautious and imprudent”—while his maternal grandfather was successively distinguished in the Indian Civil Service, as the commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, and a missionary in Bengal. His father became a doctor and then a missionary, but during the years of Stephen’s childhood his restless temperament kept the family home moving around southern England. Shyness, the son recalled, afflicted both his parents, and though he, as the third of six children, was less affected, he still experienced the temptation to contract out of society in a world of books and imagination. He was educated at the Evangelical foundation of Dean Close School, Cheltenham, a place that earned his affection for the quality of its teachers, and for providing him with the geographical roots of which his father’s roving nature had deprived him. The precocious teenager, teaching himself Hebrew by torchlight under the bedclothes, found it difficult to share what he was learning with his contemporaries, and may have taken early refuge in a kind of lonely stoicism. Religion, as well as nature and circumstance, may have conspired to mold him this way. Neill was converted during an attack of mumps, when he suddenly “just knew” the reality of the atonement. He wrote of his later, adult sense of isolation and deep despair: “It was good that I had been brought up in that austere form of Evangelicalism in which any mention of feelings was regarded as almost an indecency.” But perhaps a less austere religion would have given the church a servant less deeply damaged.

His autobiography tells us of lifelong insomnia, leading to frequent irritability and loss of perspective, but much more seriously of a darkness that was not depression but despair: “it was as if all the lights went out.” Beginning at Cambridge, after a spell of intensely hard work for his Prize Fellowship, he had several prolonged spells of “complete darkness,” from 1926 to 1933 and later from 1946 for a decade. These, he recorded, “determined the major part of my career.” Characteristically he took refuge in the Psalms, especially 88:12: “Shall thy wonderful works be known in the dark . . . ? Unto thee have I cried, O Lord” (Book of Common Prayer); and also in the words of John Newton: “Don’t tell of your feelings. A traveller would be glad of fine weather, but, if he be a man of business, he will go on.” It is impossible to know what that “going on” cost him, and what might have been in his ministry had his problem been recognized earlier. A promising course of psychotherapy was cut short for reasons that he clearly resented but does not explain in his autobiography. At times he contemplated suicide but was protected from it, he reckoned later, by an inherited Neill obstinacy and a deep-seated dislike of exhibiting such ingratitude to God. He knew no complete freedom from this malady until 1965, after which, except for a brief recurrence, it did not trouble him again.

Neill’s academic career was spectacularly untroubled. From Dean Close he won a classical scholarship to Trinity College, Cambridge, followed by a string of university prizes. Later in life he received honorary doctorates from the universities of Toronto, Culver-Stockton, Hamburg, Tokyo, Glasgow, and Uppsala, but perhaps nothing meant more to him than the award of a fellowship from his own college, the college of Bertrand Russell, G. M. Trevelyan, and so many others, founded by Henry VIII. For this he had to write a dissertation, and he chose to compare the writings of Plotinus with those of Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzen. The choice reveals perhaps the missionary in the making, for few subjects are more calculated to focus on the distinction between Hellenism and Christianity in the European intellectual tradition. The mysticism of Plotinus had many uses too as an introduction to Hindu monism, and served as a foundation and model for all Neill’s writing on Christianity and other faiths. It reveals too the catholicity of mind that the study of the Greek and Latin classics had engendered in a personality molded by Evangelicalism. The fact that it was the Fathers rather than the Reformers whom he chose to study indicated a more comprehensively Anglican spirit in this Englishman with his Scot and Irish forbears.

Comprehensiveness in Neill took other forms as well. He had become a member of the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (CICCU), the famous Evangelical student body, early in his university career. As his student reputation grew he was asked, to his great surprise, to be president of the university Student Christian Movement (SCM), the more liberal student body. Neither group, or those wider movements that they represented, gained his wholehearted loyalty. At the end of his life he wrote sadly: “For fifty years I have helplessly watched these two bodies corrupting one another.” He saw an empty liberalism on one side, matched by an unthinking intransigence on the other. These were days of bitter theological controversy as in 1922 the Church Missionary Society (CMS) split in two, giving birth to the more conservative Bible Churchmen’s Missionary Society (BCMS). No detailed history of these events has ever been written, and the BCMS archives were destroyed by enemy bombing during the war of 1939–45, so perhaps the full story can never be told. It must have been personally as well as theologically painful for Neill, for in 1924, having only just gained his Trinity Fellowship, he became a CMS missionary in India, where his...
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Peter Wagner, 8.30 a.m.-12 noon
MB561 Introduction to Research Design
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father was one of the few CMS missionaries to leave the parent body and serve with BCMS in Mirzapur. An uncle succeeded the BCMS founder and first general secretary, Daniel Bartlett, in the parish he had left near Bristol. Perhaps such experiences drove Neill to work for Christian reconciliation and unity with a lifelong intensity that theological motive alone could not have sustained. Certainly the combination of wide erudition, deep theological acumen, and passionate convictions about the co-inherence of gospel, mission, and church made him a formidable advocate of ecumenism.

At this stage, the resurrection was already the center of his faith, together with the atonement. Though he could write of Aeschylus' Agamemnon that it contained "religious utterances on the same level as that of the prophet Isaiah," he knew that "on certain levels of human distress Hellenism is not the answer," for it can only enable a reconception of the self. The resurrection, by contrast, is the rebirth of the universe. "What the Gospel offers is not a new understanding of self in an unchanged world but invitation to adventure in a world in which all things have become new." It must have been such a conviction of adventure that led him to leave the security, and for him the immense attraction, of an academic life for missionary service in India. Few students of his age had achieved more, or, in consequence, had more to lose than Neill in "burying himself," as it must have appeared, in India. Perhaps the influence of CICCUC was most evident here, but Neill does not stop to dwell on the matter in his autobiography as one might wish. He was accepted for work in the diocese of Tinnevelly (now Tirunelveli) at the southernmost tip of India, and plunged into learning Tamil and grappling with a literary culture as old as that of Greece. His missionary career lasted, with a few brief interruptions, for some twenty-two years. His early years were spent in evangelistic work and constant travel. For one spell he accompanied the pioneer in dialogue, E. Stanley Jones, as he sought out Hindu students and intellectuals for his "round table" discussions. As his gifts in teaching developed he was entrusted with the theological formation of Indian students, and in 1930 became warden of Tirumaraiyur's theological college. His own considerable learning must have made student life under his teaching exciting but also exacting, to judge from a casual footnote in his Anglicanism (1958, rev. ed. 1977), which reads: "All theological students should be compelled to read Butler [Bishop Joseph Butler, 1692–1752], not necessarily in order to think the same thoughts as Butler, but in order to learn how to think theologically. As a theological teacher in South India I used to make my students translate selections from Butler's Sermons into Tamil, a task which I think we all found difficult but profitable." As an inevitable extension of his theological teaching Neill was drawn into the work of the joint committee that was preparing for church union in South India. Of his work there Bengt Sundkler has written: "He stated the Anglican stand-point with brilliant lucidity and had a capacity to understand other traditions which was of particular value."

By his late thirties Neill’s name was increasingly mentioned when a bishopric fell vacant. Among the possibilities canvassed were Western China, Rangoon, and Mombasa, in addition to Indian dioceses, but it was Tinnevelly, where he had been ordained deacon in 1926, that eventually received him as its bishop in 1939. He remained bishop throughout the war, in circumstances of particular difficulty both social and personal, until in 1945 came the breakdown that altered his career. The full nature and consequences of this event cannot yet be known. Neill himself wrote that "for this period of my life alone I have difficulty in reconstructing the chronology." His inner agony broke through to the surface in a way that, without the support of an assistant bishop, meant that he had to resign his bishopric and leave India for good. He never held high office in the Anglican church again, nor was he given the academic responsibilities that his gifts deserved. He was made a Fellow of the British Academy in 1969, and served as professor of missions and ecumenical theology at the University of Hamburg (1962–67) and as professor of philosophy and religious studies at the University of Nairobi (1969–1973), in addition to holding numerous visiting professorships. But after India, and a short time as chaplain to his old college in Cambridge, his principal contribution lay in writing and speaking.

He was as lucid a speaker as he was a writer. He would give Bible studies and devotional addresses with nothing but the Greek testament in his hand, and people with no claim to learning themselves would listen eagerly as he developed his theme with color, vigor, and clarity. These gifts found their best expression in his work with the infant World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council, which he served respectively as associate general secretary (1948–51), and as general editor of World Christian Books (1952–62). Up to this point his writing had been occasional, the writing up of Bible studies and addresses given at missionary conventions, and one or two books for committed missionary society supporters, like his very first publication Out of Bondage: Christ and the Indian Villager (1930). Now he was to embark on a much more serious attempt to reach and educate the English-speaking world church, with a particular concern for those churches still known at that time as the "younger churches," though he at least knew that "the old distinction between younger and older Churches no longer really holds. All Churches are faced by the same problems. In all countries the same questions are being asked." (These words were included in all the early volumes of the series, as part of the general editor's preface.) The World Christian Books, for which Neill was later joined as editor by John Goodwin, eventually numbered more than fifty, with an amazing range of international authors including third-world theologians like A. J. Appasamy (no. 13: The Cross Is Heaven), D.T. Niles (no. 17: Living with the Gospel), and Norimichi Ebizawa (no. 2: Japanese Witnesses for Christ), as well as Western scholars like Charles Raven (no. 4: Christianity and Science), Gerhard von Rad (no. 32: Moses), and Max Thurian (no. 46: Modern Man and Spiritual Life). Neill’s particular fondness for pietistic writers produced some translations from the early centuries: Justin Martyr, Chrysostom, and Augustine. Six of the books he wrote himself, and at least two he translated.

Neill’s own books fall into three broad categories. He wrote many small books of biblical commentary, mostly on the New Testament and at a popular level. But he also wrote a solid history of biblical criticism in The Interpretation of the New Testament 1861–1961 (1964). Second, he made considerable contributions to
church history, or what he preferred to call "the church in history." His Anglicanism (1958, 1977) is primarily a study of the genesis and historical character of the Church of England. Other histories were A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517–1948 (with Ruth Rouse, 1954), The Layman in Christian History (with Hans Rueedi-Weber, 1963), and A History of Christianity in India, vol. 1 (1984). His two histories of mission, A History of Christian Missions (1964) and Colonialism and Christian Missions (1966), overlap with his third main area of interest, the unity and mission of the church, characterized by The Unfinished Task (1957) and The Church and Christian Union (1968). In this area too come his writings on other faiths and their relation to Christianity, in particular his Christian Faith and Other Faiths (1961), which was revised and reprinted in 1970, and further revised and retitled as Crises of Belief (1984) to appear just before his death. When his writings on personal discipleship and his editorial work (e.g., Concise Dictionary of the Christian World Mission, 1970), and his contributions to five separate English and German encyclopedias are considered, the range and significance of his written work begins to become apparent.

Usually the learning is worn lightly: "[These] lectures were delivered in Spanish," he explains in the preface to Christian Holiness (1960). Sometimes he feels it necessary to defend himself against a possible charge of academic inadequacy: "I felt with the historian of the Crusades that 'it may seem unwise for one British pen to compete with the massed typewriters of the United States.' But it seemed that the task ought to be attempted, though I can scarcely hope, like Mr. Runciman, to have succeeded 'in giving to my own work an integrated and even an epical quality that no composite volume can achieve.' "14 At the end of his life there was some criticism that Neill should attempt a solo history of Christianity in India when a team of scholars would produce a more satisfactory result, but his defense was the same, coupled with the conviction that hardly anyone but himself could handle all the fourteen languages necessary for the task.

Neill's vocation, as we have seen, led a man magnificently equipped for academic work into Christian leadership. When he could not continue in that, and no British university post came his way, he was compelled to follow his calling through his pen, and through the numerous public lectures he gave that became further books. For such a man intellectual integrity is of more than usual importance, and it is not surprising to find that he had given the subject careful thought. The issue lies at the heart of the "evangelical"/"ecumenical" debate: just where long experience led Neill most to wish to be a reconciler. In his The Interpretation of the New Testament 1861–1961 he recounts the discussion between the New Testament scholars Westcott and Hort on the question of academic freedom. Westcott was worried in case the work of their commentary might endanger orthodox convictions about divine revelation. Neill, following Hort's response, insists that the conclusions of an investigation cannot be guaranteed in advance: "this is a position which cannot be taken up by the completely independent student. His position is 'dialectical.' . . . Hort was himself a man of profound Christian faith; he was convinced that the kind of investigation that he was carrying on could tend only to the strengthening and amplification of the faith. . . . But this confidence in the general direction in which the evidence was moving was something quite different from the claim that the evidence must be made to conform to certain conclusions which had been reached independently of it." Hort would accept no collaboration on such a basis, and Neill entirely approved, recalling that "the late John Baillie once remarked to me of another great scholar, a friend of his and mine: 'The man was afraid to ask ultimate questions.' "15

It was this academic and intellectual integrity that made Neill acceptable to the "liberal," "ecumenical" mind. He had a confidence in "the general direction in which the evidence was moving," which came from a deeply held and broadly based faith in God as the creator of all available evidence. His faith was not immune to advances in human knowledge and he could not wish that it should be. He tried to ask ultimate questions. "It is often said," he wrote in reference to the famous saying of Lessing, "that the uncertain happenings of history cannot lead to faith. No, but they can destroy it; history is a great destroyer of myths. If it could be shown, as clear historical evidence, that the bones of Jesus of Nazareth had mouldered away in a Palestinian grave like the bones of any other man, I would cease to be a worshipping Christian."16 The Gospels would still be good news, and Jesus our one hope in a wintry sea because of his teaching and example, but there would be no victory, no rejoicing, and no confidence in the "direction of the evidence." But as this quotation itself indicates, with Neill liberal methods reached conservative conclusions. For him a personal faith in Jesus crucified and risen, and the new world that results, was central, and nothing could replace conversion to that. This was what won the confidence of Evangelicals, and made him so acceptable a speaker on their platforms. He often complained that no adequate study of conversion had been done since that of A.D. Nock, who had been one of his first acquaintances as a Cambridge student.17 He reckoned personal conversion to be at the heart of mission and viewed the growing emphasis of the World Council of Churches on social justice with misgiving. "Those who start at the social end never seem to get to the Gospel, whereas those who start with the Gospel sometimes accomplish, without knowing or intending it, the social revolution."18 Neill quotes with approval Hendrik Kraemer's words that "becoming a disciple of Christ means always a radical break with the past. Christ is, as we have repeatedly said, the crisis of all Religion (and philosophy, good or bad)."19 It follows that "Christianity is a religion not easily fitted into the categories of natural human life. . . . Is it possible that men have sought a synthesis where they could expect to find only a modus vivendi?"

Announcing

Two major mission conferences will be held in 1989, just a few weeks apart.

The Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches will hold its next World Mission Conference in May or June, 1989, at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. Theme of the conference is "Your Will Be Done: Mission in Christ's Way." Six hundred persons will be invited to the conference, including about 250 voting delegates.

The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization has also announced plans for an International Congress on World Evangelization, July 11–20, 1989, in Lausanne, Switzerland, the site of the 1974 congress that gave birth to the LCWE. The conference theme is "Christ the Lord: The Hope of the World." Evangelist Billy Graham, who will serve as honorary chairman of the congress, says there will be 4,000 participants at the 1989 Lausanne Congress. Leighton Ford is chairman of the Lausanne Committee; Thomas Wang of Hong Kong is the international director; Paul McKaughan of the U.S.A. is associate international director and also program director for Lausanne '89.
No doubt Neill can be faulted for his social conservatism and for occasional remarks of donnish prejudice. ("'No Popery' is one of the few unchanging constituents of what the average Englishman calls his thoughts."\(^\text{22}\)) But his gifts as communicator and his desire to communicate the Christian faith saved him from a sense of superiority. ("When I am in America I regularly read the comics, such of them, at least, as I can stand—and Blondie, Peanuts, and especially Dennis the Menace, are well-established dwellers in my inner world—with excellent theological results."\(^\text{23}\)) A more serious criticism might lie in his comparative neglect of the Old Testament, and the kingdom theology that it might have stimulated in him. That in its turn might have given him a less Kraemerian attitude to other faiths, and led him to emulate as well as admire the work of scholars like Kenneth Cragg, with their more flexible doctrine of the Spirit. Neill's strength is in a mastery of detailed fact, logic, and inference. It is rare to notice in his writing about other faiths any feeling of the attractiveness of that other.

Complaints, however, are hardly in order. Some of Neill's last published words recall the implicit message of other faiths that "For the Christian, every study of his relationship to the other faiths and their adherents must end with the ancient words of the New Testament, 'What manner of persons ought you to be?' (2 Peter 3:1)."\(^\text{22}\) In Neill's own life the question was answered in terms of faithfulness, honesty, and a sustained courageous "going on" that few of us are called to show.

Notes

1. Recorded in Neill's unpublished Autobiography, manuscript, p. 3.
3. Ibid., p. 100.
4. Ibid., p. 98.
5. Ibid., p. 127.
6. Ibid., pp. 187f.
7. Ibid., pp. 150, 167f.
11. Ibid., p. 565.
13. See bibliography below.

Selected Bibliography: Books by Stephen Neill

World Christian Books (all published in London by Lutterworth)

1955 The Christian Character.
1956 Who Is Jesus Christ?
1958 Paul to the Galatians.

Other Books


With Other Authors and Editors


1960 What Is Man?
1962 Translated: Chrysostom and His Message (sermons).
1963 Paul to the Colossians.


Ten Major Trends Facing the Church

Howard A. Snyder and Daniel V. Runyon

What major trends will shape the church’s life and witness over the next fifty years? Out of curiosity, we decided to find out by polling a number of knowledgeable church leaders as to their perceptions. Using an initial survey and a follow-up, we elicited “trends perceptions” from more than fifty denominational leaders, evangelists, educators, missionaries, writers, and others. Our sample represents a spectrum of theological and ecclesiastical perspectives and gives their perceptions and ranking of major trends in the church, or trends in the world affecting the church. Most respondents were North Americans, but we chose people with a broad knowledge of the international scene.

While this methodology is somewhat impressionistic, still it gives a fascinating and useful reading on perceived trends and on the issues with which church leaders will be dealing. We compiled the ten leading trends, researched them, and did some analysis in light of the church’s life and mission. The results have been published in Foresight: Ten Major Trends That Will Dramatically Affect the Future of Christians and the Church. This article condenses the major points from the book.

We have defined the ten major trends as follows:

1. From regional churches to World Church.
2. From scattered growth to broad revival.
3. From Communist China to Christian China.
4. From institutional tradition to kingdom theology.
5. From clergy/laity to community of ministers.
6. From male leadership to male/female partnership.
7. From secularization to religious relativism.
8. From nuclear family to family diversity.
9. From church/state separation to Christian political activism.
10. From safe planet to threatened planet.

It will be seen immediately that this profile of trends varies markedly from recent trends discussions in Christianity Today and elsewhere. The major reason, we think, is that we have tried to take into consideration the world scene, not just North America. And in that perspective, it seems clear that the most dominant, shaping trend is what might be called the new internationalization of the church—the emergence of the world church.

1. From Regional Churches to World Church

The church has always considered itself “universal,” but today this is empirically true as never before. In the nineteenth centuries following the resurrection of Jesus, Christianity grew to embrace one-third of all humanity—yet more than 80 percent of these were whites. In the twentieth century Christianity has become a global faith; the most universal religion in history. The church is said to be growing at the rate of some sixty-five new churches daily, mostly in the populous, poorer nations of the southern hemisphere. Today Christians number about one-third of all humanity and more than half the population in two-thirds of the world’s 223 nations. The Christian church has become an amalgam of the world’s races and peoples, with whites dropping from more than 80 percent to about 40 percent.

This new internationalization of the church is producing a historic revolution: a shift of the church’s “center of gravity” from the North and West (mainly Europe and North America) to the so-called two-thirds world. In 1900 the northern hemisphere counted some 462 million Christians, 83 percent of the world total, while the South had about 96 million Christians, or 17 percent of the total. By 1980 the church in the South had grown to 700 million, nearly half of the world total. Today the church of the historically “Christian” nations is probably the minority church worldwide.

What does this mean for the future? We shall likely see a world church emerge that is much more diverse ethnically and culturally; exhibits a greater mutual respect for the leadership, styles, ministries, and traditions of other Christian believers; is increasingly urban; and ministers more intentionally to the poor, oppressed, and suffering.

2. From Scattered Growth to Broad Revival

New hope for revival in North America is being sparked by rapid church growth in places like South Korea and Central Africa. The United States is seeing a dramatic increase in religious education programs, Bible studies, evangelization programs, and other religious activities outside formal worship.

This continues a 200-year-old trend. In 1776 only 7 percent of United States citizens were church members. This figure rose to 20 percent by 1850, to 36 percent by 1900, and in 1976 approached 60 percent. These statistics may merely indicate that the church is simply getting fatter, not healthier. But many people anticipate a deep and genuine movement of renewal centered in a “third wave” of charismatic renewal, renewal in mainline denominations, resurgence of the Roman Catholic Church, and new dialogue among Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Christians. The growth of house churches and of “power evangelism” churches may be part of a new wave of renewal.

Now that the world has become one global, interconnected communications network, the unprecedented Christian growth worldwide is bound to have an impact in the traditionally Christian lands of North America and Europe.

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Daniel V. Runyon received an M.A. in communication from Wheaton Graduate School and is a writer and free-lance editor. He is the co-author of Foresight and The Divided Flame: Wesleyans and the Charismatic Renewal.

April 1987
3. From Communist China to Christian China

The Christian church has come alive powerfully in China. While no one knows for sure how large the church has grown, the China Church Research Center in Hong Kong estimates 30 million Christians, or 50 million if border regions and secret believers are included. Dr. James Hudson Taylor leans toward the 50 million estimate, about 5 percent of the population and more than fifty times the number of believers thirty-five years ago when missionaries were expelled by the communist revolution. Others put the size of the current renewal much less.

Today the Chinese church exists in three main groups: a somewhat fragmented Roman Catholicism, the officially recognized Three-Self Patriotic Movement, and the house churches. The success of widespread lay leadership and house churches or other small groups suggests that the contemporary renewal in China is among the great Christian movements in history—especially considering the sheer numbers involved.

The resurgence of Chinese Christianity is likely to impact world Christianity in several ways. The Chinese church may provide sources of major new vitality, leadership, and structural forms for the church worldwide. Chinese Christianity will also enrich the theology and self-understanding of the world church. Historically the church has been dominated by Greek, Roman, European, and North American cultural and thought forms. We have yet to discover what the impact will be of a new and dynamic church rooted in one of the oldest and culturally richest societies on earth.

4. From Institutional Tradition to Kingdom Theology

A world church touched by renewal will require a global theology. Such a theology seems to be coalescing around themes of the reign or rule of God, stressing God's sovereign direction, despite and through human agency, in the course of world history. The kingdom theme is receiving increasing attention in conferences, journals, and book publishing.

Pressures for a new "world theology" that expands the way Christians understand the universe and their role in it are coming from several sources. The most important of these are internal, arising from the three trends previously mentioned. Others are external, arising from economic, social, scientific, and political developments now shaping the world.

Increasingly, Christian thinkers are pointing out that the kingdom of God was prominent in Jesus' preaching and is a central category unifying biblical revelation. Kingdom theology speaks of justice in economic, political, and social relationships, and ecological harmony and balance throughout the creation. God as supreme Ruler and Friend of all will be worshiped and glorified by the whole creation. Biblically, this is not an otherworldly, disembodied, nonhistorical realm of existence. Rather, it is something sufficiently like present experience that human bodies will be resurrected to be a part of it. Kingdom theology foresees not the total destruction of this world but its liberation (Rom. 8:21) through a process of death and resurrection.

Such a theology has wide-ranging implications for all areas of the church's life, including worship, the church's internal community life, its witness through evangelism and justice ministries, and its relationship to political powers.

5. From Clergy/Laity to Community of Ministers

A new model of pastoral leadership appears to be emerging, which will produce a very different kind of church in the future. The New Testament pattern of each congregation being led by a team of spiritually mature leaders is receiving new emphasis. A long-term trend toward plural leadership and the New Testament "equipping" model of pastoring may be underway, especially outside the United States. The evidence is spotty here so far, but this is an area that bears watching.

The equipping model, based on Ephesians 4:11–12, stresses the primary function of nurturing and leading the congregation so that each believer grows and finds his or her unique function and ministry within the body. This model may be carried out through a range of possibly culturally viable patterns. Its main principles include (1) plurality or team leadership; (2) mutuality and consensus decision-making among the leaders, rather than top-down authority, and (3) a primary focus on enabling all believers for their particular gift ministries and spiritual priesthood.

If the equipping model is adopted broadly, some anticipated results could be a greater emphasis on and practice of the priesthood of believers, the emergence of alternative forms of pastoral training and some reformulation of seminary curricula, and a more organic integration of a wide range of ministries.

6. From Male Leadership to Male/Female Partnership

In the last decade the North American church turned a historic and probably irreversible corner with a shift toward women as pastoral leaders on a par with men. In 1970 only 2 percent of United States pastors were women. That doubled by 1984 to 4 percent—still small, but continuing to grow annually. The number of women in seminary jumped 223 percent from 1972 to 1980, compared to a 31 percent increase in male enrollment. By 1985 one-fourth or more of all ordination-track seminarians in several United States denominations were women (this was true in the American Baptist, Lutheran Church in America, United Methodist, United Presbyterian, and Episcopal churches). We estimate that by the year 2000 approximately 20 to 25 percent of pastors in the United States will be women, with the total possibly approaching 50 percent by the middle of the next century.

Women already comprise a significant minority of ordained pastors in many church bodies. By 1985, 10 percent of all Disciples of Christ pastors were women. The figure was 12 percent in the United Church of Christ, 7 percent in the Episcopal church, 5 percent among United Methodists, and 6 percent among Pres-
byeterians. In Pentecostal groups, 17 percent of all pastors are women in the Pentecostal Holiness Church, 12 percent in the Church of God in Christ, and 11 percent in the Assemblies of God. One-third of female ordinations reportedly occur in Pentecostal churches.

The implications of this trend include the following:

1. The definition of the pastoral role will probably become broader and more flexible as women bring more variety, fresh ideas, differing perspectives, and a broader range of leadership styles into church leadership.

2. The emphasis on community, informality, and nurture in the church will be enhanced.

3. Theologically and conceptually, more women in church leadership will increase the tendency toward organic and ecological models of the world and the church.

4. More women in ministry may augment the trend toward "lay" ministry and the equipping of all believers.

7. From Secularization to Religious Relativism

The church has always faced the problem of how to be in the world yet not of it. But secularization comes in waves. Today the church faces a tidal wave, with many Christians in North America and Western Europe accommodating to values shaped more by the world than by biblical faith. Surveys show little difference between the views and behaviors of those who claim to be committed Christians and those who don't.

In the last fifty years United States attitudes have largely changed from the survival mentality of the Great Depression to a drive toward self-identity and recognition as persons. Yet the understanding of the road to success hasn't changed. The survivor of the depression sought security through good pay and financial stability. The modern "identity achiever" still follows the materialistic route to reach his or her objective.

According to Barna and McKay, Christians are no different from the larger population in this regard.

Rather than adhering to a Christian philosophy of life that is occasionally tarnished by lapses into infidelity, many Christians are profoundly secularized, and only occasionally do they respond to conditions and situations in a Christian manner. Recent research shows that many Christians are especially vulnerable to the worldly philosophies of materialism, humanism, and hedonism.

8. From Nuclear Family to Family Diversity

The traditional North American church has been ambushed by cultural diversity, especially in family lifestyles. By and large, white Protestant churches still assume the importance of the nuclear family (two parents, two or more children), when in fact very often that's not the primary clientele they deal with, especially in cities.

The "typical family" is almost extinct. Only 7 percent of the North American population fits the traditional profile of father as breadwinner and mother taking care of the home and two or three children. Demographers count as many as thirteen separate types of households, and these are rapidly eclipsing the conventional family pattern.

Some of the multiple forms of people living together are morally unacceptable to Christians, but many are morally neutral. Diversity and homogeneity both have their place, in society as well as in the church where there are "many members but one body." Single households, extended families, and shared households are viable Christian options. The challenge for the church will be to minister to this diversity without compromising the gospel.

9. From Church/State Separation to Christian Political Activism

In the 1980s Christians in North America entered a new phase of political involvement. The religious right, increased political activism by fundamentalists and evangelicals, and the growing number of theologically conservative Christians holding public office reflect what appears to be a new trend. Meanwhile, the "people power" revolution of Corazon Aquino in the Philippines, where the Roman Catholic Church played a key role, reveals other dimensions of Christian political activism.

Conflicting views of church and state have been with us down through church history. At one level the struggle has been between the legitimate claims and powers of political and religious authority; at another the question is how to achieve a balance between spirituality and social and political involvement. In their quest for the spiritual, monks and mystics through the ages attempted to transcend not only human affairs but the material world itself. In contrast the Roman emperor Constantine became a Christian and saw no conflict in attempting to Christianize secular government (and in the process substantially politicized the church).

Earlier in the twentieth century conservative Protestantism, especially, tended to drive a wedge between religious experience and matters of economics and public policy. Adherents often turned inward, sharply dividing the spiritual and material realms. Yet the trend today is toward political involvement. The most visible example is the new right.

While most media attention has focused on such conservative new-right groups as the Moral Majority, not all Christian political efforts are on the side of political conservatism. Evangelicals for Social Action (ESA) is a broadly based coalition working for greater sensitivity and activism on issues of social justice, poverty, and international peace. ESA is organizing local chapters across the country. Bread for the World, another primarily Christian organization, lobbies for legislation and policies that will provide adequate food for the world's peoples. Sojourners magazine and the Sojourners community agitate for international justice and promote a new abolitionism against nuclear weapons. And in 1986 a new broad-based political action committee, Justlife, was established.

"As Christian political involvement expands to include far-reaching issues such as foreign policy and the earth's resources, a crucial question is whether or not Christians can distinguish between kingdom priorities and narrowly nationalistic interests."
formed to advocate a “consistent prolife stance,” particularly on the issues of poverty, abortion, and the nuclear-arms race.

As Christian political involvement expands to include far-reaching issues such as foreign policy and the earth’s resources, a crucial question is whether or not Christians can distinguish between kingdom priorities and narrowly nationalistic interests. This applies certainly to North American believers, but equally to Christians in places like South Africa, Lebanon, and Taiwan. The issue can be boiled down to this simple question: Will tomorrow’s Christians be able to see, and persuade others to see, that the priorities of God’s kingdom are ultimately more in one’s own national interests than are narrower self-serving aims?

10. From Safe Planet to Threatened Planet

Three major world realities are shaping a new and volatile situation for the church. They are so basic and potentially dangerous that together they constitute a world of mega-dangers for all earth’s peoples. These realities are (1) the widening gap between rich and poor, (2) our threatened ecosphere, and (3) the dangers of nuclear armaments.

One need not be a prophet to see that eco-crisis and nuclear terror in a world increasingly split between rich and poor, yet intimately linked by radio and television, could easily add up to a recipe for global convulsions as devastating as any world war. These issues present not a scenario for despair but simply the dimensions of the challenge we face. Europe survived the Black Death of the fourteenth century, though in many places half the population died. Floods, earthquakes, disease, and wars have threatened major parts of the globe in the past and will do so again. Today’s issues, however, are unprecedented in their scope and reach, and in the way they interact and touch the very fabric of life for all earth’s peoples.

From a Christian standpoint, these issues caution us against triumphalism or an easy optimism. Human sin is still with us, not only in each individual and group, but cumulatively, clogging the structures of our social and environmental systems. As we move into the twenty-first century, the world is one family at war with itself and threatening to poison or explode its own home.

Conclusion

Where does all this leave the church? First of all, these and related trends will require much more study and analysis. Some are clear and empirically validated; others are more questionable and may clash with significant countertrends. But all represent areas of ferment or challenge for the church.

In our book we have reviewed these trends in light of John Naisbitt’s Megatrends and have suggested possible long-range implications. In the conclusion we suggest four possible “alternative futures” for the church and society: friendly fascism, Armageddon, nuclear terrorism, and world revival. We stress that any of these scenarios is possible, in whole or in part, or possibly in combination or sequence. The future rests on the faithfulness or unfaithfulness of the church and, finally, on God’s sovereign activity. We hope that some attention to actual and potential trends will aid Christians in sorting out the challenges they face and responding faithfully to the good news of the kingdom.

Note


Noteworthy

The Bethlehem Missionary Society (S.M.B.), a Roman Catholic society in Immensee, Switzerland, had a theological seminary of its own until 1969 when the Schöneck Seminary was integrated into the Theological Faculty of Lucerne. Since then its students have been accommodated in a house of residence in Lucerne. To bring this temporary arrangement to a close, the S.M.B. recently opened a Missionary Center in Lucerne, the Romero Center, named for the martyred bishop of El Salvador. The Romero Center has three purposes: it accommodates students and prepares them for missionary work; it offers courses to foster missionary and third-world commitment; and it conducts research on relevant missionary topics. The library of Schöneck Seminary has been transferred to the center and is now accessible to interested scholars. The director of the Romero Center is Dr. J. Rechsteiner, S.M.B. The group of researchers is led by Dr. G. Collet; to the group belong various specialists in theology, missiology, science of comparative religions, economics, and so forth. Other specialists will cooperate according to need. Address: Romero-Haus, Kreuzbuchstrasse 44, CH-6006 Luzern, Switzerland.
Missionary Archives

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Council for World Mission (former London Missionary Society) 1775-1940
Wesleyan Methodist 1791-1947
Jerusalem and East Mission 1842-1976
International Missionary Council / CBMS Africa and India 1910-1945
Conference of British Missionary Societies 1912-1954
United Society for Christian Literature 1799-1960
Protestant Missionary Works in Chinese

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Relief and Development: Challenges to Mission Today

James A. Cogswell

Relief and development are critically important aspects of Christian mission today. Yet concepts of these tasks are being pressed upon us by forces outside the church. The church in mission must take care lest consciously or unconsciously we adopt criteria regarding relief and development that are alien or antithetical to the church’s mission. Indeed, we must reexamine the faith dynamic for Christian mission in order to fill these concepts with that distinctive content which will more adequately express why and how we engage in relief and development as aspects of mission.

The year 1945 punctuated the history of the world, bringing World War II to a screeching halt and initiating the nuclear age. The end of the war found many nations prostrate in devastation. The United States stood almost alone in having been spared the destruction of its own land and resources, though the loss of hundreds of thousands of its sons and daughters in armed service left lasting scars. But in the aftermath of war, the United States undertook a task unprecedented in human history: to rebuild not only those nations with which it had been allied during the war, but also those nations that had been its enemies. Going beyond relief, the United States took on a massive and dramatic effort for the reconstruction of postwar Western Europe under the Marshall Plan. At its height, the United States directed almost 3 percent of its Gross National Product to meet human need and to rebuild the badly damaged European economies. The plan was highly successful, at the same time that it opened the way for United States investments and provided a check on the advance of communism.

With the beginning of the recovery of Europe, the focus began to shift to other areas of the world, which had suffered equal devastation. With President Truman’s Point IV Program introduced in 1949, emphasis increasingly was placed on technical and capital assistance to strengthen the economies of other war-torn nations in Asia and Africa.

With the coming of the 1960s, the vision expanded. The United Nations called for the 1960s to be “the development decade.” The logic of the Marshall Plan appeared impregnable: if Europe, then why not the newly emerging poor nations of the so-called third world? This time around, not only the United States but the recently recovered Western nations also could pitch in. The goals set were much the same as those that had emerged for the Marshall Plan, but with some new twists: (1) to move economically weak countries toward development (without a very clear idea as to what that word meant); (2) to open new sales and investment markets for Western industry; (3) to secure access to strategic raw materials and natural resources within the third world; (4) to bring greater well-being for the poor in the third world. While Western nations now recognized that their days of political control in the third world were rapidly coming to an end, there was keen competition to carve out areas of influence that would provide both resources and markets for Western corporate interests, as well as to undercut any drift in political sympathies to the left. Thus began the “development era” in the relationship between so-called developed and developing nations.

Meanwhile, much was happening in the thinking and planning of the churches. The aftermath of World War II found much of prewar mission structure in shambles. Many Christian communities around the world had suffered severely during the war. Old mission comity agreements had been disrupted, many beyond repair. European mission agencies at first were totally bereft of resources to engage in mission in those nations where they had been involved. It was a time of chaotic but creative confusion.

In that context, the churches caught a vision of Christian mission that somehow had been submerged to low priority in the past. They sensed the clarion call to bind up the wounds of a badly broken world. On the global scale, the recently formed World Council of Churches initiated its program of Interchurch Aid, Refugee and World Service. On the national scale, in the United States, Protestant churches determined to work together in meeting critical human need. Church World Service came into being, joining the service efforts of those churches that later would bring other ecumenical efforts together in the National Council of Churches. “Doctrine divides, but service unites” became the guiding theme. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the overwhelming task was that of refugee resettlement for the victims of war and binding up the wounds in the worst war-torn areas. Soon it became evident that the mandate must be expanded, for human need could not be limited to the effects of “the war,” as great a catastrophe as that had been. Natural catastrophes called for relief efforts. And each disaster opened up situations where hunger and poverty were endemic, and called for more long-range sustained efforts.

Little wonder that, as the United Nations in the 1960s began to talk in terms of “development” as the critical need in the third world, the churches also picked up that term as an integrating concept for their service ministries. “Development is the new word for peace,” said Pope Paul VI in his classic encyclical “On the Development of Peoples” (Populorum Progressio). Churches of all types echoed his words. Every ministry to human need now was conceptualized in terms of where it would lead in relation to development. The “project” mentality emerged, identifying a particular problem in a specific place and developing

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a specific strategy for responding to it. Churches and church agencies often found themselves on the cutting edge of development, because of their partnership with grassroots churches and Christian agencies in the third world.

The vision and commitment of Christian churches and agencies often provided the model for what government and international agencies would do in development. Working in the same areas, the question inevitably would arise. What is the role of the church in relation to the role of government and international agencies in development? Alliances, sometimes rather uneasy, were worked out between church and government, and between United States Christian service agencies and the United States Agency for International Development in accomplishing particular tasks and objectives. Development seemed to provide a context within which church and government could work together to meet overwhelming human need, and to open the way for long-range solutions.

Well, what has gone wrong? Why is it that, after over thirty years and billions of dollars of development aid, third-world nations and peoples are immersed even more deeply in the cauldron of poverty and hunger? What has brought about a crisis of confidence in development, in both donor and receiving nations and churches? Is there anything that the churches can do to turn the situation around? What does all this have to do with our planning, participating in, and promoting Christian mission in the world?

The first thing we need to do, I believe, is to look critically at the terms that we are using and ask what they have come to mean.

"Relief" is one such term. The miracle of the media has put the starving of the world in our living rooms—bloated-bellied children, mothers with dry breasts holding starving infants, skeletal figures lying on pallets, too weak to eat, waiting to die. The spector of famine that hangs over some half-billion people in the world today has finally broken into the consciousness of the average American, and has triggered sporadic outpourings of compassion. When we see famine in all its grim reality, we want to get food from here to there clinging to life by a thread.

But questions about relief have begun to bother us:

a. Getting food from here to there is a far more complicated process than appears on the surface. Actually, food aid is far more difficult than development. There are innumerable complexities: the shipping, the storing, the transporting, the delivering, the distributing. Relief basically goes against the natural flow of the necessities of life emerging from the land where people live.

b. What is the role of government and what is the role of private voluntary agencies in relief efforts? All the efforts of voluntary agencies combined provide only a small fraction of what is needed. Government and international agency response is basic, and yet is often controlled by narrow political interests.

c. Regarding the private voluntary agency response, there is the fierce competition of the "compassion marketplace." Relief agencies contend with one another for the compassion dollar: Who can tell the saddest stories, who can show the most pathetic pictures? Agencies are lured into measuring success in terms of the dollars raised rather than the actual meeting of needs, let alone the long-range addressing of underlying causes of hunger.

d. Who actually sets the agenda for where relief is needed? Those engaged in relief ministries have come to realize that their ministry is at the mercy of the media. When a disaster hits the headlines and gains TV visibility, comparatively large resources may be raised for that particular place, at the same time that there may be very minimal resources for equally great needs in other less visible places. Most relief agencies now find themselves swamped with funds for Ethiopia, but scratching to find resources for the desperate needs in such countries as Angola, Mozambique, and the other seriously affected countries of southern Africa.

e. Those who think seriously about the matter begin to ask the question. After relief, what? Relief in the form of food aid can create a dependence mentality, competing with and undercutting agricultural development, especially when those who have come close to starvation consider the prospect of returning to the harsh environment that they recently had fled.

f. Most serious of all, relief can actually be a Band-Aid covering a cancer. Public attention may jump from headline to headline, while deep underlying causes of poverty and hunger continue to fester and spread and deepen. Further, the givers of relief unwittingly or unwittingly can become the arbiters as to who will live and who will die. The infamous reference of former Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz to "food aid as a weapon" is not soon forgotten in the third world.

Relief, then, as an aspect of Christian mission, must not become a hiding-place for those who do not wish to face the grim realities of underlying hunger and poverty. Paulo Freire puts it starkly in Pedagogy of the Oppressed:

. . . deference to the weakness of the oppressed almost always manifests itself in the form of false generosity, indeed, the attempt never goes beyond this. In order to have the continued opportunity to express their "generosity," the oppressors must perpetuate injustice as well. An unjust social order is the permanent fount of this "generosity," which is nourished by death, despair, and poverty. That is why the dispensers of false generosity become desperate at the slightest threat to its source.

What then of "development"? Those who see beyond disaster and famine penetrate to a deeper level and see the problems of the poor emerging from underdevelopment. The pictures that come into focus at this level are depleted soil and inadequate water resources; farmers using agricultural methods unchanged for hundreds of years; mothers with too many children, needing help in understanding basic nutrition; families too large for the limited land on which they live; isolated rural communities lacking adequate roads, schools, clinics and all the rest that make basic livelihood possible. The response that such pictures call forth is the determination to share technical assistance, in agriculture, nutrition, family planning, community development, in order that people may be able to provide for themselves.

Many American Christians are learning to think beyond relief to development. "Let's share our know-how with them. They've got the problems, we've got the answers. It's just a matter of
helping them develop along the lines on which we have developed." And to a certain extent, that is a good response.

And yet, this word "development" is more and more suspect in the third world. "Development is not our word," says the Christian Conference of Asia. It is fraught with deep-seated problems: the Western model of development tends to be capital-intensive rather than labor-intensive, focusing on production rather than on people; the further it moves, the more it creates unemployment. The Western model of development tends toward the pollution of the environment and exhaustion of the world's limited natural resources. The Western model of development tends to erode traditional cultural values and to replace them with the dull sameness of a faceless technological society.

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Most serious of all, the Western model of development tends to trap the poorer nations and peoples into a macro-system that makes them pawns of the superpowers and victims of an unbalanced global economic system.

Allan Boesak, well-known church leader of South Africa, said in an address to a consultation of the Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society, "Development has almost totally failed, for it has created a dependency which opens the way to exploitation."[2]

I well remember the experience of attending the United Nations World Food Conference in 1974, when the world hunger situation had reached such a critical stage. Some of the world's outstanding political leaders and scientific experts were gathered. Great plans were devised for responding to humankind's basic need for food, all the way from a global food security system to strengthening food production in the neediest developing nations. The conference closed with a grand resolution, echoing words from the address of then United States Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, to the effect that by the end of a decade no child would go to bed hungry, no family would need to worry about food for the next day, no nation would be unable to provide for the basic needs of its people.

That decade is now past. Hunger is more widespread and poverty is far deeper than a decade ago. A staggering debt weighs upon the stooping shoulders of the world's developing nations. So-called development aid from rich nations has been sharply curtailed and tied ever more closely to political objectives, while military aid and security assistance have been greatly increased. The world's investment in arms has soared, bringing about a permanent state of war in much of the third world. Are these the fruits of "development"?

Hear me clearly. I am not saying that "relief" and "development" are bad words. Rather, they are inadequate words, for they do not penetrate to the deeper level of reality that underlies the hunger and poverty of the third world—the level of systemic injustice. They are chameleon words that take on the color of their context. As Christians, we must not let the world define those terms for us. Rather, we must fill them with the meaning that grows out of the basic convictions of our Christian faith.

So where is the handle? Where do we turn to find those integrating biblical concepts needed to help us define relief and development from a Christian perspective?

While there are many places where we might begin, let us look to the earliest days of the Christian church as recorded in the first chapters of Acts. True, that was a very different day from ours. The twenty centuries that have passed have totally changed the context. Yet, if we stop and think about it, that part of the world in which so much of the church's effort in relief and development is carried out is probably much closer to that first-century context than to ours: surrounded by a predominantly non-Christian culture; made up primarily of the poor and oppressed; living their Christian lives with very limited resources but with deep faith commitment. Possibly that third-world church can help us to understand the dynamic of that early Christian community.

In looking at those early chapters of Acts, certain words and concepts begin to emerge and become part of a whole: *marturia* (witness) and *kerugma* (proclamation); *koinonia* (community); *dia­konia* (ministry or service); *dikaiosune* (righteousness or justice); *metamorphosis* (transformation). There is a wonderful flow and blend of these words and concepts in the early chapters of Acts. They are not separated from one another. They depend upon one another. One leads to and blossoms in the other, and the latter flows from and grows out of the former. Our modern tendency is to set these terms over against one another—evangelism vs. social action, service vs. justice. The challenge is to recover that dynamic harmony, that creative tension which is found in the first-century church.

1. Marturia: The early chapters of Acts are shot through with the word. "You shall be my witnesses," says the risen Christ, "when the Spirit comes upon you, beginning where you are, then in all the surrounding region, then to the ends of the earth." The word "witness" is often attached to the word "resurrection." The apostles, including Judas' successor, are to be "witnesses to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." They are witnesses that it happened; they themselves are evidence that it happened.

Bishop Joseph Delaney of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, in his message to the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches at its meeting in November 1985 made a telling point: Jesus sent out witnesses not only to tell the good news of what had happened, but to make that good news happen. The risen Christ is made evident both in the message at Pentecost and in the making whole of the poor beggar at the temple gate.

Gustavo Gutiérrez in his inspiring book *We Drink from Our Own Wells* writes:

A follower of Jesus is a witness to life. This statement takes on a special meaning in Latin America where the forces of death have created a social system that marginalizes the very poor who have a privileged place in the kingdom of life. . . . The experience of martyrdom lived in Latin America heightens and sharpens this meaning. . . . There are many who have devoted their lives, to the point of suffering death, in order to bear witness to the presence of the poor in the Latin American world and to the preferential love that God has for them.[3]

The *kerugma* (proclamation), then, is not some antiseptic telling of the story of the cross and the resurrection. It is the man-
ifestation of the conviction that no cross shall kill this Christ, that
the power of his resurrection is loose in the world. Any kind of
need were met, because there was that sense of community. For the church, it must be an expression of the
depth of community rooted in our fellowship around the person
of Christ, a projecting of that
can rich churches in the North learn that they have much to
receive, and poor churches in the South learn that they have much to
give?
For sharing, you see, requires that we look at each other as
equals. What we are called to in Christian diakonia is sharing in
the self-emptying love of Christ, participating with the total body
of Christ in releasing God’s power of love and justice into the
world. Certainly that must be the spirit of the church in relief
and development.
4. Dikaiosune: Most frequently translated in the New Testa-
ment as “righteousness,” the word carries with it the freight
of the Old Testament theme of “justice.” The word itself does
not appear in the early chapters of Acts, and yet the concept
certainly is there. The story of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5
in evidence of the stern dimension of this good news in Christ,
for those who in greed and deceit are unwilling to share in the
spirit of the new community.
Certainly the sense of justice, which thunders out of the
prophetic message of the Old Testament, found expression as the
early church proclaimed the life and ministry of Jesus—his dec¬
laration of purpose in Nazareth, his alliance with the poor, his
clash with the religious elite of his day. “Seek first God’s king¬
dom and his justice” is a call to discipleship for the church in
eye.
In the early chapters of Acts, diakonia refers first to “the
ministry of the word” (Acts 1:17, 25), and only afterward to the
work of the first “deacons” in distribution of resources to those
neglected within the Christian community (Acts 6:1ff.)
The message is clear—witness and service cannot be sepa-
rated. Both are inextricably a part of the diakonia of the church.
But another fact is also clear—diakonia originated out of controver-
sy over the implications of koinonia. In Acts 6–7, one of the first
deacons, Stephen, becomes the first martyr as he contends for
the wider inclusiveness of the Christian community.
The effort to make Christian service a noncontroversial ac-
tivity is not consistent with the church’s own early history. Dia-
konía cannot be simply a humanitarian activity that lacks the guts
to stand up to opposition, to deal with tough questions. Far more
than charity, it is an expression of the creative tension brought
about by the experience of life in the new community.
The World Council of Churches is struggling now with the
concept of “the ecumenical sharing of resources.” It has arisen
out of the concern that, in the thinking of most church people,
there is a constant one-way flow of resources from the materially
rich churches of the northern part of the globe to the materially
poor churches in the South. One party is always the giver and
the other always the receiver. And so the challenge is posed: Can
we make the qualitative step from giving and receiving to sharing?
and thwarted and cut short by those who use them for their own
profit. We must be willing to accompany them on their passage
through what Gutiérrez calls “the dark night of injustice.”
5. Metamorphosis: “Transformation.” If there is one New
Testament word that, for us, might replace “development” as
an integrating concept, it is this one. Though it is not found in
Acts, its use in other parts of the New Testament is fascinating;
it is used of Jesus’ transfiguration ( Mk. 9:2), of the transfor-
mation into the image of Christ for those who behold the glory of the
Lord (2 Cor. 3:18). And of course it is the keynote of that great
chapter, Romans 12, which speaks of not being conformed to this
world but being transformed by a complete change of mind that
works itself out in the good and acceptable and perfect will of
God (Rom. 12:2).
Is this not what was happening in that early church, the
transformation of human minds? That must be an integral part
of all that we do in development if it is to work toward lasting
good—not simply the teaching of techniques, but the building up
of a sense of self-worth, of trustful cooperation with one’s neigh-
bors, of working together for the common good. That transforma-
tion has to take place among both the haves and the have-
nots of the world, but probably most particularly among the

“As soon as the gospel
is proclaimed it acts like a
magnet, drawing people
into community.”
"Transformation" recognizes that there is need for basic structural change, changing the forms within which rich and poor relate to one another. Yet it connotes that happening, not primarily through violent upheaval but, rather, through changing the way that people think of themselves and relate to one another.

In summary, then, what are some of the challenges to mission today as we rethink the tasks of relief and development in light of our Christian faith? Let me mention but three:

1. **In planning for mission**, we must abandon empire-building and emphasize kingdom-planting. It is remarkable that Jesus' parables of the kingdom are not about building but about planting. The power is not in our hands but in the seed that is sown. The tendency toward empire-building, which once characterized the missionary enterprise, is now all too apparent in the work of development agencies. Somehow, in relief and development, as in other aspects of mission, there must be a readiness to let go, to stop counting souls or projects like scalps for our belts, to let the seed fall into the ground and seemingly die, that it may bear much fruit. At the same time, there must be a readiness to wrestle with principalities and powers. While working on micro-structures through development programs, we must address the macro-structures which perpetuate and deepen human poverty and misery, and which undercut all the good intentions of relief and development.

2. **In participating in mission**, there needs to be less promotion of projects, more partnership with people. How poignant the words of a visiting Niger church delegation: "American church visitors come to see projects, but not to visit us." The ultimate hope is not in projects but in people. Projects may come and go. Some may succeed, others fail. The task is to empower the caring community. It will mean responding to the efforts of partner churches and Christians to deal with justice issues, and not wash our hands by saying that we don't want to interfere in internal politics. It will mean seeking to build bridges to authentic people's movements that are seeking justice for the poor. It will mean moving from a "doing for" to a "working with" approach in all that is undertaken.

   It will also mean a readiness to respond to the unpredictable leading of the Spirit. The book of Acts has been described as the story of the early church running breathlessly to catch up with the Spirit. That is what is happening in the church today in many places of great human crisis and need. We shall not determine the outcome through our development planning. If we are sensitive to the Spirit, we may have the privilege of being present as the Spirit moves people to struggle for justice and social change that is in keeping with the demands of the gospel.

3. **In interpreting and promoting mission**, we shall recognize that there is a massive educational task to be done, within the American church and reaching out to the American public as a whole. American Christians must be enabled to see that hunger is more than merely the lack of food, that its roots go deeply into politics and economics, that hunger decisions are made not only by peasants in India, but by bureaucrats in Washington, by corporate board members in Kansas City, by every American in his or her daily style of life.

   Brazilian educator Paulo Freire has coined the term "conscientization," referring to awakening the conscience of the dispossessed to an awareness of their situation. The term might well be used for the educational task to be done in the life of the church in the United States. The conscience of the church must be awakened to the kind of world, which we have helped to create, in which hundreds of millions go hungry. It is a long-term task, yet it must be undertaken with a sense of desperate urgency.

   A church leader from India is reported to have said to a United States church audience: "You are great in a crisis, but poor in a struggle." Possibly what the church needs most to learn about participating in relief and development is that we are not dealing with a crisis or an endless series of crises; if we follow the risen Christ, we are engaged with him in the struggle for the transformation of the kingdoms of this world into the kingdom of our Lord.

Notes

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A seasoned and sensitive missionary provides an enlightening entree into the reality of the Brazilian church.
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**Book Reviews**

**A History of Christianity in India: 1707–1858.**


Given his many years of missionary service in India, it is fitting that the late Bishop Stephen Neill’s last book should have been this second volume in a projected three-volume history of Christianity in India. Like his other books, this one is a very readable, often fascinating introduction to that era in which Protestant Christianity first came to play an important role in India. The sometimes chronological, sometimes regional, sometimes denominational, and sometimes topical structure takes the reader through the “Company” period of British rule—illustrating in the process the problem all historians face in trying to make of the many Christian histories of India a single history. While space is given to the Thomas Christians and Roman Catholics, the book concentrates on Anglican and Protestant missions and missionaries. Despite statements made in both the Preface and the first chapter about the primary purpose of the book relating to “the gigantic drama of the confrontation between Western and Asian cultures” (p. xiii), what we really have is a very well-done book of the traditional, somewhat paternalistic missionary style. Sometimes it appears to be a succession of missionary biographies, coupled occasionally with references to the “fruits” of their work and a few of the problems implicit in that “gigantic drama.” Among its other objectives, the book is clearly an apologia both for Western Christian missionaries and British rule in India.

The most valuable sections are those that deal with south India in general and Tamil Nadu in particular, that part of India with which the author was most familiar. Treatment of other areas is often superficial and sometimes inaccurate (e.g., the discussion of the work of the Welsh missionaries in the Khasi Hills of northeast India, pp. 352–53). This illustrates the difficulty of any one author, however well qualified, writing a comprehensive history of Christianity in India from the nineteenth century onward that takes local cultural and historical contexts seriously (a problem that the Church History Association of India has dealt with in its six-volume history by multiple authorship).

This is a book that should be read by anyone interested in Christian history. But for those who want an Indian or more contemporary historiographical perspective (which is not simply a matter of the scarcity of non-Western sources, as Neill suggests, but of the kinds of questions asked), it should certainly not be the last book read on the subject.

—Frederick S. Downs

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**Going Forth: Missionary Consciousness in Third World Catholic Churches.**


Dramatic changes have been taking place in the Christian churches in recent years. One very significant change is the rise of missionary consciousness among the churches of the third world. Omer Degrijse, a priest of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Scheut), and National Director of the Pontifical Aid Societies (Belgium), in his book, *Going Forth: Missionary Consciousness in Third World Catholic Churches,* analyzes this new and developing phenomenon. He does so with an optimism and enthusiasm seldom found in current church/mission literature. His materials are carefully documented and include interesting details and statistics.

The author explains how the young churches of the South and East have, up to this time, concentrated their evangelizing efforts solely *ad intra.* Now they are becoming aware of their responsibility to share in the task of world evangelization. They are serious about going beyond their borders and planning for a future that will take them *ad extra* and so *ad gentes.* To accomplish their task and to set up the mechanisms to achieve their goal, the third-world churches continue to count on the help of foreign missionaries for encouragement. They also see in the foreign missionary in their midst an indispensable sign of the church’s universality.

The author maintains that, as local churches grow in the understanding that the task of evangelization is to be borne by all the churches, and churches of each continent enrich each other by mutually sharing their gifts, the people of God everywhere will experience a new solidarity and unity.

The third-world churches, enjoying a privileged moment of the Spirit, constitute a sign of hope in the future of the gospel and lift the spirits of the churches of the West by helping them to recover their own self-confidence and missionary dynamism.

—Betty Ann Maheu, M.M.
Jesus and the Witchdoctor: An Approach to Healing and Wholeness.


This book is a fascinating mixture of several elements, some of which meld well at times, and others that don’t quite. Yet the overall work is a fine introduction to healing from the traditional African stance. The author, a White Father, has had extensive experience in Africa as well as education in history, missiology, and anthropology.

The first part takes a long and quite detailed look at the nature of illness in the world, viewed from the belief that it is predominantly a lack of wholeness. The lack of wholeness is traced to physical, psychological, societal, and spiritual causes. This part of the book at times seems disconnected; it jumps from statement to statement without always building in the logical connections. However, much of what is written is convincing in spite of the disjointedness. The intimate connection of body, mind, soul, psyche, and society is well explicated, and much of this section will be enlightening to people unknowledgeable in the areas of holistic healing and its contexts. He does not omit the debates that have surrounded these concepts. Neither does he get bogged down in needless trivia.

Throughout the book Hiebert employs case studies, models, charts, and essays by others to provide reinforcement or additional dimensions to the discussions. The final section emphasizing the bicultural community is pertinent to today but also probes the future. Trends being faced today (i.e., urbanization, pluralism, multiplicity of crises, and the complexities of human roles) will be even more demanding in the new century.

Hiebert has provided an excellent textbook on missionary perspectives. It is a carefully woven treatise pulling multiple factors together for a holistic understanding of the missionary task for today and tomorrow.

—G. Linwood Barney

Anthropological Insights for Missionaries.


Paul Hiebert, a former missionary in India, has studied both in theology and in anthropology. He is now a professor of anthropology and South Asian studies at Fuller Theological Seminary. Those who know him will be neither surprised nor disappointed in this book. His missionary experience, competence in anthropology and biblical theology, and sensitivity to human relationships in cross-cultural contexts have produced a book that will be read

not only by young missionaries (for whom it was written) but by experienced missionaries and missiologists as well.

Hiebert has an innate ability to see the whole picture, isolate the significant factors, and relate them to the missionary task. He is an architect in organizing the book for relating cultural differences to the gospel, the missionary, and the message in the context of the bicultural community. He is a craftsman in applying theory to practice. For example, he traces the development of the three-self formula and its further development into a fourth self, self-theologizing. This is couched within the current emphasis on contextualization but also anticipates future contexts.

G. Linwood Barney, a former missionary of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Laos, is now Dean of the Faculty at Alliance Theological Seminary, Nyack, New York.


John King Fairbank wrote in his Preface that Kathleen Lodwick “can create mountains,” and that she has done so in this index to the seventy-two-year lifespan of the Chinese Recorder. Lodwick began the work in 1976 and through these ten years of work she has earned the gratitude of generations of scholars interested in China.

Kathleen Lodwick is a member of the Department of History at Southeast Missouri State University. Toward the completion of her work on the Index she founded the China Mission Group, which meets concurrently with the annual meeting of the Association.
for Asian Studies and publishes a newsletter, *Christianity in China: Historical Studies*.

The *Chinese Recorder* Index begins with 544 pages of persons listed alphabetically with references to each person includes the designation of siblings, names of parents. Additional categories of data are: sending-organization affiliation, arrivals and departures from China, articles by the person in the *Chinese Recorder*, attacks on the person, conferences attended, itinerary, location, positions, and death. The same attention to detail is also found in the second section (Missions/Organizations, 79 pages) and the third section (Subject Index, 182 pages).

The subtitle of the Index, "A Guide to Christian Missions in Asia, 1867–1941," is misleading, for the Index touches mainly China, only one part of Asia. Prodigiously as the work is, it covers only a small part of the Western-related religious press in China from 1867 through 1939. During that period, according to The Religious Periodical Press in China (published by the Synodal Commission in China, Peking, 1940), there were 258 Protestant, 158 Catholic, 36 Jewish, and 10 Russian Christian periodicals related to the development of the Christian and Jewish communities in China. Seen against that perspective, The Chinese Recorder Index is a magnificent guide to just one mountain in a massive range of data yet to be identified and analyzed. Unfortunately, the format does not match the quality of the substance. Full-page columns of numbers and letters (p. 134) are difficult to work with even when expertly spaced, but printing with no spaces at all between the numbers and the punctuation, with no white space to break up the massive columns, makes it very difficult for the user. In this case, the publisher’s desire to save space may be counterproductive.

—Archie R. Crouch

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**Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture.**


This is the kind of book from which the reviewer is tempted to quote profusely, for it is full of penetrating insights gracefully expressed. In fact, it is Lesslie Newbigin himself who comes through on every page, with his wide and varied experience in the mission field and in the field of mission, his solid scholarship and sound practical sense, his gift for presenting the fruit of long and laborious reflection in lucid and attractive language, and above all, his deeply Christian spirit.

The problem he addresses is this: in recent decades many studies have been made on the proclamation of the Christian message to people of cultures other than those in which the gospel was born and took root; attention was concentrated on the so-called third world. But the biggest difficulty for the missionary encounter today comes from "modern Western Culture," which is shared not only by the two power blocks in the northern hemisphere but by the leadership of non-aligned countries everywhere, and finally, by the evangelizers themselves. How does the church face this challenge?

Parmananda R. Divarkar, an Indian Jesuit now retired at St. Xavier’s College, Bombay, was formerly in Rome as assistant to the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, with special concern for ecumenism and evangelization.

The author’s background enables him to look with both understanding and detachment at the various aspects of this complex and inescapable question. The first three chapters deal with basic principles and facts, culminating in a call for the radical conversion of those who bear the message—not only in will and feelings but in mind—so as to arrive at "the development of a new plausibility structure." The remaining three chapters treat of particular features to be attended to, in the areas of knowledge and of action, and the proper response of the church, with the enumeration of "seven essentials" for an effective missionary thrust. The book ends, as should every Christian work, on a note of modest but robust hope—"because God is great."

—Parmananda R. Divarkar, S.J.

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**Go Forth in Peace: Orthodox Perspectives on Mission.**


This is a revised version of a 1982 book originally distributed widely in a very modest format. Father Ion Bria is a professor at the Orthodox Theological Academy in Bucharest, the deputy director of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches, and secretary for Orthodox Studies and Relationships.

Essentially a compendium of reports of Orthodox consultations over the past twelve years with reference to mission, it is a valuable resource. The reader will benefit by first reviewing the list of "Consultations" (pp. 101–2), since the texts themselves are not identified as to source.

The major portion of the book consists of eleven texts. Understandably, all have different styles, formats, emphases, and perspectives. Nevertheless, a unity of vision emerges. Thus the importance of the corporate life of the church as manifested in the Eucharist, the need for personal Christian spirituality, and a decided commitment to social concern and action are all related to the mission tasks of the
church. There emerges a coherent Orthodox perspective on mission.

The second and shorter part of the book includes excerpts from three WCC documents, which, I believe, were chosen to show both Orthodox influence upon them as well as the ecumenical coherence of Christians today as they reflect on the task of Christian mission.

The volume is a useful addition to any missions library, and especially recommended for Orthodox clergy and laity for orientation to the Orthodox perspective on missions. We are grateful to Father Bria for putting this material together.

—Stanley S. Harakas

Mission between the Times.


In Mission between the Times, René Padilla lets us in on a very important conversation that has continued for well over a decade. This is both the gift and the difficulty of the book. It is a gift because a large share of American evangelicalism is totally unaware that this conversation has been going on. As a consequence, many evangelicals are still operating with a singularly narrow view of redemptive theology and Christian mission. Many ecumenical Christians have also been unaware of this discussion and will benefit from reading this series of essays.

But therein lies the difficulty of the book as well. For those who were unable to attend the Lausanne Congress in 1974 or any of the subsequent forums, it isn’t easy for the reader to understand the full scope of the conversation of René Padilla's provocative essays. It might have been helpful to provide the reader with an introductory chapter that summarized the sense of the ongoing conversation.

In any case, René Padilla has made a major contribution to Christian dialogue on the mission of the church in this insightful work. He correctly challenges “the lack of appreciation of the broader dimensions of the Gospel...,” asserting that it “leads inevitably to a misunderstanding of the mission of the church. The result is an evangelism of the individual as a self-contained unit... whose salvation takes place exclusively in terms of a relationship with God.” In subsequent chapters, he argues not only for a broader view of biblical mission but for a clearer understanding of: (1) the importance of contextualizing the gospel; (2) the spiritual opposition that confronts the work of Christ; and (3) our responsibility in mission, Christian unity, and lifestyles of responsibility and service.
René Padilla’s concluding comment compellingly summarizes the thrust of this important book:

Both evangelism and social responsibility can be understood only in light of the fact that in Jesus Christ the Kingdom of God has invaded history and is now both a present reality and a future hope. ... Accordingly, the Kingdom of God is neither “the progressive social improvement of mankind...” nor “the present inner rule of God in the moral and spiritual dispositions of the soul with its seat in the heart.” Rather, it is God’s redemptive power released in history, bringing good news to the poor, freedom to prisoners, sight to the blind, and liberation to the oppressed.

Evangelism and social responsibility are inseparable. The gospel is good news about the Kingdom of God. Good works...are the signs of the Kingdom for which we were created in Christ Jesus [p. 197].

This is a biblical message of singular significance that needs to be heard in the church today. Mission between the Times is must reading for those in positions of leadership in the American church.

—Tom Sine

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**Good News of the Kingdom Coming.**


After pointing out errors in current evangelical (including the church-growth movement), liberal, radical (liberation, black, feminist), and universalist searches for the kingdom, Kirk explains his own: a Christian community in which state socialism prevents extreme disparities, and the hallmark of the Christian is “ability to suffer with joy and gladness and to face death triumphantly with a song of praise on the lips” (p. 139).

Disavowing Marxism, he accepts Marxist analysis, however, assuming class struggle. Severely criticizing the ideas of advancement by education and individual initiative, he says, “The vision that propels capitalist society is not solidarity, but the possibility and desirability of personal advancement” (p. 78). Those who have advanced too much—how much, is undefined—will not enter the kingdom, for “one cannot maximize one’s own advantage without causing deprivation and suffering to another” (p. 62), and “biblical evidence suggests that private accumulation of wealth is not to be tolerated...when substantial sectors of society...do not have the basic necessities” (p. 74).

One solution to economic imbalances is giving up excess wealth to follow Jesus Christ, as the disciples and Zaccheus did and as the rich young ruler did not. “The reward...is to become a fully integrated member of a new family in which things are held in common” (p. 74).

The second solution is state socialism. Kirk gives explicit guidelines (p. 84), two of which illustrate his position: “Government would suggest guidelines for salary scales” and “the state would have to own the means of production of all activities that have genuinely social implications—road systems, railways, communications, and primary products (oil, gas, coal, and to a greater extent than at present, land).” Curiously, Kirk does not apply his own earlier criticism of Marxism to socialism, although the same criticism seems appropriate: “Human beings exploit one another, not because a particular economic order allows them to, but because the desire is deeply rooted in their nature” (p. 46).

How will this nature be changed? Proclamation and concern for one’s neighbor are inextricably entwined in the Christian message. Third-world Christians rightly demand more attention to economic and political issues, as Kirk points out. Affluent Christians are called to a simpler lifestyle. The problem is pragmatic: What will work? After making a persuasive diagnosis, Kirk fails to make a persuasive case for state socialism as a major part of the treatment.

—H. T. Maclin

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**The First Taint of Civilization: A History of the Caroline and Marshall Islands in Pre-Colonial Days, 1521–1885.**


The book carries an off-putting title, yet it is apt nonetheless. Perhaps there have never been peoples who were with such an obvious need of missionaries than the inhabitants of certain Micronesian islands during the first half of the nineteenth century. The Jesuit Francis Hezel tells us in vivid detail how, at that stage, such islands in the Caroline group as Kosrae and Ponape had become pitiable enclaves of prostitution, violence, alcoholism, and general incontinence, and were susceptible to the whites’ sorrow-bearing mix of exploitation and epidemic disease. When the (interdenominational) American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) sent such hardy workers as Albert and Susan Sturges, Benjamin and Lydia Snow, Luther and Louise Gulick, and the Hawaiian deacon Ha’aikaula and his wife, to these tiny far-off dots in the ocean in 1852, they had the hope of combating the shocking unscrupulousness of their own “race” and countrymen very much in mind (chap. 6).

By the time we get to the arrival of the Protestant missionaries, however, we are almost halfway through the book. It is, after all, a general history of contact—of maroonings and massacres, of European muskets put to the service of chiefs in tribal warfare, of beachcombing and ports-of-call only...
too attractive to windjammers' crew-
men starved of women. Hezel's rich
and marvelously detailed account is just
what is necessary to make the aims and
achievements of missionaries more
meaningful, even strikingly defensi-
ble. By the time one reaches the con-
cluding chapter, in fact, Hezel has no
one else left on the scene for whom a
genuine tribute could be paid. With the
extraordinary scramble between Ger-
many and Spain for the Caroline Is-
lands—one that almost led to what could
have been the long-term precursor of the
Falklands war, as early as 1885—
we see colonialism at its most absurd.

A long list of self-interested ploys by
resident traders in such islands as Ebo-

nial J aluit in the Marshalls, and Truk
and Yap in the Carolines during the
1860s and 1870s hardly convinces one
as the islanders' "wholesome and
realistic" entrance to the wider world.
Thus Hezel is only fair and sensible in
leaving a last impression that the mis-
sionaries were the only outsiders with
any positive contribution to make to-
ward the future well-being of the Mi-
cronesians.

In 1885 when Sturges, the last of
the pioneering missionaries, returns
home, and the flags of the two new co-
lonial administrators have been hoisted
high, "there were four thousand
baptized Christians, fully clothed and
largely literate... between the Mar-
shalls and Truk" (p. 314), and that was
only a fraction of those attending church
gatherings or affected in their daily lives
by the Protestant mission's work. With
no Mitchell-like caricaturing of Hiram
Bingham's colleagues to the Oceanic
east, he acknowledges firmly that
"the achievements of the mission
were real" (p. 315): the saving of count-
less lives in epidemics by medical work;
the literacy programs; the eliminati-

tion of warfare; and the modification but
not destruction of local patterns of so-
cial authority. That is an impor-
tant contemporary assessment coming
from a Catholic scholar, and one who,
in this book on the earlier material at any
rate, takes note of the minimal Catholic
impact on these islands until the end
of the nineteenth century. Hezel tells
us of the initial failures of his own or-
der in the Marianas (north Carolines),
1721-33, and finishes with an allusion
to the coming of a dozen Capuchins
with the Spanish colonial regime. But
for the rest of his analysis of mission-
ary endeavor he has to do with
"apostles" who did not belong to
his tradition, and he has shown an ad-
mirable poise and sensitivity, as well
as an excellent use of ABCFM archives.

Hezel is, as is well known, a rad-
diction Jesuit. In this book he not only
writes history that is accurate, inter-
esting and fair; he also champions the
local people, celebrates their adapta-
bility and their durability through the
vicissitudes of European interfere-
nces. All these virtues herald what promises
to be a fascinating second volume, and
thus the completion of a life's work in
the building up of island peoples whom
others have been for so long intent on
breaking down, and in the strength-
en of those remarkable resources the
Micronesians have inherited from their
own colorful cultures and have blended
with the liberating, cross-cultural dy-
namics of the Christian gospel.

—Garry W. Trompf
The Chinese Rites Controversy from Its Beginning to Modern Times.


Father Minamiki presents a detailed historical account of the modern phase of the Chinese Rites Controversy while attempting to give a one-volume overview of the 400-year debate on whether the use of certain terms for God and the performance of certain rites by Chinese Christians could be tolerated by the church. As Father Minamiki writes, "At issue was the problem of how Western man was to translate into the Chinese language the concepts of the divinity and other spiritual realities and how he was to judge, on a moral basis, the ceremonies performed by the Chinese in honor of Confucius and their ancestors" (p. ix).

The title announces an analysis of the 400-year-long debate. The book actually treats the earlier period in a summary fashion, as a historical background to the events of the twentieth century. The Chinese Rites Controversy consumed an immense amount of time and paper in prolonged theological debate that was almost always contentious and fractious. Minamiki has avoided taking a personal stand, and yet the book is the result of a personal interest. Father Minamiki is a Japanese-American Jesuit who teaches Japanese language and culture at the University of Notre Dame. Although Father Minamiki's training was in liturgy and Japanese, he became personally interested in the whole question when as an Asian Christian he began to ponder the "symbolic meaning of the objects and gestures involved in the rites."

In fact, it was expansionist actions on the part of Japan in Manchuria in the 1930s that acted as a catalyst for the Catholic church to elaborate a series of formulae of toleration of the Chinese Rites, culminating in the papal decree of December 8, 1939, Instructio circa quasdam caeremonias super ritibus sinenis. The history of this period is the real strength of Minamiki's book.

In reviewing the almost 400-year history of Rome's judgment of the admissibility of these rites by Chinese Christians, there is a relevance for our time. In the process of accommodation and inculturation of Christianity, what constitutes cultural orthodoxy and how should decisions on such questions be made? In the history of the struggle one can see how a growing regard for non-Western culture gradually informs the church in the present era.

This book is a labor of love. Father Minamiki is to be commended for it. He is the first to admit that it is a rather unusual book compared to most historical or theological accounts. Minamiki has given the question a great deal of thought. (In a long appended postscript Minamiki explains his modus operandi.) His work is a much needed general introduction. While the debate on the rites has died down, the whole history of and reasons behind the ceremony surrounding this complicated and profound question still wait for the care that Minamiki has given events of the modern period. His presentation is most interesting, particularly in recording the controversy's individuals and events of the twentieth century in China, Manchuria, and Japan.

A minor point: there are some problems with the book production, the text is somewhat fuzzy even though the print is large, and the index is faulty in that the references to pages in the front matter are incorrect.

—Theodore Nicholas Foss

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With the publication of this book, the eighty-year-old author has seen a dream of his youth fulfilled. The book completes his biographical studies of H. P. S. Schreuder of the Church of Norway, bishop in Zululand. The book contains exhaustive studies of Schreuder's upper-class family, his home district, his mentor W. A. Wexels, and his successor Nils Astrup. It is the first time these two men have been given extensive analytical treatment. It also contains an assessment of Schreuder as a Zulu linguist and translator (in English by C. M. Doke, and in German by Ernst Dammann). There are seven texts regarding Schreuder's theological perspective, his reports on his trip to the Zulu king, Mpande, and his episcopal visit to Madagascar. One chapter analyzes Schreuder's personal characteristics.

Apart from Myklebust's personal interest in Schreuder, the reasons for his two books—the first came in 1986—are two. Schreuder was the first missionary of the newly formed Norwegian Missionary Society, and in 1843 the founder of its first mission, among the Zulus of South Africa. But Schreuder also became the center of a tremendous controversy in Norway, which led to the severing of his ties with the society in 1873. The result of the controversy was tragic for Schreuder personally and for the society. Since then Schreuder has been regarded as a villain in missionary circles in Norway and his memory disregarded.

Myklebust's work on Schreuder is very courageous, because it goes against what for more than a century has been regarded as unassailable truth. He has done it with great scholarly skill and knowledge, based on the most thorough documentation from primary sources. He has clearly shown that myth is often taken as historical truth, and that churches and their agencies are capable of committing sin. I congratulate him on a task admirably completed.

—Per Hassing


Bruno Gutmann, His Life, His Thoughts and His Work: An Early Attempt at a Theology in an African Context.


A highly significant body of modern missiological writing is too little known in the English-speaking world. This is the Warneck school, especially Gustav Warneck himself, Christian Keysser, and Bruno Gutmann. The only complete work available in English is Christian Keysser's A People Re-born (original, Eine Papuagemeinde), thanks to the William Carey Library, Pasadena, California. So we are happy indeed to have these recently published works about Gutmann.

Winter is a German anthropologist with much ecclesiological insight. Jaeschke is a theologian and missiologist grounded in social anthropology. Winter's book is the product of a doctoral dissertation at Oxford University. Jaeschke writes as Gutmann's fellow missionary for three and a half years in Kilimanjaro Diocese, and his disciple and close friend. Jaeschke served also as an evangelistic missionary and theologian for nearly sixteen years in New Guinea and was executive secretary of the Leipzig Mission in West Germany for seven years. Winter puts Gutmann in perspective as a ranking social anthropologist of his time and shows the importance of his anthropological approach to the initiation of the new church in Old Moshi. The core of Jaeschke's book consists of three long chapters (211 pages) derived from lectures given in 1968 at the Makumira Seminary in Tanzania. The book is dedicated to African friends, especially in the Kilimanjaro Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania where Gutmann served the greater part of his time in East Africa. It is an instructive combination of apologetic—in the basic meaning of the word—and critique and commentary.

Both writers survey the missionary's early life and his ministry in Africa in some depth, and describe the formative influences on his thought and missiological orientation. Winter's systematic anthropological analysis is most helpful. Jaeschke supports his statements with significant quotations from Gutmann. For the rest, the reader will find Winter very illuminating for Gutmann's understanding of totemism, his choice of social structure as offering a more basic approach than traditional folklore, and his delight in Gemeinschaft, rooted in a certain quality of sentiments and feelings rather than in formal relationships and external constraints—a "vitalistic" structuralism. Jaeschke spells out how this organic totemism, based on primal social ties as "orders of creation," is adapted to the formation of the new church. The roots are in the traditions of the past, but the result is a new Christian community, reshaped by the theology stemming from the Lutheran Reformation.

The sharpest critical issue is raised by Johannes Hoekendijk (Jaeschke, pp. 254f.). Does Gutmann's missiology substitute a divinely instituted fixed order of nature for the historical redemptive act of Christ, resulting in a Christless eschaton here and now? Interestingly, Jaeschke answers this question as much from observation of the missionary's practice as from his voluminous writings. Knowing the church in question, I would comment that the calibre of its contemporary ministry and its remarkable evangelistic outreach provide evidence of deep Christianization. Both the volumes under review will richly reward careful study.

—Donald C. Flatt
Early Buddhism and Christianity in Korea: A Study in the Emplantation of Religion.


Here is a significant book that may easily be overlooked, because of its rather abstruse title and its recondite academic format. The author has been an American Methodist missionary in South Korea, and this is his 1979 Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. His basic purpose is to present an anthropological model for the process of religious diffusion, which he has termed "emplantation." It is his belief that this is "the first time that this cultural process has been treated in a general and abstract manner" (Preface). After sketching the derivations and general characteristics of this model from his outlines of early Chinese Buddhism, Grayson goes on to apply the model to the development in Korea of Buddhism, Catholicism, and Protestantism.

A few words about "emplantation" are needed, to begin with. Grayson has been influenced by the anthropological models of E. M. Pye for "transplantation of religion," and of Ralph Linton for "cultural diffusion," but he has developed his theory in his own ways, to apply to any of the "missionary religions" of humankind, such as Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam, as well as certain phases of Hinduism. He finds that "religions which are emplanted in a new culture must undergo a three stage process of Contact and Explication, Penetration, and Expansion if they are to achieve a state of stability/supremacy" (p. 142). There are sub-phases in this model, and separate tracks for both slow and rapid conversion patterns. He outlines five factors that are crucial to examine, in order to understand the growth of these religions: "the clash of traditional and new values, tolerance of the new religion by the elite, linguistic factors, contention with other religions or philosophical traditions, and the political circumstances which existed at the time of emplantation" (p. 142).

Grayson's model of emplantation has thus been derived from the religious experiences of people in China and Korea, and he gives narrative chapters to outline the development of religious groups in both countries. At the conclusion of each narrative chapter, he tries to show how the developments he has described reflect the variables of his emplantation model. As he indicated in the Preface, "I do not hope to present new and unknown facts to the reader, but rather I hope to show how these facts may be interpreted afresh."

Readers need to bear in mind that this emplantation model is derived from the records of missionary religions that generally flourished in their new settings, despite many setbacks. There are, of course, other cases where missionary religions have not done so well, at least from a statistical standpoint—Christianity in Japan and Thailand, for instance—even though many background factors were somewhat similar. Whether Grayson's model has relevance for such "slow-growth" areas remains a matter for extensive debate.

Since this reviewer's specialty is history rather than anthropology, he is not competent to critique this particular anthropological model. The presentation is nevertheless an interesting one, rather clearly presented, and suggestive for further research. For better or for worse, the author limits himself to a very few footnotes, and thus it is not possible to track him in most cases for specific documentation for his views. However, he does give an extensive bibliography of works consulted.

Will the new model of emplantation that Grayson has outlined here make its way into further academic and church discussions, or will it lie stillborn on the publisher's shelves? One sincerely hopes the former outcome, for in spite of some of the generalities with which the writer has drawn up this model, there is much food for thought here. In a day when we seem deluged with monographs on specialized topics, it is refreshing to have some general studies such as this, which seek to place the whole mission story of a particular religion in a new land into a clearer focus, for further reflection and research.

—James M. Phillips

Is Christ the Only Way?

Christian Faith in a Pluralistic World.


This engagingly written book tackles the central theological issue facing the Christian movement today. With unceasing restlessness the peoples of the world continue to move from ancestral homes to take up residence in alien climes and cultures. They migrate with their traditions and cultures largely intact. Particularly in the West an inter-mingling of cultures and religions is occurring on a scale no one could have foreseen a generation ago. Western societies that traditionally thought of themselves as Christian, with possibly a Jewish minority, today have become pluralistic. This is affecting how we carry on public discourse, interpret laws, teach religious and moral issues
in public schools, and so forth. What impact should this new fact have on how Christians understand and speak about Jesus Christ?

In Part I Mark Heim examines presuppositions that have come to govern the way we think about religious questions—the rise of science, awareness of history, and direct encounter with peoples of other faiths. The only absolute in matters religious allowed by many is that all must be relative. Heim scores this as logically inconsistent. Concern for humaneness and respect for the rights of others do not necessarily imply sloppy thinking. What pluralism does is call us to live with real differences. It does not preclude maintaining religious convictions. The first Christians, who themselves lived in a world of plural religious claims, dared to name Jesus Christ as Lord—holding together both the particularity and the universality of that claim.

Part II sets forth Heim’s interpretation of who Jesus Christ is based on the Scriptures. Christ is first of all the One acting in God’s place to forgive and ultimately to die for humankind. But Jesus Christ is also the One in our place—one with us who established relationship with God. Finally, Jesus is the One whose place cannot be taken. Heim affirms that God does communicate with people outside the revelation in Christ, but only in Christ is God revealed definitively and fully. Having said this much, Heim must admit there are unanswered questions; ambiguity remains.

The third part treats of “Christ and Other Ways.” In this section Heim employs a typology borrowed from his faculty colleague at Andover Newton Theological School, Gabriel Fackre. He first examines the varieties of pluralism: parallel pluralism, picture-puzzle pluralism, degree pluralism. Then he turns to particularity: magnetic particularity, healing particularity, imperial particularity. Each one contains elements of helpfulness and insight, but none is adequate as an interpretive device.

Heim concludes that as Christians we are called to confess Jesus Christ as the way, the truth, and the life. We need to be open to learning new ways of witnessing to the Christ—ways that more fully reflect the compassion and self-giving love of God in Christ. But we also need to be intellectually more rigorous and courageous in thinking through our apologetic.

—Wilbert R. Shenk

Wilbert R. Shenk is Vice President for Overseas Ministries, Menno­nite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana.


To read the autobiography of this creative United Methodist missionary to Angola and bishop for Southern Africa is to recall the cries against Paul and Silas at Thessalonica: “These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also” (Acts 17:6).

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Gods and the One God.


A distinguished scholar of Christian origins gives us a brilliant depiction of early Christian understanding of faith within the context of religious quests and theological reflections of the pagan world of its day. An important contribution to the new series of the Library of Early Christianity, the intention is to relate early Christian understanding of God and salvation to the social and religious features of Roman society of its time. Grant does so in a masterful way, which will open up new insights to general readers and to professional scholars—no mean achievement.

In a skillful fashion that exhibits his wide range of learning, Grant permits ancient writers to speak their own piece, expressing their religious views and practices. Commencing with references to pagan religious thought in the book of Acts and continuing with pagan authors, we learn of popular cults and cult figures of the empire and the paens of praise by which they were worshiped. Zeus, Apollo, Athena, Dionysus, Hermes, Asclepius, Hercules, Isis, and Serapis are celebrated for their benefactions and their works of wonder in these aretalogies, to the consternation and denunciation of Jews and Christians alike. We listen to philosophers and rhetoricians expound their doctrines of God in their movement toward monotheism and consider the probable influence of Middle Platonism upon some of the early Christian Gnostic teachers and more mainline Christian Apologists.

In this context we are prepared to follow the claims Christians were making about Christ as prophet and God-man with backgrounds in Hellenistic Judaism’s concepts of Word and Wisdom and paganism’s assignment of the lesser gods functioning as instruments of the Father God Zeus. Trinitarian theology, which emerges in the latter years of the second century, bears some interesting parallels to the theology of second-century Platonist Numenius.

Grant helps us to see that Christian thought in its diversity and its unity is not to be dismissed as an instance of plagiarism; nor is it to be regarded as an anemic eclecticism. It functions with and against its environment. It is shaped by and it shapes religious cultures, past and present, of which it is part.

—Ernest W. Saunders

Making Evangelical Missionaries 1789–1858: The Social Background, Motives and Training of British Protestant Missionaries to India.


This is a major study in the subject of its title. Stuart Piggin is senior lecturer in modern history at the University of Wollongong and lecturer in divinity in the University of Sydney in Australia. The book is based on doctoral research for the University of London. It gives evidence of wide reading, with careful and extensive reference to archival deposits of the missionary societies studied (BMS, CMS, LMS, WMMS among them). Piggin is to be congratulated on his mastery of a wide range of source and secondary material; the result is a study with a degree of documentation that makes it a worthy addition to the “scientific” (wissenschaftlich) history of missions. An analysis of over 500 missionaries, their previous occupation and education, is also appended with three contemporary mission texts.

Like Bishop Stephen Neill before him, Piggin dismisses the criticism that evangelicals were so busy with “the souls of Hindus and the suffering of slaves” (Anglicanism, pp. 241–42) that they ignored the needs of those at home. By contrast, “those most concerned about the heathen abroad also appear to have shown the greatest compassion to the heathen at home” (p. 103). Equally, he judges that, where scholars like Hinchliff and Gunson have tended toward the view that evangelical missionaries were trained in a background where learning was devalued, their view requires correction (p. 156). This was not the case when societies like the London Missionary Society and the Church Missionary Society set about preparing missionaries for India. For instance, the alumni of Islington College gained high com-
mendation for their academic attain­
ment from the bishop of London, C. J.
Blomfield. If there is to be criticism it
might, rather, be that the evangelicals
were too heavily indebted to the En­
lightenment and to Western assump­
tions as a “rational” basis with which
to approach apologetic activity in India
during this period.

—Timothy E. Yates

Timothy E. Yates, Rector of Darley Dale, Der­
bshire, U.K., taught for sixteen years in the
University of Durham, England, and did doc­
toral research with the University of Uppsala,
of which university he has recently been made
Docent. He is author of Venn and Victorian
Bishops Abroad, a study of Henry Venn of the
Church Missionary Society.

The Overseas List: Opportunities for Living and Working in Developing Countries.

By David M. Beckmann, Timothy J.
Mitchell, and Linda L. Powers. Revised
and expanded ed. Minneapolis, Minn.:
224. Paperback $11.95.

The Overseas List is one of the most
comprehensive resource materials on
overseas work opportunities available.
Actually it is much more than a list.
The book contains helpful hints
throughout for the person considering
work in developing countries. It gives
short historical sketches of trends in
developing nations and how these
trends affect overseas work today. Al­
though not indicated in the title, this
work is written primarily for the Chris­
tian reader looking for shorter-term
opportunities overseas.

Chapter divisions are by work
areas, which are: private development,
church mission, study and tourism,
teaching and journalism, international
organizations, United States govern­
ment, and business. Specific oppor­
tunities are listed for employment or
volunteer work in each of these areas
along with many references to related
published materials. Anyone looking
for overseas work would find these
lists extremely useful. Each area con­
tains helpful hints for the Christian
considering overseas work, including
brief discussions on issues of justice
and ethical challenges.

In the first chapter, “Why Go
to a Developing Country,” we are re­
minded that “The complication for
U.S. Christians abroad is that they rep­
resent not only their servant Lord, but
also a powerful nation” (p. 18). On
sensitive issues such as the causes of
poverty and the role of multinationals,
the authors present both sides but are
cautious in taking definite positions.
For example, on the causes of poverty
two positions are presented: (1) pov­
erty is caused by the poor themselves
and (2) poverty is caused by the
oppression of the rich. The reader is
asked to consider the moral issues.
Other areas of Christian ethics are rec­
ognized, such as: “. . . some forms
of U.S. involvement in the developing
countries run counter to these [eco­
nomics] development of the poor] goals.
. . . Christians need to be prayerful
and ethically awake” (p. 215).

The book ends with a chapter on
practical matters and a chapter on the
Christian rationale for overseas living.
This final chapter would seem tacked
on had the Christian thread not ap­
peared woven throughout the book.
This thread is summarized beautifully
in: “If U.S. Christians in the Third

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—Elton Trueblood

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World can, in some small way, assist poor people in reaching 'their' basic aspirations, they are doing God's work" (p. 212).

Publication of this book is made possible by a grant from Church World Service. Authors Beckmann, clergyman and economist with the World Bank; Mitchell, international banker; and Powers, graduate student in Mexico, are active practitioners in international work and are well qualified to do a book of this nature. Without doubt this book will be recognized as an important resource by those exploring work options in third-world countries.

—Gerald Shank

Unfinished Agenda: An Autobiography.


Author of more than a dozen books, missionary to India for thirty-eight years, elected a bishop of the Church of South India—which he helped to found—before the age of forty, associate general secretary of the World Council of Churches, five years a teacher at Selly Oak Colleges, and pastor of an inner-city church in Birmingham, England, the Right Reverend Lesslie Newbigin has lived a life full of adventure, service, and faith. This book is subtitled "An Autobiography," but it is more accurately a mem-

Charles A. Ryerson is Associate Professor of the History of Religions, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey. He spent ten years in India, engaged in various educational and cultural projects and knows Bishop Newbigin from that period.


$27.00: paperback $13.50.

"While the French converted empty churches into garages, the American missionaries converted garages into churches" (p. 178). Secular sociologists, French Christians, or some American missionaries might have been expected to come up with certain insights found in this book. However, this volume is perhaps the first detailed historical study of Amer-

James Renick is Associate Director for the European Project of World Mission Associates in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He was a missionary in France from 1967 to 1985, serving successively with the Grace Brethren Foreign Missionary Society; Campus Crusade for Christ, Intl.; and the Reformed Church of France in Lyon. American missionary work in postwar Eu-

ope. The author, Allen V. Koop, professor of European history at Colby-Sawyer College in New Lon-
don, New Hampshire, limits his sub-
ject to France, but applications are possible across Europe and around the world.

Dr. Koop’s approach is that of a professional historian, thorough and careful; that of an independent analyst, objective yet sincerely interested; that of a sympathetic observer, coming from an evangelical church background; that of a concerned commentator, offering constructive criticism while acknowledging real accomplishments. His book includes a series of forthright and perceptive insights such as: "Many times mission policies and practices reflected, not the situation in France, but the dictates of the home office, ... churches back home. ..."

(p. 54).

Dr. Koop recognizes the effectiveness of American evangelicalism, but also its inability to integrate new converts into local churches. This led to a "critical and even fateful decision" to avoid existing French Protestant churches by starting new evangelical churches from scratch. "By dissim-

missing out-of-hand the people and re-
spected heritage of the French Reformed Church, the missionaries took a step which limited severely their impact on French society" (p. 76). Thus an already hard task became infinitely more difficult! In fact "much of the story of what happened ... in France lies in what failed to happen ... . The key to it all lay somewhere in the relationship between American attitudes, evangelical doctrine and French society" (p. 130).

The final two chapters are by far the most important. Dr. Koop analyzes the confrontation of Americans with
French culture and society. Some missionaries saw the main problem residing in the “sub-biblical” nature of French society, while others insisted that Americans had simply not yet adjusted to French culture sufficiently to make any significant impact on French society. “Cultural adaptation was proscribed by theological conviction . . .” (p. 171).

Throughout this first generation of American missionary work in France, Dr. Koop notes steadily increasing missionary investments of personnel, funds, and material, with results remaining slim. Among the accomplishments of the American missionary movement, the greatest impact was achieved within the tiny French evangelical community. “American missions were unwilling to sacrifice control for the sake of an expanded personal impact of the missionaries. The faith missions . . . had more faith that their financial needs would be met than that their converts would be sustained without a tightly controlled religious environment” (p. 177).

This excellent volume should provoke serious reflection, heated discussion, and further research on both sides of the Atlantic! —James Renick


This useful research pamphlet is written by a promising young scholar in his early twenties, a graduate student in missiology in the University of Leiden. It is a study in secondary literature concerning words with the Hebrew root ‘ēd and the Greek root martus. It promises somewhat more than it offers in that the main concentration is on New Testament usage, in which biblical passages are listed; of the fifteen articles treated in detail only one deals with Old Testament evidence. The material is clearly presented, though at one point Luke appears oddly as Lukas (p. 48).

The concept of witness in the New Testament is complex. Adrian Hastings (quoted in a note) identifies five different notions: (1) one who presents Christ and points him out (the Baptist); (2) one who gives evidence as to the fact of resurrection (Peter); (3) one who knew Christ on earth (John the Evangelist); (4) one who preaches Christ to the world (Paul); (5) one who suffers and dies for Christ (Stephen). To these should certainly be added (6) Christ’s own witness to God’s love and his way with humanity.

Three things stand out from Walton’s analysis. First, “witness” is far wider than “martyr.” Second, the object of witness is to induce faith. Third, on the whole the witness is Christocentric.

Such a study is important for the interaction of mission and dialogue. Once we realize that our calling is not to convert (the work of the Spirit) but to witness, there is no incompatibility. —John Ferguson

Unto the Islands of the Sea: A History of the Latter-day Saints in the Pacific.


The recent growth of the Mormon church in America has been a well-known feature of religious life in this country. Less well known has been the growth of that church in other parts of the world. The proportion of Mormons living outside the United States has increased from 8 percent in 1951 to 25 percent in 1978, and this despite the large American growth. One of the most impressive areas of growth has been in Oceania. Between 25 and 30 percent of the people of Tonga are now Mormons, which is the highest percentage of Mormons anywhere in the world. Samoa has 18 to 20 percent of its people in this church. These are some surprising pieces of information given in this new book by R. Lanier Britsch, professor of history in Brigham Young University.

Painstaking research lies behind this volume, which traces the growth of Pacific Mormonism from its beginnings in 1844 to the present. It is carefully documented, largely from primary sources. Most of it is institutional history, telling the names of the early missionaries and of the later leaders, the story of the erection of the principal buildings and of the various schools and colleges. More historical interpretation and sociological analysis seem to be needed, but of course one book cannot do everything, and those needs may call forth the contributions of later scholars. Where other scholars

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have already attempted such analysis, as in the investigation of why Mormonism appealed to the New Zealand Maoris, Professor Britsch makes good use of their findings (pp. 262, 276-77). It is striking that during most of its history in New Zealand, the Mormon church has found greater acceptance among the Maoris than among the Europeans.

The book covers Australia and New Zealand as well as the Pacific Islands. Most of the story in the islands deals with Tahiti, Hawaii, Samoa, and Tonga. In each of these areas there was great difficulty and slow growth in the early years, when the island people were accustomed to religious homogeneity and the Mormon missionaries were poor and had no precisely defined pattern for work. In each of them, however, recent years have brought the acceptance of religious diversity and a carefully planned mission scenario with fine buildings and important educational institutions, all of which have helped to bring rapid growth.

—Charles W. Forman


"Anyone who deals with the theology of liberation addresses a phenomenon that is still in the process of becoming" (p. 142). Claus Bussmann, a biblical scholar teaching in West Germany, who has traveled extensively in Latin America, has tried to respect this "fluid" character of Latin American liberation theology. To do that he has gleaned extensively from a great variety of sources, at different times and in different areas of Latin America during the last twenty-five years. This may be both the strength and the weakness of the book. It offers an incredible wealth of material, not only from the best-known authors but from journals, meetings, pastoral letters. His notes are a mine of information. On the other hand, he has not been able to put this variety of sources in chronological order, to assess the varieties of styles and occasions and the nature and purpose of the different texts.

A too brief introduction (34 pp.) tries to fill in the reader with enough general knowledge to understand the texts. Then, he concentrates on the Christological question and reviews the different authors under the headings "Interest in Jesus," "Going Back to Jesus," "Jesus' Death and Resurrection," and "The Key: The Kingdom of God." In each chapter the author summarizes (using in most cases well-chosen quotations) the interpretations of different authors concerning a key passage of the Gospels or a specific theme (for instance, the death of Jesus). He notes convergences and differences, but often these are not pursued or discussed. In my view Bussmann has grasped two basic dimensions of liberation Christology. On the one hand, the centrality of the historical Jesus, which, he rightly maintains, is not a re-presentation of the nineteenth-century "quest" or the post-Bultmannian "new quest" but a reflection on the "historicity" (the historical significance) of the Jesus Christ of the Gospels in our own present history. Thus the classical debate on "the Jesus of history" and "the Christ of faith" is overcome. On the other hand, Latin American Christology stresses the category of "praxis" as an epistemological principle for understanding Jesus.

Unfortunately, in my view, Bussmann has chosen the category of "applicability" to interpret this emphasis. It would have been more fruitful to use the biblical categories of "discipleship" and "discernment," which Jon Sobrino has underlined consistently and developed in his latest book (Jesus in Latin America, forthcoming in English from Orbis). This would have permitted one to relate theology to the Christological spirituality in Latin American experience and also, in dogmatic terms, to explore the possibilities of reinterpretation of classical Christological affirmations.

—José Míguez Bonino

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Frederick Herzog, Professor of Systematic Theology at Duke University, is author of Liberation Theology (1972) and Justice Church (1980).

The work will be crucial for any introductory course in the field, but also as reference "library" for those who need to orient themselves yet do not have the time to wade through all the material in detail. The Reader brings together twenty-seven authors from Latin America, Africa, and Asia, theologians most of whom are well known, but also some hitherto little

International Bulletin of Missionary Research
known. Such a work is a labor of love that dare not become unrequited love.

The Introductory Survey is a masterpiece of thumbnail sketches. Here we usually find the most salient thing we need to know about an author. Elsa Tamez "is one of very few Latin American liberation theologians who makes extensive use of the writings of José Miranda. She is also one of the very few who point to sexism as a major form of oppression." Henriette Marianne Katoppo in Indonesia "would include full rights for women and minority groups.... If we can read the Bible without its masculine bias, we shall discover underlying female imagery." Allan Boesak of South Africa affirms that liberation theology in his country is "a direct descendant of the Reformed tradition associated with John Calvin." We encounter the whole gamut of issues from contemporary to traditional.

In the same vein, the chapter on the critics of liberation theology masterfully profiles the opponents in a sentence or two. "The same Michael Novak who can be so scholarly and incisive in carefully documenting his partisan views on Catholic social teachings can be so unscholarly and opinionated when he discusses liberation theology." There is also good counsel: "We should be able to get past the stage of waving red flags when it comes to the use of terms such as 'capitalism,' 'socialism,' and 'Marxism.'... We should be willing to incorporate some Marxist insights in the same way that we utilize the views of other thinkers from the past."

These will be watershed volumes. We now have before us the major product of the third-world uprising in theology. The two volumes record it. By now we "know" what the people from the underside of history are asking of us in the first world. We North Americans have a penchant for passing the theological buck. In the 1960s we still left all responsibility to the Europeans, the Molthmanns, and the Pannenbergs and the Metzes. In the 1970s we passed it to the Latin Americans and the third world in general. We shall keep on deluding ourselves if we continue to think we can escape judgment by doing liberation theology on the backs of the third-world poor. There are challenges in North America that need to be met head-on. Without changes in our system of third-world domination, there will be no third-world liberation. It will be one thing if the third world forces them on us. It will be another for us if we pay attention to black theologies and feminist theologies and Native American theologies in our own midst. In fact, these hard facts lead us to work hard on further liberation theologies of our own.

—Frederick Herzog

**Presbyterian Missionary Attitudes toward American Indians, 1837-1893.**


The volume under review here is a further instance of the historical pathology now being applied to missions and especially to "the Great Century." The value of this work, however, lies in its skillful weaving of history, anthropology and theology into the tapestry of the cultural milieu, so that it stands out in the vast crowd of histrionic-critical books on the subject.

The book is an excellent piece of scholarship on several counts. It makes extensive use of primary source documents in the correspondence of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, and supplements this study with an extensive use of secondary works. The historical inquiry provides the reader with historical charts and includes a wealth of illustrations. It manages to place in relief the rather severe and humorless quality of the subjects studied.

The fundamental thesis of the book is not original, but follows the theme of works by Berkhofer, Keller, Prucha, McGloughlin, Axtell, and other critics of the Manifest Destiny impact on American Protestant missionary thought. Coleman is constantly critical of the theological rigidity of Presbyterian missionaries and of a certain ideological blindness that led them to equate the conversion of the Indians with a total acculturation within the model of American frontier

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individualism and the "Protestant Ethic." The most valuable chapters of the book may be chapters 5 and 6, which study the encounter between Presbyterian "ethno-theology" and native culture and the missionaries' struggle with native language and idiom respectively. The author attempts to be fair as he points out the absence of racism in the missionaries and defends their integrity and consistency. These persons come off as being people very much of their time and place, bound in, as were most Christian missionaries of the time, by a rigid theology and a lack of cultural sophistication.

If one is interested in reading material on this subject but unable to wade through the spate of publications, the present book is worthy of special mention. It would be a good book for mission-history classes as well as for study groups seeking historical perspective for the benefit of future mission work.

—Carl F. Starkloff, S.J.

Dissertation Notices

From the United States

Carrington, Donald E.
"Developing Creativity in Theological Education: Sensitizing Theologians Preparing to Teach in a Non-western Context."
S.T.D. San Anselmo, Calif.: San Francisco Theological Seminary, 1986.

Chun, Walter C.
"Religious Freedom in South Korea: An Ethical Analysis Toward Social Reconstruction."

Elmer, Muriel.
"Intercultural Effectiveness: Development of an Intercultural Competency Scale."

Fraser, David A.
"Foundations for Christian Ethics: Karl Barth's Christological Anthropology and the Social Sciences."

Gerstner, Jonathan Neil.
"The Thousand Generation Covenant: Dutch Reformed Convenant Theology and the Colonists of South Africa, 1652–1814."

Greve, Wayne G.
"Analysis of Selected Curricular Elements in the Internationalization Process in Mission Schools of Nazarenes from 1968 to 1985."

McGraw, Gerald E.
"The Doctrine of Sanctification in the Published Writings of Albert Benjamin Simpson."

Mnemba, Joest Jacob.
"African Ecclesiology: The Battle for the African Church—Developing a Conception and Praxis for an Effective Ecumenical Church in Malawi."
Th.D. Chicago: Lutheran School of Theology, 1986.

Mottesi, Osvaldo Luis.
"An Historically Mediated Pastoral of Liberation: Gustavo Gutierrez's Pilgrimage Towards Socialism."

Pankow, Fred J.
"A Scriptural Stance Toward Undocumented Hispanics and Selected Methodologies for Reaching Them with the Gospel."
Th.D. St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Seminary, 1986.

Park, Jong-Chun.
"Paul Tillich's Categories for the Interpretation of History: An Application to the Encounter of Eastern and Western Cultures."
Ph.D. Atlanta: Emory Unio., 1986.

Prescott-Erickson, Robert.
"The Sending Motif in the Gospel of John: Implications for Theology of Mission."
Ph.D. Louisville, Ky.: Southern Baptist Seminary, 1986.

Preus, Jacob A. O., III.
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Th.D. St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Seminary, 1986.

Smith, Linton H.
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Suh, Chang Won.
"A Formulation of Minjung Theology: Toward a Socio-Historical Theology of Asia."

Thomas, T. Jacob.
"The Idea of Person-in-Community as a Theological and Ethical Concept in the Writings of M. M. Thomas."

Zimbelman, Joel Andrew.
"Theological Ethics and Politics in the Thought of Juan Luis Segundo, S.J. and John Howard Yoder."
Ph.D. Charlottesville, Va.: Univ. of Virginia, 1986.
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