

CENTRO PRO



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CENTRO PRO UNIONE

Il Centro Pro Unione dei Frati dell'Atonement è un centro ecumenico d'azione. Il suo scopo è di essere luogo d'incontro ecumenico, di studio e d'informazione. Due volte l'anno organizza conferenze su argomenti d'interesse ecumenico, in collaborazione con altre organizzazioni e con singoli all'estero. I suoi locali e altre facilitazioni sono a disposizione di ogni gruppo che abbia fini ecumenici. La direzione prepara programmi per i singoli, come per i gruppi che visitano Roma a scopo ecumenico. Possiede una biblioteca (ecumenica) aperta agli studenti che risiedono in Roma e può dare informazioni circa le attività ecumeniche mondiali. La biblioteca ha oltre 7.000 titoli di carattere ecumenico, in 5 lingue: soggetti teologici analizzati dal punto di vista ecumenico, dialoghi, documentazioni, storia della Chiesa e delle religioni, etc.; 1.200 periodici rilegati e oltre 100 riviste correnti.

I Frati dell'Atonement (o della Riconciliazione) sono una comunità religiosa di tradizione francescana, esistente in particolare per aiutare pienamente la missione della Chiesa per l'unità cristiana, per testimoniare il Vangelo tra cristiani e non-cristiani e per portare tutti gli uomini alla pienezza di unità con il Popolo di Dio.

The Centro Pro Unione is an Ecumenical Action Center conducted by the Atonement Friars. Its aim is to be a place of ecumenical encounter, study and information. It does this through conferences organized twice a year on themes of ecumenical interest usually in cooperation with other organizations and individuals outside of Italy. Its facilities are available to any group with an ecumenical concern. The staff organize programs for individuals as well as groups who visit Rome with an ecumenical purpose. It provides an ecumenical library for students in Rome and is available to supply information on ecumenical activities throughout the world. The Library has 7,000 titles of an ecumenical nature in 5 languages e.g. theological subjects studied ecumenically, dialogues, documentation, Church History etc., as well as 1,200 bound periodicals (ecumenical literature) and more than 100 current reviews.

The Atonement Friars (At-one-ment) are a religious community in the Franciscan tradition existing specifically to help fulfill the Church's mission of Christian Unity, to witness to the Gospel among Christians and non-Christians and to bring all men to the fullness of unity with the People of God.

Le Centre Pro Unione des Frères de l'Atonement est un centre œcuménique d'action. Son objectif est d'être un lieu de rencontre œcuménique, d'étude et d'information. Deux fois par an il organise des conférences sur des thèmes d'intérêt œcuménique, en collaboration avec d'autres organisations et des particuliers hors de l'Italie. Il met ses locaux et autres facilités à la disposition de tout groupe ayant un but œcuménique. L'équipe organise un programme pour les particuliers ou les groupes qui visitent Rome dans un dessein œcuménique. Il possède une bibliothèque œcuménique ouverte aux étudiants, et il est à même d'informer sur les activités œcuméniques à travers le monde. La bibliothèque a 7.000 titres de caractère œcuménique, en 5 langues: sujets théologiques, dialogues, documentation, histoire de l'Eglise etc.; 1.200 périodiques reliés et plus de 100 revues courantes.

Les Frères de l'Atonement (At-one-ment = pour-unir-en-un) sont une congrégation religieuse de tradition franciscaine. Leur vocation spécifique est d'aider l'Eglise en sa mission de rétablir l'unité chrétienne, de témoigner de l'Évangile parmi les chrétiens et les non-chrétiens, de conduire tous les hommes à la plénitude d'unité avec le peuple de Dieu.

ATTIVITA' DELL'ANNO

A giudicare dalle principali attività da noi svolte quest'anno, si arriva alla conclusione che Roma sta diventando sempre di più un luogo di incontro ecumenico. Ciò non soltanto per quanto riguarda i contatti ufficiali, dei quali si legge nei giornali, ma anche, cosa ancor più significativa, per ciò che interessa il cristiano comune e soprattutto gli studenti. L'opera delle Dame di Betania, che offrono ospitalità a tutti i cristiani e che occupano parte dell'edificio dov'è situato il Centro Pro Unione, è ben conosciuta. Quest'opera è stata intensificata, tanto da condurci ad una più ampia e stretta collaborazione reciproca. I vari gruppi che vengono a Roma contattano loro o noi e spesso il lavoro viene tra noi suddiviso: loro ospitando i gruppi e noi organizzando conferenze e incontri non ufficiali.

Quest'anno i gruppi sono venuti principalmente dall'Olanda, dalla Germania e dagli Stati Uniti. Da parte nostra organizziamo i programmi in accordo con i loro desideri; spesso hanno richiesto di avere incontri ufficiali e, data l'eccellente cooperazione dei rappresentanti dei Segretariati per l'Unità e per i Non-Credenti, ciò è stato sempre possibile. Altri gruppi, come ad esempio il St. Olaf's College Foreign Study Group, richiedono l'organizzazione di un programma accademico. Ebbene, tramite l'attiva collaborazione dei membri delle facoltà delle università Gregoriana, Urbaniana e Anselmiana, come pure del North American College, è stato possibile realizzare questo programma.

Mettiamo anche a disposizione di tutti le nostre facilitazioni, purché gli scopi siano ecumenici. Quest'anno si sono tenuti al nostro Centro alcuni programmi di beneficenza organizzati da terzi. Ad esempio, la conferenza tenuta il 18 novembre 1971 sul tema: « Nuove forme di comunità », della quale si può leggere il rapporto a pag. 6.

Inoltre gli organizzatori di gite, come ad esempio quelli della United Church Tours (U.S.A.) o della Interfaith Travel (Gran Bretagna) ci chiamano ad incontrarci con i turisti ed a discutere con loro la situazione ecumenica attuale.

Quest'anno i Frati dell'Atonement hanno organizzato vari programmi al Centro Pro Unione. A cominciare dalla Settimana di Preghiera 1972, essi sono: una conferenza del Rev. Vincenzo Miano, S.D.B., del Segretariato per i Non-Credenti, sul tema « Dialogo con i Non-Cristiani ». Un « Incontro Ecumenico dei Giovani » — per le giovani comunità straniere di lingua inglese a Roma — è stato improntato alla formula « ritrovarsi insieme, pregando e facendo musica insieme ». Ha suonato un complesso, gli Underground Railroad, composto da seminaristi. Un breve servizio biblico relativo a questo incontro ecumenico, è a pag. 35. Alcuni giorni dopo, un altro programma dello stesso genere, chiamato

« Osanna Jesuralem », fu tenuto per studenti italiani, con la partecipazione di un complesso chiamato « I Frammenti ». Il dott. Mario Sbaffi, presidente della Federazione Italiana delle Chiese Evangeliche, ha tenuto una meditazione sul tema: « La Carità ». Il testo del servizio biblico è a pagina 35.

In marzo due programmi sono stati realizzati al Centro. Il primo è stato un colloquio durato tre giorni e condotto dal dott. Günther Gassmann, del Centre d'Etudes Oecuméniques (Strasburgo), sul tema: « Le conversazioni bilaterali tra le chiese cristiane ». Nel primo giorno il dott. Gassmann ha tenuto una conferenza pubblica. Nel secondo, una discussione con i rappresentanti ufficiali della Chiesa Cattolica e con vari professori delle università romane. Nel terzo giorno ha ricevuto un gruppo di studenti che svolgono studi specializzati nel campo ecumenico. Il testo del suo discorso in inglese inizia a pag. 8. Un sommario del suo saggio, come pure di quello in italiano del dottor Ans Van der Bent, che condusse il secondo dei due programmi di marzo, è a pag. 26.

Il programma del dott. Van der Bent, bibliotecario e archivista presso il Consiglio Mondiale delle Chiese a Ginevra, fu strutturato nella stessa maniera di quello del dott. Gassmann e fu offerto in collaborazione con il Segretariato per i Non-Credenti. Il suo tema: « Alle soglie di un'era di più ampio ecumenismo », trattava della prospettiva di espansione del dialogo e dell'azione ecumenica. L'intero discorso del dott. Van der Bent, in francese, è riportato a pag. 14. Infine, una conferenza riservata alle Religiose, soprattutto a quelle impegnate nella catechesi, è stata organizzata in maggio. La signora Irina Findlow, moglie del defunto direttore del Centro Anglicano a Roma, e membro della chiesa Russo-Ortodossa, ha parlato sul tema: « La Madonna nella tradizione ortodossa ». Il testo in italiano è a pag. 33.

I membri del nostro personale hanno inoltre altre mansioni. Uno di loro da parte del Comitato Esecutivo dell'International Ecumenical Fellowship; un altro si incarica di preparare una serie di discorsi, tre volte l'anno, riguardanti il mondo ecumenico attuale, che vengono trasmessi dalla Radio Vaticana nell'Africa dell'Est; un altro infine, collabora alla preparazione di una Bibliografia Ecumenica Internazionale.

A differenza degli anni precedenti, nessun nuovo progetto particolare è stato da noi intrapreso quest'anno; abbiamo però cercato di raccogliere il maggior materiale possibile per aggiornare il Direttorio Ecumenico dei Centri ed Istituti, da noi pubblicato lo scorso anno. Gli aggiornamenti al suddetto Direttorio sono a pag. 37 del presente bollettino. Il lavoro nella nostra biblioteca ecumenica è considerevolmente avanzato: quasi la metà dei 7.000 libri esistenti è stata completamente catalogata. Il numero dei periodici rilegati

è aumentato di alcune centinaia e conta ora quasi 1.200 unità.

Per concludere, possiamo dire che è stato un anno di lavoro intenso, svolto al servizio della causa dell'unità.

THE YEAR'S ACTIVITIES

Judging from the activities that we principally involved ourselves with this year we have come to the conclusion that Rome is more and more becoming a place of ecumenical encounter. This is not only true for official contacts which one reads about in the newspapers but also, and more significantly, for the ordinary Christian, especially students. The works of the Ladies of Bethany who offer hospitality to all Christians and who share part of the same building where the Centro Pro Unione is located are well known. They also have multiplied, causing both of us to enter into greater and closer collaboration. Various groups coming to Rome either contact them or ourselves and frequently we divide the work, they handling hospitality and we organizing conferences and other unofficial contacts.

This year groups came principally from Holland, Germany and the United States. For our part we organize programs according to the wishes of the group. Frequently they want to meet with officials; because of the excellent cooperation of the staffs of the Secretariats for Unity and Non-Believers this has always been possible. Other groups, such as St. Olaf's College Foreign Study Group, request an organized academic program. Again through the active cooperation of faculty members from the Gregorian, Urban, and Anselmianum Universities, as well as the North American College programs have been developed and carried out.

We also offer the use of our facilities to others provided their purposes are ecumenical. This year various benefits have been held here as well as programs organized by other groups. An example of this was the November 18th 1971 Conference on « New Forms of Community ». A report of this appears on page 6.

Finally tours, such as those organized by United Church Tours from the U.S.A. or Interfaith Travel from Great Britain, call upon the staff to meet their people and discuss the current ecumenical situation.

This year the Friars of the Atonement at the Centro organized a variety of programs. Beginning with the 1972 Week of Prayer these included: A conference by the Rev. Vincenzo Miano, S.D.B. of the Secretariat for Non-Believers on « Dialogue with non-Christians ». A Young Peoples Ecumenical Encounter (for the English speaking

young people in Rome's foreign communities) which featured « meeting together, praying together and making music together ». A combo, called the Underground Railroad and composed of seminarians provided the music. The brief Bible service appears on page 35. A few days later a similar program called « Osanna Jesusalem » was held for Italian students featuring a combo group called « I Frammenti ». Dr. Mario Sbaffi, President of the Italian Federation of Evangelical Churches gave a meditation on the theme « La carità ». The text of the Bible Service is on page 35.

In March two programs were carried out at the center. The first was a three day colloquium conducted by Dr. Günther Gassmann of the Centre d'Etudes Oecuméniques (Strasbourg) on the « Bilateral Conversations Between the World Confessional Bodies ». On the first day Dr. Gassmann gave a public conference. On the second he held a discussion with invited officials of the Catholic Church and with various Professors from the Roman Universities. On the third day he met with a group of students doing special studies in the ecumenical field. The text of his talk in English begins on page 8. A summary of his paper as well as that of Dr. Ans Van der Bent who conducted the second program appears on page 26. In Italian. Dr. Van der Bent, who is librarian and archivist of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, was structured similarly to Dr. Gassmann's and was co-sponsored by the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Believers. His topic « Entering an Era of Wider Ecumenism » dealt with the expanding scope of ecumenical dialogue and action. The full text of Dr. Van der Bent's talk in French will be found on page 14. Finally a special conference for Religious Sisters, especially those involved in catechetics, was organized in May. Mrs. Irina Findlow, wife of the late director of the Anglican Center in Rome, and a member of the Russian Orthodox Church, spoke on « La Madonna nella tradizione ortodossa ». The text in Italian is on page 33.

The different staff members of the Center have also been involved in other tasks. One is a member of the Executive Committee of the International Ecumenical Fellowship. Another prepares a series of talks on the current ecumenical scene three times a year for transmission via Radio Vaticana to East Africa. Finally another is a collaborator in preparing the *International Ecumenical Bibliography*. Unlike previous years no new specific project was undertaken this year, rather we tried to gather as much material as possible to update the Ecumenical Directory of Centers and Institutes published last year. The gathered information appears on page 37 of this bulletin. Work in our ecumenical library has considerably advanced; almost half of the 7,000 titles have been

catalogued completely. The number of bound periodicals increased by several hundred and now number almost 1,200. All in all it has been a busy year of service to the cause of unity.

ACTIVITES DE L'ANNEE

A en juger d'après les activités que nous avons développées tout au long de cette année, Rome devient de plus en plus un lieu de rencontre œcuménique. C'est vrai, non seulement pour les chrétiens ordinaires, en particulier les étudiants. On connaît l'activité des Dames de Béthanie qui offrent hospitalité à tous les chrétiens; elles habitent dans l'immeuble même où est situé le Centro Pro Unione et l'intensification de nos activités respectives nous a fait entrer dans une collaboration plus intime et plus large. Les groupes qui viennent à Rome s'adressent à elles ou à nous, et bien souvent nous nous partageons le travail: elles donnent l'hospitalité, nous organisons les conférences et autres contacts non officiels.

Cette année les groupes sont venus notamment de Hollande, d'Allemagne, des Etats-Unis. Pour notre part nous organisons des programmes à la demande du groupe et selon ses vœux. Fréquemment on souhaite rencontrer des responsables du mouvement, ce qui a toujours été possible étant donné l'excellente coopération des équipes des Secrétariats pour l'unité et des non-chrétiens. Certains groupes, par exemple le 'St Olaf's College Foreign Study Group', nous ont demandé un programme académique. Grâce à l'active collaboration de membres des universités Grégorienne, Urbaniana et de S. Anselme, comme du Collège Américain du Nord, les programmes souhaités furent développés et menés à bien.

En outre nous offrons l'usage de nos locaux à qui le désire, à condition que le but soit œcuménique. Plusieurs représentations de charité se sont ainsi déroulées chez nous pendant l'année ainsi que des programmes organisés par d'autres groupes. Par exemple, le 18 novembre 1971 fut donnée une conférence sur le thème « New Forms of Community » (cf. compte-rendu p. 6).

Des voyages touristiques nous ont demandé de les recevoir pour leur parler de la situation œcuménique actuelle. Citons ceux organisés par United Church Tours des Etats-Unis, ou Interfaith Travel de Grande-Bretagne.

Cette année les Frères de l'Atonement ont organisé au Centro variés programmes. Débutant avec la Semaine de Prière de cette année 1972, ils s'échelonnent ainsi: Conférence du Père Vincent Miano, S.D.B., du Secrétariat pour les non-croyants, sur « Dialogue avec les non-chrétiens »; Ren-

contre œcuménique de Jeunes (des communautés étrangères de langue anglaise à Rome) autour du thème: discutons ensemble, prions ensemble, faisons de la musique ensemble ». Un ensemble, dit le métropolitain et composé de séminaristes assurera la musique (cf. le bref service biblique p. 35). Quelques jours plus tard un programme analogue « Hosanna Jérusalem », pour les étudiants italiens, avec un ensemble dit « I Frammenti ».

Le dr. Mario Sbaffi, Président de la Fédération italienne des Eglises évangéliques, donna une méditation sur le thème « La Carità » (cf. texte du service biblique p. 35).

En mars, le Centro a vu la réalisation de deux programmes. Le premier, un colloque de trois jours sous la direction du dr Günther Gassmann du Centre d'Etudes œcuméniques de Strasbourg, autour du thème « Bilateral Conversations between the World Confessional Bodies ». Le premier jour, le dr Gassmann a donné une conférence publique. Le second, il orienta les débats avec des invités officiels de l'Eglise catholique et des professeurs des universités romaines. Le troisième jour fut réservé à un groupe d'étudiants se spécialisant en œcuménisme (cf. texte anglais p. 8; cf. aussi p. 26 un résumé en italien et l'exposé du dr Ans Van der Bent qui anima le second programme). Le dr Van der Bent est bibliothécaire et archiviste du Conseil œcuménique des Eglises à Genève; son programme eut la même structure que celui du dr Gassmann, sous les co-auspices du Secrétariat vaticane pour les non-croyants. Le thème en fut « Entering an Era of Wider Ecumenism », l'élargissement du dialogue et de l'action œcuméniques. (Cf. p. 14 le texte intégral en français). Enfin une conférence pour religieuses, en particulier pour celles engagées dans la catéchèse, fut donnée par Mme Irina Findlow, épouse de l'ancien directeur du Centre anglican de Rome et membre de l'Eglise orthodoxe russe, sur le thème « La Madonna nella tradizione ortodossa » (cf. texte italien p. 33).

Le personnel du Centro s'est aussi dédié à d'autres activités. Un de nos membres fait partie du Comité exécutif de l'Association œcuménique internationale. Un autre prépare une série d'entretiens sur la situation œcuménique actuelle, que la radio vaticane destine à l'Afrique orientale (3 fois par an). Un autre enfin collabore à la préparation d'une *International Ecumenical Bibliography*. Contrairement aux années précédentes, l'année écoulée n'a vu la réalisation d'aucun projet spécifique; toutefois nous nous sommes attachés à rassembler le plus de matériel possible pour mettre à jour le « Directoire des Centres et Instituts œcuméniques » que nous avons publié l'an dernier. On trouvera cette mise à jour p. 37 dans le présent bulletin. L'aménagement de notre bibliothèque œcuménique a considérablement progressé: déjà près de la moitié de nos 7.000

titres sont catalogués. Le nombre des périodiques reliés s'est accru par centaines et atteint presque 1.200. Somme toute, l'année écoulée a été active au service de la cause de l'unité.

CONFERENCE ON « NEW FORMS OF COMMUNITY »

Rome, 6-13 November, 1971

Eighteen specialists in « New Forms of Community » from ten countries (Argentina, Belgium, France, Germany, Israel, Mexico, Netherlands, Sweden and the U.S.A.) met in Rome from November sixth through thirteenth to exchange experiences and to study together the world-wide phenomenon on new community life. The participants of the conference, most of them also living actually in a new form of commune or community, came to the conclusion that, although the differences of new forms of communities are enormous, there are nevertheless many common elements on a deeper level, more specifically as far as relations to established structures, new life style, and the search for new values and for human liberation are concerned. This came as a clear conclusion from a confrontation of such communities as, for instance, the Swedish and American communes, the Israeli Kibbutz, the Latin American Comunidades de Base, the Italian spontaneous groups, a French experimental monastery, dissident student parishes, and the Sjaaloom group in Holland.

Among the participants were well-known writers such as Yehudah Paz from the Kibbutz Kisuftim, André Tange from the International Community Center in Brussels, Rosabeth Moss-Kanter from Brandeis University in the U.S.A., Bernard Besret from the Abbey of Boquen in France, and Arnaldo Nesti from the Marianum University in Rome.

This conference was one in a series particularly concentrating on the phenomenon of communities. Earlier this year conferences or seminars were organized in Strasbourg France (by SEDIC), Cuernavaca, Mexico (CIDOC), and Louvain, Belgium (Pro Mundi Vita). As far as known, the actual conference in Rome was the first effort to study the common elements and ideology of new communities on such an intercontinental and transconfessional level.

Concluding the work of the conference, the participants decided to build up a network of documentation and communication for new forms of community involved in human liberation in order to promote the exchange of experiences, documentation and bibliography. Different research programs will be promoted as well as a series of continental conferences during the next

two years in the Middle East, the Far East, Africa, Latin America, North America and Eastern Europe, which might lead in 1974 to another worldwide conference.

At the end of their week-long intensive work the participants issued the following preliminary statement:

VALUES

Values may be seen as basic patterns of projects which persons and groups throw ahead of themselves in time and attempt to realize in their acts. In this sense values are the interaction between meaning and action.

Value structures are comprehensive, normative, trans-personal, social-historical, transcendental. They guide communes through their analysis of their social-historical situation, their setting of goals, their strategies of action vis-à-vis the structures of society, their internal organization and the personal development of their individual members.

Some communities seek the integration of scientific, technological advance and evolving social structures with spiritual growth through their goals and actions. They are involved in shaping a critique of modern society and of its structures which oppress man. They seek the liberation of man as a totality and as the active object of his own history.

In order to avoid abusive generalizations it is necessary to consider that communities do not come into existence gratuitously, but are based on a reaction against their milieu and are in intimate relationship with it. In any attempt to define systems of authentic values in communities, it ought not to be supposed that all communities have the same milieu. Communities are as varied and numerous as there are varied and numerous milieux. Therefore it is necessary to take into account not only the internal dynamism which determines the authentic values of communities but also their immediate milieux. What is important is to determine the *significance* of this or that community (with its whole value system, structure of relationships and differing impacts) with regard to its rapport with its own milieu-social; cultural, political, economic, religious; etc.

Nevertheless, we look to communes to develop new social forms and transcendental insights, leading in turn to the discovery of still further new values, new problems, and new community experiments.

TYOLOGY

The following types of communities or communes, among others, seem to emerge in these reactions to society:

- a) those which negate societal values and

seek as complete as possible an escape from the institutions of that society, such as hippie communes;

b) those which see their communes as parallel institutions crystallizing counter-cultural values, and existing along-side other structures, for example the Comunidades de Base and the alternative universities of the United States and Europe;

c) communes used as tools by movements for the overthrow of social structures, with explicit post-revolutionary goals, such as the freedom fighters;

d) those which, in anticipation of the needs of society, seek the creation of a new social structure with a special, leading role for communes, for example the Kibbutzim and the Frelimo Vilages;

e) communities which work as dynamic change units within existing structures, such as renewal groups within churches, for example the Chrétiens Solidaires;

f) living communes with limited goals vis-à-vis structures of society, such as the goal of personal growth, unrelated to social critique.

A dynamic movement through several of these types may be perceived in the development of some communities. There are also a great variety in density, that is size and scope, as well as a wide range in organization, from loosely connected groups to total living situations. Furthermore, an immense difference is evident between communities of the First World and of the Third World. In the Third World the struggle for basic « survival values » is so intense that it frequently precludes concern for many aspects of « being values » which are often of major concern in many communities of the First World. Still, a common ground among all types may be found in their search for human liberation.

RESEARCH AREAS

Research into the phenomenon of the new communities involves the investigation of *internal structures* of communes growing out of their *value systems* and their *strategies* vis-à-vis the rest of society. While each of these elements in itself demands careful study, they develop together through such essential and dynamic interaction that it becomes almost impossible to treat them separately.

Taking into account this interaction, the following areas of organizational characteristics seem to be important:

a) *Government*: an investigation of the den-

sity (size and scope) of the community; leadership (charismatic and other); status; responsibility; principles and practices of rotation; democratic structures; social structures; including an inquiry as to whether a direction towards socialism is implied in economic sharing within the community.

b) *Economics*: considerations of ownership; division of wealth; especially an inquiry as to whether communal life implies a direction towards income sharing (and thus towards socialism, as indicated above); standard of living, including an investigation as to whether poverty and simplicity of life are considered values in themselves; work; the kinds of economic arrangements possible and appropriate in relation to different types of communities and different degrees of commitment.

c) *Social life*: a study of *family life*, especially in the light of the new sexual freedom and its consequences on marriage, divorce, women, children, and in general on responsible interpersonal community relationships; a study of *education* in general, and in particular with respect to personal and emotional preparation for communal life and provision for ideological growth and for the conscientization of the individual and of society; a study of *personal growth*, particularly in interaction with internal structures, and involving an investigation of the new psychology of society and of the human personality as moving and varying rather than fixed and static; a study of communal life as it involves membership, deviance, mutual responsibility and commitment.

It must be noted that internal structures and values in communities vary in relationship to community goals as internal or external. For example, the external goals of the Comunidades de Base take precedence in the lives of some members over such internal goals as personal growth and social life, so that they choose celibacy in dedication to the external goals of their communities.

d) *Religious life*: an investigation of the transcendental values of communities. Although communities may vary widely in the explicit values of their origins, as being basically religious or basically social-political, they are all concerned with man as a totality. Therefore, the explicit values of one type of community are implicitly contained in the total orientation of the other. Thus religiously established communities are seen to move towards social-political involvement, and political communes are seen to enter a search for transcendental meaning, often turning to various practices of meditation, such as Yoga.

It is important to investigate the nature and relevance of religious and transcendental values as they underlie or emerge within experiences

of communal life, especially as they relate to internal structure, and as they affect the success or continuity of communities.

e) *Political Involvement*: a study of relations; interactions; strategies, vis-à-vis society as a whole, but especially with regard to the immediate milieu of the community; an investigation of possible tensions between the demands of political involvement and of personal growth needs of the members as well as of the possibility that concentration on one of these goals may serve as an escape from meeting the demands of the other. (See Typology).

Finally, it is not enough to investigate values and structures. It is necessary to study the gap between and/or the integration of the actual values and the actual operations of communes, and to investigate the processes by which communes develop not towards institutionalization and rigidity, but towards further openness and flexibility.

BILATERAL CONVERSATIONS - PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES

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I. Definition

Bilateral is usually understood to mean an official encounter between two partners, each of whom has a defined identity of history, life, ethos, and faith. Thus, two individual churches or two groups of churches each belonging to the same tradition, or two confessional families or great communions on the world level can become partners in a bilateral dialogue. Consequently, *multilateral* would mean an encounter between churches, groups of churches or confessional or church families all belonging to more than two different traditions. This definition implies bilateral conversations on the national, regional, inter-national, and world level.

But this understanding of « bilateral » can become too narrow, too static, too quantitative or formalistic. It can and must be widened by a more qualitative understanding. The criterium for « bilateral » then would be no longer two different historical identities but it is constituted by the issues and problems themselves which are the object of a bilateral encounter. There can be two sides to an issue, but these two sides are not to be identified with a single church or confessional family. An example for this wider understanding is, of course, the new Lutheran World Federation — World Alliance of Reformed Churches — Roman Catholic Study Commission

on « The Theology of Marriage and the Problem of Mixed Marriages ».

II. History

The fact that we can register today a large number of bilateral conversations on different levels, with different aims and methods and with different topics, is a new factor on the ecumenical scene. Multilateral and bilateral forms of encounter between separated Churches have, of course, coexisted since the beginning of the ecumenical movement. The agreement on full communion between Anglican Churches and Old Catholic Churches was a result of such bilateral conversations. There are many other examples. The co-existence of these two forms can also be seen in reunion conversations.

With the foundation of the World Council of Churches and the extension of the work of the Faith and Order Commission, with the increasing number of local, national, and regional Councils of Churches, with the multiplying of church union negotiations during the last 25 years clearly a predominance of multilateral forms of theological dialogue and practical collaboration can be observed up to the sixties. In this process of drawing as many churches as possible into an ecumenical encounter, bilateral conversations were accused as being too narrow, too limited in their concept.

It was undoubtedly the official entrance of the Roman Catholic Church into the ecumenical movement since Vatican II which has been the main reason for the new emergence of a large number of bilateral dialogues and contacts. This may be explained, partly, by the fact that the Roman Catholic Church is not yet a member of the World Council of Churches and is only slowly entering into multilateral forms of ecumenical encounter.

When the Joint Working Group between the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church was formed, the discussion of specific doctrinal issues was excluded on purpose, because these were considered to be the subject for direct conversations between the churches. This principle is no longer applied in a strict sense: at Uppsala 1968 nine Roman Catholic theologians became members of the Faith and Order Commission, and during the last years two Joint Study Commissions of Faith and Order and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity have worked on « Catholicity and Apostolicity » and on « Common Witness and Proselytism ». Nevertheless, there seems to be on the Roman Catholic side a continuing emphasis on bilateral encounters. The reasons for this attitude may be sought in the whole structure of the Roman Catholic Church, in its theological patterns of encounter

and its highly different relations with specific other churches due to history.

A further explanation for the new emergence of bilateral conversations could be a certain disappointment or dissatisfaction with the results of multilateral theological conversations during the last decades. There is also the realization, that the particular difficulties and concerns of small or minority churches can be better taken care of in bilateral conversations.

Finally, the sense of urgency, felt by many people committed to the search for unity, might have led in some circles to a certain preference for bilateral conversations. It is believed that here agreements leading to concrete steps and decisions of the churches might be achieved in a quicker and more compelling way than in multilateral conversation.

It is interesting and challenging at the same time, that bilateral conversations should be seen as a part of and possible answer to the present ecumenical malaise or disappointment.

While many people turn away from controversial doctrinal questions and see ecumenism only in terms of common social action, bilateral conversations insist on overcoming historical differences of faith, which are still influencing our official relationships as churches. If they fail to build new bridges and if the churches fail to use these bridges — under the condition that they are solid and acceptable — the present malaise will only be increased.

III. *The Present Situation*

The proliferation of bilateral conversations is a new factor on the ecumenical scene, yet even more the fact that a number of them are sponsored in some way or other by World Confessional Families or worldwide churches. This has, of course, consequences for the self-understanding of confessional families or world-wide churches and for their relationship to the whole ecumenical movement.

The main official conversations on the world level are:

- 1) Anglican-Roman Catholic (plus subcommission on mixed marriages)
- 2) Anglican-Lutheran
- 3) Roman Catholic-Lutheran (up to 1971)
- 4) Roman Catholic-Methodist
- 5) Roman Catholic-Reformed
- 6) Reformed-Lutheran-Roman Catholic (marriage).

There are even a greater number of official

regional and national bilateral conversations, among them:

- 1) Lutheran-Reformed in Europe (up to 1971)
- 2) Roman Catholic-Lutheran in the USA
- 3) Roman Catholic-Episcopal in the USA
- 4) Roman Catholic-Orthodox in the USA
- 5) Roman Catholic-Reformed in the USA
- 6) Roman Catholic-Disciples of Christ in the USA
- 7) Roman Catholic-Baptist in the USA
- 8) Roman Catholic-United Methodist in the USA
- 9) German Evangelical Church-Russian Orthodox Church
- 10) Lutheran-Orthodox in Rumania
- 11) Roman Catholic-Old Catholic in Holland, Germany and Switzerland
- 12) Anglican-Roman Catholic in South Africa and in Latin America and others.

As you know, the Orthodox Churches are preparing world-wide dialogues with several communions, for example Old Catholics and Anglicans.

I am mentioning some of these conversations only to prove the statement that they are a new and important element within the ecumenical movement which has its roots to a large degree in the new ecumenical involvement of the Roman Catholic Church. They are new, because they are on the whole six or less years old. They are important since they manifest an intense and determined effort on several levels to push forward in the search for unity. And they show the numerical dominance of Roman Catholic participation.

IV. *Possibilities*

I have mentioned some of the reasons for the emergence of bilateral conversations. This implies that these conversations constitute a certain critique of and challenge to other multilateral forms of ecumenical encounter. In order to avoid misunderstandings or setting up wrong alternatives, two presuppositions should be made clear: A. There is and can be no question of either or with regard to bilateral and multilateral dialogues. B. There is only one ecumenical movement which requires a proper coordination, inter-relation and mutual correction and enrichment of different forms of encounter. The ecumenical

movement is a dynamic and comprehensive movement in history. It cannot be tied down to just one method.

Bilateral conversations work with different methods (which I will not discuss now) and aim at different goals: better mutual knowledge, understanding and relationships; increased cooperation in practical and theological areas; overcoming specific problems like mixed marriages; preparing the way for mutual recognition and for occasional or full intercommunion; preparing the way for some form of organic unity. What is common to them all is the prominent role of theological discussion.

What are, then, the real possibilities or advantages of these conversations?

- 1) Bilateral conversations have the *advantage* of filling a gap in the network of ecumenical relations. There are churches which are, as a result of historical developments, majority churches in a particular country. They do not live in a pluralistic denominational situation. This holds true to a number of Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Lutheran churches. Bilateral conversations on a world or international level provide an occasion for these churches to experience closer ecumenical contacts and relations.
- 2) On the other hand there are minority churches or very small churches which sometimes and in certain situations experience great difficulties in establishing ecumenical contacts with and improving their relationships to a majority church in their area. In a bilateral conversation conducted by their confessional family they may get the assurance that they and their concerns are better represented than in a multilateral, not directly church-sponsored encounter. There is also the hope, that their majority partners are influenced by a bilateral conversation in such a way that relationships become more relaxed. (This has, among other reasons, led the Reformed World Alliance to overcome its initial hesitancy with regard to bilateral conversations with Roman Catholics).
- 3) There are specific controversial questions and even mutual condemnations which were and still are the main dividing factors between two Communion. Bilateral conversations have the *advantage* that they can select these particular questions for their agenda and deal with them in a precise and concentrated manner.
- 4) Because the area of topics is limited and

only two partners with their particular traditions are involved, bilateral conversations have a *greater chance* than multilateral forms of encounter to come to agreements and joint statements.

- 5) Bilateral conversations are in a position to take up convergencies and agreements emerging in the more « private » field of general theological research. By defining, correlating and accepting these convergencies and agreements they « lift them up » to another level. Through this form of reception they are able to prepare the way for an official recognition of advances in the theological field in the interest of growing unity.

V. Authority

Although the delegations appointed for bilateral conversations possess the official authorization and the confidence of their churches or world communions, they have no authority in themselves.

Therefore, bilateral conversation cannot arrive at results or decisions which are as such binding for the churches. Their results must be examined and then accepted or rejected by the churches. World Confessional Families (with the exception of the Roman Catholic Church) too cannot decide for their member churches. Nevertheless, it seems clear that bilateral conversations under the authority of World Confessional Families or world-wide churches possess a greater weight and urgency for the churches involved. Because of the official appointment of the dialogue-groups, their terms of reference and their more limited task of representing one tradition over against another one, it is more likely that the churches are prepared and willing to take up and implement the results and recommendations of such a conversation. This is even more true with regard to national or regional conversations.

Yet even where the results of bilateral conversations are not officially accepted by the churches involved they may have considerable influence on the thinking of the churches. Since they are not the product of individual thinking but carry the weight of a serious investigation into the truth by a representative group of churchmen, they can and should find much public interest. They are able to change the ecumenical climate and prepare the churches and their authorities and members for future decisions which seem to be not possible at the present moment.

VI. Representativeness

At a time of increasing theological pluralism within all churches, it is, of course, difficult to

appoint a commission which is representative for a church in such a way that it satisfies the expectations of all groups and sections. In most cases great care is taken to constitute a commission in such a way that it represents the different theological attitudes.

Yet, a difficulty certainly cannot be overlooked here. A delegation should be composed of people who have a good knowledge of their partners from another tradition. But very often this implies also a very positive attitude towards the other tradition. This facilitates a conversation but at the same time arouses the suspicions of others who take a more critical, detached position.

To overcome these difficulties delegations can use official doctrinal statements of their own church as a guideline for their own position. This makes a conversation easier between, e.g., Lutherans and Catholics than between Catholics and Methodists. A strong liturgical tradition with its formulars may also be of help. On the other hand the interpretations of these documents vary considerably and make, therefore, the task of a bilateral conversation not an easy one. The basic question behind all this is the problem of the self-identity of a church.

VII. Problems

- 1) There are certain problems and difficulties which are common to both bilateral and multilateral forms of dialogue. One of the most important ones is the relation between the different levels of dialogue. There are e.g. theological questions, though in principle of universal relevance, which are shaped in a decisive way by the context (historical, theological, social, cultural, etc.) in which particular churches live. Very often, therefore, it seems to be difficult to apply common approaches, convergencies or agreements arrived at world-conversations to these specific situations.
- 2) And another question: Can theological conversations in the form of a dialogue-process really be done «for others», representatively? Is not a dialogue-process and its results only relevant for those who have themselves experienced this dialogue — which is not only an exchange of ideas, but also a personal experience? Here the task of communication is essential, though it can solve this problem only partially.
- 3) The fact that a particular church is conducting concurrent conversations with several traditions at the same time, raises

again the question of self-identity mentioned above. Are the results, e.g., of discussions on the eucharist with these different partners contradictory — which would be an ecumenical disaster — or are they different but not mutually exclusive? With other words: is a church presenting different faces to different partners? This danger can only be avoided by a correlation and mutual information between different dialogues.

- 4) Ecumenical cooperation is carried out in many cases on a multilateral basis. The same applies to new developments in ecumenical relations (team ministries, Councils of Churches, shared church buildings, common social actions, etc.) and to the emergence of common ecumenical problems (mixed marriages, intercommunion, tensions between different concepts of the task of the church in the world, etc.). There is, therefore, a danger of a gap or incongruency between these multilateral forms which certainly require a theological reflection, and a network of bilateral conversations.

- 5) The ecumenical theological dialogue has definitely gone beyond the phase of comparative ecclesiology and has become a common search for truth, being christocentric in its basic approach. There might be a danger, however, that in a bilateral conversation, being a confrontation between two church traditions, the basic approach becomes again more comparative and more churchcentred.

The experience of the actual conversation shows that these encounters are in a high degree conditioned by the general theological thinking of today and even more by the problems and tasks which are confronting all the churches in the present time and world. It is exactly because of these common problems and tasks that a definite effort is made to overcome differences of the past. It is exactly because the general theological thinking and developments of today are constituting the context of the dialogues that such remarkable results in overcoming inherited differences have already been achieved.

VIII. Results

Compared with the sixty years which make up the history of the modern ecumenical movement, the history of bilateral conversations is still very short. It may, therefore, be premature,

to speak of results. But looking at bilateral conversations more closely we find here a movement of theological exploration and reconception which has already yielded truly remarkable results. The advances and convergences that are taking place appear all the more striking when one considers the fact that in several instances they are bridging age-long chasms within Christendom.

I would like to mention four of these remarkable results. Because of lack of time this must be done in a very general manner.

1) *Lutheran-Reformed conversations in Europe* (1964-1971)

Lutheran-Reformed conversations on the European level have come to an end. It is significant that the final report included proposals for concrete steps in order to implement the goal which the conversations had aimed at. With this goal of church fellowship (i.e. full altar and pulpit fellowship and practical relations as close as possible) and the draft for a «concord» as a basis for establishing this fellowship these conversations have, so far, achieved the most far-reaching results of all bilateral conversations. The draft of the «concord» was discussed, revised and accepted in September 1971 by a larger group of official delegates of Reformed, Lutheran and United Churches in Europe. The «concord» will be now submitted to the decision-making bodies of the churches involved for their action.

Full church fellowship will be established if the churches accept the «concord» and fulfil these conditions: 1. The churches who sign the «concord» agree in the understanding of the gospel as expounded in part 2 of the «concord». 2. The condemnations expressed in the 16. century confessions no longer apply to the present doctrinal position of the churches signing the «concord». Present differences in doctrine, order and life-style are not of church dividing importance. 3. The churches who sign the «concord» acknowledge one another as part of the Church of Jesus Christ by granting to one another altar and pulpit fellowship. This includes mutual recognition of ordinations and the possibility of intercelebration (Concord, IV.I.).

Organisational consequences of the declaration of church fellowship, like organic union, are left to the decision of the churches.

Some people see this agreement as a new model of unity.

Past history of the formerly divided traditions, including their positive doctrinal statements, is not neglected or wiped out. Church fellowship on the basis of present agreements is seen as a process involving all aspects of church life and leaving open the organisational questions of uni-

ty. It seems that most churches will accept the «Concord».

2) *Conversations between the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church* (Study Commission on «The Gospel and the Church», 1967-1971).

The Joint Study Commission has completed its work. The final report will be published within the near future. It has been decided that the original «Roman Catholic-Lutheran Working Group» of 1965-66 (in a somewhat changed composition) will meet again in order to evaluate the results of the Study Commission and to discuss the question of a continuation of Roman Catholic-Lutheran conversations.

The preliminary reports issued after each meeting, as well as the final report, emphasize the significant and far-reaching agreements achieved in the work of the Commission. These concern the understanding of the Gospel and its fundamental and normative significance for the church, its christological and soteriological center and a number of other doctrines connected with it. Thus, important convergences in the area of the doctrine of the ministry forced the Commission to ask concrete questions which were beyond its original task. Accordingly the questions of mutual recognition of ministries and of intercommunion were taken up. As a result, the Commission recommends that the respective authorities of the two churches should consider seriously the possibility of an official mutual recognition of ministries and the possibility of allowing acts of intercommunion at special occasions.

In the final report it is recommended that these conclusions should be discussed as widely as possible within the two churches.

The Commission has by no means covered all the important controversial questions which are standing between Lutherans and Roman Catholics (e.g. the question of the eucharist). But it has established some fundamental theological and hermeneutical agreements concerning the Gospel on the one hand and the historicity of theological or doctrinal decisions and the structures of the church on the other. From this basis future and more detailed conversations can be initiated in the hope of further progress.

3) *Anglican-Roman Catholic Conversations* (Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, 1970).

The third meeting (Windsor, September 1971) of this Commission achieved a remarkable breakthrough. It not only considered a more preliminary and moderate aim, called «limited communion». It also directed its work in groups entire-

ely to the question of the eucharist, using the draft of a subcommission. The result of this effort was the Agreed Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine. « We believe that we have reached substantial agreement on the doctrine of the eucharist... It is our hope that in view of the agreement which we have reached... this doctrine will no longer constitute an obstacle to the unity we seek ».

As many of you certainly know, this Statement has aroused much public interest and also either cautious or open criticism. Embedded in a very concise treatment of several aspects of eucharistic doctrine the two main controversial issues are: 1. A strong insistence on the *real presence*, interpreting « transubstantiation » as an affirmation of this presence but not as an explanation of the mode of change in the elements. 2. An equally strong insistence on the « once for all » of Christ's sacrifice, in which the eucharistic « anamnesis » is seen as making effective of this sacrifice in the present, together with the self-offering of the people present.

Considering the fact that a statement on « Eucharist as Sacrifice » from the Lutheran-Roman Catholic conversations in the USA arrived at similar, almost identical conclusions, I would suppose that the Anglican-Roman Catholic statement is not as unrepresentative of present eucharistic thinking among the churches as some of its critics believe.

4) *Lutheran-Roman Catholic Conversations in the USA (1965-)*.

After dealing with the Nicene Creed and Baptism this Commission turned its attention to the theme « The Eucharist as Sacrifice ». In a mutual reinterpretation of meanings and intentions, the group made « immense progress » in rooting out ingrained misconceptions, in uncovering large areas of common belief and narrowing down unresolved differences, such as the conceptual inadequacy of the doctrine of transubstantiation. The concluding statement declares:

« Despite all remaining differences in the ways we speak and think of the eucharistic sacrifice and our Lord's presence in his supper, we are no longer able to regard ourselves as divided in the one holy catholic and apostolic faith on these two points ».

The next logical step appeared to be a reexamination of the possibilities of intercommunion. It became clear, however, that no advance would be possible without first considering the key question of what constitutes a valid ministry in eucharistic celebrations. An important step forward in the ensuing studies on « Eucharist and Ministry » was the acknowledgment » that there was no demonstrable normative pattern of the minis-

try during the period covered by the New Testament » but rather « a great richness and variety... The implications of these findings offer hopeful possibilities in efforts to harmonize the existing differences in the Lutheran and Roman Catholic traditions of ministerial service ». The study resulted in a unanimously adopted Joint statement, followed by parallel commentaries by both partners, which together « represent a forward step of immense significance ». The latter statements culminate in reciprocal recommendations that the authorities of the participating churches recognize the validity of the Ministry and the eucharistic administration of the other communion.

The group is currently probing the conflicting understandings of the papacy.

As far as I know the two last reports of these conversations have been examined by Roman Catholic authorities and have been sent back, with strong criticisms, to the Commission for revision. Apart from theological problems involved I can understand that recommendations from a national dialogue which would affect a whole worldwide church as well as its relationships with other Christian communions create of course, great difficulties. This problem makes it even more necessary to continue conversations also on the world level with a proper correlation to national conversations.

Apart from their concrete agreements I am convinced, as it was mentioned before, that the bilateral conversations may have also an indirect influence on the whole theological and ecumenical atmosphere. It is hard to measure the extent of this influence and it certainly depends on the quality of the work and an effectiveness of communication and information.

IX. *Conclusions.*

It may be true that I have overstressed the possibilities and the importance of bilateral conversations. A more careful evaluation would reveal more weaknesses of this new ecumenical phenomenon than I have mentioned. But in general, it would be an illusion or just pure blindness to ignore or question their value and right of existence.

Experience so far justifies a continuation of this form of ecumenical dialogue. This can only be done under the conditions 1) of a proper integration into the whole ecumenical discussion, 2) of a close interrelation between the different geographical levels of dialogue, 3) of an awareness of other forms of ecumenical relationships in the life of the churches, 4) of improved methods, avoiding past mistakes, 5) of establishing clear and realistic goals, 6) of making the dialogue groups more fully representative of the total

membership of a Christian communion, and 7) of more effective and open information and communication.

The future of bilateral conversations will finally depend on one basic question. If these conversations become an institutionalized expression of mere ecumenical good-will without a serious commitment to take risks, to become challenged, to be asked to change inherited positions and attitudes — then they become a « l'art pour l'art » game and should be discontinued. But if these conversations continue to be able to arrive at concrete and honest agreements and if the churches and their authorities are prepared to consider these agreements with a positive and open attitude, then there will be no question about the future of bilateral conversations. They may, then, still be ahead of large sections of the church, but they are to be considered as pathfinders on a way, which the churches can follow with good conscience and, hopefully, not too slowly and uncertainly.

UNE ÈRE D'ŒCUMÉNISME ÉLARGI S'EST OUVERTE

Le mot 'œcuménique', on le sait, vient du grec *oikumenê*, qui signifie 'terre habitée'. Il fit aussi partie du vocabulaire de tout le monde connu, à savoir l'Empire romain. Dans le langage théologique actuel, le mot 'œcuménique' désigne le mouvement des chrétiens pour réaliser l'unité de l'Eglise et l'unité de toutes choses dans le Christ. Il ne se réfère pas à une seule organisation particulière, mais à tous les organismes et à toutes les personnes qui s'emploient à atteindre cet objectif. Lors de son Assemblée à Rolle en 1951, le comité central du COE (Conseil Œcuménique des Eglises) définit ainsi le mot 'œcuménique': « s'applique au sens propre à tout ce qui concerne la tâche qui incombe à l'église entière de propager l'évangile dans toutes les nations ».

Ce n'est que tout récemment qu'apparut la nécessité de donner à ce mot un sens plus fort et plus large en lui adjoignant un certain nombre d'adjectifs qualificatifs. Et il n'est pas rare aujourd'hui d'entendre ces locutions: œcuménique pastoral ou social, œcuménisme non ecclésial, œcuménisme non officiel, œcuménisme séculier, œcuménisme élargi. Toutes ces locutions et bien d'autres encore indiquent les différents plans sur lesquels l'œcuménisme est actuellement conçu.

Premièrement. De plus en plus on reconnaît que le message de réconciliation et de paix de l'Eglise n'est crédible que si l'Eglise est prête à s'engager dans un service charitable interconfessionnel et coopératif, à l'échelle internationale. Depuis son origine le Conseil Œcuménique des Eglises a maintes fois réitéré un appel aux églises pour

une action commune en face des nécessités toujours nouvelles du monde contemporain.

Secondement. Après une décade de nombreux dialogues œcuméniques et de discussions théologiques fructueuses, beaucoup de chrétiens sont maintenant tacitement ou ouvertement d'avis que le plein consensus doctrinal demeure, et est un but hors de portée, qui par ailleurs n'est pas à souhaiter. Le véritable œcuménisme implique avant tout un engagement commun des disciples dans le monde, au service du monde.

Troisièmement. Poussant plus avant cette importante notion œcuménique, d'autres groupes de chrétiens soutiennent la thèse que l'Eglise ne progressera vers la restauration parfaite de l'unité qui lui a été donnée, qu'en travaillant côte à côte avec les nombreuses autres forces chrétiennes tendues aussi vers l'objectif commun d'une plus grande unité entre tous les hommes et de leur bien-être.

Finalement. Les locutions 'œcuménisme séculier', ou 'œcuménisme élargi' sont employées par ceux qui demeurent sceptiques devant la tentative de réunir de nouveau les églises chrétiennes sous un même toit; pour qui la création d'une assemblée ecclésiale réellement universelle ne se rattache qu'indirectement à la manifestation plus parfaite de l'unité de l'humanité. Ils prétendent que de nos jours une tâche s'impose avec plus d'acuité: promouvoir l'unité de la race humaine par tous les moyens possibles, politiques, idéologiques, économiques, ceux qui déjà existent et ceux qui restent à produire. Le monde s'est substitué à l'Eglise pour fixer le programme d'une réflexion et d'une action réellement 'œcuménique'.

Il est bien évident que je ne puis adhérer qu'en partie aux données et interprétations de chacune de ces quatre positions, et que même je dois les désapprouver dans une certaine mesure. Substituer un prétendu 'nouvel' œcuménisme à un prétendu œcuménisme 'd'autrefois', c'est tout bonnement sous-estimer le problème de la relation unité de l'Eglise-unité de l'humanité. Certes l'œcuménisme d'autrefois fut, et il arrive qu'il le soit encore, plutôt 'd'église' (churchly) dans son orientation, et on peut voir en lui une justification masquée de l'existence même de l'Eglise. Mais cela ne signifie aucunement que les œcuménismes dits 'étroit' et 'élargi' s'excluent réciproquement comme contradictoires. Les chrétiens sont citoyens de deux mondes, le séculier et le spirituel, et de ce fait ils doivent combattre sur deux fronts pour restaurer l'unité du corps du Christ. C'est pourquoi il serait peut-être plus sage de laisser choir les qualificatifs 'élargi' et 'séculier' et de retourner à l'usage du simple mot 'œcuménisme', lequel embrasse à la foi l'unité de l'église et l'unité du monde dans une relation dialectique et dynamique.

Nous avons fait l'expérience d'une dévaluation

analogue avec le mot 'théologie' quand nous avons voulu le revaloriser par des déterminatifs comme: théologie de révolution, théologie de libération, théologie de sécularisation. Bien sûr, si le mot théologie n'implique rien de plus qu'une étude académique dans une tour d'ivoire, de Dieu, des Écritures, des doctrines de l'Eglise, des Pères et des Réformateurs, alors il faut le moderniser et lui redonner vie en le reliant à l'existence de l'homme d'aujourd'hui, à sa responsabilité envers ce monde. A mon avis cependant, la définition de Locke est toujours valable: « La théologie, du fait qu'elle contient la connaissance de Dieu et de ses créatures, nos devoirs envers lui et envers les autres, l'état de notre condition présente et future, comporte toute autre connaissance dirigée vers sa vraie fin ». Voilà qui rejette les « théologies » de libération, révolution, sécularisation, et aussi œcuménisme élargi, comme de pures tautologies. Vouloir élaborer et adapter notre vocabulaire religieux à un langage nouveau et séculier pourrait, paradoxalement, être le signe de notre répugnance et de notre incapacité à suivre les courants irréversibles du monde contemporain.

Unité de l'Eglise et de l'humanité

Il est clair que nous avons seulement commencé à nous attaquer à ces problèmes: comment formuler l'unité de l'Eglise et l'unité de l'humanité, comment les lier l'une à l'autre? Quand nous lisons le matériel recueilli pour l'Assemblée de la commission Faith and Order à Louvain, en août 1971, et le rapport présenté, se confirme notre conclusion-suggestion, à savoir que nous venons d'entrer dans une ère de nouvelles entreprises et découvertes œcuméniques. Aucun accord ne s'est fait sur un point dont nous pourrions partir, sur une méthodologie que nous pourrions suivre, et nous ignorons l'issue de la réflexion théologique qui suivra et des délibérations des églises. Notre recherche transconfessionnelle et internationale pour réaliser l'unité en devient d'autant plus un défi, lourd de promesses. Nous ne pouvons travailler qu'en faisant appel à des modèles 'ouverts' du concept d'unité et devons nous garder d'introduire et d'imposer des notions d'unité qui emprisonneraient et le monde et l'Eglise dans une camisole de force théologique ou idéologique. La dogmatisation de concepts d'unité particuliers ne tient pas compte du procès historique, porteur d'une unité de plus en plus profonde, pluraliste et complexe. Plus que jamais auparavant nous réalisons que l'unité voulue par Dieu ne peut être obtenue que moyennant notre participation au procès actuel de l'histoire humaine et de l'histoire de l'Eglise, à travers l'expérience de crises et de décisions, et notre engagement personnel pour un renouveau radical.

Sans hésiter on admettra que le procès accéléré de sécularisation a contraint l'Eglise à porter pour

la première fois une réflexion approfondie sur le concept 'humanité' et sur celui de la solidarité de la race humaine. A ce jour le thème 'humanité', comme phénomène en soi et relation entre le monde et l'Eglise considérés comme deux entités séparées et comparables, n'a jamais constitué un chapitre central en théologie ou en dogmatique. L'Eglise persécutée des trois premiers siècles fut dominée par la conscience d'une contradiction profonde entre l'Eglise et le monde. Bien que l'unité de l'Eglise fut en général liée à l'unité du monde (Empire romain), ce n'en était pas moins l'unité de l'Etat qui servait de modèle à l'unité de l'Eglise et non pas vice versa. La seconde période qui fut marquée par une fusion presque parfaite de l'Eglise et du monde, à vrai dire avec une légère subordination du monde à l'Eglise, commença après la mort de Constantin, pour fleurir plusieurs siècles durant en Occident chrétien et ne prendre fin qu'à l'heure actuelle. L'affaiblissement de la tension entre l'Eglise et le monde était dû au fait que la contradiction fut absorbée en l'Eglise par la division des croyants en clergé et laïc. Par suite de cette distinction le sacré et le séculier furent accolés l'un à l'autre et l'Eglise, en tant que la plus haute organisation sociale, pouvait dominer tous les aspects de la vie humaine.

Aujourd'hui l'Eglise se trouve en face d'un monde autonome et doit reconnaître que de larges segments de la société agissent totalement indépendants de toute connexion, interprétation ou référence religieuse. Les civilisations modernes se jettent à corps perdu dans le progrès technique et scientifique et adoptent une forme de vie rationnelle en laquelle l'Eglise fait figure de vestige suranné. De nos jours le monde prétend lui aussi servir l'unité de l'humanité, mieux que l'Eglise, ou en tout cas d'une manière plus réaliste. Or cette assertion trouve partiellement sa justification non seulement dans les stupéfiantes divisions qui tiennent encore les églises à l'écart les unes des autres, mais aussi dans la conception des églises protestantes encore quelque peu déterminée par l'expectative d'une vie meilleure dans l'au-delà et une approche individualiste de l'éthique chrétienne, et dans le fait que l'église catholique romaine reste tentée de s'accrocher aux structures d'une *ecclesia triumphans* et de la *societas perfecta* des siècles passés.

Notre monde séculier et autonome doit, il est vrai, faire face à un grand nombre de problèmes extrêmement complexes et parfois apparemment insolubles. Qu'entend-on réellement par 'humanité'? Dans que sens pouvons-nous considérer l'humanité comme une unité? Existe-il vraiment une relation entre l'interdépendance croissante humaine et l'unité de la race humaine? Comment pouvons-nous éviter de traiter le concept de la solidarité de tous les hommes simplement comme un slogan ou une formule magique? Les degrés et

les caractéristiques du procès de sécularisation ne sont-ils pas tellement différents de par le monde que les généralisations absolues sont au mieux aléatoires? La diffusion universelle de la civilisation scientifique et technologique ne crée-t-elle pas de nouvelles formes d'asservissement, de dégradation et de manipulation de l'homme, dans les parties du monde dites développées comme dans celles dites sous-développées? En dépit de l'impact d'unification des mouvements idéologiques sur certaines fractions de la population mondiale, pouvons-nous parler d'un développement pour une société plus juste et plus harmonieuse, et de relations humaines plus communautaires à un plus large niveau? La réalisation d'un état cosmopolite universel ne repose-t-elle pas sur un espoir non réaliste et illusoire, précisément parce que la possibilité d'une unité totalitaire de l'humanité est devenue aujourd'hui un véritable cauchemar? Ne convient-il pas de concevoir l'unité de l'humanité seulement dans le sens d'un très long procès du devenir, toujours ouvert, et qu'on ne peut en aucune façon définir aujourd'hui avec précision?

Ces difficiles questions pourraient être quasiment multipliées à l'infini. Elles nous reconduisent d'emblée à la difficulté, voire à la répugnance de l'Eglise pour traiter systématiquement et avec sympathie toute cette nouvelle chaîne de problèmes déconcertants. De fait, c'est précisément parce que seules des réponses tout à fait expérimentales et insuffisantes peuvent être données aux questions séculières prises en bloc, ou le seront éventuellement, que l'Eglise est tentée, peut-être davantage encore que jadis, de se cantonner dans ses frontières traditionnelles, théologiquement bien délimitées et gardées, et de parler avant tout d'elle-même, de sa propre existence et de ses attentes, tombant ainsi dans un nouveau triomphalisme ecclésial. Certes l'Eglise est en droit d'affirmer que l'unité de l'humanité est un concept ambivalent. Le monde interdépendant qui est le nôtre, crée non seulement de nouvelles libertés et de nouvelles formes de communautés élargies, mais également de nouveaux conflits, de nouvelles exploitations, de nouvelles oppressions. Pour la première fois l'humanité se trouve placée devant une autodestruction universelle.

Ainsi donc, l'Eglise doit vivre en tension et désaccord avec le monde séculier divisé et souvent marqué par l'échec. Impossible pour elle de savoir avec certitude « si l'action internationale positive est une des tâches de sa mission ou une auto-affirmation anti-chrétienne ». En assumant son rôle de médiation et de réconciliation, mais aussi de mise en garde prophétique au milieu des périlleuses affaires du monde, il ne s'agit pas pour elle de devenir 'du siècle' et de perdre ainsi son identité et son caractère de sel et de ferment dans ce monde. C'est pourquoi l'unité de l'humanité ne paraît pas être un légitime point de départ pour

formuler une doctrine de l'unité de sa propre communion. En dernière analyse sa tâche demeure, d'abord et avant tout, de proclamer l'espérance transcendante du Royaume de Dieu.

Or ces critiques valables et ces affirmations donnent à juste titre au monde séculier l'impression que l'unité de l'Eglise et sa propre unité constituent des domaines séparés et sans rapport, et que leur réalisation doit de faire par des moyens séparés, en tant qu'objectifs séparés. Nous touchons ici, je crois, au plus difficile problème de notre sujet. Il est bien évident que nous ne pouvons par formuler et re-formuler une doctrine de l'unité de l'Eglise en dehors de la christologie et de la pneumatologie. D'autre part, nous ne parviendrons jamais à développer une authentique doctrine de l'unité de l'Eglise hors du contexte d'une doctrine de l'unité de l'humanité. Mais cette doctrine authentique ne peut pas être élaborée si l'Eglise ne fait une large place à la question séculière préalable et fort complexe: dans quelle mesure d'humanité s'est-elle engagée dans son mouvement vers l'unité? Cette concession générale n'est d'ailleurs pas suffisante. Tant que l'Eglise ne sera pas aux côtés du monde dans sa lutte continue pour abattre les barrières de nations, races, classes, éducation, tradition et position sociale, et promouvoir une plus grande paix internationale, l'égalité et la justice entre les nations — non pour elle-même mais en considération du monde —, sa conviction que le règne de Dieu embrassera finalement l'unité du monde et l'unité de l'Eglise dans une seule et même unité, ne portera pas d'impact sur le monde non-croyant. L'authentique œcuménisme porte le sceau d'une nouvelle solidarité et d'une nouvelle identification avec la race humaine et se caractérise par sa participation à la joie du monde et sa signification d'achèvement, mais également à ses déceptions et à ses peines dans sa marche progressive vers une communauté mondiale créatrice, libre, différente et plus forte. Dans la seconde partie de cet exposé j'illustrerai par deux exemples comment les chrétiens, dans le service du Christ et de son Eglise, peuvent militer pour réaliser une unité de l'humanité puissante et plus significative.

Idéologie et idéologies

Au tout premier chef il s'agit de s'intéresser beaucoup plus sérieusement au phénomène de l'idéologie, à l'impact des systèmes idéologiques et à la relation idéologie-théologie. Si je ne mets pas en doute le renouveau théologique, l'*aggiornamento* réel de Vatican II et ses importantes réalisations, je dois aussi noter avec regret qu'une discussion du problème de l'idéologie et des idéologies est totalement absente des documents officiels du Concile. De son côté le Conseil Oecuménique des Eglises n'a jusqu'ici fait aucun effort sérieux pour analyser minutieusement les vagues de

fond idéologiques de ses réflexions, déclarations et actions œcuméniques. Tout récemment seulement dans des conférences et réunions d'étude organisées par le département Church and Society du Conseil Oecuménique des Eglises, un léger progrès est apparu pour explorer « la relation entre les structures de la pensée chrétienne et les différentes autres combinaisons d'analyse théorique et de stratégie pour l'action sociale, dites parfois idéologies » (1). Bien qu'il soit admis que « la théologie est toujours idéologique en tant qu'elle s'exprime dans un contexte particulier » et que « c'est là en un sens la force de la théologie » parce que « la parole de Dieu doit devenir concrète en des temps et des lieux particuliers », on ne s'est pas encore accordé pour préciser dans quelle mesure l'éthique chrétienne doit combattre le danger idéologique et jusqu'où « la théologie doit risquer de devenir idéologique pour indiquer à l'homme comment user plus sciemment du pouvoir technologique et se libérer de ses structures oppressives » (2).

En bien des lieux les églises soutiennent encore que la croyance et la pratique religieuses ne peuvent être affectées par les perspectives idéologiques. Leur prétention est étayée par de nombreux théologiens, qui contestent également que le christianisme doit être approché et saisi à un autre niveau, simplement parce que les horizons du *credo* ne coïncident pas avec l'appréhension quotidienne de la réalité phénoménale et l'expérience des sciences empiriques naturelles et sociales. La foi est l'acceptation d'une vocation, non une déduction à partir d'une interprétation. La foi chrétienne, en tant qu'expérience d'un Dieu transcendant, rend toute idéologie transcendante, de par une transcendantale nécessité, dans la mesure où l'idéologie change en absolu une sphère limitée d'expérience tangible et du dedans. En sorte que le mot 'idéologie' est encore employé dans un sens négatif et péjoratif pour exprimer souvent la création artificielle d'un système d'idées ou d'interprétation de situations qui ne résultent pas d'expériences concrètes mais en sont une sorte de connaissance déformée. En d'autres mots, l'idéologie sert à dissimuler la situation réelle; elle agit sur les individus comme une contrainte. Cet élément d'assujettissement à une idéologie est particulièrement fort en Occident, façonné en majeure partie par un libéralisme traditionnel, système idéologique qui a toujours énergiquement refusé d'être classé comme tel. Vu que l'idéologie est toujours une fonction d'une groupe et qu'elle propage l'implication collective des masses dans une situation donnée, en soi elle est rejetée puis-

que l'individualisme est la véritable essence de l'idéologie libérale. Si au demeurant l'idéologie a envahi la théologie, alors la théologie doit être épurée le plus possible de ces éléments idéologiques totalitaires, destructeurs et inhumains.

Ce n'est que dans quelques discussions très récentes du département Church and Society du COE et dans quelques sous-commissions du COE que cette position (adoptée par un grand nombre d'églises et de chrétiens individuels) a été critiquée et déclarée non concluante et insoutenable. Toutefois le COE, et aussi des groupes progressistes de l'Eglise catholique romaine, restent encore sur la réserve et se réfèrent uniquement aux possibilités de polarisation idéologique dans la pensée théologique et l'action chrétienne; ils laissent à l'étude dans les situations concrètes actuelles la relation entre idéologie et christianisme.

L'exigence de la force motrice d'un véritable œcuménisme peut, me semble-t-il, nous aider à faire un pas considérable au-delà de la situation présente, incertaine et embrouillée. Avant tout il nous faut progressivement éduquer et convaincre les chrétiens que le terme 'idéologie' peut et doit être employé dans un sens positif et pragmatique. Qu'il me soit permis de donner ici quelques définitions possibles. L'idéologie est un corps cohérent d'idées pleines de valeur, qui sert de guide et de stimulant à l'action. Ou bien: l'idéologie est une théorique et analytique structure de pensée, qui sous-tend efficacement l'action en vue d'un changement révolutionnaire dans la société ou pour justifier le *status quo*. La définition donnée par le professeur Luis Alberto Gomez de Souza est peut-être plus précise encore: « L'idéologie est un faisceau de dynamismes exprimant les intérêts de groupes sociaux, en vue de préserver ou de changer la structure sociale » (3). Ces définitions impliquent que l'idéologie, en simplifiant les situations sociales complexes, offre à de nombreux peuples de divers héritages la possibilité d'élucider quelque chose de la signification latente cachée dans l'histoire humaine, et de coopérer dans la lutte pour atteindre des buts communs. Bien plus, un système idéologique renforce l'implication collective de larges groupes de personnes dans une situation donnée et fait valoir la nécessité d'une massive et active participation au procès d'éveil progressif et de mutation sociale. Ainsi l'idéologie, en tant qu'elle fait intégralement partie de la société contemporaine, peut donner l'occasion de se comprendre soi-même, et elle sert de facteur dynamique dans le changement social, dans la mesure où elle est une réalité et sera dirigée par des groupes spécifiques opérant selon des plans soigneusement élaborés. Sans avoir be-

(1) World Conference on Church and Society. Genève, WCC, 1967, p. 206.

(2) Here to where? Ed. by David M. Gill. Genève, WCC, 1970, pp. 75-76.

(3) « The Future of Ideologies and the Ideologies of the Future ». Traduction anglaise, dans *Anticipation*, WCC Department on Church and Society, N. 2, June, 1970.

soin pour eux d'un programme d'ensemble et d'une conception du monde, les chrétiens peuvent coopérer aux efforts des autres hommes pour une meilleure compréhension et, de cette manière, ils contribuent au bien-être et à l'unité de tous les hommes. Pour conclure, nous dirons que l'idéologie peut nous aider à réaliser le changement social désirable, mais que parfois elle facilite un changement social indésirable.

Secondement. L'idéologie étant ainsi définie, il est clair que la théologie n'est jamais une 'pure' discipline et ne pourra jamais être 'neutre'. Nous devons rejeter ce genre de théologie qui essaie d'universaliser tous les aspects de la vie humaine en les insérant dans ses propres catégories a-historiques et idéalistiques. La théologie œcuménique traite de la transformation et de l'unité du monde; pour cette seule raison elle se réfère à l'idéologie et a un rôle important dans le combat idéologique. La foi chrétienne nous oblige à affronter les réalités sociales et politiques et à participer au combat pour la libération de l'homme, pour éliminer toute aliénation, exploitation, ségrégation, et instaurer une juste société internationale. De ce fait la théologie peut remplir une fonction cruciale en détectant les forces idéologiques qui défendent principalement l'ordre et le *status quo* de la société, mais elle ne promeut aucun changement nécessaire au progrès. Une bonne partie de l'humanité est encore dominée par l'inconscient, et par conséquent par les idéologies mystificatrices et destructrices qui résistent au renouveau et au changement des structures politiques et socio-économiques, et n'indiquent aucun choix arrêté devant les priorités urgentes qui émergent dans le procès historique. La théologie peut à la fois créer une nouvelle prise de conscience des situations d'injustice et d'oppression qui contredisent l'Évangile, et attaquer une ossature idéologique occulte sur laquelle se greffe une société. Une fois qu'elle a dénoncé une infrastructure idéologique traditionnelle et engagé bon nombre de chrétiens à se détourner d'un système donné, la théologie peut alors encourager la destruction des structures actuelles d'aliénation et d'esclavage.

Toutefois la théologie joue un rôle d'égale importance en intervenant dans l'élaboration d'une idéologie de remplacement qui peut créer une nouvelle, consciente et critique infrastructure et assurer à la société une reconstruction effective et sa transformation. La seule alternative d'être asservi par un *ethos* idéologique inconscient, est d'attaquer courageusement notre tâche de produire la meilleure idéologie pouvant nous offrir des indices pour comprendre l'homme, l'histoire, et les perspectives futures de notre entreprise humaine.

Troisièmement. Nous n'avons aucune raison

d'avoir peur d'examiner les liens que les églises gardent avec les pouvoirs politiques et économiques établis et de nous poser cette question spécifique: quel genre de relations est vraiment conforme au message et à la mission des églises? Nous ne savons que trop bien — mais ce n'est pas souvent que nous l'admettons —, que l'Église, par suite d'un défaut de perspective ou simplement par crainte de la violence qu'entraîne le désordre social, accepte assez fréquemment le rôle de principal spectateur apologiste ou passif d'un ordre social injuste. Enchevêtrées dans un ensemble complexe de relations avec les pouvoirs économiques et sociaux, les églises jouissent de certaines libertés et avantages dus à ces relations. En endossant une idéologie donnée, elles occupent une place garantie dans l'ordre établi. Il est donc essentiel que les églises examinent objectivement jusqu'où leurs systèmes institutionnels sont infiltrés et manipulés par les pouvoirs idéologiques qui les entourent. Nous manquons encore trop d'une information précise et en profondeur sur l'adaptation tacite des églises ou leur défi aux idéologies libérales, centristes ou socialistes.

De même il serait grand temps d'entreprendre l'analyse des présuppositions idéologiques délibérées ou inconscientes qui entrent dans la formulation et la mise en œuvre de nombreux projets et programmes du COE. Il ne fait pas de doute que les sous-commissions intéressées, par exemple: Développement, Racisme, Education et « Conscientisation », Mission urbaine et industrielle, 'Le salut aujourd'hui' et autres, comportent des composants idéologiques qui, volontairement ou non, sont aussi bien 'négatifs' que 'positifs'. Bien plus, apparaît une réelle nécessité d'organiser de grandes assemblées COE, groupant théologiens, autorités ecclésiastiques, et un nombre considérable de laïcs chrétiens hommes et femmes, de tous les continents, qui exposeraient et soutiendraient l'idéologie de leur allégeance ou de leur opposition à leur gouvernement national, et feraient connaître leur point de vue sur l'hostilité idéologique internationale toujours aussi vive, qui est provoquée et encouragée par les grandes puissances et des pays comme le Tiers-monde. Ces rencontres nous aideraient au moins à mieux connaître quiconque aux niveaux ecclésiastiques, administration ou champ d'action, soutient ou critique telle idéologie 'occidentale', 'orientale' ou 'méditerranéenne'. On pourrait profiter de ces rencontres pour formuler et définir les positions sur les idéologies libérales, pragmatiques ou évolutionnaires, démocrates sociales, ainsi que le communisme européen et asiatique, le marxisme latino-américain, le socialisme africain. Non seulement la dernière déclaration du COE sur le communisme (Assemblée d'Evanston) date de près de vingt ans, mais elle est bien trop générale et se présente trop exclusivement comme une réponse à la situation internationale toute particulière que

créé la tension bilatérale américano-russe. L'apport traditionnel de l'éthique internationale catholique et les contributions de la doctrine sociale de l'église catholique romaine resteront eux aussi inadéquats si les implications de Vatican II ne sont pas approfondies et développées et si n'est définie sur les formes variées du socialisme et du communisme une position nouvelle, concrète, beaucoup plus élaborée.

Quatrièmement. Je pense que le concept d'un pluralisme idéologique peut être alimenté précisément dans ce contexte d'œcuménisme, et que des groupes idéologiques opposés peuvent être rassemblés pour s'expliquer les uns avec les autres et travailler ensemble dans une tension créatrice. La première question ici n'est pas de savoir si le mouvement œcuménique doit être plus politique, plus de droite, du centre ou de gauche, mais si l'Eglise universelle est capable de créer un forum bien coordonné où l'échange des opinions peut susciter des critiques constructives à travers toutes les expériences et options idéologiques. Des débats idéologiques peuvent être implantés sur la base de l'engagement chrétien commun, expression de préoccupation commune et de soutien mutuel.

Le but de ces réunions œcuméniques élargies devrait être d'amener les participants à une position plus prudente ou plus révolutionnaire, mais il ne pourra être atteint que si les opinions dogmatiques rigides sont écartées, si la tendance à l'intolérance vis-à-vis des autres options est démasquée, si les solutions proposées ne sont pas axées sur la politique intérieure du pouvoir. A moins d'offrir sur les problèmes idéologiques un programme de travail ouvert, celui qui ressort de la vraie nature du mouvement œcuménique; à moins de reconnaître la nécessité d'user dans nos délibérations et travaux d'instruments idéologiques, sans faire d'une théorie sociale d'ensemble une hypothèse de travail; et à moins de choisir, modifier et adapter ces instruments idéologiques aux situations spécifiques comme aux problèmes universels communs, sans requérir une complète identification entre le christianisme et une quelconque idéologie politique, l'Eglise sera tout à fait inefficace et incompétente dans le difficile combat idéologique, parfois diabolique, mais inévitable et lourd de promesses. Il n'y a qu'une seule place où les divergences idéologiques puissent être ouvertement affrontées, attentivement comparées, amplement discutées: dans le mouvement œcuménique élargi.

Ces quatre points concernent les questions cruciales de l'idéologie, l'impossibilité d'une neutralité idéologique, l'implication et l'engagement idéologique des églises, et aussi projettent une nouvelle lumière sur ce qu'on appelle le dialogue chrétien-marxiste, passé et présent. Il n'y a guère que

quelques années que furent supprimées dans les cercles du COE les vieilles expressions comparatives telles que 'le christianisme et les religions non-chrétiennes', 'Chrétiens et non-croyants (ou athées)' et qu'y fut introduit ce titre nouveau: 'dialogue des chrétiens avec les hommes d'autres croyances et idéologies'. Si l'on admet que l'expression peut être interprétée de différentes manières, le sens qui s'impose à la lire littéralement est que le christianisme est une idéologie parmi les autres idéologies. A la lumière de notre analyse le fait ne doit pas plus nous alarmer que nous embarrasser. Au contraire, quand nous affrontons sans détour dans le dialogue notre interlocuteur marxiste, nous n'avons rien à perdre, mais beaucoup à gagner, à admettre franchement que « la théologie est toujours idéologique en tant qu'elle s'exprime dans un contexte particulier ». La foi chrétienne n'existe jamais dans un vide culturel; elle est toujours liée à une vision particulière du monde. C'est en raison de la dynamique de l'incarnation de Dieu en Jésus-Christ que le christianisme peut révéler les valeurs et critères spécifiques de l'homme dans un ordre social donné ou à construire.

D'autre part la formule 'dialogue avec les hommes d'autres croyances et idéologies' implique que les chrétiens identifient le marxisme comme une idéologie. Or combien de marxistes, indiscutablement fidèles disciples de Karl Marx, rétorqueront ici que ce n'est pas la philosophie marxiste qui est une idéologie, mais la religion, et que de surcroît celle-ci est une idéologie dangereuse parce qu'elle entrave l'auto-libération révolutionnaire de la société en offrant à l'homme un achèvement imaginaire qui émousse sa volonté de travailler au changement. Elle est l'opium du peuple. Tout comme l'état, la religion sera totalement éliminée dans une société sans classes. Si quelque progrès dans le dialogue chrétiens-marxistes devait être fait, de longues et franches discussions sur le degré nécessaire d'infiltration d'idéologie dans le christianisme et le marxisme s'imposeraient alors. Du côté chrétien, que l'on tente d'expliquer aux marxistes que le véritable christianisme ne glorifie ni ne maudit l'idéologie, sachant que l'idéologie relève de la promesse et du jugement de Dieu, comme toute autre entreprise humaine. Que les marxistes soient prêts, de leur côté, à admettre que le communiste n'est pas 'purement et simplement' une 'méthodologie d'initiative historique' (Garaudy), scientifique, anti-idéologique, à l'effet de réaliser un radical changement de la société, et que dans les différents pays les partis communistes ont reconnu, voici déjà bien des années, que l'idéologie est un instrument unique pour éveiller et armer la classe prolétarienne dans son rôle d'unification dans le procès historique. Dans toute société socialiste un puissant stimulus idéologique demeurera des

plus nécessaires tant que les objectifs théoriques ne seront pas pleinement réalisés.

Le dialogue avec les hommes de fois vivantes

La recherche d'une justice internationale, de la paix, d'un avenir plein d'espérance, et le défi d'aller vers une communauté humaine ouverte à tous, pose une seconde question importante, à savoir: si en sa vraie nature le christianisme est aussi exclusif des autres religions qu'on l'a généralement prétendu jusqu'ici, et si la nature hétérogène, des variés credos religieux demeure un sérieux obstacle à l'élargissement et à l'approfondissement des contacts humains avec notre entourage de foi différente. Fort récemment seulement nous avons découvert que le terme « Christianisme et religions non-chrétiennes » désigne directement ou indirectement un phénomène que nous appelons aujourd'hui le paternalisme spirituel chrétien, un mobile occidental pour l'expansion coloniale ou une approche ecclésiale monolithique du monde païen pour le sauver et l'amener dans l'Eglise institutionnellement établie, qui occupe le centre de l'histoire du monde et se présente comme la seule manifestation des rapports de Dieu avec les hommes. Ayant replacé nos textes sur les religions comparatives, qui remontent à des siècles lointains, sur les rayons poussiéreux où nous avons consigné nos ouvrages de théologie scolastique emplis de suffisance et monologues, maintenant nous parlons et nous écrivons sur le dialogue avec les hommes de fois vivantes. Ce qui veut clairement dire que nous souhaitons entrer en rapport avec des hommes comme nous, qui sont aussi qualifiés que les chrétiens pour proclamer une foi en Dieu authentique et existentielle, et qui sont en droit de prétendre savoir quelque chose sur l'origine, la signification et la destination de l'univers. Enfin, ayant découvert combien l'égoцентриté et l'autodéfense culturelles et psychologiques étaient mêlées aux arrogants et agressifs mouvements missionnaires chrétiens, nous commençons lentement à comprendre que la foi chrétienne authentique n'est pas 'all-exclusive' (qui exclut tout le reste), mais 'all-inclusive', car la vraie plénitude et la signification ultime de toutes les religions seront révélées dans le rassemblement de toutes choses dans le Christ. De cette pénétration élargie et plus en profondeur nous pouvons tirer les deux conclusions suivantes:

Avant tout, nous n'avons pas prêté une oreille suffisamment attentive à la voix, passée et présente, des Eglises orthodoxes qui continuent à soutenir que l'effusion de l'Esprit-Saint sur toute chair n'est pas subordonnée à la seconde personne de la Trinité, mais demeure une prérogative absolue du Père. Le don du Saint Esprit aux Gentils n'est pas une prolongation de l'Incarnation; l'Esprit opère selon sa propre économie en rendant le Christ présent dans toutes les nations.

Selon l'enseignement orthodoxe, la doctrine de la création inclut l'activité de l'Esprit-Saint dès l'origine, conduisant tous les hommes et toutes choses dans le cours de l'histoire du monde à leur accomplissement final. La liberté de Dieu ne peut pas être limitée à son action providentielle et rédemptrice révélée dans quelque événement de l'histoire du salut. Si nous allons au-delà de l'idée de '*Heilsgeschichte*', nous retrouvons la signification de l'*oikonomia* de Dieu, nous déchiffrons tous les autres signes qu'il a élevés en dehors du peuple de l'Alliance, et pouvons sonder l'authentique vie spirituelle des non-baptisés. Le dialogue de Dieu avec l'humanité entière s'est poursuivi après la création aussi longtemps que l'alliance cosmique avec Noé a conservé sa validité, indépendamment de l'alliance avec Abraham. Israël est sauvé figurativement comme représentant de l'humanité. Le Nouvel Israël conserve son rôle de médiateur, mais Dieu continue à faire surgir d'autres voix, d'autres vocations en dehors de l'enceinte de l'Eglise chrétienne. Cette théologie orthodoxe de la création, du Saint Esprit et de l'économie du salut s'appuie sur de nombreuses références scripturaires, en particulier sur les Actes et les épîtres de saint Paul aux Corinthiens et aux Colossiens.

A une consultation de théologiens et de membres du staff COE, qui eut lieu à Zürich en mai 1970 sous le patronage de la commission World and Evangelism, ces points de vue orthodoxes furent exposés dans le contexte christologique suivant: « La mission de l'Eglise ressort de l'activité de Dieu pour le salut du monde entier et la concerne. Les chrétiens savent que celle-ci est une activité de l'amour de Dieu, pour eux particulièrement incarné dans le Christ. C'est dans le Christ que toutes choses trouvent leur cohésion et c'est dans le Christ que toutes choses seront rassemblées. De là la mission de l'Eglise: les chrétiens en particulier doivent la remplir et y participer dans les situations où ils se trouvent; elle est issue de la mission de Dieu (qui envoya au monde son Fils bien-aimé), et en est une réponse. Cette mission consiste à révéler le Christ là où il est, rassemblant déjà toutes choses; à le faire connaître afin que les hommes puissent l'accueillir sciemment et participer à son œuvre de conduire toutes choses à leur accomplissement dans son Royaume, le Royaume de l'amour; à le recevoir tel qu'il se fait connaître à nous à travers son activité et à travers les disciples d'autres croyances et d'autres engagements » (4).

Secondement. Les quelques dialogues initiaux que nous avons déjà engagés avec les musulmans, les hindous, les bouddhistes, et qu'il nous faudra

(4) Christians in Dialogue with Men of Other Faiths. In: International Review of Missions, vol. 59, n. 236, oct. 1970, p. 385.

poursuivre pendant beaucoup plus longtemps avec patience et avec plus de pénétration, commencent à nous faire réaliser que le problème de la désunion humaine et de l'unité de l'Eglise doit recevoir une nouvelle formulation dans un contexte beaucoup plus large de l'unité de l'Eglise au milieu de nombreuses prétentions religieuses à l'unité. La relation entre l'unité de l'Eglise et l'unité de l'humanité, que nous concevons maintenant plus en termes de dialogue et d'association qu'en termes de suspicion et de défense, est croisée par les civilisations religieuses hindoues, bouddhistes, musulmanes et autres, chacune d'elles en quête de la volonté divine et de son plan sur toute l'humanité. Il s'ensuit qu'une nouvelle tentative à outrance pour christianiser le monde entier serait à condamner comme une entreprise purement anachronique et impossible, justement parce que l'Eglise a besoin d'avoir comme associés essentiels et le monde séculier et le monde pluri-religieux pour prendre conscience de sa vocation propre et de sa mission, et y répondre. Il s'ensuit également qu'aucune suggestion ou tentative ne doit être faite pour renforcer le 'côté religieux', en recherchant un ensemble de dénominateurs communs religieux pour les dresser en barrage devant un monde de plus en plus 'irreligieux'.

De moindre valeur encore que les espoirs religieux rivalisant dans leur variété et les perspectives sur la destinée dernière de l'humanité, serait un syncrétisme réconfortant, facilement obtenu et à bon compte. C'est à l'intérieur même du monde pluri-religieux que doit être étudiée et approfondie la question de séparer et distinguer chaque foi, et de savoir jusqu'où toutes les religions sont, à partir d'une source commune, hâchées par des voies imparfaites et incomplètes; de cette étude devrait jaillir de nouvelles et meilleures réponses. Pour tous les hommes de fois vivantes il importe que le dialogue se fasse continu, mais qu'il se garde d'introduire une nouvelle compétition pour les âmes ou d'embrasser un irénisme universel et une tolérance qui profanent la déité en lesquelles ils ont foi, au bénéfice d'un être spirituel abstrait, indistinct, sans puissance.

Il reste que la recherche séparée de la vérité, unique stimulant de chaque croyance et réservoir commun des sources de révélation et d'interprétation, est une entreprise problématique, à moins que ne l'alimente notre vie actuelle menée ensemble dans le même monde; à moins aussi que n'en soit intensifiée notre recherche d'une vocation commune, même si notre achèvement devait être diversement interprété. Au milieu d'un monde plongé dans la tourmente et les luttes, marqué par le progrès et la stagnation, il faut que le christianisme se départisse de son hégémonie et de ses manières de voir occidentales, l'islam de ses variées allégeances nationalistes, le bouddhisme de son infiltration dans la politique de l'Extrême-orient, afin que bouddhistes, musulmans, chrétiens (et

tous les autres croyants) servent ensemble les hommes et glorifient Dieu dans cette tâche. L'unité du christianisme, l'unité de toutes les religions et toutes les unités liées les unes aux autres, doivent devenir une partie constituante de la suprême manifestation d'unité, à savoir l'unité de l'humanité. Alors chaque effort religieux tendu vers l'unité représentera une anticipation exaltante et sera un symbole transparent de cette suprême unité.

L'humanité entière devant un seul Dieu

Avant d'achever cet exposé je voudrais faire quelques remarques sur l'eschatologie. Le véritable œcuménisme se caractérise par la croyance journalière et ferme que seulement dans le Royaume de Dieu, et pas avant, l'unité de l'Eglise et l'unité de l'humanité non seulement coïncideront totalement mais encore seront transformées en la seule et simple unité entre Dieu et les hommes. Sur la route de cette unité l'Eglise représente l'humanité, mais comme entité institutionnelle elle n'est qu'un instrument pour la réalisation de ce but. L'unité de l'Eglise ne peut et ne doit jamais devenir une unité en soi, car l'Eglise, tout autant que l'humanité, et ensemble avec l'humanité, est en marche vers le Royaume de Dieu à venir. Puisque le salut dans le Christ est offert au monde entier, les chrétiens n'ont pas à tracer une ligne de démarcation entre l'Eglise et le monde. A Dieu seul il appartient de discerner la ligne frontière dans l'humanité. Nous ne pouvons donc pas faire de différence entre croyants et non-croyants de la même manière que nous classons les hommes et les femmes dans des catégories séparées. Dans l'Eglise et dans l'humanité il s'agit toujours d'une créature humaine, de cette même créature pour laquelle le Christ est mort, puis ressuscité. Nous devons d'ailleurs faire un pas de plus et dire que le monde, pris dans son tout, peut être considéré comme une église latente, qui n'a pas encore conscience d'elle-même.

Naturellement il faut ajouter que seule l'unité de l'Eglise, et non pas l'unité de l'humanité, est un article de foi énoncé dans le *credo* de l'Eglise. Cette unité est célébrée d'une manière exclusive et suprême dans l'Eucharistie, qui non seulement est l'unique fondement de la communauté ecclésiale (*koinonia*), mais la manifestation souveraine de l'unité finale de l'humanité et son anticipation. Dans l'Eucharistie nous expérimentons dans la plénitude de notre être la vraie libération de toute servitude et notre réception dans la communion permanente et indissoluble. Cependant, même armés d'une 'eschatologie centrée sur l'Eucharistie', il nous est impossible de combattre efficacement à la fois le triomphalisme ecclésiastique et l'idéalisme séculier, si nous ne regagnons en toute hâte (*hurry back*) les véritables champs de bataille de ce monde, et ne pensons et n'en convoiquons les

autres que les efforts contemporains vers l'unité de l'humanité sont en fait une participation à l'action de *Dieu*.

Instaurer le Royaume de Dieu (dont seule l'Eglise a vraiment l'avant-goût) n'est pas en notre pouvoir; mais nous participerons effectivement à son édification si nos efforts se joignent à ceux de nos compagnons pour créer un monde unifié dans la paix, la justice et la joie. Comme j'ai essayé de l'exposer, l'engagement total des chrétiens et des églises, leur identification avec le combat idéologique du monde et leur ouverture aux hommes et aux familles des autres fois vivantes pour instaurer un monde plus unifié, tout cela est directement et foncièrement lié à l'édification du Royaume. Sachant qu'un jour l'humanité entière se trouvera devant le seul et unique Dieu, les chrétiens ne peuvent, comme créatures humaines, que parler avec modestie de l'unité visible et invisible de l'Eglise. Toutefois, que sans timidité, mais avec assurance, ils participent aux fardeaux comme aux espérances de ce monde. Je pense qu'en fin de compte c'est en cela que consiste le véritable œcuménisme, car la souveraineté du Christ s'étend bien au-delà des seuls chrétiens et des églises institutionnelles, et même de l'Eglise universelle. Elle embrasse chaque créature humaine et l'univers. Intervenant à l'origine de chaque homme, cette réalité est aussi l'achèvement de toute vie.

Un dernier mot sur la notion chrétienne de 'péché'. Bien que j'aie insisté sur la nécessité d'opérer selon des modèles 'ouverts' du concept d'unité dans l'humanité, j'ai pu donner l'impression que nous avons déjà une connaissance plutôt claire et détaillée de ce que cette unité comporte et implique. Et on pourrait m'accuser d'avoir éliminer la doctrine chrétienne du péché et d'avoir traité notre sujet en des termes trop optimistes et trop évolutionnaires. Mais Jésus-Christ n'a-t-il pas dit à ses disciples qu'il n'était pas venu apporter la paix ici-bas, mais la guerre. Autrement dit, c'est en termes de querelle, de tension et de conflit qu'il faudrait décrire la marche vers l'unité de la race humaine. Si bien qu'une grave question reste ouverte: les hommes vivront-ils jamais ensemble dans l'harmonie et l'unité, étant donné que toute créature humaine est pécheresse et atteinte par la perplexité du problème du mal?

En dépit de la validité de cet argument, je suis intimement persuadé que l'examen idéologique de nous-mêmes et notre dialogue avec les hommes d'autres croyances et idéologies se situent dans une perspective d'attente et d'optimisme. L'Eglise a trop longtemps méprisé et ridiculisé les pensées et les comportements du monde séculier et pluri-religieux pour prouver la légitimité et la supériorité de son existence. Bonhoeffer nous rappelle aujourd'hui encore « que nous ne devons pas mal parler de l'homme dans sa 'mondanité', mais le

situer devant Dieu dans ce qu'il a de meilleur; que nous devons nous défaire de tous nos subterfuges cléricaux, de notre regard de psychothérapie et d'existentialisme comme précurseurs de Dieu » (5) (aujourd'hui nous pouvons substituer aux mots psychothérapie et existentialisme: nouveaux humanismes idéologiques et fois vivantes). Certes, l'unité de l'humanité n'est pas une formule immuable ne nécessitant aucune clarification ultérieure. Non seulement nos concepts d'unité ont besoin d'être complètement re-pensés et radicalement re-formulés, mais nos nouvelles définitions de l'unité de l'humanité doivent comporter comme élément essentiel d'unité la nécessité de la diversité et du conflit. Toutefois les chrétiens ne peuvent pas assumer cette tâche, à moins d'être marqués d'une profonde solidarité et d'une authentique identification avec la race humaine. C'est seulement parce qu'ils s'engagent dans le procès actuel d'une marche commune avec les autres hommes vers une communauté mondiale créatrice, diverse et plus forte, qu'ils sont en droit de parler de péché et de culpabilité solidaire. C'est seulement pour cela que leurs paroles sur le pardon du péché et le triomphe sur le mal deviennent crédibles et peuvent porter. Alors les hommes séculiers et religieux pourront entrevoir le Christ cosmique tenant ce globe dans une véritable et parfaite unité.

QUESTIONS A DEBATTRE POUR UN « ŒCUMENISME ELARGI »

Au fur et à mesure que nous avançons dans la génération dialogique, il semble que les questions l'emportent sur les réponses. De quel genre de questions s'agit-il? Le Père McGinn, du Secrétariat vatican pour les non-chrétiens, a établi une liste de ces questions à débattre dans les dialogues; « c'est le genre de questions, dit-il, posés aux membres du Secrétariat pour les non-chrétiens ». Attendu que notre vision œcuménique s'élargit, dans les prochaines années les réponses à plusieurs de ces questions seront vitales.

1. Si le christianisme est une religion entre de nombreuses autres religions, pouvons-nous encore dire qu'il est « la seule vraie religion »?
2. Le dialogue interreligieux est-il une catégorie de pensée et d'expérience relative à la spiritualité hindoue, musulmane, bouddhiste, ou bien, peut-être, un concept occidental que nous essayons d'imposer aux autres?
3. De quelle manière spécifique le Christ est-il

(5) Bonhoeffer, D. Letters and Papers from Prison. New York, Macmillan, 1962, p. 214.

- présent dans les religions Autres-que-chrétiennes?
4. Une vraie conversion *du catholicisme* au vrai Dieu d'une religion Autre-que-chrétienne est-elle possible?
 5. Le dialogue est-il une piètre manière de remplacer l'évangélisation *ou* d'échapper à ses exigences?
 6. Si le salut est possible dans les religions Autres-que-chrétiennes, quel est le but réel et final de l'activité missionnaire?
 7. La conversion au Christ doit-elle comporter conversion et adhérence au christianisme tel qu'il est organisé et s'exprime aujourd'hui?
 8. L'outillage traditionnel théologique convient-il au dialogue?
 9. Les livres saints des peuples Autres-que-chrétiens renferment-ils d'authentiques éléments de révélation et d'inspiration, dans le sens que donnent à ces mots dans la Bible les théologiens chrétiens?
 10. Est-il théologiquement chimérique de soutenir que, pour sauvés soient dans leur vie personnelle les hommes Autres-que-chrétiens, leurs religions et leurs pratiques religieuses n'interviennent en aucune façon dans leur salut?
 11. Les religions Autres-que-chrétiennes sont-elles aussi salvifiques que le christianisme?
 12. Quelle est l'unicité du Christ dans le contexte des religions Autres-que-chrétiennes?
 13. Qu'attribuera à une personne sincère Autre-que-chrétienne un membre formel de la communauté du peuple de Dieu?
 14. Mon expérience divine est-elle personnellement communicable?
 15. Pouvez-vous prêcher un évangile d'absolutisme religieux?
 16. Supposez-vous que ce qui est mentionné dans l'Ancien et le Nouveau Testament Dieu, le Père, le Créateur, le Rédempteur et le Sanctificateur, l'ait fait en dehors, pour un plus grand segment de l'histoire de l'homme, et parmi une plus large partie de l'humanité?
 17. La pluralité de pensée religieuse doit-elle inévitablement conduire à la pluralité de religion?
 18. Trouve-t-on chez les peuples Autres-que-chrétiens une réelle sainteté personnelle, dans le sens que donnent à ce terme nos auteurs spirituels?
 19. L'Eglise de 1970 est-elle suffisamment 'incar-née' pour avoir son sens?
 20. Comment l'œuvre d'évangélisation de l'Eglise peut-elle se présenter comme une œuvre d'humanisation?
 21. Une Eglise qui n'a pas su inculquer une théologie morale de valeur et acceptable dans les domaines Guerre, Sexe et Autorité, peut-elle sérieusement prétendre avoir une théologie morale valable pour la grande majorité des peuples du monde moderne?
 22. La complicité passée des grandes religions du monde touchant ce qui fut ensuite catégoriquement reconnu mauvais, que peut-elle nous dire maintenant de l'autorité morale de ces religions?
 23. En quoi la religion chrétienne peut-elle encourager... et entraver... le procès de modernisation et d'humanisation?
 24. La « souveraineté » de Dieu signifie-t-elle que Dieu a guidé toutes les nations comme il a guidé la nation juive?
 25. Que faut-il faire pour préparer les chrétiens au défi, aux difficultés et aux risques du dialogue?
 26. Si les profits exorbitants faits aux dépens de la pauvreté du Tiers-monde sont en fait ce qui procure au monde occidental la possibilité d'un haut standard de vie, quel est le rôle d'une société missionnaire *vis-à-vis* du monde occidental?
 27. Dans quelle mesure l'effort de l'Eglise porte-t-il sur ceux qui pourraient, *en ce moment*, avoir une bonne influence sur la marche des affaires dans leur pays, à l'échelon ville, état, gouvernement fédéral?
 28. Pouvez-vous aider à bâtir le communauté si vos idées s'arrêtent à un seul problème de cette communauté, par exemple la religion?
 29. Dieu sera-t-il moins servi si, sans pour autant négliger l'Atonement (réconciliation), nous commençons à donner un peu plus de temps à l'At-one-ment (pour-unir-en-un)?
 30. Dieu est-il présent comme rédempteur dans l'humanisation de l'homme?
 31. Un acte peut-il être irrégulier s'il est humain?
 32. Un acte peut-il être indigne d'un homme s'il est religieux?
 33. Le « colonialiste ecclésiastique passé » est-il le bouc émissaire de chaque problème missionnaire en Asie et dans le Tiers-monde?

34. Le christ aurait-il compris ce que veut dire « chrétien anonyme »?
35. Comment les hommes Autres-que-chrétiens voient-ils notre activité missionnaire?
36. Quelles aptitudes requiert des interlocuteurs un dialogue sérieux sur les expériences spirituelles personnelles?
37. Quelles sont les différences entre christianisme théorique, exporté et existentiel?
38. Voudriez-vous dire quelques mots sur l'inspiration et l'infaillibilité dans les Sutras bouddhiques?
39. En quoi l'exégèse méditée de Amos 9, 7 vous aide-t-elle à comprendre votre état de membre du corps des 'élus'?
40. Peut-on étendre aux hindous, aux bouddhistes et aux musulmans la croyance chrétienne qu'Israël durera jusqu'à la fin des temps?
41. L'idôlatrie de l'Ancien Testament fut-elle mauvaise en soi ou in alio? C'est-à-dire, fut-elle un mal parce qu'elle violait l'alliance des juifs (leur alliance) avec Yahvé?
42. Les conférences et instituts traitant du dialogue (*on or about*) sont-ils dans une large mesure périphériques?
43. Les vérités de religion naturelle, les vérités connues par la conscience et les vérités connues par la révélation biblique sont-elles les seuls accès de la connaissance de Dieu ouverts à l'homme?
44. Le 'mysticisme négatif' (bouddhisme) est-il vraiment un athéisme religieux?
45. L'âge de l'action missionnaire en Asie est-il *dépassé*, pour autant qu'on puisse le prévoir?
46. Si tous les hommes de bonne volonté font déjà partie de l'Eglise (peuple de Dieu), la tâche du missionnaire d'engager les non-chrétiens à se joindre à sa communauté dans l'Eglise ne semble-t-elle pas superflue?
47. Les hindous, les musulmans, les bouddhistes sont-ils membres d'une Eglise ou adhérents d'une religion?
48. Le Christ a-t-il besoin d'être libéré du christianisme?
49. Si le 'dialogue' est un défi à une force de l'homme, la 'mission' serait-elle alors un palliatif à sa faiblesse?
50. Est-ce qu'oublier les 'différences' entre les religions n'équivaut pas à oublier les religions elles-mêmes?
51. Une sincère conviction religieuse est-elle incompatible avec l'attitude de tolérance religieuse nécessaire pour une approche en commun des intérêts touchant à la communauté mondiale?
52. Est-ce que la bienveillance que Dieu manifeste en se révélant aux hindous, aux musulmans et aux bouddhistes, et en les aimant, diminue en quelque manière son amour pour les chrétiens et les juifs?
53. Est-il contraire au christianisme que les hindous poursuivent leur marche dans l'histoire dans la croyance qu'ils sont le peuple de Dieu?
54. Le 'Qui est chrétien?' est-il plus important que le 'Qu'est-ce que le christianisme?' ?
55. Vous devient-il de plus en plus manifeste que le Dieu d'Abraham est le Dieu des juifs, des hindous, des chrétiens, des musulmans, des bouddhistes?
56. La coexistence entre le christianisme, le judaïsme, l'hindouisme, l'islam et le bouddhisme a-t-elle cessé d'être un problème théologique, pour être reconnue au contraire comme un événement de grâce?
57. Peut-on développer une théologie existentielle acceptable en se mettant à l'écoute du peuple de Dieu traitant du développement et du changement social à la lumière de sa foi?
58. Le dialogue a-t-il tué l'autorité dans l'Eglise?
59. L'institutionnalisation de l'œcuménisme, du dialogue, et l'expérimentation liturgique sont-elles synonymes d'insensibilisation anesthésique?
60. Quelle différence y a-t-il entre extinction de la réalité (NIRVANA) et transformation de la réalité (Royaume de Dieu)?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR A
« WIDER ECUMENISM »

As we proceed into the dialogical generation we are becoming gradually more aware that questions seem to be growing faster than answers. What are some of these questions? Father McGinn of the staff of the Vatican Secretariat for non-Christians has drawn up the following list of questions for the sake of discussion. He describes them as « the kind of questions that are being asked here of the members of the Secretariat for non-Christians ». As our ecumenical vision broadens in the next years the answers to some of these questions will be vital.

1. If Christianity is one among many religions, may we still speak of «one true religion»?
2. Is Inter-Faith Dialogue a category of thought and experience relevant to Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist spirituality or is it perhaps a western concept that we are trying to urge on them?
3. In what specific way is Christ present in Other-than-Christian religions?
4. Is it possible to have a true conversion *from Catholicism* to the true God of any of the other than christian religions?
5. Is dialogue a poor substitute for evangelization *or* an evasion of its exigencies?
6. If salvation is possible in Other-than-Christian religions, what is the adequate and comprehensive purpose of missionary activity?
7. Does conversion to Christ entail conversion and adherence to Christianity as it is organized and expressed today?
8. Are the traditional tools of theology apt for dialogue?
9. Do the sacred books of the Other-than-Christians peoples contain genuine elements of revelation and inspiration as the words are understood of the Bible by Christian theologians?
10. Is it theologically unrealistic to maintain that, though Other-than-Christian men are saved in their personal lives, their religions and practices play no part in that salvation?
11. Are Other-than-Christian religions as salvific as Christianity?
12. What is the uniqueness of Christ in the context of the Other-than-Christian religions?
13. What will explicit membership in the Christian community of the people of God bestow upon a sincere other-than-christian person?
14. Is my divine experience personally communicable?
15. Can you preach a gospel of absolutism in a religiously pluralistic world?
16. What do you imagine that God: The Father, the Creator, the Redeemer and the Sanctifier has been doing outside what is mentioned in the Old and New Testament, for the greater part of man's history and among the larger part of mankind?
17. Does plurality of religious thought inevitably lead to plurality of religion?
18. Is there real personal holiness among other-than-christian people in the same sense that our spiritual writers use the term?
19. Is the Church of the 1970's incarnate enough to be meaningful?
20. How can the church's act of evangelization appear as an act of humanization?
21. Can a church which has failed to inculcate an acceptably meaningful theology of morality in the fields of War — Sex — and Authority seriously claim to have a moral theology for the great majority of the people of the modern world?
22. What does past complicity of the great world religions in what has been later judged patently evil say to us now of the moral authority of these religions?
23. In what ways will the christian religion abet... and hinder... the process of modernization and humanization?
24. Does «Lordship» mean that God shaped all nations just as He did the Jewish nation?
25. What must be done to prepare Christians for the challenge, hard work and risk of dialogue?
26. If the exorbitant profits made at the expense of the poor of the 3rd World are in fact what makes the high standard of living possible for the Western World, what is the role of a missionary society *to the* Western world?
27. How much of the church's effort is expended on those who could *at this moment* influence to the good, the course of affairs in their country at the level of City, State and Federal government?
28. Can you be a builder of community if your ideas are only concerned with one problem in that community, e.g. religion?
29. Will the Father be served less if we, while not forgetting about Atonement, begin to spend a little more time working for At-one-ment?
30. Is God redemptively present in man's humanization?
31. Can an act be irreligious if it is human?
32. Can an act be unworthy of a human if it is religious?
33. Is «past ecclesiastical colonialism» a scapegoat for every christian missionary problem in Asia and the Third World?

34. Would Christ have understood the meaning of « anonymous christian »?
35. How do Other-than-Christian men view our missionary activity?
36. What are the requirements for individuals to have serious personal dialogue on matters of personal spiritual experiences?
37. What are the differences between theoretical, exported and existential christianity?
38. Would you like to say a few words about inspiration and inerrancy in Buddhist Sutras?
39. What does a prayerful exegesis of Amos 9, 7 do for your understanding of your being a member of the 'chosen'?
40. May we extend the Christian belief that Israel will continue to the end of time to Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims?
41. Was the idolatry of the Old Testament wrong in se or in alio? I.e., was it wrong because it violated *their* covenant with Jahweh?
42. Are conferences and institutes *on* or *about* dialogue largely peripheral?
43. Are the truths of natural religion, the truths known from conscience and the truths from biblical, revelation, the only avenues of knowledge of God open to man?
44. Is 'negative mysticism' (Buddhism), really religious atheism?
45. Is the age of missionary achievement in Asia *over* as far as the foreseeable future is concerned?
46. If all men of good-will are already in the Church (the people of God), does the missionary's job of preaching to non-Christians to join his community within the church seem redundant?
47. Are Hindus, Muslims and Buddhist members of a church or adherents of a religion?
48. Does Christ need to be liberated from Christianity?
49. If 'Dialogue' is a challenge to a man's strength, is 'Mission' then a palliative to his weakness?
50. Is the forgetting of the 'differences' between religions equivalent to forgetting the religions themselves?
51. Is effective religious conviction incompatible with the tolerant religious attitude necessary for promoting a coming together in the interests of world community?
52. Does God's apparent willingness to address Himself to Hindus and Muslims and Buddhists, and to love them, in any way diminish His love for Christians and Jews?
53. Is it unchristian that Hindus pursue their course in history in the faith that they are the people of God?
54. Is 'Who is a Christian?' more important than 'What is Christianity?' ?
55. Is it becoming increasingly apparent to you that the God of Abraham is the God of the Jews, Hindus, Christians, Muslims and Buddhists?
56. Has the co-existence of Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Muslimism, and Buddhism ceased to be a theological problem and instead now recognized as a grace-event?
57. Could an acceptable existential theology be developed by listening to the people of God talking about development and social change in the light of their faith?
58. Has dialogue murdered authority in the church?
59. Is the institutionalization of ecumenism, dialogue and liturgical experimentation tantamount to anesthetization?
60. What is the difference between salvation from reality (NIRVANA) and transformation of reality (Kingdom of God)?

RAPPORTO SULLE CONFERENZE
TENUTE DAL PROF. GUNTHER GASSMANN
E DAL DOTT. ANS VAN DER BENT

Durante il mese di marzo, al Centro Pro Unione hanno avuto luogo due serie di riunioni ecumeniche. La prima concerneva le conversazioni bilaterali fra le Chiese. Il dott. Günther Gassmann, incaricato per la Ricerca al « Centre d'Etudes Oecuméniques » (Strasburgo), è venuto a Roma per fare un rapporto pubblico dello studio particolareggiato che lui ed il dott. Nils Ehrenstrom stanno svolgendo sulle conversazioni bilaterali per la conferenza dei Segretari del « World Confessional Bodies ».

La seconda serie d'incontri è stata condotta dal dott. Ans Van der Bent, bibliotecario e archivistica presso il « World Council of Churches ». Egli ha tenuto una conferenza sull'influsso che la secolarizzazione, il marxismo e i non-credenti hanno sul pensiero e l'azione ecumenica. Entrambi, il prof. Gassmann e il dott. Van der Bent, durante il loro soggiorno a Roma, hanno in-

contrato, non ufficialmente, alcuni funzionari del Segretariato per l'Unità e per i non credenti. In periodi diversi essi hanno preso parte a conversazioni con vari professori romani e con gruppi di studenti che seguono corsi di ecumenismo a Roma.

Nella sua pubblica allocuzione il dott. Gassmann ha fatto notare come il numero delle conversazioni bilaterali fra le Chiese sia notevolmente aumentato nel corso degli ultimi sei anni. Ed ha proseguito: « Senza dubbio l'ingresso ufficiale della Chiesa Cattolica Romana nel Movimento Ecumenico dal Vaticano II, è stata la ragione precipua del nuovo fiorire di gran numero di dialoghi e contatti bilaterali. Le conversazioni bilaterali sono considerate, generalmente, come incontri ufficiali tra le due Chiese, ma, ha precisato l'oratore, gli argomenti e i problemi, oggetto di questi incontri, costituiscono proprio ciò che rende tali conversazioni bilaterali. Ogni problema presenta due aspetti. Nessuna delle conversazioni ha forza impegnativa per le Chiese, come tale, ma il loro valore principale è insito nel fatto che: « Esse sono in grado di mutare il clima ecumenico e di preparare le Chiese, le loro autorità e i loro membri, a decisioni che, al momento attuale, sembrano impossibili. Queste conversazioni, ha detto il professor Gassmann, hanno scopi diversi, e.g.: una conoscenza reciproca e rapporti migliori. Aumento di cooperazione nell'area di ordine pratico e teologico; soluzione di problemi specifici quali i matrimoni misti; preparazione della via a mutui riconoscimenti e all'intercomunione; e ancora, correzione della via per migliorare alcune forme di unità organica. Naturalmente esse portano con sé una precisa serie di problemi. Qual è la relazione fra i diversi livelli dei dialoghi? Le conversazioni teologiche possono realmente essere fatte in modo rappresentativo « per altri »? Una Chiesa impegnata in varie conversazioni bilaterali si espone alla possibilità di « presentare aspetti differenti ai diversi soci »? Le conversazioni stesse possono generare nuove forme di relazioni ecumeniche, sia in senso avverso che proficuo (e.g. compartecipazione nel ministero, azioni sociali comuni). Molto dipende dalla consistenza della posizione. Il dottor Gassmann ha proseguito: « L'esperienza attuale delle conversazioni mostra che questi incontri sono altamente condizionati dal pensiero teologico generale odierno, ed ancora più dai problemi e dai compiti che tutte le Chiese devono affrontare nel tempo e nel mondo attuale. È proprio a causa di questi problemi e di questi compiti comuni, che uno sforzo preciso viene fatto per superare le divergenze del passato. Ed è proprio perché il pensiero teologico e gli sviluppi odierni costituiscono il contesto dei dialoghi che si sono potuti raggiungere risultati considerevoli nel superare differenze ereditarie.

Infine il dott. Gassmann, dopo aver passato in rassegna parecchie delle attuali conversazioni bila-

terali in corso, ha così concluso: « L'esperienza finora giustifica una continuazione di questa forma di dialogo ecumenico. Questo può infatti realizzarsi solamente con l'esistenza delle seguenti condizioni: 1) un'appropriata integrazione delle conversazioni nell'insieme della discussione ecumenica; 2) una stretta interrelazione fra i vari livelli di dialogo, sia nazionale che internazionale; 3) la consapevolezza di altre forme di relazioni ecumeniche nella vita delle Chiese; 4) un sistema di metodi aggiornati e la fuga dagli errori del passato; 5) precisazioni di fini chiari e realistici; 6) la capacità di rendere i gruppi dialoganti completamente rappresentanti della totalità dei membri di una comunione cristiana; 7) informazione e comunicazione più effettiva e aperta.

* * *

A sua volta il dott. Van der Bent ha messo in risalto il fatto che « il messaggio di riconciliazione e di pace della Chiesa, è credibile solo se la Chiesa è pronta a impegnarsi nel servizio interconfessionale e di carità cooperativa... Un ecumenismo pertinente implica prima di tutto un servizio comune di apprendistato nel mondo ». Questo ecumenismo nuovo e secolare, come viene chiamato, non può essere permutato col « vecchio » o teologico ecumenismo, orientato ecclesiasticamente, perché, ha continuato il dott. Van der Bent, ciò equivarrebbe a sotto valutare meramente il problema del porre in relazione l'unità della Chiesa e l'unità del genere umano.

Il dott. Van der Bent ha richiamato l'attenzione sul fatto che l'ecumenismo di punta è attraente e s'indirizza sia verso una comprensione teoretica, sia pratica, dell'Unità della Chiesa e del genere umano. E ancora: « ...l'unità richiesta da Dio può essere acquisita solamente partecipando all'attuale processo della storia umana e di quella della Chiesa... il processo accelerato di secolarizzazione ha costretto la Chiesa a meditare più profondamente sul concetto di 'genere umano' e sulla solidarietà della razza umana ». Le Chiese, oggi, subiscono la pressione di un mondo autonomo che esige di servire l'unità degli uomini, di ponderare i suoi tentativi teologici e pratici all'unità. Un problema urgente è: « Non si dovrebbe pensare dell'unità degli uomini solo nel senso di un processo lunghissimo, senza fine, un processo in divenire che in nessun modo oggi può essere definito con precisione? ».

L'ideologia che il dott. Van der Bent ha definito come: « un corpo coerente di idee basate sul valore, che serve come guida e impulso all'azione », è il fattore dinamico del risveglio sociale, del mutamento e del progresso. La teologia, poi, ha un ruolo cruciale da interpretare nel mondo attuale. Essa non può mai esistere nel vuoto della cultura, non può mai essere neutrale. Può invece creare sia una nuova coscienza delle situazioni in corso,

sia rendere evidente il valore o l'assenza di valore di una inquadratura ideologica che tiene assieme, giustamente o ingiustamente, una società, o che esige un cambiamento radicale nella società.

« Qui il problema primario », ha proseguito il dott. Van der Bent, « non è quello di un movimento ecumenico più politicizzato... bensì quello della possibilità di tutte le Chiese del mondo, di creare un foro ben coordinato in grado di offrire molte opportunità per partecipare alle capacità d'intuizione e per generare una critica costruttiva attraverso la serie completa di esperienze ideologiche e di opzioni. I dibattiti ideologici possono realizzarsi sulle basi di un mandato comune cristiano e quale espressione d'interesse e di sostegno reciproco ».

Questa pienezza di direzione dell'ecumenismo rende imperativo, non solo un dialogo con le ideologie secolari del mondo, quali il marxismo, ma anche con gli uomini di altre fedi religiose viventi, come hinduisti, buddhisti, maomettani. Tutto questo in certo qual modo è già stato intrapreso. Come risultato, il dott. Van der Bent proponeva « ora possiamo soltanto renderci conto che il problema della disunione degli uomini e dell'Unità della Chiesa dev'essere riformulato nel più ampio contesto dell'Unità della Chiesa tra le numerose esigenze religiose all'Unità ». Ciò conduce o induce molti a considerare il fine dell'ecumenismo come escatologico. Il che implica un aumento di attività e d'interazione nel mondo ed è « caratterizzato » dalla fede ferma e quotidiana, la quale solamente nel Regno di Dio, e non prima, farà pienamente coincidere non solo l'unità della Chiesa e del genere umano, ma sarà anche trasformata nell'Unità unica tra Dio e gli uomini.

NON-CHRISTIANS FAITH AND THEOLOGY IN OUR UNIVERSITIES

by Rev. Daniel McGinn

One of the surprising developments in christian academic life over the past decade is the inauguration of Non-Christian religion studies in seminaries and universities. All over the world students have shown great interest in these newly sanctioned studies. For many of these academic institutions, the creation of the possibilities of such studies represented a considerable change of policy. The past policy at some church related colleges and universities had, in effect, forbade the teaching of Non-Christian religions on their campuses. Against this background, the new Sections for Non-Christian Religious Studies constitutes a breakthrough.

Why did these institutions oppose the teaching of these religions in the past? More was involved

than the distinction between the « One True Religion » and the « False » ones. While the reasons were never written down, they came up at faculty meetings whenever the creation of such sections for the Non-Christian religious studies was discussed. One reason for opposing the study of Non-Christian religions in seminaries and on church related campuses was the then understood missionary character of Christianity and the understandable desire to avoid confessional debates among those students who might be sympathetic to some tenet or other of a Non-Christian religion. It must be said also that Catholic institutions were sometimes afraid that the method of presenting their claim of absolute truth, when confronted with another religious system with the same claim, would suffer in an academic environment in which pluralism, free discussion and critical methods were allowed. The teaching of Non-Christian religions along with the Christian one, it was felt, would also quite possibly introduce strife onto the institution's campus. It would inevitably excite passionate loyalties and provoke vehement distrust and opposition. When the heads of Catholic institutions looked at the Non-Christian religion's houses of study (which usually mirrored their own) and examined how religion was taught there, they found only confessional theology, taught with authority by Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim professors who regarded themselves or the religious thought they representend, as a special bearer of truth. The catholic institutions were wary of these counter-claims to absolute truth.

Related to this was another reason why Christian institutions were prudential in permitting the teaching of Non-Christian religion on their campuses. They were concerned that a section or a department of Non-Christian studies might become a power base for the Non-Christian religion from which its adherents might, yes would, try to attempt to influence the Christian community, exert pressure and promote the truth in which they believed. The Christian community could point to a long history of Non-Christian opposition (some even recalled it in such a way as to call it persecution) to free inquiry. Thus the study of Non-Christian religions, however scholarly it might seem at the ideological level, seemed to the Christian institutional leaders to be bound to a counter quasi-ecclesiastical institution, (if not by some form of legality, then at least by a loyalty) and hence would represent a threat to the ideals of the Christian institution. The separation of « truth » from « error » became a separation of Christian institutions that taught Non-Christian religions and those that did not.

Another reason for opposing the study of Non-Christian religions at these institutions is the profound conviction, entertained by some profes-

sors, that Non-Christian religions were not a proper object of religious academic research. Some held this view because of their exclusivistic approach to christianity. They regarded Non-Christian religions as tissues of superstitions, a remnant of less enlightened people that deserved to be dissolved by faith and reason, not to be studied by those who had both. Other professors, the more pragmatic ones, were led by their pietistic inclinations to take the Non-Christian religions seriously but to regard them solely as a matter of the heart, a « feeling » of devotion, and hence not of sufficient merit to be considered as topics to be studied at Christian religious institutions. Whether for the former or the latter or for other reasons, in any case, Non-Christian religions were not considered worthy of a place in the academic discipline. Due to a combination of factors then, one of the most universal phenomena of human history, namely Non-Christian Religions, were hardly mentioned, let alone studied at Christian institutions. Interest among intelligent Christians in Non-Christian religions was left to those people who studied and taught in departments of the Social Sciences, History and Literature where the concentration on Non-Christian religions was limited to the extent that it pertained to their field of interest.

Why have these institutions changed their policy with regard to the teaching of Non-Christian religions? They now seem to realize that there is a difference between confessional Non-Christian theology and the study of Non-Christian religion. They have acknowledged that religion is a universal phenomenon and that therefore it deserves to be so studied. A newly established Section of Non-Christian Religion at such an institution presents itself in terms somewhat like this:

« Throughout history man has expressed his profoundest convictions, questions, aspirations and fears in many ways. His art, philosophy, conduct, social institutions, even his theories about the universe, have conveyed and illuminated his measure of himself and the world in which he lives. From time to time these forms of expression have coalesced within a particular pattern and tradition, which we may identify as a « great » or a « world » religion. But along with such religions — both within them as well as outside them — are the individuals, each with his own personal convictions, values and interpretations of experience and symbols by which he represents to himself the ultimate concerns of life. The examination of all this constitutes the academic enterprise which we entitle « Religious Studies » and within which most surely belongs a Section on Non-Christian Religions ».

Such persuasive presentation of what religious studies (including Non-Christian) are was instrumental in helping to overcome the objections against the study of Non-Christian religions.

Eventually it helped to persuade Christian institutions to establish these new sections.

Religious studies, as above defined, were and should be for everyone, not just each religion's adherents. Non-Christian religions were seen as one phenomenon among others, to be studied with the various methods used in academic disciplines not depending solely on those with a particular commitment, but open to all who desire to make themselves sensitive to the subject. This descriptive definition of religious studies made it clear that No Buddhist or Hindu monk could plan, much less, succeed in planning the establishment of a Non-Christian religious imperialism or the disguised presence of a Non-Christian cell or Sect within the confines of a Christian institution.

This type of definition also presented the empirical basis of the study. While some professors may still feel that too much importance is given to Non-Christian religious phenomenon, they can hardly object to the Non-Christian religious studies in principle. Even the pietistically inclined professor could be told that the study of Non-Christian religious « feeling » throughout the ages revealed the extraordinary power which this « feeling » has had in the creation of institutions and the production of social change. While, even though some were still half-suspecting this to be some novel form of the Devil's attempt at infiltration, many Christian institutions were thus rendered willing to endorse the new enterprise.

Now that these sections exist, many questions regarding the aims and methods of Non-Christian religious studies deserve to be more carefully examined. Non-Christian religions, like the Christian religion, is studied, or can be, with a variety of methods. Since the Non-Christian religious phenomenon itself is so deeply immersed in human life, its institutions and its history, it can be examined from a variety of viewpoints by diverse methods and with several separate purposes in mind.

As the choice of method in many instances will be left to the teacher, one very interesting question comes easily to mind: « Is it possible *just* to teach a Non-Christian religion in a Christian institution? ». This question is not strictly parallel to the similiar but much simpler question whether a philosopher committed to Hegelian thought or to Thomism can be *just* a professor in a philosophy department. The answer to the second question is easy. It is obvious that academic research and university teaching involve commitments of various kinds. An explicit philosophical commitment does not (or at least should not) disqualify a teacher from an academic institution. However, because of the nature of the religious commitment and, more especially, because of the conditions under which the Section on Non-Christian Religion was created, the question about the Buddhist theologian teaching at a

Christian institution needs to retain our attention a little longer.

Other questions: Is the study of Non-Christian religion from the vantage point of equally acceptable absolute truth compatible with the nature of such Religious Study Sections? Is a teacher who is teaching theology rather than religion sailing under false colors in a Religious Studies Section? Have its exponents insisted that religious studies are essentially different from theology so that our institutions would change their policy and now, after the event, do they reverse their position and claim that their theology fits very well into a program of religious studies? Are they apparently trying to smuggle in a whole Oriental Divinity school under a new name? Is this a political strategy of the Non-Christian groups to make their « absolutes » heard in a conversation of men who have been temporarily lulled into preferring a more cautious, more critical and more modest approach to truth?

It would be the contention of this article that it is methodologically proper and honest, given certain conditions, to teach Non-Christian theology as well as Non-Christian religion in a Religious Studies Section of a Christian institution.

Let me first express what is commonly acknowledged, namely that here are different ways of understanding what a Religious Studies Section of a Christian institution is and does. I wish to simplify a complex problem by distinguishing between two types of Religious Studies Sections. The first promotes a study of all the major religions in what we will call an objective or positive way. Here religion is looked upon as a set of beliefs and practices to be studied with a maximum of objectivity. Here the scholar tries to isolate the object of his study from his own feelings about it as well as from the subjective attitude of the people practising the religion. He tries to look upon religion as an objective reality and study it with the detachment proper to the scientific method. This approach to religion, one might add, usually always leads to comparative studies. When a religion is isolated from the self-understanding of the people who practice it, it readily falls into a common genus of religion. It is a particular instance that ought to be compared with other instances of the same genus. This approach, inevitably, leads to overlooking the uniqueness and particularity of the individual religion. The scholar who follows this approach cannot discover and understand the heart of a living religion because he does not make himself sensitive to the subjectivity that keeps that religion alive. Needless to say, there is no room for theology in such a Religious Studies Section.

The other, type of Religious Studies Section promotes a study of religion that may be called phenomenological. What is studied here is not religion as an objective reality, separated from

all subjectivity, but religion as a living, historical reality including the meaning and power of that religion among the people who believe it. Here religion is never separated from the self-understanding of the people who adopted it and live by it. Here religion is regarded as a set of symbols that give meaning to life and hence creates a special style of life, or even an entire culture, and for that reason can never be studied without attending to the subjectivity of the believers. This approach, we may add, preserves the uniqueness and particularity of the individual religion and is not tempted to move speedily into comparative studies. This method respects the possibility that the so-called « world religions » have divergent meanings for the people who hold them and hence may not constitute a common genus of religion at all.

The phenomenologically oriented Religious Studies Section, we conclude, studies how people understand the religion they hold, i.e. how Jews understand Judaism, how Christians understand Christianity, how Moslem, Hindu and Buddhist, etc., each understands his own religion. What is studied are the variations in self-understanding of the various religious communities, in other words, their theologies. It is not only permissible, therefore, but necessary to teach Non-Christian theology in a Religious Studies Section just as much as it is necessary to teach Jewish thought or the theological self-reflection of Christianity.

The Religious Studies Section, however, may also study the same religious phenomena from other perspectives. It may study, for instance, the economic ethos the various religions generate and hence, the kind of material culture they promote. It may study the forms of literature these religions produce and the effects of these literary forms on the wider culture. It may study the basic attitudes to the emotions and to the physical body that Christian and Non-Christian religions create and hence their effect on the self-understanding of the whole culture.

These few examples illustrate that, while many methods may be used in the study of religion — methods drawn from sociology, literary criticism, psychology, etc., — what is always presupposed is that religion is a living reality in history and is to be understood best through the subjectivity of those who believe and follow it. This interiority, as a constitutive part of the human world, is that which is studied.

This Phenomenological orientation of the Religious Studies Section is, of course, made known to the Christian institution. Thus, the Non-Christian Religious Studies Section sees itself as an academic discipline based upon a broad concept of the fundamental significance of religion in the life of the individual and society. The intention of the Section sees itself as an academic discipline based upon a broad concept of the fundamen-

tal significance of religion in the life of the individual and society. The intention of the Section is to provide students the opportunity to deepen their understanding of man and his institutions by exploring the various ways which the ultimate questions and convictions have affected the foundations of man's life throughout history.

Since the study of the Non-Christian religion demands an understanding of the interiority that keeps that religion alive and gives it its meaning, what is required on the part of the student — especially the christian student — is a special power of empathy. The study of a Non-Christian religion widens the student's awareness of reality so that he becomes increasingly more capable of projecting himself into the subjectivity of others, not by commitment but by empathy (though commitment ought not be excluded), and of gaining an understanding of what that religion means to the persons and communities who profess and live by it. Such an expansion of personal awareness is not confined to the study of Non-Christian religions only; students of fields having to do with human life, such as literature, anthropology, history, etc., are in need of a growing self-awareness and sensitivity to the interiority of others. The study of human life is never a purely intellectual endeavour but implies a certain transformation of awareness. This is especially true of the study of religion. The Non-Christian religion that is taught in the Religious Studies Section is essential to the implementation of the Section's intention, by its course of studies, to expand human awareness in areas which affect directly the foundation and the quality of life and to encourage the critical and creative extension of this awareness into the areas of individual and corporate blindness.

In the context of this phenomenological approach Non-Christian theology can and should be taught in Christian institutions. At the same time, of course, it ought to be understood that it would be against the professed ideal of such a Section (and slightly deceitful in regard to our institution) to import an entire theological seminary-type program into the Section. But it might be asked if it is possible to specify the conditions that will assure the appropriateness of a program of Non-Christian studies within a Religious Studies Section of a Catholic institution. Since Christianity has been a majority religion in the West and since it has often understood its claim to absolute truth in a very literal fashion, christians have, unfortunately, often succumbed (though often quite unconsciously) to the temptation to use the pluralistic institutions of Western society to promote their own faith. While this is legitimate and, whenever the purpose and intentions are made public, praiseworthy, care must be taken that a Non-Christian Religious Studies Section which presents itself as pluralistic does

not become a front for a Non-Christian theological seminary.

The question mentioned above certainly merits further discussion and it is possible that the following remarks might be considered a contribution to that continuing discussion. A first condition is that the Non-Christian Religious Studies Section retain its credibility as a part of a pluralistic institution. It should not allow itself to become a section where non-christian students simply study Non-Christian religions with the recognized and traditional methods of theology. In addition to Non-Christian theology then, other courses must be offered, either studying other religions and their self-understanding — or studying the Non-Christian religions themselves but with methods not drawn from theology, i.e., methods drawn from the social sciences, from philosophy, from literary criticism, etc.

A cursory glance at the program of courses offered by the Religious Studies Section ought to convince the inquirer that what goes on there is not the teaching of Non-Christian theology but the study of the human phenomenon of religion from a diversity of viewpoints. It would follow also that if Non-Christian theology is taught in the section of Non-Christian religious studies, it must relativize its own self-understanding. Here theology is pursued, where apart from the quest for intelligence and sensitivity, no religious commitment is required and where not one, but several theological world views are being presented. Non-Christian theology thus finds itself there as one among several. Implied in the teaching of such theology therefore will be a certain modesty, a certain sense of relativity, in keeping with the structure of the Religious Studies Section.

It is not surprising that some christian theologians would have objections to the teaching of Christian theology *within* a « Religion Department or within a Religious Studies Section at a Christian university. They do not want to apply the methods used in the study of religion to the Christian Church, its faith and its practices. They clearly sense the relativizing implicit in a « Religion Department ». Similarly for conservative theologians, who make a strict separation between the natural and the supernatural, theological cooperation in a « religion department » raises grave problems. Until recently many Christians have even avoided using the term « philosophy of religion » because it seemed to suggest that reason and reflection exercise a normative role over divinely revealed religion. Christians and christian theologians who make a naked and unqualified claim to absolute authority rightly fear that theology taught in a « religion department » will undergo a certain relativizing influence.

Another difficulty is seen in that the Christian theologian teaching in a « religion department » or in a Religious Studies Section, must acknowl-

edge that every other member, whatever his religious views, has as much right to teach and study religions as he, just so long as he follows the phenomenological approach adopted by the department on the section. It just would not do for the christian theologian to accept the Hindu or Jewish member of the department or section or the religiously uncommitted student only by force of circumstances, or out of necessity, or with clenched teeth covered over with a charitable smile. If the christian (or non-christian) theologian swallows hard in the presence of men with different religious sensibilities — if he feels the impulse to affirm the absolute claim of his truth and is only kept from it by his determination to remain polite, his unconscious attitude will be obvious and his influence in the department or section will be destructive.

The theologian who teaches in such a department or section may not be able to render a theoretical account of religious pluralism but there is little reason to doubt that he will be enabled to grow personally in his ability to develop a new religious sensitivity regarding the convictions of other men and other religious communities. Another most excellent point that must not be overlooked is that the experience of teaching theology in a Religious Studies Section will create in the christian and non-christian theologian alike a new sympathy for the tradition of the *theologia negativa*. He will become increasingly more aware that nothing that is said of the divine mystery is true in a univocal sense and that thus the best man can do is to speak about the divine in analogies and symbols — or describe its redemptive power in human life. The agnostic tradition, within christianity as well as within Non-Christianity, stresses in one way or another the unknowability of the divine mystery. This agnostic position incidentally, is not a weak or non-contributing religious position... for it is precisely this negative theology that serves to continually unmask the idolatries which « theologians » create to threaten human society.

In a Religious Studies Section the teacher addresses himself to students who may not share his personal faith. They may not even regard themselves as believers in God. What he teaches them is how christians and non-christians (and various groups of both) understand their own religion. While he may not wish to hide his personal commitment, he does not teach out of his commitment as he might do in a school of spirituality. In a Religious Studies Section the students are interested in the commitment of the professor only to the extent that it creates a special sensitivity in him for the interpretation of the subject religion. It must even be recognized that another professor, without commitment but with a great power of empathy, might even be able to present the same topic even more adequately.

At the same time, the student ought be aware that he is not involved in a purely intellectual enterprise. This study ought also promote his growth of self-awareness and his religious sensitivity. The study of religion understood in this light has a certain humanizing effect on those engaged in it and hopefully even on the intellectual culture of the present day. It must be made perfectly clear however that if and when christian theology is taught in a Religious Studies Section, it must, of course, be open to new methods of enquiry. Theology is inevitably affected by the institutions in which it is taught. In the case of christian schools of theology, the traditional division of theology into biblical, historical and systematic largely determined the shape of christian theology. The christian theologian worked out his methods of research and the presentation of his topic in conversation with biblical scholars, historians of dogma and, possibly, professors of ecclesiastically approved philosophy. His theology was focused mainly on doctrine. His theology became an intellectual history of the christian church. Further, when he taught at a school of theology that was an ecclesiastical institution, the purpose (better, a purpose) of his theology was often to protect and promote doctrinal orthodoxy. When his theological school was at a university, the christian theologian many times found himself taking up the challenges to christianity raised by philosophers and historians, but in both cases, the christian theologian found himself party to the creation of a christian theology that systematically became more and more a simple history of christian ideas.

When christian theology is taught in a Religious « Department » or in a Religious Studies Section, it enters a new conversation. The christian theologian must be willing to recognize that, there, the christian religion will be studied with methods used in the study of religious phenomena — methods drawn from the social sciences, from various philosophical traditions, from literary criticism, etc. He must be ready to learn from the conversation with his colleagues that religion is more than doctrine and that theology is more than the history of ideas. Religion is a concrete living historical phenomenon, embracing human values, visions and actions that vitally affect the creation of culture and the formation of society. Through this conversation, the theologian will eventually, and hopefully, ask new questions and undertake new inquiries.

To the christian theologian who thinks in the context of the historical « faculty » of theology, the application of the sociological and psychological analysis to christianity tends to appear reductionistic. He is not used to such methods. But he possibly forgets that there was a time when the application of the historical method to christianity was regarded as reductionistic.

In a Religious Studies Section the theologian will be led to look at his subject in a new light. For instance, recently, scholars of religion have begun to be keenly interested in meaning and in interiority; in the structure of religious experience; in the cultural and political effects of religion; in the influence of religion on the psyche and consciousness; etc., and as a result it would seem that a good deal of attention may eventually have to be paid to these important matters, heretofore, so widely neglected in our traditional theology.

As an attempt at orientation here at the end of this article we might try to crystalize our position by asking a question: Are we really in touch with a living religion when we study only the doctrinal tradition? or phrased in another way: Is religion a more total and embracing phenomenon, of which the doctrinal is only one aspect? To phrase such questions helps us to answer the question we started out with. After our consideration, it would seem that there is room for Non-Christian religious studies in a pluralistic Religious Studies Section of a Christian institution. But we have seen that such a study program, to be effective, ought not be a replica of a seminary program. Further, it would seem appropriate that it not simply adopt the structure of theology as it has developed in theological faculties. To do this would seem to be introducing a foreign body into a Religious Studies Section. A program of studies of both christian and non-christian religion in a Religious Studies Section will demand that the christian and non-christian religion both be studied with various methods, some old, some new, some as yet unknown, and from perspectives that have been generated from a living dialogue within the section.

At the same time we have seen that this openness of theology to new methods and its new position in the pluralistic context in which it will be studied ought in no way damage the authentic christian and non-christian heritage. Indeed, the new sensitivity developed in such a Religious Section or Religious Department will most certainly enable the teachers, christian and non-christian alike, to gain a greater insight into the substance of their individual scriptures and the vitality of their separate traditions.

LA DEVOZIONE ALLA MADONNA NELLA CHIESA ORTODOSSA

di Irina Findlow

Nel 1959, ad un gruppo di pellegrini armeni, Papa Giovanni XXIII disse: « La migliore speranza di riconciliazione tra cattolici e ortodossi è il nostro comune amore per la Madre di Dio ».

E sempre difficile parlare d'amore, perché l'amore è una cosa intima, sentita e vissuta piuttosto che detta. Ciò nonostante non si può parlare della Madonna, la genitrice di Dio, come noi la chiamiamo nella Chiesa Ortodossa, senza parlare d'amore. Per noi cristiani, Dio è amore e la Madre di Dio è parte del Suo amore per noi ed anche del nostro per Lui; è l'umanità che offre il suo più bel fiore: la Beata Vergine Maria essere madre del Dio incarnato. In una preghiera di Natale si dice: « Bambino Gesù, il cielo ti ha portato la stella; la terra, la grotta e noi ti portiamo la B.V. Maria ». Vuol dire che con la persona della B.V. Maria l'umanità offre a Cristo il suo più perfetto dono.

La prima grande festa della Madonna è la *Presentazione di Maria al Tempio*. I suoi genitori, S. Gioacchino e Sant'Anna, che l'accompagnano, sono sempre venerati e invocati alla fine di ogni liturgia. Anche nelle icone sono sempre rappresentati entrambi, come simbolo di matrimonio sacro.

La seconda grande festa della Madonna è l'*An-nunciazione*. In russo diciamo che nemmeno gli uccelli fanno il nido in questo giorno, che rappresenta la prima promessa per l'anima umana di liberarsi dal peccato per l'Incarnazione di Cristo. In Russia esisteva una tradizione per cui, in questo giorno, in tutti i mercati si vendevano uccelli in gabbia ed i bambini acquistavano queste gabbie proprio per poter liberare gli uccelli che vi si trovavano. Fino a qualche tempo fa, la Russia era chiamata « La casa della B.V. Maria » e la vita quotidiana era molto legata alle festività cristiane. I santi occupavano un grande parte nella vita del popolo tanto che l'onomastico di una persona era ritenuto molto più importante del suo compleanno.

La terza grande festa della Madonna è la festa di *Pocrov* (Protezione), una festa tipica orientale in memoria di un avvenimento del X° secolo, quando Costantinopoli era circondata dai nemici e, secondo la tradizione, la B.V. l'ha coperta col suo mantello. Questa festa tanto amata dai russi è diventata un simbolo, tanto che durante la tragica storia russa, i fedeli hanno sempre invocato la protezione della Madonna, dedicando molte chiese alla Madonna di Pocrov.

La Chiesa Ortodossa non ha il dogma dell'Immacolata Concezione, però il termine « Immacolata » è molto usato. L'Oriente ha una concezione diversa da quella dell'Occidente per quanto riguarda i dogmi: l'Oriente ama molto il mistero e non tenta di spiegare cose profonde con parole ed evita definizioni precise. Lev Tolstoj ha scritto un racconto, tratto da una storia popolare, nel quale illustra molto bene la mentalità orientale. Narra di tre vecchi eremiti che vivevano in una piccola isola del Mare Artico. Erano veramente santi e la loro fama era nota in tutta la Russia. Il Vescovo di quella regione decise di partire per recarsi ad incontrarli. Dopo un lungo e faticoso viaggio, il

Vescovo giunse all'isola, che apparve ai suoi occhi arida e desertica, costituita in maggior parte da rocce e ghiacciai. In una grotta trovò i tre uomini che vivevano in estrema povertà e semplicità, scalzi e in mezzo ai più grandi disagi. Il Vescovo chiese loro cosa facevano per salvare le loro anime ed in che modo pregavano Dio, dal momento che non avevano neppure una chiesa. I tre risposero dicendo che pregavano semplicemente la Santissima Trinità con queste parole: « Santissima Trinità, Voi siete tre, noi siamo tre; quindi abbiate misericordia di noi ». A queste parole il Vescovo disse loro che questo non bastava, ma che per lo meno occorreva conoscere il Pater Noster e cominciò ad insegnarglielo. Dopo una settimana il Vescovo desiderava tornare a casa e così disse ai tre eremiti: « Ora spero che conoscete il Pater Noster perché io non posso più restare con voi ». Si accinse quindi ad imbarcarsi su di un battello che tornava in patria. Durante la navigazione, in una notte oscura e tempestosa, il battello rischia di affondare. Il Vescovo ha paura e comincia a pregare il Signore. Ad un tratto appaiono all'orizzonte tre luci mobili che avanzano sull'acqua. Il Vescovo le guarda interessato, mentre le luci si avvicinano alla nave. Finalmente, riconosce nelle tre luci i tre eremiti che aveva lasciato nell'isola, i quali, avvicinandosi al Vescovo, si inginocchiano sull'acqua dicendo: « Santo Padre, siamo così sciocchi che abbiamo già dimenticato le parole della sua preghiera. Vuole ripetercele ancora? ». Ma il Vescovo, stupito da così grande prodigio, si inginocchia a sua volta e risponde: « Non io devo insegnare a voi, ma voi a me che siete tanto più santi. Andate e pregate per me ». Come possiamo vedere, questo racconto spiega nella maniera più ampia il sentimento del popolo orientale e del suo misticismo. Infatti, l'Apostolo Giovanni, che è il più notoriamente mistico tra i dodici Apostoli, è il più venerato nel mondo ortodosso; ed è significativo anche il fatto che lui è stato l'apostolo più vicino alla Madonna, a cui N.S.G.C. affidò la propria Madre quando morì sulla croce.

Un momento saliente nella liturgia ortodossa è immediatamente dopo la Consacrazione, quando il sacerdote recita questa preghiera: « In modo particolare Ti offriamo questo Sacrificio per la tutta santa immacolata, benedetta, gloriosa Signora nostra, Madre di Dio e sempre vergine Maria ». E il coro risponde: È veramente giusto proclamare beata te, o Deipara, che sei beatissima, tutta pura e Madre del nostro Dio. Noi magnifichiamo Te, che sei più onorabile dei Cherubini, e incomparabilmente più gloriosa dei Serafini, che in modo immacolato partoristi il Verbo di Dio, o vera Madre di Dio ».

Per Pasqua, l'inno della Nuova Gerusalemme è anche l'inno della Vergine. Questo fatto è molto significativo perché sottintende che non può esserci un nuovo cielo ed una nuova terra senza

l'opera di Maria, che trasforma l'universo con la sua opera di redenzione.

Arriviamo ora alla festa più importante e forse la meno compresa dalla maggioranza: l'Assunzione, chiamata in Oriente « Kimesis », che significa « Dormizione ». L'Assunzione non è un dogma per il mondo ortodosso, ma costituisce parte integrale della fede ortodossa. Tante icone famose sono dipinte con la raffigurazione di questo mistero, però non recano parole che vi si riferiscono perché, come abbiamo già detto, in Oriente certe cose non vengono spiegate con le parole, bensì ognuno ha fede e saggezza e secondo i propri sentimenti: così un saggio può penetrare appieno il mistero guardando le icone, laddove un semplice può intuire solo una parte di esso. Sull'icona della « Dormizione » la Madonna è sempre rappresentata sdraiata, circondata dagli apostoli e dagli angeli, con Cristo accanto al suo letto che la tiene tra le braccia, come una bambina in fasce. In un inno della « Dormizione » si canta: « Rallegrati, o Beata, Tu che non ci abbandoni neanche nella Tua dormizione ». Così la Madonna indica tutto il cammino verso la risurrezione della carne, ed è chiamata per questo, la gioia di tutti gli afflitti.

Non si può concludere un discorso sulla Madonna, senza citare le parole con le quali alcuni grandi poeti e scrittori russi la descrivono. Dostojevski, in un suo capolavoro, « I fratelli Karamazov », nel capitolo « Le Nozze di Cana in Galilea », dice: « Un grande cuore, il cuore della Madre di Dio, sapeva che suo figlio non era venuto al mondo soltanto per un tremendo eroismo, ma che era disceso dal cielo anche per dare una gioia semplice alle semplici e povere genti di Galilea, che l'avevano invitato al loro umile matrimonio. Per la prima volta, Cristo aiutò la gente non nel dolore ma nella gioia, trasformando l'acqua in vino ». È stata la Madonna a chiedergli di fare questo. In Russia, infatti, tante icone della Madonna sono chiamate « La nostra gioia ».

Un grande poeta russo, Lermontov, ha scritto una bellissima preghiera dedicata alla Madonna, nella quale dice: « Eccomi o Madre di Dio, di fronte alla Tua luminosa immagine, pregando non per la mia salvezza, non per una vittoria in battaglia, non con riconoscenza o penitenza, non per la mia arida anima, anima di un pellegrino errante, ma io voglio mettere una giovane, innocente creatura sotto la protezione Tua. Tu che sei la tenera mediatrice in questo mondo freddo ».

Anche un poeta più moderno, Alessandro Bloch, ha dedicato un grande ciclo di poesie alla « Bella Signora », cioè la Madonna: « ... Tu che reggi il mare e la terra nella Tua mano delicata ed eterna ».

Due autori contemporanei, Pasternack e Solzenitsyn, premi Nobel, hanno scritto frasi significative sulla Madonna. L'ultimo romanzo di Solzenitsyn, « 14 agosto », è dedicato a Lei in maniera

celata. Lo dimostra una frase alla fine del romanzo, nella quale si parla della Madonna.

Così la gran Madre di Dio è amata e lodata in Oriente, come pure nell'Occidente, ed oggi, quando le Chiese di Cristo cercano di avvicinarsi per riunirsi secondo la volontà di Nostro Signore « Che siano tutti uno », la preghiera e la protezione della B.V. Maria sono, come ha detto Papa Giovanni, « ... la nostra più grande e più forte speranza ».

UNA BREVE VEGLIA BIBLICA PER UNITA'
« VI DO UN COMANDAMENTO NUOVO »

Gv. 13:34

Introduzione

Gesù chiede ai suoi di vivere secondo un nuovo stile di vita. Essi devono amarsi l'un l'altro come lui stesso li ha amati. Questo sarà il segno distintivo, con il quale si riconosceranno i suoi discepoli.

La lettura I Gv. 3, 13-18
(breve pausa di meditazione)

Invocazione

Unanimità nella carità diciamo insieme Kirie eleison.

V Preghiamo lo Spirito Santo di accendere in noi il fuoco del suo amore, affinché nella Chiesa muoia tutto ciò che non è conforme al volere di Dio, e vivano e crescano in lei i doni dello Spirito.

R Kirie eleison.

V Preghiamo lo Spirito Santo di ispirare quelli che lavorano e pregano per l'unità dei cristiani e di guidarli alla verità.

R Kirie eleison.

V Preghiamo lo Spirito Santo di aprire i nostri cuori affinché Gesù Cristo possa offrire attraverso di noi la sua preghiera per l'unità dei suoi e ci faccia crescere tutti insieme in unione con lui.

R Kirie eleison.

V Preghiamo lo Spirito Santo di farci partecipi delle sofferenze che la nostra disunione e la nostra infedeltà causano al nostro Signore affinché possiamo partecipare alla risurrezione.

R Kirie eleison.

V Preghiamo lo Spirito Santo perché la Chiesa sulla terra sia pronta a lasciarsi fiaccare e a donarsi per i bisogni del mondo, nella fedeltà al Signore che donò la sua vita per gli uomini.

R Kirie eleison.

V Preghiamo lo Spirito Santo, che opera lui stesso tra gli uomini per realizzare la sua unità, affinché ci apra a tutti gli uomini, nostri fratelli, e ci sia dato di ricordarci di quelli che sono radicati in culture differenti dalla nostra e che ci danno modo di arricchirci scambievolmente, di quelli che devono affrontare tutt'altre situazioni economiche diverse, di tutte le istituzioni internazionali che si sforzano di costruire un mondo nuovo...

R Kirie eleison.

V Preghiamo lo Spirito Santo che susciti nella Chiesa testimoni di riconciliazione che lavorino per l'unità voluta da Cristo.

R Kirie eleison.

Orazione del Signore
(al mattino)

V Benediciamo il Signore.

R Rendiamo grazie a Dio.

P Il Dio della pazienza e della consolazione ci conceda di vivere gli uni accanto agli altri in buona armonia affinché unanimi e con una sola bocca noi rendiamo gloria a Dio, Padre di Gesù Cristo nostro fratello.

R Amen.

A SHORT BIBLE VIGIL FOR UNITY
« LOVE ONE ANOTHER »

Leader: God is love; who lives in love lives in God

All: and God lives in him (I John 4:16)

All: Anyone who says, « I love God, and hates his brother, is a liar, since a man who does not love the brother that he can see cannot love God, whom he has never seen. So this is the commandment that he has given us, that anyone who loves God must also love his brother.

(1 John 4: 20-21)

1st Reading: Luke 10: 25-37
(Silent Meditation)

All: God, our Father, You have told us in the

Sacred Scriptures that we should love one another but we do everything in our power to avoid such a commitment to our fellow men. We so easily let our minds be dulled to your truth that we are startled each time we hear again your commandment of love. Teach us to understand that every man has great value in your eyes; that our love must embrace not « mankind » but every man.

All: If your brother does something wrong, reprove him and, if he is sorry, forgive him. And if he wrongs you seven times a day and seven times come back to you and says « I am sorry », you must forgive him. (Luke 17: 4).

2nd Reading: John 15: 12-17
(Silent Meditation)

INTERCESSIONS:

1. Let us pray to the Lord who brings us unity that he will make us open:

to one another as Christians.
to a true communion beyond all differences of opinions, backgrounds and cultures.
to full community of action and service in the world especially to the poor and suffering.
to those who live with the tension between the generations.

V. LORD AS YOU HAVE LOVED US
R. TEACH US TO LOVE

2. Let us pray to the Lord who brings us unity that he will make us open:

to all our neighbors.
to our parishioners in our own church.
to our neighboring churches (names).
to new manifestations of unity in our neighborhood.

V. LORD AS YOU HAVE LOVED US
R. TEACH US TO LOVE.

3. Let us pray to the Lord who brings us unity that he will make us open:

to all who live and work in our community.
to those who strive for economic and political justice.
to those who suffer from loneliness, isolation and alienation.
to those who suffer from hunger, from loss and from war in every continent.
to transcending the barriers we have built up between other races and ourselves.

V. LORD AS YOU HAVE LOVED US
R. TEACH US TO LOVE.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

LET US SUM UP ALL OUR PRAYERS IN THE WORDS OUR LORD HAS TAUGHT US:

Our Father in heaven,
holy be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Do not bring us to the test
but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

BENEDICTION

The God of peace make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be the glory for ever and ever.

Amen.

In the ecumenical directory **Ecumenism Around the World - L'Oecuménisme à travers le Monde**, published by us last year, the following changes and additions should be made:

- p. 17 Change the name and address to:
Australian Frontier, Inc.
10 Floor, Rm 18
422 Collins St.
Melbourne, Victoria 3000
Australia
- p. 26 Add to the paragraph
under symbol P:
Via S. Antonio, 5
20122 Milano, Italia
- p. 54 Change the name from **Centro** to
Instituto
- p. 73 Eliminate this center, it has been
closed
- p. 75 Change the name from **Stellenbosch**
to **Emmaus House**
- p. 127 Change the street address to:
Via della Cava Aurelia, 8
- p. 143 Change the address to: Muher,
Richmond Yorkshire DL 11-6 QQ
- p. 200 Remove Ut Unum Sint

Additions to the Directory:

Africa:

Ecumenical Research Unit
c/o Fr. T.A. Verryn
St. John Vianney Seminary
Groenkloof, Pretoria
Republic of So. Africa

Edendale Lay Ecumenical Center
P.O. Box 63
Plessislaer, Natal
Republic of So. Africa

Koinonia Conference Center
P.O. Botha's Hill
Natal, Republic of South Africa

Wilgesprint Fellowship Centre
P.O. Box 81
Roodepoort, Transvaal
Republic of So. Africa

Asia:

Christian Institute for the Study of
Religion and Society
6G Mount Sophia
Singapore 9, Japan

Lumen Institute
P.B. 1769
Ernakulam, Cochin 16
Kerala, India

Europe:

Samthinilayam Ecumenical Center
Kumeram, Alloor
P.O. Kottayam 16
Kerala, India

Ekumeeninen Kestus Myllyjarvi
Pelkänitly, Espoo
Finland

Centre Oecuménique d'Information et Dif-
fusion sur le développement (CIDEV)
47, Quai des Grands Augustins
Paris (VIe), France

Liturgisch Oecumenisch Centrum
Mathenesserlaan 301C
Rotterdam 3003, Holland

Mellomkirkelig Rad
for den Norske Kirke
Geitmyrsveien 7d
Oslo, Norway

Azione Ecumenica Europea
Largo Chigi, 19
00187 Roma, Italia

Centro di Studi Ecumenici
Giovanni XXIII
Priorato di S. Egidio
24039 Sotto il Monte (Bergamo), Italia

Centro Ecumenico Comasco
Via Giuseppe Ferrari, 1
22100 Como, Italia

Centro Ecumenico di Ospitalità
Don Orione
Via Montanara, 8
00186 Roma, Italia

Studi Ecumenici
Piazza Risorgimento, 16
10143 Torino, Italia

The Blaendulais Ecumenical Center
Blaendulais, Neath
Glamorgan, Wales, U.K.

The Delaney Centre for Ecumenical
Cooperation
c/o 8, Elm Garth
Witheral, Carlisle, England

The Ecumenical Society of the B.V.M.
229 Fulham Palace Rd.
London, S.W. 6, England

North America: John XXIII Ecumenical Center
220 South Valley Rd.
Paoli, Pa. 19301, U.S.A.

Latin America: Centro de Estudios Cristianos del Rio
de la Plata
Casilla Correo 445
Montevideo, Uruguay

Centro Ecumenico de Difusión
Post Box no. 16477
Santiago de Chile
Correo 9 - Chile

**Under the section
for Reviews**
(p. 194 ff) add:

Community
one for renewal
82 High Rd.
East Finchley, London, N. 2, U.K.

Ecumenical Trends
Grayntoor Ecumenical Institute
Garrison, N.Y. 10524, U.S.A.

Revista Biblica
Av. San Martin 3773
Rafael Calzada (Bs As)
Argentina

Studia Liturgica
Mathenesserlaan 301C
Rotterdam 3003
Holland

Unité des Chrétiens
17, Rue de l'Assomption
75 Paris 16e, France

