

Paul B. Steffen SVD
Centres of Formation and Evangelizing Ministry
Pastoral Institutes in Oceania and Africa

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Paul B. Steffen SVD

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FOREWORD

It is a great honor to be asked to contribute a foreword to this book by Paul B. Steffen, Divine Word Missionary and professor of pastoral mission concerns at the Urbaniana University in Rome. I have followed Fr. Steffen's work for many years and have found it always insightful. His 1995 work, *Missionsbeginn in Neuguinea: Die Anfänge der Rheinischen, Neuendettelsauer und Steyler Missionsarbeit in Neuguinea*, for example, is full of comparative insights on the way in which members of the Society of the Divine Word and two Lutheran missionary societies worked in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It offers many important insights into the pastoral-missiological strategies and practices of these missionary societies.

The present work continues Steffen's tradition of exhaustive study and clear thinking, this time on the contributions of three major pastoral and missiological institutes to the process of contextualizing Christianity in Papua New Guinea (Melanesian Institute), East Africa (AMECEA Pastoral Institute), and South Africa (Lumko Institute).

Of special value in the book is the way in which Steffen sorts out the history of the Gaba/Eldoret Institute, which was founded in 1967 and began work in 1968 under the wing of the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa (AMECEA), whose members were Churches in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Sudan, and Zambia. Begun at Gaba, Uganda and later moved to Eldoret, Kenya, the AMECEA Pastoral Institute (API) became the locus for dialogue on how to promote the transformation from being missions to local Churches. Besides offering renewal courses and theological discussions patterned on the model of the East Asia Pastoral Institute in the Philippines, the API became the locus of serious reflections on the Church in Africa that eventuated in an emphasis on Small Christian Communities and the notion of the "Church as Family" that would become the leading motif of the 1994 Synod of African Bishops in Rome.

My acquaintance with the API and Lumko is with their materials and, in the case of Lumko, from extensive correspondence with Bishop Fritz Lobinger (Bishop Emeritus of Aliwal in South Africa). The founders and most of the first and second generation staff of the Melanesian Institute (MI) in Goroka, Papua New Guinea were all my friends. When I arrived in PNG in 1972, the MI had recently been founded as an ecumenical institute dedicated to providing pastoral and socio-cultural services to both Catholic and Protestant Churches. The MI frequently offered courses at the Holy Spirit Seminary in Bomana (near Port Moresby) and later sponsored encounters in which teachers from the four

tertiary-level Catholic and Protestant seminaries in PNG met to discuss curriculum, formation, and contextualization issues, which I was privileged to be part of. At that time (the 1970s) the API was the most developed of the three institutes studied in this volume, and the questions we were asking in PNG about making our work relevant to our students and their sending Churches were being reflected on in API publications. We studied them assiduously and the MI's founder visited Gaba.

The reader should recall that at precisely this period of time – as decolonization movements were gathering steam throughout Africa and the Pacific – each of Father Steffen's three institutes was coming into its own. They were the key to illuminating the intense debates occurring both within Churches and between missionary organizations and indigenous local communities. These discussions revolved around such questions as whether local Churches could be truly contextual while foreign missionaries retained power by controlling the flow of money for salaries and projects or by retaining supervisory roles in the young Churches. The matter was brought to a head when the Reverend John G. Gatu, at that time the General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, proposed a "moratorium" on sending foreign missionaries and money in a speech to a Reformed Church in America mission conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1971.¹ That speech crystallized issues that post-colonial missionaries had to face.

Mainline Protestant Churches, such as the Lutheran, Anglican, and Presbyterian, were already reducing their expatriate staff in much of Africa and Melanesia, and it is hard to know whether Gatu's call hastened that movement or whether it would have occurred anyway as a result of growing ambivalence to the traditional missionary enterprise on the part of liberal branches of Protestantism associated with the World Council of Churches.

For Catholics, the issue was more complex. First, in most missions, they did not yet have sufficient numbers of indigenous priests, brothers, sisters, and trained laity to replace expatriate pastors, teachers, and directors of social services. Nor was there any prospect for replacing them absent major changes in Roman Catholic regulations in areas like mandatory celibacy for priests. Second, Catholics were also in the process of absorbing changes mandated by the Second Vatican Council. Catholics who were working in places like PNG and Kenya from the late 1960s through the early 1980s remember well the controversies stirred up by both decolonization and the implementation of the Council's teaching. In the end, it is clear that the Melanesian, Gaba/Eldoret, and

¹ John Gatu, Missionary Go Home: *Church Herald* 28:37 (Nov. 5, 1971).

Lumko Institutes were instrumental in helping us implement the Council's vision, although the question of structures of ministry remained difficult to resolve.

In my opinion, Churches in these areas – taking their clues from programs and studies undertaken by the pastoral institutes – were generally more successful in the task of contextualizing both the message of the Council and insights from renewed biblical studies than the Churches in Europe or North America. The reasons for this are complex, but a plausible case can be made that the Churches of what we now often call the “Global North” were more institution-centered, and the sheer inertia of institutional concerns impeded the process of both *aggiornamento* (“updating”) and *rinnovamento* (“renewal”) envisaged by Pope John XXIII and his Council. Instead, progressives and conservatives – each side convinced it was right – struggled for control of the institutions. The resulting divisions were deep, especially in the United States. They were deep in Europe, too, which also found itself victim of a different set of circumstances that are well documented in insightful books by Grace Davie (*Religion in Modern Europe: A Memory Mutates*, 2000) and Hugh McCleod (*Religion and the People of Western Europe 1789-1989*, 1997; and *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s*, 2007).

In Africa and PNG, by contrast, the phrase “We are the Church” was greeted with enthusiasm by local people, even as the institutes whose stories are told in Father Steffen’s book created materials for grassroots educational ventures and updating of both the clergy and laity to concretize what that phrase meant. Bishop Fritz Lobinger, whose influence on Lumko Institute is recounted here, is one of the most far-seeing and contextually-grounded bishops that the Catholic Church has produced in our time. His vision of how the Aliwal diocese in South Africa (and by implication other local Catholic Churches, *mutatis mutandis*) ought to implement the Council’s vision of a Church in which pastoral and missional concerns were front and center remains impressive. His book *Like His Brothers and Sisters: Ordaining Community Leaders* (Manila, 1998 and New York, 1999) is a vivid testimony to the creative impulses set in motion at Lumko.

Father Steffen tells well the story of all three institutes, and as I read this work I keep coming back to the central question facing the Roman Catholic Church in the twenty-first century. At one level, as *Roman catholic* (the lower case “c” is intentional), the Church is the repository of an immensely rich heritage of theological, spiritual, and liturgical treasures. The great Catholic historian Lamin Sanneh of Yale University, born a Muslim in Gambia, says of the issues at stake:

In its current resurgence outside the West, Catholicism is poised to play a major role in the demand for a new design

of society based on the dignity of human beings as human beings, not simply as consumers or as subjects of the state. ... Catholicism's doctrinal core is arguably more stable than that of many other variants of Christianity. Even if its directives are contested, the church's magisterium is recognized for what it is. The catechism and the instruments of papal encyclicals together have defined Catholic faith just as that faith is enshrined in the church's liturgical life, with Jesus Christ at its core. Against the cultural fragmentation of modern life, that is a considerable advantage.²

Father Steffen's book does not attempt to make an *apologia* for Catholic superiority, but its tale of three pastoral-missionary institutes is the tale of faithful men and women striving to deal with the *vetera* ("ancient elements") of a two-thousand-year Roman Catholic patrimony even as they strive to help Christians in the Global South to bring forward the *nova* ("new elements") that will aid in rooting the faith in much the same way the wise householder of Matthew 13:20 does. For, as Sanneh says in another place, "Several lines converge on the subject of the character of Christianity in Africa. The most significant of these is undoubtedly the contribution of traditional religions to a deepened sense of the religious potential of the message of the Bible."³ Understanding how these three institutes have managed to carry on a dialogue with African and Melanesian cultures, a dialogue that is respectful of Christian tradition, while applying that tradition in ways that learn from the *nova et vetera* of African and Melanesian cultures, has made missiologists and theologians in both Africa and PNG better equipped to deal with the kind of cultural fragmentation Sanneh speaks of.

The adjective "Roman" in Roman Catholicism, however, bespeaks a tension. The word "Roman" itself denotes an entity (the Church as the body of Christ as it grew in the Latin West) with its own history and culture. On the other hand, the word "Catholic" denotes the claim of that entity to have universally valid and important traits. In the missionary process, a deep process of translating the message goes hand-in-hand with integrating Christianity into new ways of thought as well as challenging and learning from the *vetera* of places like Nigeria and the Solomon Islands.

As Joseph Ratzinger puts it, the process of inculturation (perhaps better, intercultural dialogue or contextualization) is not a new incarna-

² Lamin Sanneh, *Summoned from the Margin: Homecoming of an African*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 2012, 259.

³ Lamin Sanneh, *West African Christianity: The Religious Impact*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1983, 242.

tion: “We cannot repeat the process of the Incarnation at will, in the sense of repeatedly taking Christ’s flesh away from him, so to speak, and offering him some other flesh instead. Christ remains the same, even according to his body. But he is drawing us to him.”⁴ He also notes, correctly I believe, that, “Anyone entering the Church has to be aware that he is entering a separate, active cultural entity with her own many-layered intercultural character that has grown up in the course of history.”⁵ The crucial issue for Roman Catholicism, accordingly, is how one balances both the Roman-Latin Church’s traditional *vetera* with the *nova* that Melanesians, Malawians, and Vietnamese bring to the interpretation of the Gospel’s promise.

The story of the institutes whose history and ethos Father Steffen retrieves and analyzes are first and foremost the story of an extraordinary group of individuals who have navigated the tension between tradition and innovation over the two generations since Vatican Council II. Their story is one that Churches globally have a great deal to learn from, and his readers owe Paul Steffen a debt of gratitude for bringing their contribution to light.

*William R. Burrows*⁶

⁴ Joseph Ratzinger, *Truth and Tolerance: Christian Belief and World Religions*, trans. Henry Taylor, San Francisco: Ignatius Press 2004, 71.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ William R. Burrows is managing editor emeritus, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York and research professor of missiology in the World Christianity Program at New York Theological Seminary as well as Senior Fellow in the Andrew F. Walls Center for the Study of Christianity in Africa and Asia at Liverpool Hope University in Great Britain.

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I am particularly grateful to William Burrows for writing the foreword which has put my work into the context of the worldwide ecclesial renewal in the post-Vatican II era.

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to my good parents, Ingeborg Mathilde Ottilie Steffen, née Wertz (1919-2008), and Dr. med. Hermann-Josef Steffen (1915-2008), for giving me my first and most important human and Christian formation and to my good eight sisters and three brothers who contributed significantly to my upbringing in our family.

Rome, Collegio del Verbo Divino, April 9, 2014

On the 31st anniversary of my ordination in 1983 in Sankt Augustin, Germany

Paul B. Steffen SVD

ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Apostolicam Actuositatem, Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, 1965
AAS	Acta Apostolicae Sedis
ACRC	Association of Clerical Religious Superiors in PNG/SI
AFER	African Ecclesial Review
ADS	AMECEA Documentation Service
AG	Ad Gentes, Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church, 1965
AM	Africae Munus, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Benedict XVI, 2011
AMECEA	Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa
API	AMECEA Pastoral Institute
AR	Annual Report of the Melanesian Institute, Goroka, PNG
AsIPA	Asian Integral Pastoral Approach
ATR	African Traditional Religion
BEC	Basic Ecclesial Community
BBKL	Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon
CBC	Catholic Bishops' Conference
CD	Christus Dominus, Decree Concerning the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, 1965
CELAM	Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano – Latin American Episcopal Council
CI	Communication Institute, Goroka, PNG
CIC	Codex Iuris Canonici
CSSp	Congregatio Sancti Spiritus – Congregation of the Holy Spirit (Spiritans)
CUEA	Catholic University of Eastern Africa
DIIPA	Developing Indian Integral Pastoral Approach
DWU	Divine Word University, Madang, PNG
EA	Ecclesia in Africa, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of Pope John Paul II, 1995
EAPI	East Asian Pastoral Institute, Manila
EAPR	East Asian Pastoral Review
EN	Evangelii Nuntiandi, Evangelization in the Modern World, 1975
EG	Evangelii Gaudium – The Joy of the Gospel, 2013
ELC	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
FABC	Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences
Fr.	Father

FR	Final Report of the Self-Study of the Catholic Church in PNG, Goroka 1976
GA	Generalate Archives SVD
GS	Gaudium et Spes, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, 1965
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus infection / acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
Ibid.	Ibidem – in the same place
IBMR	International Bulletin of Missionary Research
Id.	Idem – the same author
IMBISA	Inter-Regional Meeting of the Bishops of Southern Africa
ITEBEA	Inter-Regional Episcopal Board in Eastern Africa
KM	Die Katholischen Missionen
LG	Lumen Gentium, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 1964
LCI	Liturgical Catechetical Institute, Goroka, PNG
M.A.	Magister Artium – Master of Arts
M. Afr.	Missionarii Africae – Missionaries of Our Lady of Africa (White Fathers)
MATS	Melanesian Association of Theological Schools, PNG
MCC	Melanesian Council of Churches, PNG
MFL	Marriage and Family Life research project, MI, Goroka, PNG
MJTH	Melanesian Journal of Theology
MI	Melanesian Institute
MM	Maryknoll Missionaries - The Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America
MSC	Missionarii Sacratissimi Cordis – Sacred Heart Missionaries
NLCC	National Liturgical Catechetical Centre, Goroka, PNG
NZM	Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft
OFM	Ordo Fratrum Minorum – Franciscans
OMI	Oblates of Mary Immaculate
OT	Optatam Totius, Decree on Priestly Training, 1965
PAC	Pallottine Animation Centre, Nagpur, India
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PIME	Pontificio Istituto Missioni Estere – Pontifical Institute of Foreign Missions, Milan, Italy
RM	Redemptoris Missio – The Mission of the Redeemer, 1990
SACBC	Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference
SAC	Societas Apostolatus Catholici – Society of the Catholic Apostolate, Pallottines

SC	Sacrosanctum Concilium – Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 1963
SCC	Small Christian Community
SDB	Salesians of Don Bosco
SECAM	Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar
SI	Solomon Islands
SIL	Summer Institute of Linguistics, Ukarumpa, Eastern Highlands Province, PNG
SJ	Societas Jesu – Society of Jesus
SM	Society of Mary – Marists
SMSM	Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary
SPI	Singapore Pastoral Institute
SVD	Societas Verbi Divini – Society of the Divine Word, Divine Word Missionaries
UC	United Church of PNG
UPNG	University of Papua New Guinea
ZMR	Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft

INTRODUCTION

The people of God believes it is led by the Spirit of the Lord who fills the whole world. Moved by that faith it tries to discern in the events, the needs, and the longings which it shares with other men [and women] of our time, what may be genuine signs of the presence or of the purpose of God.¹

Pastoral Institutes in Oceania and Africa are places of formation and ministry, which with creative missionary imagination developed new models of contextualized ministry approaches for the evangelizing mission of the Church in Oceania and Africa.

This book investigates the origin, development and contribution of pastoral and cultural institutes in Oceania and Africa since 1962, the year the Second Vatican Council started its work and Lumko Institute was opened in a faraway place on the margins of the Catholic Church. English-speaking practical and contextual theology is aware of the work of these institutes, but has not investigated the role such institutes have played in the transition stage of missions becoming local churches and the role the institutes played in developing with creative imagination new models of formation and community building, church building and rooting the faith in non-Western cultures. This work wants to fill this gap.

In recent years theology and practical theology in particular has been studying the *Wirkungsgeschichte*, that is the impact the vision and decrees of Vatican II had in the local churches worldwide. The American missiologist Stephen Bevans has made an important observation:

In GS 45 the Council proclaims that the church lives for one thing: “that God’s Reign may come and that the salvation of all humanity may come to pass.” Nevertheless, it will only be after the Council that this distinction becomes a major motif in ecclesiology, and serves to ground a new and powerful theology of the church’s mission.²

What the author does not say is that this had an outstandingly fruitful impact on the new models of formation, ministry and missionary training to which the pastoral institutes were committed.

¹ *Gaudium et Spes*, 11.

² S. BEVANS, Ecclesiology since Vatican II. From a Church with a Mission to a Missionary Church: *Verbum SVD* 46 (2005) 27-56, here 30; cf. R. SCHREITER, The Changed Context of Mission. Forty Years after the Council: *Verbum SVD* 46 (2005) 75-88; cf. J. KAVUNKAL, Gaudium et Spes and the Mission of Transforming Cultures: *Verbum SVD* 46 (2005) 393-402.

This work of course does not intend to go further into this multifaceted topic. But this study does show how the pioneers of those institutes were guided by the vision of Vatican II in their respective local contexts and the challenges they faced in rooting the Catholic faith in South Pacific and African cultures and communities.

Vatican II made clear that the missionary *implantatio ecclesiae* model, which brought the Christian faith to Oceania and Africa, was not sufficient to root the Christian faith in the heart of peoples in the non-Western world. European prefabricated models of doing ministry did not correspond to the African and Pacific imagination and did not integrate their ways of care and communication. Foreign missionaries and the increasing number of local pastoral ministers had to undergo new stages of learning from each other and from the cultures and spirituality of the people they wanted to minister to. The pastoral and cultural institutes were outstanding places of such mutually enriching learning processes of expatriate and indigenous church ministers. The institutes even developed for the first time ministry training programmes for priests, religious and laity alike. This was something unknown up to this time in the Catholic Church. Karl Rahner is often praised as the theologian who introduced the anthropological shift in theology. Actually his Jesuit confrere, Josef Andreas Jungmann SJ (1889-1975), teaching pedagogy, catechetics, pastoral theology and liturgy at the Jesuit faculty in Innsbruck, was the first theologian who insisted on the significance of the practical experience of faith as the most important foundation for growth and maturation towards an adult and strong Christian faith. His programmatic work on the kerygmatic renewal in catechetics *Die Frohbotschaft und unsere Glaubensverkündigung* (The Good News and Our Proclamation of the Faith), published in 1936, had to be withdrawn from the market. It was nevertheless the beginning of the catechetical and pastoral renewal in the Catholic Church not only in Western countries, but through his faithful student Johannes Hofinger also worldwide. Hofinger himself in 1955, some years before Vatican II, founded a Pastoral Institute in Manila. Through his international catechetical and liturgical congress started before Vatican II he created a common platform for renewal for the mission and Western countries. That movement had an impact on all the pastoral and cultural institutes which emerged in the years around the Second Vatican Council. The pioneering founders of the pastoral institutes saw their mission as a service of transforming the cultures from within (cf. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 20).

“A basic argument,” to apply D. Bosch’s reflection on “Mission as Contextualization,” “has been that, from the very beginning, the missionary message of the Christian church incarnated itself in the life and

world of those who had embraced it. It is, however, only fairly recently that this essentially contextual nature of the faith has been recognized.”³ The Pastoral Institutes were born in the period when the context as a theological locus was re-discovered and therefore they could fully do practical theology by recognizing the context of the Christian communities for their approaches to ministry training and ecclesial renewal in missionary outreach projects to people to whom the church had not given sufficient attention in previous periods of her history.

The first chapter of the present work investigates the long history of missionary training institutions from the Middle Ages onwards to the period of the modern missionary movement in the 19th and 20th centuries. The founding of chairs of Catholic missiology and Catholic missiological journals is a part of this search for better ways to train missionaries for their task to announce the Good News interculturally. Only when cultural anthropology was developed in Catholic missionary circles was a base laid for entering into a dialogue and renewing mission theology and missionary approaches. The chapter shows how much the search for finding better ways to announce the Gospel was always a part of those who carried out the missionary mandate of the Church.

The second chapter elaborates the history, development and service of the Melanesian Institute in Papua New Guinea. It shows how missionaries felt the need to promote and support initiatives for getting better introduction to the cultures of the people they wanted to serve. That this need and longing was not limited to Catholic missionaries soon opened the way to offer such courses to missionaries from all main-line churches and to transform a Catholic Institute into an Ecumenical Institute. The chapter on MI shows also the importance of a combined approach of research, teaching and publication, which enrich each other mutually.

The third chapter describes and analyses the history of the Eastern African Bishops’ Conferences and the AMECEA Pastoral Institute Gaba with special emphasis on the pastoral priorities of the AMECEA churches. The AMECEA bishops gave their Pastoral Institute the task of training all pastoral agents in such a way that they could be trainers, animators and promoters of the pastoral priority the AMECEA bishops have declared several times since 1973, namely, the construction and constructive accompaniment of Small Christian Communities in the local churches of Eastern Africa.

The fourth chapter researches the origins of the Lumko Institute and its development and contribution to new models of ministry training,

³ D. BOSCH, *Transforming Mission. Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, Maryknoll, NY 1991, 421.

Bible sharing and community building. For a long time this Institute called itself a missiological one. And there were good and positive reasons to do so, since its work, research, teaching and publications have been a concrete way of developing a renewed and adequate model of ministry training and community building in the Catholic Church, which had not known such ways of integrating the laity into her evangelizing mission on the level of local churches and parishes.

The fifth chapter deals not with any pastoral institute in particular, but with the influence which the Lumko approach to ministry training, a participatory church in Small Christian Communities and Bible sharing had on the Asian churches since the Fifth Plenary Assembly of the FABC in Bandung, Indonesia in 1990. In the development and promotion of the Asian Integral Pastoral Approach (AsIPA) two Asian Pastoral Institutes played a very special role, namely, the Singapore Pastoral Institute and the Pallottine Animation Centre in Nagpur, India. The chapter shows the various ways how AsIPA or the Indian version called DIIPA are to be understood in the various situations and places. Finally the chapter portrays the way AsIPA was received by Christians in European countries and how it can be interpreted and understood in Europe.

It should be noted that the Melanesian Institute, the AMECEA Pastoral Institute and the Lumko Institute had from the very beginning a missiological undercurrent which influenced all their outlook and activities. Lumko was even called Institute of Missiology. It was not first of all a systematic theology of mission which was done in those institutes, but a practical and contextual theology, which we might also call practical mission theology. Mission theologians give little attention to this practical mission theology; they prefer to remain with their reflections in the field of systematic theology. So in 2002 the American theologian of mission Stephen Bevans published a very insightful and inspiring article on *Wisdom from the Margins. Systematic Theology and the Missiological Imagination*.⁴ What he actually says of mission theology as part of systematic theology could also be said of missiology as practical, contextual theology. The practical theologians of the pastoral institutes in Africa were inspired by their creative missiological imagination which helped them to develop new approaches to formation and new lay ministries. But also the anthropologists, missiologists, and sociologists at the Melanesian Institute put all their expertise at the service of mission to communicate the Good News for the people in Melanesia.

⁴ S. BEVANS, *Wisdom from the Margins. Systematic Theology and the Missiological Imagination: Verbum SVD* 43 (2002) 91-115.

CHAPTER 1

THE NEED FOR PASTORAL AND CULTURAL STUDY CENTRES

The Unfolding of the Idea of Pastoral and Cultural Centres

There is always a difference between reality and human culturally conditioned understandings (models) of that reality. We assume that there is a reality “out there” but it is the mental constructs (models) of that reality inside our heads that are the most real to us. God, the author of reality, exists outside any culture. Human beings, on the other hand, are always bound by cultural, subcultural (including disciplinary), and psychological conditioning to perceive and interpret what they see of reality in ways appropriate to these conditionings. Neither the absolute God nor the reality [God] created is perceived absolutely by culture-bound human beings.”¹

When the Christian message has come in contact with new cultures its messengers have been confronted with new horizons of understanding on the part of the listeners, which has at all times created a real challenge. “Though many gifted missionaries had made extensive linguistic and ethnographic studies, an in-depth dialogue between local and Christian religiosity had hardly begun.”² The need for pastoral and cultural centres must be set in relation to the lack of an in-depth dialogue between local and Christian religiosity. Their mission is to overcome the rift between culture and religion.³ The mission of Pastoral and cultural Centres of the Church is always, with the help of their respective methods and aims, to evangelize. The cultural context and socio-economic situation matters in any Christian ministry of evangelization.

¹ Ch. KRAFT, *Christianity in Culture*, Maryknoll, NY 1979, 300. Quoted in S. BEVANS, *Models of Contextual Theology*, Revised and Expanded Edition, Manila 2003, 4.

² H. JANSSEN, Vision and Foundation of the Melanesian Institute, in: E. MANTOVANI (ed.), *25 Years of the Service: The Melanesian Institute, Its History and Its Work*, Goroka 1994, 28-38, here 29.

³ Cf. “The split between the Gospel and culture is without a doubt the drama of our time, just as it was of other times. Therefore every effort must be made to ensure a full evangelization of culture, or more correctly of cultures,” EN 20.

1. The Significance of the Missionary Discourse on the Areopagus

In the early Christian period one example of this is the Apostle Paul's Areopagus speech.⁴ Paul wanted to make the message understandable to the Greeks, pointing to parallels with their religious experience and their culture. On the part of Paul the failure of his attempt to convert the Athenians is a classic example from which to draw a valuable lesson about the Christian message.

It indicates that the recipients of all missionary activity have their own cultural background and therefore a particular way of understanding which the preacher of the Christian message must take into account. The Pauline example indicates, however, that the success of this method depends not only on the announcer. The gap which exists between the two perspectives, the one of the Christian message and the one of the non-Christian cultural context, cannot easily be overcome.

The gospel, as the message of the saving will of God in Christ, brings with it something very different and new by various peoples. Paul, with his talk on the Areopagus, began only the first phase of a long missionary process, which aimed at confronting the non-believers with a message that was unknown to them.

The newness and uniqueness of the Christian message and the Jesus Christ event can in no way be changed, shortened or ignored.⁵ In the discourse at the Areopagus the full power of the Hellenistic cultural world meets the original Christian message. It was, in fact, impossible that Paul's attempt would lead to immediate success.

For the systematic theologian Helmut Thielicke the Areopagus discourse is a typical example of the conduct of Christians towards other religions. According to Thielicke Luke first allows the Areopagus speaker to incorporate his message into the religious scheme of polytheism, he knows that the Athenians can understand the Christian message only in their own religious categories. But he is convinced that the *Exousia of Christ* will in time widen their understanding from within.⁶ The knowledge and religious truth will prevail that he is the "only one."⁷

⁴ Acts 17:22-34; cf. L. A. LOSIE, Paul's Speech on the Areopagus: A Model of Cross-cultural Evangelism. Acts 17:16-34, in: R. GALLAGHER/P. HERTIG (eds.), *Mission in Acts. Ancient Narratives in Contemporary Context*, Maryknoll, NY 2004, 221-238. The author presents here a summary of contemporary research.

⁵ More on the life context of evangelization, in: L. KILGER (ed.), *Die Neuheit des Lebens als Ziel und Frucht der Weltmission*, Missionsstudienwoche in Würzburg 21.-25. Mai 1956, Münster 1957.

⁶ „Lukas läßt den Areopag-Redner seine Botschaft zunächst in das religiöse Schema des Polytheismus einbauen. Er tut das selbstverständlich nicht in der

The acceptance of the listeners goes so far that a scholar such as Martin Dibelius can say that the Areopagus discourse was a Hellenistic speech with a Christian conclusion.⁸ For the German exegete M. Dibelius there is no room for doubt: “What we are facing is a Hellenistic discourse on the true knowledge of God.”⁹ Here the effort of understanding the message from the perspective of the listener is addressed though it might be different and alien to us. The fundamental theological problem that lies therein should not be overlooked.

In this regard it is important to see the methodological problem, which will not be meaningless to missionaries in their dealings with other religions. In his talk the speaker encounters the religious context of the listener with an outstanding knowledge and mastery of the internal structures of thought and language, which allows a blending of the Christian message of salvation with the context and therefore the whole talk appears as an authentically hellenistic discourse. Up to our time Paul is a model of cultural sensitivity and creativity to all those who communicate biblical truth to non-Christians.¹⁰

Meinung, als könnte seine Christusbotschaft in allgemeine religiöse und stoische Kategorien einbezogen werden. Sondern er tut das gleichsam in sokratischer Absicht. Er ist nämlich durch die Gewissheit bestimmt: Falls die Athener überhaupt – wenn auch nur mit den ihnen vorerst verfügbaren religiösen Kategorien – die Botschaft von Christus anzunehmen bereit sind, falls sie ihn zunächst in die Reihe ihrer Götter aufnehmen, dann wird die Exousia dieses Christus schon dieses Aufnahmeschema von innen her sprengen.“ In: H. THIELICKE, *Der Evangelische Glaube*, Band 3: *Theologie des Geistes. Der dritte Glaubensartikel. Die Manifestation des Heiligen Geistes im Wort, in der Kirche, in den Religionen und in den letzten Dingen*, Tübingen 1978, 467.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ „So ließ Lukas seinen Paulus an einer der vornehmsten Stätten Griechenlands so predigen, wie er meint, daß zu seiner Zeit den Griechen gepredigt werden sollte: mit philosophischen Beweisen, unter relativer Anerkennung des griechischen Polytheismus, mit Berufung auf die von griechischen Dichtern ausgesprochene Weisheit.“ In: M. DIBELIUS, *Paulus auf dem Areopag*, Heidelberg 1939, 56.

⁹ Ibid. M. DIBELIUS, Paul on the Areopagus, in: H. GREEVEN (ed.), *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, London 1956; cf. LOSIE, Paul’s Speech on the Areopagus, 221-238.

¹⁰ “Paul’s ministry in Athens is a model of cultural sensitivity and creativity when presenting biblical truth to non-Christians ... At the same time, Paul refuses to syncretize his message or to compromise its theological integrity. He engages Athenian culture with the aim of its transformation,” D. FLEMMING, Contextualizing the Gospel in Athens: Paul’s Areopagus Address as a Paradigm for Missionary Communication: *Missiology* 30 (2002) 199-214.

2. The Need to Have Centres for the Study of Language, Culture and Religion in the Second Christian Millennium

2.1 Medieval Attempts

The question of cultural and linguistic exchange became evident when European Christianity encountered Islam in its evangelization efforts in territories under Islamic control.

In the Middle Ages Catholic missionary monks, especially the Franciscans, had already got engaged in the study of Arabic and in the translation of Arabic texts. Dominicans made some sporadic attempts to train their missionaries. But continuous study centres were not created by those medieval missionaries of the mendicant orders in the 13th century who sent their missionaries to China and Persia.¹¹

An important attempt for the organization of studies for missionaries was finally made by the Franciscan tertiary, Ramon Llull (Raymundus Lullus) who lived from 1232 to 1315 on his native island of Mallorca. Llull was very knowledgeable about the impact Islamic and Arabic culture and religion had in his county. For Llull, effective evangelization work in Islamic and Arabic countries needed first of all a sound study and knowledge of Arabic and Oriental languages and cultures. Although his formulations and arguments were not always correct, his intent and his point of view were legitimate and just. Llull fought for Christian evangelization work in Islamic countries so that European Christianity was better prepared to encounter Islam. To achieve these goals, Llull considered mastery of the language, culture and theology a basic condition. Therefore he himself started to study Oriental languages.

Shortly before his death, the Council of Vienne (1312) accepted his proposal and demanded the creation of two chairs for Oriental languages. Unfortunately, the decree of the Council of Vienne was not carried out. Llull wanted to open training centres and organise seminars for the preparation and formation of missionaries which would have dealt mainly with the study of Arabic, Islamic theology and Arabic culture.¹²

Even though the historical conditions prevented the promotion of his missionary vision, he founded the first missionary college in Miramar

¹¹ B. ALTANER, Die fremdsprachliche Ausbildung der Dominikanermissionare während des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts: *ZMR* 23 (1933) 234-241.

¹² R. SUGRANYES DE FRANCH, *Raymond Lulle. Docteur des Missions*, Schöneck-Beckenried 1954; cf. B. ALTANER, Sprachstudien und Sprachkenntnisse im Dienste der Mission des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts: *ZMR* 21 (1931) 113-136.

(Mallorca) in 1276. Finally, Lull himself dedicated his life to missionary activity among Muslims in North Africa.¹³ The attempts of the modern missionary movement prove that understanding the cultural-religious context of peoples is often only partially possible and not fully achieved.

2.2 Attempts since the 16th Century

Matteo Ricci SJ (1552-1610) is one of the most extraordinary figures in the field of this type of attempt, which he was able to put into practice in 16th-century China.¹⁴ Ricci understood immediately that without the knowledge and study of the cultural background and religious traditions he would not be able to grasp the Chinese understanding of the Good News.

The tragic outcome of the great evangelization attempt in China is not exclusively found in the dispute about rites and the quarreling among competing missionary orders in China, but even more in the lack of understanding the Gospel preached to Chinese listeners despite the radical acculturation attempts the Jesuits made in China.

A Chinese scholar was quite puzzled about the intent of Fr. Ricci's stay in China:

Now he speaks our language fluently, writes our characters and knows how to use our behavior code. He is truly outstanding. In a noisy meeting with many people, where the arguments went back and forth, the discussions did not bear the slightest confusion for him. Of all the men I've known, there is no one to equal him ... But I do not understand why he ever came here. I have already met him three times and I still do not know what he wants to do here. I think that if his intention is to replace the teaching of the Duke of Tschou (Lao Tzu) and Kung-fu-tse with his own,

¹³ “Se entregó a la actividad misional, sobre todo en el Norte de África. De los escritos *Docteur des Missions* pueden extraerse toda una teología misional y un método misionero y resumirlos en tres puntos: predicar la fe, sobre todo, a los musulmanes; exponer la doctrina de la fe cristiana en libros y tratados y apuntalarla con pruebas comprensibles para los no cristianos; fundar colegios para la formación y preparación científica de los misioneros. Desarrolló un concepto de adecuada comunicación misionera respecto del Islam ...” H. RZEPKOWSKI, Lulio, Raimundo (Lull, Ramon), in: ID., *Diccionario de misionología*, Estella (Navarra) 1997, 334.

¹⁴ Cf. G. ANDREOTTI, *Un gesuita in Cina 1552-1610. Matteo Ricci dall'India a Pekino*, Milano 2001.

this would be the height of stupidity. Certainly this cannot be the case.¹⁵

The Italian Jesuit Alessandro Valignano¹⁶ (1537-1606),¹⁷ one of the greatest strategists of the Catholic mission in Japan in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, refers in his letter of 1604 to a study centre in Nagasaki, where intensive studies of the history, culture and religion of Japan, especially Buddhism, were carried out.¹⁸ In the modern missionary era, this centre was one of the first places to study the culture and religion of a people in the proper place that enabled the development of a thoroughly contextualized study approach.¹⁹ For missionaries it was important to know the local context and to develop an effective evangelization approach built on such knowledge. This made it

¹⁵ J. GERNET, *Christus kam bis nach China. Eine erste Begegnung und ihr Scheitern*, Zürich-München 1984, 30. – “Ricci cerca di dimostrare che la dottrina cristiana non è una ‘nuova dottrina’, ma il vero compimento delle migliori tradizioni della Cina, che il cristianesimo deve essere ritenuto come la restaurazione del vero confucianesimo.” H. RZEPKOWSKI, Ricci, Matteo, in: ID., *Lessico di Missiologia*, Città del Vaticano 2000, 537. – It would be interesting to investigate the influence the Areopagus speech of Paul had on the speech of Matteo Ricci with Confucian Chinese intellectuals; W. KUBIN, The Importance of Misunderstanding: Reconstructing the Encounter of the East and West: *Monumenta Serica* 53 (2005) 249-260.

¹⁶ Cf. A. LUCA, Alessandro Valignano. La missione come dialogo con i popoli e le culture, Bologna 2005.

¹⁷ Cf. J. F. SCHÜTTE, *Valignanos Missionsgrundsätze für Japan*, 2 vol., *Storia e Letteratura*, Roma 1951, 1958. – The website of the Jesuits gives a clear assessment of Valignano’s work: “occupò diverse cariche nella Compagnia fino all’estate del 1572, quando fu nominato visitatore delle missioni delle ‘Indie Orientali.’ Partì da Roma nel settembre 1573 per il Portogallo, da dove salpò per Goa nel marzo 1574. Visitò le missioni dei gesuiti in India, Malaysia, Molucche e Macao. Finalmente si prese cura personalmente dello sviluppo delle missioni in Cina e Giappone, dove insistette sul rispetto della cultura locale, rivoluzionando così i metodi di evangelizzazione. Però, si dovette aspettare fino al Concilio Vaticano II perché tutta la Chiesa si rendesse conto dell’importanza dell’inculturazione e perciò i suoi metodi dovettero in seguito essere abbandonati per altri che non diedero molti frutti nell’Asia. Morì in Macao il 20 gennaio 1606.” <http://www.gesuiti.it/storia/24/27/139/140/schedapersonaggio.asp>; H. RZEPKOWSKI wrote on Valignano: “Incoraggiò Matteo Ricci (1552-1619) a una trasposizione del messaggio cristiano in cinese,” in: Valignano, Alessandro, in: ID., *Lessico di Missiologia*, 634.

¹⁸ J. J. SPAE, *Christian Corridors to Japan*, Tokyo 1965, 255; cf. also J. F. SCHÜTTE, *Introductio ad Historiam Societatis Jesu in Japonia 1549-1650*, Romae 1968, probably refers to the letter from 1601 and not 1604. Valignano left Japan already in 1603.

¹⁹ SPAE, *Christian Corridors to Japan*, 255-257; A. BROU, Le clergé japonais au XVIIe siècle: *Revue d’Histoire des Missions* 9 (1932) 457-498.

possible to construct effective ways to communicate the Good News to the Japanese people.²⁰

Valignano proved not only to be an effective organizer who faithfully followed his vision, but also a man full of love and understanding for the Japanese:

We have to treat them with great charity, with kindness and respect ... We should not enjoy their misfortunes, nor insult them or speak ill of them ... We must rather try to become their friends, especially with those in authority.²¹

2.3 Attempts in the 19th and 20th Centuries

In the missionary history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries many plans and efforts to create learning centres for missionaries were made. All those plans and efforts aimed at achieving a better understanding and a deeper appreciation of the local cultures.

The enthusiastic apostle of Africa and founder of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Verona, Daniel Comboni (1831-1881), developed a mission plan for the African continent. He also envisioned universities with a missionary scope to inculturate Christianity in Africa.²² The White Fathers, for some time, had opened training centres in North Africa, where their new recruits from Europe were introduced to missionary spirituality and the charisma of the Missionaries of Africa.

²⁰ According to B. Mondin “la penetrazione cristiana in Giappone, iniziata da San Francesco Saverio, trovò nel gesuita italiano Alessandro Valignano il suo ‘ideologo’, il suo sapiente animatore e il suo efficace realizzatore.” “Si prospettarono subito come indispensabile i seguenti provvedimenti: adattamento integrale (nelle cose lecite) agli usi e costumi giapponesi; studio approfondito della lingua; formazione del clero locale. Queste tre decisioni costituiscono tre pietre miliari nella storia delle missioni e della metodologia missionaria.” In: B. MONDIN, *Storia della Teologia*, vol. 3, Bologna 1996, 412-414, quoted in: LUCA, *Alessandro Valignano*, 308.

²¹ “I giapponesi sono così dotati che è sperabile che essi stessi, dopo una preparazione spirituale e di studio, si dimostrino capaci di divenire religiosi, chierici e vescovi, come nelle nazioni d’Europa.” Both citations are found in: LUCA, *Alessandro Valignano*, 188.

²² D. COMBONI, *Piano per la Rigenerazione dell’Africa*, Torino 1864; ID., *Piano per la Rigenerazione dell’Africa*, ed. by Studium Combonianum, Roma 1970, Introduzione, 15-31, Testo, 39-55; F. BORNEMANN, *Combonis Afrika-Plan 1864: Verbum SVD* 12 (1971) 168-169. A recent work explains clearly the context, the influence and the development of the plan of Comboni, cf. Il Piano di Comboni, in: G. ROMANATO, *L’Africa Nera fra Cristianesimo e Islam. L’esperienza di Daniele Comboni (1831-1881)*, Milano 2003, 233-248; cf. L. FRANCESCHINI/J. TROY, *The Writings of St. Daniel Comboni, Correspondence and Reports (1850-1881) of the Founder of the Comboni Missionaries*, London 2005.

In Tunis and later in La Manouba they ran a school for the teaching of Arabic literature. In 1926, during their General Chapter, it was decided to establish a training centre for missionaries.

First, the “Foyer Arabe” was opened in Tunis. Ten years later a proper institute grew from this beginning. In addition to Arabic language studies, courses were held on the Qur’an and Islamic theology, literature and Arabic philosophy.²³

Arnold Janssen (1837-1909), the founder of the Missionary Society of the Divine Word, can also be considered as one of the founders of Catholic Mission Studies. Since the beginning of his foundation in Steyl/Netherlands Janssen promoted the teaching of mission studies, especially a course called *missiographia* (Missionskunde) and missionary geography as part of the syllabus taught in the minor seminary and in the major seminary for missionary candidates.²⁴ Mission history received a lot of space in the SVD missionary training. Janssen insisted on the study of other cultures and languages as part of the curriculum in the SVD high school and seminary training. He sent gifted students for further academic studies, especially in those disciplines that served the improvement of missionary work.

For that reason Fr. Janssen sent the young SVD priests Friedrich Schwager (1876-1929) and Wilhelm Schmidt (1868-1954) for scientific studies to state universities. Schwager taught various courses with missiological content from 1889 to 1893, first in the SVD high school in Steyl and later in the SVD seminary St. Gabriel’s near Vienna. This became the foundation of the profound missiological competence he developed in his life. Janssen appointed the young priest for the teaching of missionary science (Missionskunde) and made him editor of the “Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote” (Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus) magazine. Janssen supported Schwager’s work to convert the popular religious journal he had already founded himself in 1874 into a specific SVD missionary magazine with the new title “Steyleyler Missionsbote” (Steyleyler Missionary Messenger). In 1921 Fr. Schwager was made a lecturer for Mission Studies in the SVD formation house of St. Augustine near Bonn. In 1924 he was sent to attend the Missionary Congress of the United States. In the same year he was appointed Professor of Missiology at the SVD Seminary in Techny near Chicago, where he taught missiology for a year. Karl Müller has rightly called him a “pio-

²³ H. RZEPKOWSKI, Die Bedeutung der Kultur- und Pastoralinstitute für die missionarische Verkündigung: *Verbum SVD* 13 (1972) 131-139.

²⁴ Cf. F. BORNEMANN, *Arnold Janssen: Founder of Three Missionary Congregations, 1837-1909: A Biography*, Rome 1975; J. ALT, *Journey of Faith. The Missionary Life of Arnold Janssen*, Nettetal 2002.

neer of Catholic Missiology.”²⁵ Wilhelm Schmidt shaped the education and training of future missionaries in the SVD seminary St. Gabriel with a profound ethnological and linguistic study program, which was, up to then, unknown in such institutions.

From his review “Anthropos – Journal of Ethnology and Linguistics,” which he founded in 1905 in St. Gabriel’s, “impulses for the development of linguistics and the history of civilizations and religions developed.”²⁶

He dedicated himself to the recognition of primitive peoples, for their true and full human dignity, although this was denied by many ethnologists and experts ... of his time. Respect for others religions had in him an unknown and hardly mentioned pioneer. He helped to lay the foundations for a universal thought that has found in the mission theology of the Church at the Second Vatican Council its full confirmation in decrees on non-Christian religions.²⁷

Rzepkowski affirms that “the re-evaluation of religions has grown up in missionary circles,” especially in the circles sensitized by professors such as Schmidt and his student Paul Schebesta (1887-1967).²⁸ For the German missiologist Horst Rzepkowski Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt was the foremost and most important promoter of this development.

²⁵ K. MÜLLER, *Friedrich Schwager (1876-1929). Pionier katholischer Missionswissenschaft*, Nettetal 1984.

²⁶ “El abogó siempre por la plena personalidad de los pueblos primitivos, por su auténtica y plena dignidad humana, aunque muchos etnólogos y científicos de la cultura se la denegaban. La estima de las religiones extranjeras tuvo en él a su pionero, muchas veces desconocido y casi nunca nombrado. El contribuyó a poner el fundamento para un pensamiento universal que encontró su confirmación plena en la teología misionera de la Iglesia en el concilio Vaticano II en las exposiciones sobre las religiones no cristianas. La nueva valoración de las religiones ha surgido precisamente de los círculos misionales.” In: H. RZEPKOWSKI, Schmidt, Wilhelm, in: ID., *Diccionario de misionología*, 496.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Paul Schebesta SVD studied besides philosophy and theology also linguistics, ethnology and history of religions under his moderator and professor Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt. Immediately after his ordination in 1911 he was sent as missionary to Mozambique. In 1916 together with his fellow German missionaries he was interned by the Portuguese. Schebesta could undertake various extensive field studies among pygmy tribes in the Congo and Malaysia. In his work he stressed the cultural richness of the indigenous peoples. As a professor of ethnology and linguistics he influenced the future missionary generation with his deep understanding and empathy for indigenous peoples. Cf. P. SCHEBESTA, *Portugals Konquistamission in Südost-Afrika*, St. Augustin 1966 (*Portugal – a Missão da Conquista no Sudeste de África*, Lisboa 2011); ID., *Les Pygmées du Congo Belges inconnus, les chevaliers des aventures*, Namur 1957.

And here Schmidt has to be mentioned as a great and important stimulator, who in the international journal “Anthropos,” founded by him, offered not only to the missionaries the opportunity to publish their ethnological and religious studies but also in effort and unremitting struggle ... pushed for a positive assessment of non-Christian religions. He did this by not only the condemning and denouncing of negative attitudes of devaluation and contempt of the non-Christian religions, but also through lovingly praising and highlighting positive values. If there has been a big change in attitude to non-Christian religions, some of the credit for this lies in the collaboration between research and mission organized by him.²⁹

During the initial stage of the new Catholic Mission in mainland New Guinea, its founder, Fr. Eberhard Limbrock SVD (1859-1931), drew up a document to ensure that the missionaries would receive a sound preparation appropriate to their task.

In 1883 Limbrock as a deacon began to work in the SVD mission in Shandong, China, where he was ordained priest three years later. In 1896 Rome appointed him the first Prefect Apostolic of Wilhelmsland in mainland New Guinea, part of German New Guinea.³⁰ In 1897-1898

²⁹ “Y aquí hay que nombrar a Schmidt como gran e importante impulsor, que en la revista internacional ‘Anthropos,’ fundada por él, no solo ofreció a los misioneros la posibilidad de publicar sus estudios etnológico-religiosos monográficos, sino que además, en esfuerzo y lucha incansables, en cientos de indicaciones, empujó a una valoración positiva de las religiones no cristianas. Lo hizo condenando y reprobando actitudes negativas de devaluación y desprecio, pero también alabando y destacando amorosamente valores positivos. Si se ha producido un cambio tan grande en el juicio sobre las religiones no cristianas, una parte del mérito de ello está en la colaboración entre investigación y misión, propiciada por él.” H. RZEPKOWSKI, Schmidt, Wilhelm, in: ID., *Diccionario de misionología*, 496; cf. L. LUZBETAK, Wilhelm Schmidt SVD 1868-1954. Priest, Linguist, Ethnologist, in: G. ANDERSON et alii (eds.), *Mission Legacies. Biographical Studies of Leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement*, New York 1994, 475-485.

³⁰ Cf. P. STEFFEN, *Missionsbeginn in Neuguinea. Die Anfänge der Rheinischen, Neuendettelsauer und Steyler Missionsarbeit in Neuguinea*, Nettetal 1995; J. ALT, *Arnold Janssen SVD. Letters to New Guinea and Australia*, Nettetal 2001; P. STEFFEN, Die katholischen Missionen in Deutsch-Neuguinea, in: H. HIERY, *Die deutsche Südsee. Ein Handbuch*, Paderborn, 2002, 343-383; P. STEFFEN, From Mission to Church. Assessment and Perspectives of the Catholic Church in Mainland New Guinea after Its First Hundred Years, in: STEYLER MISSIONSWISSENSCHAFTLICHES INSTITUT, *Divine Word Missionaries in Papua New Guinea 1896-1996*, Nettetal 1996, 231-258; simultaneously in: *Verbum SVD* 37 (1996) 231-258.

and in 1909-1910 he took part in the third and fourth General Chapters of the Divine Word Missionaries in Steyl (Netherlands).

After the Third General Chapter Limbrock wrote a “Memorandum on the preparation for and care of the missions.”³¹ In his memorandum he called for the establishment of a practical-pastoral journal for missionaries, written by missionaries and qualified priests. He justified his plan because of his conviction that the new missionaries lacked the basic knowledge of how to deal with Christians and non-Christians. He felt it was necessary, in fact, for them to adapt themselves to the customs and manner of life of the locality and the people. To do this, however, the older missionaries lacked literature. Limbrock also saw the missionaries as envoys who were able to gather information about the language, the customs, the religion, as well as geography, botany and zoology of foreign countries and peoples. Unlike the colonial officials and traders they lived in the midst of the common people. In announcing his message, the missionary must connect himself to the religious sentiments in the manner in which they manifest themselves in non-Christian forms. So some traditional festivals, customs and habits are not to be eradicated, but rather to be christianized. They should behave like Paul in Athens, who made reference to the “unknown God.”³² In his suggestions Limbrock shows a lot of pastoral wisdom and missionary empathy. Although his ideas were not put into practice, they exerted a positive influence on the training of missionaries and inspired reflections on the need for a more intensive study of linguistics and ethnology by the Divine Word Missionaries.³³

At a time when the missionary societies became increasingly aware of the need for missionary formation in Germany, the German government in Berlin promoted the founding of a Chair of Mission Studies at the Catholic Theological Faculty at the state University of Münster.

³¹ Generalate Archives SVD (GA), Rome. – The memorandum was published in the article by K. MÜLLER, Ein Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte der ZMR: ZMR 67 (1983) 137-144. See also: Memorandum von Eberhard Limbrock, in: K. J. RIVINIUS, *Im Dienst der Mission und der Wissenschaft. Zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Zeitschrift Anthropos*, Roma 2005, 109-116.

³² Cf. F. BORNEMANN, *P. Wilhelm Schmidt SVD: 1868-1954*, Roma 1982, 30-31.

³³ *Ibid.*, 52-53; according to F. Bornemann, Limbrock also influenced the foundation of the “Anthropos” journal, which was started in 1906 by Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt (1868-1954). Pope Pius XI asked Schmidt to organize the ethnological section of the great missionary exhibition in Rome in 1925 with the aim of showing the cultures and religious traditions of the people that the Catholic missionaries encountered. Everything was displayed in the Lateran and this marked the beginning of a new missionary-ethnological museum, founded in 1927 under the influence of its first director, Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt.

In 1898 Limbrock had already proposed in his memorandum³⁴ to Fr. Arnold Janssen the foundation of a journal for missionary methodology (Missionsmethodik). Wilhelm Schmidt knew about this request when in 1906 he founded the *Anthropos*, the international magazine for ethnology and linguistics. Later Fr. Friedrich Schwager (1876-1929), a pioneer of Catholic missiology, also promoted the founding of a missiological journal.³⁵ Schwager, as editor, developed the popular and more devotional magazine “Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote” (Little Messenger of the Sacred Heart) into a mission magazine with the new name “Steyler Missionsbote” (Mission Messenger from Steyl), which reached out to a more educated readership. Schwager fought all his life for better training for missionaries. He was convinced that better intellectual training makes one “intellectually robust.”³⁶ K. Müller, Schwager’s biographer, writes: “By 1908 Schwager was contemplating a Catholic missiological review, somewhat like the Protestant *Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift* published by Gustav Warneck.”³⁷

The birth of Catholic missiology received, among other things, an additional stimulus by the fact that the Protestant side had already begun to focus on missiological issues.³⁸

Schmidlin began his academic career as a professor of Church History at the Faculty of Catholic Theology in Strasbourg. In 1907 he was transferred to the Faculty of Catholic Theology in Münster. From sum-

³⁴ Cf. Memorandum of Fr. Eberhard Limbrock, in: RIVINIUS, op. cit.

³⁵ K. MÜLLER, Friedrich Schwager 1876-1929. Trailblazing for Catholic Missions and Mission Education, in: ANDERSON, op. cit., 102-109, here 102; cf. K. MÜLLER, The Legacy of Friedrich Schwager: *IBMR* 18 (1994) 125-130; ID., *Friedrich Schwager*, 31-37, 178; ID., *Josef Schmidlin (1876-1944), Papsthistoriker und Begründer der katholischen Missionswissenschaft*, Nettetal 1989, 67-88.

³⁶ Cf. MÜLLER, The Legacy of Friedrich Schwager, 125-130.

³⁷ MÜLLER, Friedrich Schwager, Trailblazing, 103. – When the first number of the *Catholic Missiological Journal* came off the press on March 1, 1891, Schwager, as member of the editing and managing committees, was listed among the coeditors. Cf. *ibid.*

³⁸ E. NUNNENMACHER, Missiologia, in: *Dizionario di Missiologia*, Bologna 1992, 352. Nunnenmacher continues saying, “ad esempio con la prima cattedra a Edimburgo (1867) e poi con l’opera decisiva di Gustav Warneck in materia storica e dottrinale.” *Ibid.* – Rzepkowski explains the history in more detail: “In ambito tedesco, nel 1896 la disciplina venne proposta per la prima volta come campo autonomo di ricerca e d’insegnamento da Gustav Warneck (1834-1910), presso l’università di Halle. Egli sostenne la disciplina dal 1896 al 1908 e tenne nel 1897 la sua lezione introduttiva sul diritto di cittadinanza della missione nell’insieme della teologia. Egli produsse la prima esposizione generale missiologica della missione, con un chiaro orientamento verso la funzione dell’evangelizzazione come compito fondamentale della Chiesa.” ID., *Missiologia*, in: ID., *Lessico di Missiologia*, Roma 2000, 420.

mer semester of 1910 Schmidlin gave lectures in Catholic mission studies. The German missiologist E. Nunnenmacher SVD is convinced that

from the Catholic side some precursors should be mentioned (including Robert Streit, OMI and Friedrich Schwager, SVD) who declared the need for similar publications; they made several concrete proposals in this regard. But the real founder of Catholic missiology is without doubt Josef Schmidlin (1876-1944), who gave courses on missionary matters at the University of Münster and finally received the first chair of Catholic missiology. The year 1911 can be considered as a decisive date, with the creation of the International Institute of Missiological Research and the appearance of the first issue of a missiological journal that was published under the title “Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft” (journal for mission science).³⁹

3. The Lack of an Introductory Course for New Missionaries

In 1954, Fr. Albert Aufinger SVD (1901-1960), from 1927 a missionary in New Guinea, wrote a memorandum entitled “Impediments and damage to the missionary work in New Guinea since the war.”⁴⁰ In this memorandum he laments the discontinuity in the evangelizing approach in New Guinea. In fact, the new missionaries did not continue the method developed by the missionaries in New Guinea in the decades before the Second World War. At the end of his document Aufinger lamented the lack of a specific course for the introduction of new missionaries, which he considered as a handicap for the mission:

No newcomer should be dispensed from this introductory course. The Regional Superior or a very experienced confrere should conduct this course, with about three hours a day of introduction and one hour of mutual exchange of views on the following themes: General information about the country and people – the government (composition and work) – our opinion on particular officials – the other mis-

³⁹ NUNNENMACHER, op. cit., 352; among the best known works of Schmidlin on Catholic missiology are: *Catholic Mission Theory*, Techny, Ill., 1931; *Catholic Mission History*, Techny, Ill., 1933; *Katholische Missionsgeschichte*, Steyl 1924; *Einführung in die Missionswissenschaft*, Münster 1925; *Katholische Missionslehre im Grundriss*, Münster 1919; cf. MÜLLER, *Josef Schmidlin*.

⁴⁰ A. AUFINGER, Memorandum: Hemmnisse und Schäden des Missionsbetriebes in Neuguinea seit dem Kriege, in: GA; cf. P. STEFFEN, Aufinger, Albert SVD (1901-1960): *BBKL* 35 (2014) 38-42.

sionary societies (first the Catholic, then the most important non-Catholic ones) and their methods – learning Pidgin-English (improvement of English where necessary). Main contents of the Ethnology and Anthropology of the local people (the main tribes, special customs and traditions: youth initiation, engagement, marriage, death, and burial) – our behavior towards the natives – the most important elements of the mission method – churches and confessional – home visits, etc. (pastoral) – the main diseases and their treatment – who and what do I need for a bush tour and how the tour is done – cooking, bread baking – practical exercises in catechesis before natives, Bible lessons, singing – etc.⁴¹

According to Fr. Aufinger such orientation courses should last at least six weeks, preferably three months. Aufinger was convinced of the need to have well-organized training courses for new missionaries. Only with such courses would the mission get effective pastors (Seelsorger) and bush missionaries. The New Guinea missionary Albert Aufinger produced a document before the Second Vatican Council that describes the shortcomings of introduction and training of missionaries and the vision to overcome the lack of training with orientation courses conducted in mission countries.

Everyone who has had intercultural missionary experience will well understand what Aufinger's memorandum talks about since he too suffered from similar deficiencies in his own pastoral and missionary work among people with different cultural behavior patterns and with a different mentality. Encountering different people is definitely the most significant experience in the life of a missionary. Missionary formation

⁴¹ „Von diesem Einführungskurs dürfte kein Neuling dispensiert werden. Dieser Kurs müsste vom P. Regional oder von einem sehr erfahrenen Mitbruder gehalten, täglich etwa drei Stunden der Einführung und eine der gegenseitigen Aussprache umschließen, über folgende Themata: Allgemeines über Land und Leute – die Regierung (ihre Zusammensetzung und Arbeiten) – unsere Stellungnahme zu den Offizialen – die anderen Missionsgesellschaften (zunächst die katholischen, dann auch die wichtigsten akatholischen) und deren Methoden – Erlernung des Pijin-Englisch (Verbesserung des Englischen, wo nötig). Das Wichtigste aus der Ethnologie und Anthropologie der Kanaken (die wichtigsten Volksstämme, besondere Sitten und Gebräuche: Jugendweihe, Verlobung, Hochzeit, Tod und Begräbnis) – unser Verhalten den Eingeborenen gegenüber – das Wichtigste aus der Missionsmethode – Kirchen- und Beichtpraxis – Hausbesuche etc. (Pastoral) – die wichtigsten Krankheiten und deren Behandlung – Wen und was brauche Ich für eine Buschtour und wie wird sie gemacht? – Kochen, Brotbacken – praktische Übung vor Eingeborenen in Katechese, Bibelunterricht, Gesang – etc.“ Cf. AUFINGER, Memorandum.

in the country where the missionary carries out his missionary activity will always be of irreplaceable importance.

4. The Need to Create Places of Contextual Mission Studies

David Bosch suggests with Martin Hengel “that the history and theology of early Christianity are, first of all, ‘mission history’ and ‘mission theology’.” Heinrich Kasting even states: “Mission was, in the early stages, more than a mere function, it was a fundamental expression of the early life of the church. The beginnings of a missionary theology are therefore also the beginning of Christian theology as such.”⁴² Living the evangelizing mission of the Church therefore always needed theological reflection which explains this mission activity. As we have seen in our brief historical *excursus*, in every period of church history theologians and missionaries arose who were able to promote the cultural, linguistic and religious studies of the peoples the Church had come across. Out of this encounter between the various cultures and the Christian experience a theology of mission was developed.

The Alsatian church historian Joseph Schmidlin (1876-1944), a priest of the Diocese of Strasbourg, in 1911 founded the “International Institute for Missiological Studies”⁴³ at the University of Münster and soon after initiated the “*Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft*,” the official organ of the missiological institute and the very first Catholic missiological journal.⁴⁴

In 1919 the second chair of mission studies was erected at the Ate-neo Urbano di Propaganda Fide in Rome by Pope Benedict XV. Fr. Giovanni Battista Tragella (1885-1968) from the Pontifical Society of Foreign Missions at Milan became the first Professor of Missiology, followed in 1922 by Fr. Laurenz Kilger OSB (1890-1964), and in 1925 by Fr. Cyril Rudolf Jarre OFM (1878-1952), in 1928 by Fr. Vitalis Lange

⁴² Quoted in D. BOSCH, *Transforming Mission. Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, Maryknoll, NY 1991, 15-16. – Martin Kähler said in 1908 that “mission is the mother of theology.” *Ibid.*, 16.

⁴³ Internationales Institut für missionswissenschaftliche Forschungen e. V. (IIMF); Schmidlin, the founder of Catholic missiology, knew how to combine organizational skills with the ability to search for possibilities to found this university discipline. At the same time he worked without preserving its resources for the mission of the Church. In the winter of 1913-14, and in May 1930 he made study trips to the missions in China and New Guinea. This shows his interest not only for archival sources, but also for the concrete missionary life. Cf. MÜLLER, *Josef Schmidlin*.

⁴⁴ J. SCHMIDLIN, *Wie unsere Missionswissenschaft entstand. Zu ihrem 20jährigen Bestand: ZMR 21 (1931) 1-18.*

OFM (1880-1934), and then in 1930 by Fr. Ugo Bertini (1887-1972), a priest of the Diocese of Lucca.⁴⁵ Tragella and Bertini were Italians, Kilger, Jarre and Lange were Germans. Only the two Franciscans Jarre and Lange had mission experience in China. The increasing academic missionary movement led to the foundation of several chairs of missiology in Europe and North America, e.g. in Munich and Würzburg in Germany, Nijmegen in the Netherlands, Fribourg in Switzerland, Louvain in Belgium, Burgos in Spain and Ottawa in Canada. Since 1927 the Flemish Jesuit Fr. Theodor Monnens (1891-1956) from the Catholic University of Louvain gave a missiological course at the Gregorian University in Rome, where in 1932 the first Faculty of Missiology was founded.⁴⁶

In the same year an Institute for Mission Studies was founded at the Ateneo Urbano di Propaganda Fide.⁴⁷ While these chairs of mission studies with their academic studies contributed to the academic formation of missionaries, the mission seminaries of the religious orders and mission societies engaged in missionary work were doing their best to prepare their own future missionaries. Nevertheless, the Western missionary training remained too generic and did not answer the questions which arose in the concrete missionary situation in various cultural and socio-economic contexts. Therefore, it is not surprising that this system did not satisfy the expectations and needs of missionaries who worked in the field. The archives of the various Generalates of missionary congregations are full of visitation reports which mention the deficiencies in missionary training and the lack of sufficient ongoing formation for missionaries in their respective missions. All the people responsible for the training of missionaries, e.g. the superiors, professors, church leaders and the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples gradually realized the lack of adequate training in the context of the concrete missionary situation. The lack of appropriate institu-

⁴⁵ Cf. P. STEFFEN, Jarre, Cyrillus Rudolf OFM, Bischof (1878-1952): *BBKL* 34 (2013) 603-620; ID., Kilger, Laurenz Ferdinand OSB (1890-1964): *BBKL* 34 (2013) 673-683; ID., Lange, Hermann Vitalis OFM (1880-1934): *BBKL* 34 (2013) 787-790; ID., Bertini, Ugo (1887-1972): *BBKL* 34 (2013) 87-92.

⁴⁶ J. LOPEZ-GAY, Historia de la Facultad de Misionología, in: M. DHAVAMONY, *Prospettive di missiologia, oggi*, Documenta missionalia – 16, Roma 1982, 9-32.

⁴⁷ P. Michael Schulien SVD (1888-1968) taught “Historia comparata religionum et Ethnologia” (1932-1933), “Lingue africane” (1932-1933) and the Austrian diocesan priest Albert Drexel “Lingue africane” (1933-1936); cf. P. ROHRBACHER, Albert Drexel (18.6.1889-9.3.1977) Priester, Sprachwissenschaftler und Völkerkundler – Eine gesamtbiografische Würdigung: *Anthropos* 105 (2010) 555-566.

tions to bridge the gap between theory and practice became more and more obvious.⁴⁸

5. On the Way towards Pastoral Institutes

The call to found catechetical centres influenced also the call to found cultural and pastoral institutes.⁴⁹ Already in 1935, the decree *Provido sane Consilio*⁵⁰ of the *Congregazione del Concilio* [nowadays called the Congregation for the Clergy], asked for the creation of “catechetical offices,” which would organize the entire catechetical work of the diocese. This idea was further developed during the International Catechetical Congress of 1950 in Rome, called by Pope Pius XII (1876-/1939-/1958).⁵¹

After this document of 1935, which explicitly suggested conferences and refresher courses, a conference in 1950 went a step further and called for the establishment of national or regional catechetical centres.⁵² The Roman Congress of 1950 interprets this question in a larger and more positive context. The task of the catechetical centres was described as “to organize, supervise, promote, and improve the whole organization of catechetics and religious instruction.”⁵³

⁴⁸ Writing to his superior general, an SVD missionary describes the shortcomings and mistakes committed by him and his fellow missionaries in China. He complains of the inadequacy of the study of the Chinese language, especially because of the shortage of time, strength and money, all of which, if properly explored, would have made the study of language more effective. According to this witness, the new missionaries did not have the opportunity to preach in their first three years in the mission. On the one hand, in fact, they did not know enough about the language and on the other hand they did not have the opportunity to practice and to make enough use of the language. Cf. Letter from Ichowfu, October 10, 1935 from Fr. Josef Kaufhold to the superior general SVD, in: GA. – Another missionary wrote from Flores, Indonesia in 1956 to the SVD Generalate criticizing the lack of time available to anthropological research that could ensure the future generation the cultural heritage of the many mountain tribes. *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Cf. RZEPKOWSKI, Die Bedeutung der Kultur- und Pastoralinstitute, 131-139, esp. 134.

⁵⁰ 12.1.1935; AAS 27 (1935) 145-152; cf. H. RZEPKOWSKI, Pastoral, Istituti, in: *ID.*, *Lessico di Missiologia*, 489.

⁵¹ *Acta congressus catechist. internat. MCML*, Città del Vaticano 1953; A. KNAUBER, Bericht über den Kongreß: *Katechetische Blätter* 76 (1951) 49-54.

⁵² J. M. GOPU, Centres of Catechetical Apostolate, in: J. HOFINGER/C. HOWARD (eds.), *Teaching All Nations*, Freiburg-London 1961, 330-331.

⁵³ *Acta congressus*, 171; see also GOPU, *op. cit.*, 331.

Catechetics in general and religious culture were seen as the scope of such institutes. The International Mission-catechetical Congress, held in Eichstätt in 1960, developed these thoughts further.⁵⁴ The Archbishop of Hyderabad, Mark Gopu, strove during this congress for the establishment of catechetical centres.

The national and regional centres had to complement each other through their research work. The regional institutes with similar themes had to collaborate globally and have sufficient exchange among themselves.⁵⁵ This international conference, held shortly before the Second Vatican Council, was never truly appreciated for the contribution it had made. What *Ad Gentes* in numbers 31 and 34 expressed, had been, in large part, already discussed during the congress of Eichstätt. This is true in particular with regard to the national and regional institutes for the renewal of the announcement of the faith in mission countries.

On the eve of the Second Vatican Council, the Tyrolian Jesuit Fr. Johannes Hofinger, the great promoter of catechetical renewal in mission countries, published his manifesto of missionary renewal, entitled "The unity of the Church from the perspective of the mission."⁵⁶

The fact that the Magisterium of the Church tends to propose the same faith for everyone could lead to consider the unity of faith as adherence to a monotonous and stereotyped faith practice, where believers with their particular ritual, ethnic and personal beliefs would not find an appropriate place. These details cannot be left out in the proclamation of faith. Ignoring them would be a fatal mistake, which would have devastating consequences, especially in mission areas. It is true that the same Good News is proclaimed to all nations, and all will accept this

⁵⁴ J. HOFINGER (ed.), *Katechetik heute. Grundsätze und Anregungen zur Erneuerung der Katechese in Mission und Heimat*. Referate und Ereignisse der internationalen Studienwoche über Missionskatechese in Eichstätt, Freiburg-Basel-Wien 1961; GREGORIUS OFM Cap, Eine kritische Betrachtung der internationalen Studienwoche über Missionskatechese: *NZM* 16 (1960) 300-303; cf. International Study Week on Mission Catechetics Eichstaett, 21-28 July 1960: *AFER* 2 (1960) 295-301; K. MÜLLER, Die missionskatechetische Studienwoche in Eichstätt: *ZMR* 44 (1960) 64-65; J. SPAE, Catechetics at Eichstaett: *Japan Missionary Bulletin* 14 (1960) 506-511; L. WIEDENMANN, International Study Week on Catechetics (Eichstaett): *Asia* 12 (1960) 812-823; M. C. EZEOKOLI, *Missionary Catechesis. 1. A Turning Point: J. Hofinger's Writings in China and in Philippines (1940-1960). 2. J. Hofinger and the International Study Weeks on Mission Catechetics (1960-1967)*, Roma 1985; cf. M. WARREN (ed.), *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics*, Winona, MN, 1983. The first part contains the documentation and interpretation of the "International Catechetical Study Weeks," 23-109.

⁵⁵ GOPU, op. cit., 329-330.

⁵⁶ J. HOFINGER, Die Einheit der Kirche von der Mission her gesehen: *Katechetische Blätter* 86 (1961) 451-460.

Good News in its entirety and in a spirit of faith. It is God's call, which reaches out to all people and invites all people to give a free answer to God's call. And yet, this Good News can be welcomed by all in their own way, which should be announced to all people with an empathetic adaptation to the cultural characteristics of the receivers. It is similar to a German or African artist who will express their image of Christ in a different way, while immersing themselves in the contemplation of the same Gospel, so even people of different races and cultures have a sacred right, and even more the task of receiving and expressing the Good News of Christ in their own way.⁵⁷ At the end of his article Hofinger expresses the desire that the Council treat these issues seriously and find a solution consistent with the needs of today. It requires a thorough study of the missionary situation; a work that still needs to be done in many cases: a work which cannot be done by the missionary who is busy with his pastoral and missionary work. To do this work specialized institutes are needed. In fact, according to J. Hofinger there was no more urgent need presented during the study weeks of Nijmegen and Eichstätt than to have a highly developed Pastoral Institute for the mission.⁵⁸

In international conferences organized by Hofinger the bishops from the so-called mission countries, the periphery of the Catholic Church, were able to overcome their state of being at the margins of the Church by developing a new vision of the mission of the Church, suggesting appropriate approaches to the evangelizing mission of the Church by renewing their pastoral and catechetical methods. So the Congresses of Hofinger paved the way for the needed contextualization of the pastoral ministry and catechetics. This enabled them to proclaim the Good News to the peoples in accordance with the cultural characteristics and spiritual riches of the peoples they served. Hofinger knew that the so-called mission countries, or better, the new local Churches outside the Western world, were in need of pastoral institutes which would help them to carry out the needed process of adaptation and contextualization as the first step towards a healthy inculturation of the Christian message into the cultures and mentalities of non-Western societies and peoples.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 453. – „Zusammenfassend kann man sagen, die Einheit christlichen Kultes folge ganz ähnlichen Gesetzen wie die recht verstandene Einheit christlichen Glaubens. So wie es in der Glaubensverkündigung nicht genügt, die christliche Lehre überall mit denselben stereotypen Formeln westlicher Ausprägung zu verkünden, so genügt es wohl auch im Gottesdienst nicht, ihn überall in genau derselben und darum tatsächlich westlichen Gestaltung zu feiern.“ Ibid., 459.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 460.

6. Horst Rzepkowski's Vision on the Need and Significance of Cultural and Pastoral Institutes

The German missiologist Horst Rzepkowski was the first theologian who reflected on the mission and significance of pastoral and cultural institutes. In his article "The Importance of Cultural and Pastoral Institutes for Missionary Proclamation," published in 1972, he wrote: "When we speak about pastoral and cultural institutes, we are referring here not to the school or university institutions of the mission, but to special foundations that deal with pastoral issues, local cultures and the transmission of the Christian message."⁵⁹

For him

the institutes are meant for planning and research work with the goal of becoming a local Church. They should offer initiatives for liturgical practice, scientifically study the social structures of the peoples and ethnic groups so that an appropriate pastoral approach can be developed. Therein lies the paramount importance of pastoral and cultural institutes.⁶⁰

What is amazing is that Rzepkowski already saw the need to link those institutes with a university or other international scientific institution. It has to be said that the possibility to integrate the institutes into a Catholic University did not exist in the 1960s and 1970s. The Catholic Universities in Kenya and Papua New Guinea were founded years after the pastoral institutes:

A real knowledge of and anchoring in the local culture must be guaranteed, but also links with international developments must be assured. Close contact with international research needs to be striven for. This last goal can be achieved by being associated with a university or an international scientific institute.⁶¹

⁵⁹ RZEPKOWSKI, *Die Bedeutung der Kultur- und Pastoralinstitute*, 133.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 137. – "For this reason it is necessary that the members of these institutes be composed of expatriate and local personnel and be qualified experts in their fields." *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.* – "This presupposes that top experts can be consulted for particular research. Apart from the composition of the team and the make-up of the institute, the aim of internationalization can be most easily attained through publications. Beside an informative publication for the pastoral and catechetical fields, a more scientific publication is necessary, either a magazine or a series of studies. By means of such publications one gains contact with other scientific fields and will be recognized and assessed internationally." *Ibid.*, 139.

For Rzepkowski the pastoral and cultural institutes are required because, according to the mission decree, only missionary activity that is adapted to the situation can be considered real evangelization. Furthermore, their specific function is to complete the stage of being a mission church and to assist in founding a mature local church.⁶²

The further historical development shows how farsighted Rzepkowski's thoughts have been.

7. The Guidelines of the Supreme Magisterium of Vatican II

The missionary encyclical *Princeps Pastorum* (1959) of Pope John XXIII (1881-/1958-/1963)⁶³ advocated the establishment of study centres with a direct missionary orientation, where foreign and local priests could use their knowledge and experience for the good of the nation from which they came or to which they were sent.⁶⁴ The encyclical considered as a distinctive feature of these centres the importance of publications and the dissemination of Christian literature in such a way that the Church can, through these centres, have an influence on public opinion. The encyclical also recognized and highlighted collaboration among local and foreign clergy as an essential task of pastoral and cultural institutes.⁶⁵

In the Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church *Ad Gentes* the idea to have “centres for pastoral care, catechetics, liturgy and publications”⁶⁶ is fully developed. Especially in numbers 31 and 34 thoughts and suggestions related to such centres are treated in detail.⁶⁷ For economic and practical reasons interregional collaboration is suggested, so that forces and means can be shared.⁶⁸

In number 33 a strong recommendation is made:

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ AAS 51 (1959) 833-864.

⁶⁴ Cf. V. GRACIAS, *Modern Catechetical Renewal and the Missions*, in: HOFINGER (ed.), *Katechetik heute*, 23.

⁶⁵ Cf. *Herder Korrespondenz* 14 (1959/60) 170-180. – Rzepkowski writes: “La collaborazione tra clero indigeno e clero straniero viene sottolineata come un compito essenziale degli istituti culturali e pastorali.” ID., *Pastorali, Istituti*, 489.

⁶⁶ AG 3; cf. H. BETTSCHIEDER, *The Contribution of the Society of the Divine Word to the Elaboration of Ad Gentes: Verbum SVD* 46 (2005) 371-391.

⁶⁷ AG 31 and 34, AAS 58 (1966) 981-983.

⁶⁸ Cf. AG 31.

The institutes engaged in missionary activity in the same territory should find ways and means of coordinating their work. Therefore, it will be very useful to have conferences of Religious men and unions of Religious women, in which institutes of the same country or region should take part. These conferences should ask what things can be done by combined efforts, and they should be in close touch with the episcopal conferences.

Number 34 is a kind of basic rule for these institutes and it is worthwhile quoting it at length:

Since the right and methodical exercise of missionary activity requires that those who labour for the Gospel should be scientifically prepared for their task, and especially for dialogue with non-Christian religions and cultures, and also that they should be effectively assisted in the carrying out of this task, it is desired that, for the sake of the missions, there should be fraternal and generous collaboration on the part of scientific institutes which specialize in missiology and in other arts and disciplines useful for the missions, such as ethnology and linguistics, the history and science of religions, sociology, pastoral skills and the like.

In number 26 of the same Decree thoughts and requests often made by missionaries are reflected. The preparation of missionaries requires a thorough scientific training

that they may have a general knowledge of the peoples, cultures, and religions; not only a knowledge that looks to the past, but one that considers the present time. For anyone who is going to encounter another people should have a great esteem for their patrimony and their language and their customs. It is very necessary for the future missionary to devote himself to missiological studies ...

Number 26 makes clear that missionary formation

should be completed in the lands to which they are sent, so that the missionaries may have a more thorough knowledge of the history, social structures, and customs of the people; that they may have an insight into their moral order and their religious precepts, and into the secret notions which, according to their sacred tradition, they have formed concerning God, the world and man. Furthermore, they would be properly introduced into special pastoral problems.

Much emphasis is given to the training of specialists in scientific mission institutes and to other scientific fields for the support of mis-

sionary work. We must not forget that the promotion of these ideas continued even after the closure of the Second Vatican Council as this study is going to prove. We can already note that here the Council “clearly demanded that missionaries, through exposure and study in the countries of their mission, should gain deeper knowledge of the life of the people so that they might be better equipped for their pastoral work.”⁶⁹ Based on the concrete suggestions from Vatican II documents (SC 44, CD 17, OT 22, AG 31) many cultural and pastoral institutes were founded in the post-conciliar period in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Oceania.

According to anthropologist Hermann Janssen they can be divided into three basic types:

- Biblical pastoral, catechetical and liturgical institutes;
- Institutes of the science of religions or of pastoral anthropology;
- Centres of interreligious dialogue.⁷⁰

Though the Pontifical Council for Culture naturally focuses on the cultural aspect of such study centres, even the separation lines between cultural and pastoral centres are often very difficult to make out. And in many cases they might be overlapping and complementary to each other and part of the same institute, as is the case in the Melanesian Institute. “These [cultural] centres, institutes, training houses and other institutions of the Church are involved at the local or regional level in the dialogue between faith and culture and the promotion of Christian culture.” The Pontifical Council for Culture describes these centres as follows:

Catholic Cultural Centres are public forums, meeting places for reflection, study and information, exchange of ideas and deepening of faith and culture. They offer to Catholics, as to every person interested in a cultural meeting, opportunities for contact and fruitful exchange on the world and history, religion and art, culture and science, and help to discern

⁶⁹ JANSSEN, *Vision and Foundation of the Melanesian Institute*, 30.

⁷⁰ RZEPKOWSKI, *Pastorali, Istituti*, 488: “Si possono menzionare i seguenti istituti: *East Asian Pastoral Institute* (Manila 1953, riorganizzato nel 1965); *National Biblical, Catechetical and Liturgical Centre* (Bangalore 1967); *AMECEA Pastoral Institute* (Eldoret, Kenia aperto nel 1968 a Gaba, Uganda); *Lumko Missiological Institute* (Sudafrica 1968); *Istituto Pastorale del CELAM* (Medellin 1974); *Oriens Institute for Religious Research* (Tokyo 1963); *Melanesian Institute for Pastoral and Socio-Economic Service* (Goroka 1968); *Institute of Indian Culture* (Bombay); *Centre d'études ethnologiques* (Bandundu, Congo); *Snehasadan* (Pune), *Aikiya Alayam* (Chennai), *Tulana* (Kelaniya, Sri Lanka); *Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture* (Nagoya).”

the values that can illuminate existence and give meaning to life (cf. *Ecclesia in Africa*, 103).⁷¹

What can be concluded is that the Pontifical Council for Culture sees these centres as important frontiers, which have the mission “to inculturate the Gospel and evangelize the cultures, in order to overcome the split between faith and culture, between the Gospel and daily life ...”⁷²

8. Post-conciliar Documents and the New Code of Canon Law of 1983

The “General Catechetical Directory” of 1971, for instance, declares in number 109 that:

Higher institutes for training in pastoral catechetics should be promoted or founded, so that catechists capable of directing catechesis at the diocesan level, or within the area of activities to which religious congregations are dedicated, may be prepared. These higher institutes can be national or even international.

Also the Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae* (1979) by John Paul II emphasizes the organization of appropriate centres and institutes for accurate formation of catechists which would have a great importance in the Church (CT 71).

Their preparation calls on us to organize special centres and institutes, which are to be given assiduous attention by the Bishops.⁷³

This post-conciliar promotion is more specifically directed towards the formation of catechists, but it should not be forgotten that the catechesis and the formation of catechists is to be done in a renewed overall pastoral plan for evangelization.

In the view of the new challenges posed for today’s catechesis, it is indeed important to situate catechesis within the

⁷¹ <http://www.cultura.va/content/cultura/en/strumenti/ccc.html> (31-01-2014)

⁷² “In order to inculturate the Gospel and evangelize the cultures, in order to overcome the split between faith and culture, between the Gospel and daily life, and to proclaim the Message in a time of indifference and practical atheism today, we require, in addition to the teachings of the Magisterium of the Pastors, a capillary action, articulated at the local level, and the promotion of local cultural traditions responding to the needs and expectations of a given community. Hence the importance of the ‘frontiers’ which are the Catholic cultural centres.” Ibid.

⁷³ RZEPKOWSKI, *Pastorali, Istituti*, 489.

context of a pastoral project that is open, courageous and is viewed from the perspective of evangelization and in dialogue with culture and life.⁷⁴

The new Canon Law of 1983 promotes exactly the adaptation and openness of the Church that Fr. Hofinger expressed in his article of 1961. The preaching of the gospel to non-Christian peoples is required to be done “with the procedure suited to their talent and culture,” so that they have full access to the Gospel (cf. CIC, can. 787 § 1).⁷⁵

9. The Latest Recommendation from the Papal Magisterium

The results of two synods on Africa held in Rome in 1994 and in 2009 were reflected on by the respective popes. Pope John Paul II wrote the Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa* (EA) in 1995 and Pope Benedict XVI the Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Africae munus* in 2011. It is important to notice that EA 62 refers to the difficult and delicate task of inculturation and therefore the importance of cultural study centres is recognised. Pope John Paul II states:

Inculturation is a movement towards full evangelization ... that ... includes the whole life of the Church and the whole process of evangelization. It includes theology, liturgy, the Church's life and structures. All this underlines the need for research in the field of African cultures in all their complexity. Precisely for this reason the Synod invited Pastors “to exploit to the maximum the numerous possibilities which the Church's present discipline provides in this matter” (EA 62).

Paragraph 64 has a section that is a clear support for the need and task of pastoral and cultural centres, which are actually doing what the Pope is recommending.

The Synod expressed the hope that the Episcopal Conferences, in cooperation with Universities and Catholic Institutes, would set up study commissions, especially for matters concerning marriage, the veneration of ancestors,

⁷⁴ E. ALBERICH/J. VALLABARAJ, *Communicating a Faith that Transforms*, Bangalore 2004, 33. – “We do this in order to avoid isolating catechesis from the pastoral action as a whole, and to underline the urgency of a holistic programmed action at the service of a well-conceived pastoral plan or project. Only in this manner can catechesis offer a valid contribution to the work of evangelization.”

⁷⁵ Cf. D. SALACHAS, *Fede e cultura nell'azione missionaria della Chiesa secondo le norme del diritto canonico: Euntes Docete* 51 (1998) 107-117, here 108.

and the spirit world, in order to examine in depth all the cultural aspects of problems from the theological, sacramental, liturgical and canonical points of view (EA 64).⁷⁶

Pope Benedict XVI refers to what his predecessor Pope John Paul II had said in *Ecclesia in Africa* No. 103 on the role of Higher Institutes. For him having “Catholic institutions of higher education is as pertinent as ever” (AM 136). He underlined even more the importance of such institutes by quoting from *Ecclesia in Africa* (103) his predecessor’s most significant statement on Catholic cultural centres:

Catholic cultural centres offer to the Church the possibility of presence and action in the field of cultural exchange. They constitute in effect public forums which allow the Church to make widely known, in creative dialogue, Christian convictions about man, woman, family, work, economy, society, politics, international life, the environment. Thus they are places of listening, respect and tolerance (AM 136, cf. EA 103).⁷⁷

Conclusion

Summarizing the proposals of *Ad Gentes* it can be said that the missionary activity of the Church needs the scientific preparation of personnel, so that especially the dialogue with non-Christian religions and cultures can be carried out and this can happen by applying specific missiological, sociological, ecumenical, ethnological, linguistic and pastoral knowledge. Cultural and pastoral institutes are seen as essential means in the process of becoming an authentic local Church. Such institutes can make use of the experience and knowledge of those serving the evangelizing mission of the church. They can serve as bridge builders between local and expatriate Church workers and missionaries.

⁷⁶ John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*: AAS 88 (1996) 40-41.

⁷⁷ “The Catholic Universities and Higher Institutes in Africa have a prominent role to play in the proclamation of the salvific Word of God. They are a sign of the growth of the Church insofar as their research integrates the truths and experiences of the faith and helps to internalize them. They serve the Church by providing trained personnel, by studying important theological and social questions for the benefit of the Church, by developing an African theology, by promoting the work of inculturation, by publishing books and publicizing Catholic truth, by undertaking assignments given by the bishops and by contributing to the scientific study of cultures” Benedict XVI, *Africae Munus*, No. 136; cf. John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*: AAS 88 (1996) 62-63.

The Missionary Decree *Ad Gentes* directed and inspired the worldwide renewal of missionary pastoral activities with fundamental consequences for the young churches of Africa, Asia and Oceania. At the same time *Ad Gentes* summarized historical experience that could be of help in the concrete undertakings of local Churches.

Fr. John Schütte SVD (1913-1971), who led the commission “De Missionibus” to a successful conclusion, had with this commission a significant influence on the Conciliar Decree *Ad Gentes*.⁷⁸

In the commentary on *Ad Gentes*, which he published in 1967, he shared his ideas on how to put the missionary vision of Vatican II into praxis in the post-conciliar period. Those observations are valid even today, nearly half a century after the closure of the Council. The bishops of the traditionally Catholic countries have – in many cases – “discovered” the true nature of mission, which is not conducted on the margins of the Church and entrusted exclusively to missionary institutes, but which is the essential task of the whole Church and, therefore, their responsibility. The Church of the future will surely be a missionary Church, fully aware of her missionary commitment and missionary orientation. But at the same time she will be perfectly aware that Vatican II gave her only the first impulse for her mission. The Council has shown new ways and perspectives, new ways of thinking about the mission, but this is only a beginning: the realization of this vision has to be put into practice by the generations after the Council.⁷⁹

The purpose of this chapter was to show the reasons which have led local Churches and missionary societies to launch new cultural and pastoral institutes with a missionary perspective in Africa, Asia, Oceania and Latin America.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Fr. John Schütte, the superior general of the SVD missionaries, presented three times a proposal to the Council Fathers: first the “Relatio super schema decreti de activitate missionari ecclesiali” on October 7, 1965, then “relatio generalis” on November 10, 1965; and finally the third and final edition of the “relatio generalis” on November 30, 1965. Cf. F. BORNEMANN, *In Memoriam: Fr. John Schuette. 6th Superior General SVD*. Rome 1972; H. BETTSCHIEDER, *The Legacy of John Schütte, S.V.D.: IBMR 27* (2003) 29-33; ID., *The Contribution of the Society of the Divine Word to the Elaboration of Ad Gentes*, 371-391; S. PAVENTI, *Iter dello schema “De activitate missionari ecclesiae”*: *Euntes Docete* 49 (1966) 98-126.

⁷⁹ J. SCHÜTTE, *Prefazione*, in J. SCHÜTTE (ed.), *Il destino delle missioni*, Roma-Brescia 1969, 7; cf. ID., *I problemi posti dalla missione al Concilio*, in: ID., op. cit., 9-24; German original: *Fragen der Mission an das Konzil*, in: ID., *Mission nach dem Konzil*, Mainz 1967, 9-20; in French: *Ce que la mission attendait du Concile*, in: ID., *L'activité missionnaire de l'Eglise*, Paris 1967, 107-120.

⁸⁰ Cf. P. STEFFEN, *Places and Models of Formation for Mission and Ministry. Pastoral Institutes in Africa and Asia: Verbum SVD* 51 (2010) 423-438.

CHAPTER 2

THE MELANESIAN INSTITUTE Its Pastoral and Socio-cultural Service for the Churches and Society in Melanesia

Introduction

The Melanesian Institute (MI) is an ecumenical research institute which occupies itself with socio-cultural, economic, ecological and especially pastoral-theological issues in Melanesia.

The institute was first called Melanesian Social Pastoral Institute, but in 1971 the name Melanesian Institute for Pastoral and Socio-Economic Service was adopted. "Pastoral" underscores the concern for studying the cultural context in which the work of Christian ministry is carried out and for exploring pastoral options and strategies.¹

This is also made clear in *Catalyst*, the journal published by MI, which has the subtitle "Pastoral & Socio-Cultural Journal for Melanesia."

The vision for the need to found a pastoral-cultural institute for Melanesia rose among missionaries working in Papua New Guinea (PNG) after the Second Vatican Council. The Divine Word Missionaries especially played a crucial role in translating the vision into reality and making it not only an inter-congregational project among several Catholic orders, but an ecumenical project among the mainline Churches of PNG.

According to the founding director of the MI "[t]he new institute was to serve missionaries following the inspirations of the Second Vatican Council." But then he asked: "who were the missionaries and what were the inspirations taken up by the Institute?"² In Janssen's evaluation

Christian missionaries had a deep and positive influence on the life of the Pacific people. Most Melanesians speak gratefully of their first missionaries and catechists ... Among the

¹ M. N. MACDONALD, Writing about Culture and Talking about God: Christian Ethnography in Melanesia, in: S. R. JAARSMA/M. A. ROHATYNSKYJ (eds.), *Ethnographic Artifacts: Challenges to a Reflexive Anthropology*, Honolulu 2000, 158; cf. *Catalyst* 1 (1971) 4.

² H. JANSSEN, Vision and Foundation of the Melanesian Institute, in: E. MANTOVANI (ed.), *25 Years of Service. The Melanesian Institute: Its History and Its Work*, Point No. 19, Goroka 1994, 29.

younger generation, however, some critical remarks concerning land ownership of missions, regarding certain paternalistic attitudes of some missionaries and about the lack of understanding for local cultures were raised. Indeed, I think it would be right to say that there was still a rift between Gospel and cultures. Though many gifted missionaries had made extensive linguistic and ethnographic studies, an in-depth dialogue between local and Christian religiosity had hardly begun.³

In its character and purpose, the MI has developed a special identity that is unique in the Christian world. It is unique in its approach in being Melanesian, ecumenical, cultural anthropological, socio-economic and pastoral in its nature, aim and focus.

The MI is integral in the sense that it seeks to achieve a balance between the “spiritual” and the “social,” between Melanesian culture and Christian heritage, between the responsibility of the ministers of the Christian churches and the leaders of the civil government for the common good of the people in PNG, which is why it is integral in its method and approach and in its content. The MI is integral because it addresses not only the ministers of the Christian churches, but also politicians, business people and all those who have a responsibility for the common good of the country, which the following quotation clearly shows:

The Melanesian Institute has played a significant role in the development of PNG since its inception twenty five years ago. Its significant contribution towards national development can be discerned specifically in the areas of development research, teaching and publications. From a humble beginning, the MI has become an effective medium of communication for both the missionaries, lay men and women, academics and political leaders of the country. It has also become a source of inspiration for many aspiring PNG thinkers, philosophers and politicians.⁴

³ Ibid.

⁴ J. MOMIS, Foreword. *The Future Role of Melanesian Institute. A Call for the Spirit of Critical Co-operation between the Church and State*, in: MANTOVANI, op. cit., 6. – The author wrote the article as Minister for Information and Communication and parliamentary leader of the Melanesian Alliance Party in 1994. Since June 10, 2010, he is the President of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Momis (20-01-2014)

1. The Development of the Vision and Its Historical Realization

1.1 The Development towards the Foundation of the Melanesian Institute

The development towards the foundation of the Pastoral Institute, similar to other pastoral institutes founded in the non-Western world in the late 1960s, goes back to the Second Vatican Council.⁵ There can be no doubt that the Second Vatican Council has stimulated a continuous renewal process in all local Churches worldwide, from which other Christian Churches have also benefited.

The impact of Vatican II had a special role to play in the transition period of so-called missions becoming local Churches. The newly emerging ecumenical movement was part of this renewal in the non-Western Churches. And in the case of the MI the participation of not only Catholics members but also of Protestant Churches showed, as never before, an unparalleled development of inter-ecclesial trust and cooperation.⁶ Moved by the impulses of Vatican II the missionaries of PNG began to reflect on more fruitful ways to proclaim the Gospel in a fast changing society.

The visionaries of the institute and the main line churches believed that preaching of the Good News could be effectively transmitted through better sensitisation and possible acculturation of the missionaries.⁷

The question of the introduction of new missionaries in particular was discussed, who still arrived every year in large numbers in PNG and neighbouring Melanesian countries.⁸ The new missionary generation brought along new ideas about missionary work and new approaches to promote the living conditions of the people. The same was the case with the staff of the MI, which aimed at doing justice to the needs of the times in transmitting an updated understanding of missionary work that would be in line with a better understanding of the cultural values and pastoral needs of the Melanesian people and their

⁵ Cf. H. CZARKOWSKI, Zur Bedeutung und Situation der Pastoralinstitute in der Dritten Welt: *ZMR* 59 (1975) 112-126, 182-200.

⁶ "The need to study systematically Melanesian cultures was felt not only in Catholic circles but also among the other major churches (Anglican, Evangelical Lutheran, and United Church) in the region. It made sense for them to share their resources for this task, and the developing ecumenical climate made it possible. Within a few years all the four churches were members of the institute," in: MACDONALD, op. cit., 158.

⁷ MOMIS, Foreword, 6-7.

⁸ Cf. E. MANTOVANI/F. ZOCCA, Introduction of New Missionaries in Papua New Guinea: *Verbum SVD* 43 (2002) 41-53.

Christian communities. The MI was aiming at an interdisciplinary approach that would be able to integrate different fields of science like sociology, cultural anthropology, mission theology and practical (pastoral) theology. But those human, theological and social sciences had to be cautiously translated and to be adapted to the multiethnic and multi-linguistic realities of Melanesian societies. There was an urgent need to develop and practice new ways of evangelization which would respect the cultural values of Melanesian societies. The new missionary generation was looking for an orientation in that particular transition period in their search for new approaches to evangelize and minister to the people in Melanesian societies. During the first post-Council General Chapter of the Society of the Divine Word in 1967 in Nemi, near Rome, the need for a proper introduction for new missionaries was discussed. The missionaries from PNG especially saw a great need for an adequate orientation for newcomers in the mission. In particular, the North American SVD priest, Ernest Brandewie, who taught Social Anthropology at the San Carlos University in Cebu, strove for the creation of an "Orientation and Research Center" for new missionaries in Papua New Guinea.⁹ It was especially Fr. Gerry Bus, the Regional Superior of the SVD in PNG and chairperson of the *Association of Higher Clerical Superiors* in PNG/SI (AHCS), who took up the proposal of Brandewie to establish Orientation Centres for the missionaries, since he saw in such centres the opportunity to renew the missionary work in the country.¹⁰ The Generalate administration of the SVD under the leadership of Fr.

⁹ Cf. E. BRANDEWIE, The Vision of the "Founding Fathers," in: MANTOVANI, op. cit., 17-19. – Ernest Brandewie was born in the USA in 1931 and ordained priest as member of the SVD in 1959. For two years he did ethnological research in PNG for his doctoral thesis at the University of Chicago. He was made professor of Social Anthropology at the San Carlos University run by the SVD in the Philippines and a member of the Anthropos Institute of the SVD. In two published articles in *Verbum* (1967) he strongly advocated the need to establish "Orientation Centers" as a preparation place for new missionaries. In 1967 Brandewie wrote a ten-page memorandum on this issue which he sent to the CBC of PNG/SI and to the AHCS in PNG/SI. In his first article, The Anthropos and our Missionary Apostolate: *Verbum* 9 (1967) 21-31, he suggested that the Anthropos Institute could take the responsibility to found and lead such Orientation Centers in mission countries. In his second article, A Pastoral Orientation Center in New Guinea: *Verbum* 9 (1967) 137-145, he developed the issue more precisely. The desired orientation centre should be made available to all the missionaries (priests, brothers, sisters and lay missionaries), experienced and newly arrived missionaries, through annual introductory and refresher courses. It should also promote the ecumenical movement, and be at the service of priests and members of local congregations. In this regard, he thought that the responsibility for the institute should be assumed by the bishops' conference.

¹⁰ Cf. G. BUS, The Beginnings of the Melanesian Institute, in: MANTOVANI, op. cit., 20-21.

John Schütte, 1957-1967, already had aimed at such an Orientation Centre for missionaries and appointed several priests for studies in anthropology and practical theology for that purpose.¹¹ Under the newly elected SVD Superior General, Fr. John Musinsky (1918-2006), the idea of establishing a pastoral institute was taken up in 1967 and developed further. Professor Brandewie was given the task of implementing this idea of an Orientation Centre.¹² At that time Brandewie still spoke about a Centre for the orientation of new missionaries. From the beginning, the institute was not intended to be an SVD institute or a business run by the SVD, but rather an institution and an enterprise of the whole Church in Papua New Guinea. Especially Fr. Gerry Bus had done much to ensure that the envisioned institute became an institute carried out under the responsibility of all the forces of the Church in Papua New Guinea. So from the very beginning along with the support of the Divine Word Missionaries, the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (MSC) and the Marist Missionaries (SM) showed a strong interest in the development of an orientation centre and wanted to make their own experts available to such an institute. The years 1968 and 1969 led, step by step, to the realization of the envisioned Pastoral Institute. In his letter dated January 29, 1968 Brandewie outlined the first concrete steps to the SVD Superior General.¹³ In a letter dated February 9, 1968, Fr. John Musinsky asked Bishop George Bernarding SVD (1912-1987) of Mt. Hagen diocese to make Fr. Joseph Knoebel, a trained anthropologist and missionary at Lake Kopiaiko, available for the planned new institute. Fr. Knoebel was seen as a possible director of the new centre.¹⁴ On March 7, 1968, Fr. Musinsky wrote a joint letter to the four SVD bishops in PNG on the issue of the planned "Pastoral Institute." The letter communicated to the bishops that for some time a discussion to establish a pastoral institute had taken place and that such an institute would have a double function. The first function would be to do scientific studies and research regarding the problems and missionary-pastoral methods. Secondly, it should become a centre which would introduce new missionaries to their ministry in the Melanesian societies.

¹¹ Cf. letter of Ernest Brandewie of January 29, 1968 to the Superior General SVD, Fr. John Musinsky; in Generalate Archives SVD (GA), Rome, n. 880. – Gerard (Gerry) Bus (1921-2007) was born in Bussum, Netherlands. In 1933 he joined the SVD and was ordained a priest in 1945. In 1947 he came to the highlands of PNG and started the Catholic mission in the Enga province. From 1967 to 1975 he was the Regional Superior of the SVD in PNG. In 1995 he left PNG and returned to his home country.

¹² Letter of John Musinsky to E. Brandewie of February 9, 1968, in: GA.

¹³ Cf. letter of January 29, 1968 and answer dated February 9, 1968, in: GA.

¹⁴ Letter of J. Musinsky to Bishop G. Bernarding SVD of Mt. Hagen, February 9, 1968, in: GA.

For the Superior General these thoughts were in harmony or total agreement with the demands and the reflections of the previous General Chapter. He assured the full support of the Generalate in order that the future pastoral institute would run effectively.¹⁵ The Archbishop of Madang, Msgr. Adolf Noser SVD (1900-1981), as the president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference (CBC) of PNG/SI, replied in a letter dated March 29, 1968. In his letter he communicated that the bishops in principle supported the idea of a pastoral institute, but that they had not reached any subsequent agreement and that therefore the time was not yet ripe for a decision from their part on the proposed issue. In his opinion the question of establishing a pastoral institute and the responsibility of running it fell on religious superiors and not on the bishops of the country. He further argued that since almost all the missionaries belonged to a religious congregation, it would therefore be the duty of the religious superiors to choose and appoint the needed staff members of the future pastoral institute.¹⁶

The CBC, which the initiators had originally approached to be the leaders of the new project, had not taken up the initiative to found the pastoral institute nor did they show any interest now in becoming the founders of the pastoral institute. Therefore, the AHCS decided in their meeting on June 13, 1969 to go ahead on their own with the foundation and the realization of a "socio-pastoral institute for Melanesia."¹⁷

The "jus commissionis" by which certain religious institutes had their own missions, which made them completely responsible for staffing and running those missions, had theologically been almost superseded by Vatican II, but legally it only ended with the publication of the document "Quo aptius" in 1969.¹⁸ This explains to some extent the insecurity shown by the bishops in that transition period regarding the legal status and responsibilities of religious congregations in their respective juridical areas and the status of the missions of those religious congre-

¹⁵ Letter of the Superior General SVD, J. Musinsky, to the four SVD bishops in Papua New Guinea of March 7, 1968, in: GA.

¹⁶ Letter of Bishop A. Noser to the Superior General SVD of March 29, 1968, in: GA.

¹⁷ Cf. *SVD nota*, June 1968. – "In April 1967 the idea for a training institute for missionaries was brought to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea and the British Solomon Islands in a letter drafted by Ernest Brandewie ... The bishops agreed to the need for such an institute but said they could not move on it that time. Several months later the Clerical Religious Superiors of the Catholic Church in PNG studied the proposal and decided to supply the resources for implementing it." MACDONALD, *op. cit.*, 158.

¹⁸ Published February 24, 1969, in: AAS 61 (1969) 281-289; cf. Jus commissionis, in: H. RZEPKOWSKI, *Lessico di Missiologia*, Città del Vaticano 2000, 352-353.

gations at that time. In fact, the missionary territories, assigned in the past to certain religious congregations, became the full responsibility of the diocese and the responsibility for evangelization was given to the local Church.¹⁹

1.2 The Need and Purpose of a Melanesian Institute

The anthropologist Dr. Hermann Janssen claimed “it would be right to say that there was still a rift between Gospel and cultures. Though many gifted missionaries had made extensive linguistic and ethnographic studies, an in-depth dialogue between local and Christian religiosity had hardly begun.”²⁰ Through the scientific introduction given by the institute, the new missionaries should be able to get to know and better understand the indigenous people and their cultures. A permanent research institute with such an objective had therefore to support the missionaries in finding solutions to the many unresolved challenges they encountered in their work.

Fr. Hermann Janssen, a member of the Sacred Heart Missionaries and a specialist in cultural and social anthropology, was chosen as the first director of the Melanesian Institute.²¹

From November 17, 1969 until January 31, 1970 the newly founded institute held its first orientation course for 45 new missionaries coming from different nationalities and different religious congregations. The institute’s orientation course was held at the Centre of the Sacred Heart mission in Vunapope near Rabaul, East New Britain. The participants of the Orientation Course (OC) came from all parts of the country and represented fourteen Catholic dioceses in PNG and thirteen different nationalities; there were also six local priests of PNG in the course.

¹⁹ Cf. P. B. STEFFEN, *From Mission to Church. Assessment and Perspectives of the Catholic Church in Mainland New Guinea after Its First Hundred Years*, in: STEYLER MISSIONSWISSENSCHAFTLICHES INSTITUT, *Divine Word Missionaries in Papua New Guinea 1896-1996*, 231-258.

²⁰ JANSSEN, *Vision and Foundation of the Melanesian Institute*, 29. – Hermann Janssen (1933-1998) was born in Germany where he joined the MSC; he was ordained MSC priest in 1960. 1962-1967 he studied anthropology, sociology and philosophy at Cologne and Vienna and received his PhD in Anthropology there. For periods during 1963-1964 and 1967 he did research work in Central India. He came to New Guinea in 1967, and for two years did pastoral and research work in the MSC Mission on New Britain. In 1969, he became the founding director of the MI. Ill health forced him to leave MI and PNG for Germany. He worked as a research officer and was responsible for Oceania at the Missiological Institute of Missio Aachen up to his retirement in 1996; cf. *A Tribute to Dr. Hermann Janssen: Catalyst* 29 (1999) 2-4.

²¹ Cf. *A Tribute to Dr. Hermann Janssen*, 28-38.

The course started with various lectures on contemporary Theology of Mission. Janssen organized this first course. During the course the official opening of the Melanesian Institute was celebrated on January 11, 1970.²²

There were two issues that were of concern to most of the participants and lecturers in Vunapope:

- 1) how to help the missionaries so as to avoid the danger of interpreting the problems they encountered in Melanesia only from the view point of their respective experience in Europe, America and Australia; and,
- 2) secondly, what role they had to play as missionaries in Melanesia.²³

With this initial work and with those questions in mind the founding of the Melanesian Institute and the Institute's work had started.

1.3 The Early Identity and Purpose of the Institute between 1969 and 1970

According to Brandewie, the Melanesian Social Pastoral Institute was established to accomplish four tasks:

- 1) to carry out relevant anthropological and socio-economic research work;
- 2) to organize orientation and in-service training courses for missionaries (priests, brothers and lay missionaries);
- 3) to publish the "Melanesian Social Pastoral Papers," a quarterly magazine for information and discussion;
- 4) to help to implement socio-economic development schemes and experiments of urgent pastoral adaptation.²⁴

Brandewie argues from the viewpoint and insights of a cultural and social anthropologist and missionary priest, who wants to preserve cultural identity and values in the process of evangelization of Melanesian people and their cultures and at the same time he wants to help them to improve their life.

Each one of these goals is necessary, if the over-all aim of the Institute is to be realized, which is to bring all resources

²² Ibid., 29.

²³ Cf. E. BRANDEWIE, *The Melanesian Social Pastoral Institute: Verbum SVD* 11 (1970) 41.

²⁴ Ibid., 37.

to bear on the problem of Christianizing the people of Melanesia with the least amount of shock and disruption to their way of life, preserving what is good, while helping them, at the same time, to a better life.²⁵

Brandewie understood the goal of the new *Melanesian Social Pastoral Institute*, as he called the institute in his article in 1970, to be in “accord with the directives of Vatican II in its various documents, especially the ones dealing with the Missions of the Church and the relations of the Church and the Modern World.” For him, “the staff of the Institute will be composed of experts in their fields of Pastorals, Anthropology, Economics and Economic Development, Linguistics and the like.”²⁶ The task of such a team of experts would be to do relevant basic research and not just to apply research work done at other places. With that he already describes the future attitude and approach to research work carried out by MI staff members. Doing basic and relevant field research work has always been a part of the mission of MI.

Not only were the originally envisioned orientation courses for incoming missionaries seen as a task for the newly established MI, but even more the necessity of in-service training for all kinds of church workers for the churches in PNG and eventually also for neighbouring countries in Melanesia. The teaching of the staff members of MI always reflects at the same time an outstandingly anthropological and missiological perspective. It is also not surprising and a part of the vision commonly held in the 1970s, that the MI also favoured human promotion programmes and the training of lay leaders, which should help “to answer very basic needs in the Melanesian situation.”²⁷ Brandewie also saw in “a quarterly magazine of information and discussion” an important objective of MI.

Whatever new ideas, experiments, insights are achieved as a result of discussion and study at the center, they can be shared with others through this quarterly. Far from being an appendix to the Institute’s work, this magazine must be considered essential as far as achieving the central goals of the Institute.²⁸

Looking at over four decades of the Institute’s successful publication of *Catalyst*, the “Pastoral & Social Journal of Melanesia,” it is astonishing to notice with what clarity Brandewie in 1970 had described the

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 39.

²⁸ Ibid., 39-40.

typical characteristics of the magazine the MI should publish. In 1970, Brandewie already could give the name of six competent future staff members of the MI. Hermann Janssen, the first director of MI, would cover the field of Anthropology and Sociology of Religion; Fr. Joseph Knoebel, with an M.A. in Anthropology, would serve the MI as Vice-Director and with his major interests in Sociology and Education. Fr. Gerry Arbuckle, a member of the Society of Mary from New Zealand, holding a doctorate in Philosophy and an M.A. in Anthropology, with an interest and extensive experience in the field of Social Economics and Community Development, was assigned to the MI by the Marist Generalate. Fr. Leo Brouwer (1929-1994), a Dutch Divine Word Missionary, had experience in the field of training catechists in Papua New Guinea and was doing doctoral studies in Pastoral Theology in the Netherlands to join the MI staff. Finally Fr. E. Schütte MSC had experience in training catechists and in homiletics. Fr. John Z'Graggen (1932-2013) was a Swiss Divine Word Missionary holding a doctorate in linguistics with great expertise in the local languages of the Madang Province in PNG. Of these intended staff members, the last two did not remain part of the staff after the first orientation course of 1969-1970 and G. Arbuckle²⁹ remained an active member of the MI only for 18 months. So it was mainly the German H. Janssen, the American J. Knoebel and the Dutch L. Brouwer who carried on the work of the first years. All of them priests and members of Catholic religious orders involved in doing missionary work in PNG.³⁰ The MI aimed also at integrating local specialists as guest lecturers. The whole concept of cooperation was a novum in the history of the Church of PNG and the Solomon Islands.

Until then there had been only the separate development of the individual missions, which were much more connected with their foreign headquarters than among each other.³¹

Hermann Janssen saw three major tasks of MI:

Firstly, the MI should research and mediate the Melanesian culture to the missionaries through orientation courses, in-service courses and publications.

²⁹ Cf. G. ARBUCKLE, *The Founding of the Melanesian Institute: A Personal Dream Comes True*, in: MANTOVANI, op. cit., 22-27. – Gerald A. Arbuckle, SM, born in New Zealand, is a Catholic theologian and anthropologist. He holds a Ph.D. in social anthropology from Cambridge University, UK. He was assistant general of the Society of Mary from 1981 to 1985, and he had been a lecturer of cultural anthropology at the East Asian Pastoral Institute, Ateneo de Manila University. He is now co-director of Refounding and Pastoral Development, a research ministry, in Sydney, Australia.

³⁰ Ibid., 40.

³¹ Ibid.

Secondly, the MI should assist the ecclesiological and pastoral development from “mission to Church,” especially through the strengthening of Christian groups and communities, which was then expressed in the self-study project of the Catholic Church “We Are Church.”

Thirdly, the MI should contribute to overcome the isolation and rivalry of the individual missionary congregations, dioceses and churches; and MI should develop contact with similar pastoral institutes, especially with the Gaba Pastoral Institute in Kenya and the Lumko Institute in South Africa.³²

In addition to the orientation course the young institute aimed at five additional targets for its staff. They should

- 1) prepare themselves for in-service training courses;
- 2) collect and organize all the relevant material on mission activities;
- 3) collect information on all socio-economic development projects of the Church and on pastoral and liturgical events and experiments of adaptation;
- 4) organize quarterly “Melanesian Social Pastoral Papers”;
- 5) work on definite plans for pastoral adaptation and socio-economic services concerning the whole region of PNG and Solomon Islands.³³

From the earliest stages the new institute wanted to collaborate fruitfully with other institutes and educational institutions in its sphere of influence. The MI was thinking of the following institutes:

- a) the Institute for Social Research;
- b) the Liturgical-Catechetical Institute;³⁴

³² Letter of H. Janssen to the author of March 1989; see also H. JANSSEN, *Barela Bhilala in Zentralindien. Ergebnisse einer Feldforschung 1963-1964*, Wien 1966; ID., *Impulse aus Afrika für die Familien- und Gemeindepastoral: ZMR 65* (1981) 241-248; cf. ID., *Neue religiöse Bewegungen in Melanesien: ZMR 77* (1993) 35-49; cf. ID., *Creative Deities and the Role of Religion in New Britain. An Evaluation of Carl Laufer's Anthropological Concern*, in: H. JANSSEN (co-ed.), *Carl Laufer MSC. Missionar und Ethnologe auf Neu-Guinea*, Freiburg 1975, 19-39.

³³ BRANDEWIE, *The Melanesian Institute*, 41. – H. Janssen later wrote: “In specific terms, this task of service is carried out through five main avenues: 1. Orientation Courses; 2. In-Service Courses and Seminars; 3. Research Work; 4. Publications; 5. Consultation for pastoral and socio-economic projects,” JANSSEN, *Vision and Foundation*, 31.

- c) the Communication Institute;³⁵
- d) the Xavier Institute of Missiology;³⁶
- e) the department of Religion at the University of PNG;³⁷
- f) the Divine Word University;³⁸
- g) other relevant departments of the Government.

Cooperation was the key word, which stood for an attitude of cooperation with all possible and available forces. The Institute wanted to go this route of exchange and cooperation with religious communities, dioceses, and Churches, as well as with various state and university research institutions in order to achieve its goal of service to the society and the Church in Melanesia.

Whether that goal could be achieved only the future would show. But it was definitely a step in the right direction, according to Brandewie, and it was the only way the Church in Melanesia could move forward.³⁹

³⁴ Ibid., 41. – In 1964 the bishops founded a national liturgical commission under the impact of Vatican II. In 1968 it was made the National Liturgical and Catechetical Centre (NLCC). Fr. Cornelius van de Geest SVD was appointed its first director. The NLCC had its headquarters in Alexishafen, where at that time also the Archbishop of Madang and the Regional Superior of the Divine Word were residing. In 1976, Fr. Henk te Maarsssen SVD, the second director of NLCC, moved the Centre to Goroka and renamed it Liturgical Catechetical Institute (LCI), see C. VAN DE GEEST, NLCC. The National Liturgical Catechetical Centre: *Catalyst* 1:1 (1971) 76-79; see also: The Liturgical Catechetical Institute of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, 1964-1984, in: R. JASPERS, (ed.), *Papers prepared for the Visit of Pope John Paul II to Papua New Guinea, 7-10 May 1984*, Port Moresby 1984.

³⁵ The Communication Institute (CI) is an institute of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

³⁶ The Xavier Institute of Missiology was founded in 1968/69 by the Association of Female Religious Superiors of PNG/SI. It offers courses on social and pastoral ministry and on formation for local and expatriate sisters. At the beginning it was planned to offer also orientation courses for religious sisters. But since 1971 religious sisters attended the MI orientation courses; see Sr. CATHERINE, The Xavier Institute of Missiology: *Catalyst* 1:2 (1971) 86-87.

³⁷ The University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) was founded in 1967 in Port Moresby. Especially the Religious Department became a partner for collaboration and exchange with the MI.

³⁸ The Divine Word Institute (DWI) was founded by the SVD in 1979 and became the first Catholic tertiary educational institution in PNG. Since 1996 it is called Divine Word University (DWU). DWU "is ecumenical, coeducational and privately governed with government support." In: <http://www.dwu.ac.pg/en/index.php/about-dwu> (18-01-2014)

³⁹ BRANDEWIE, The Melanesian Institute, 44.

1.4 *The Further Development of MI*

The MI was originally sponsored only by the Catholic missionary orders working in PNG. Therefore the first service of MI, the Orientation Course, was only for mission personnel who were Roman Catholic, all male and mainly clerical and religious.

1.5 *An Inter-congregational Project of Various Catholic Orders*

The Melanesian Institute was clearly an initiative of the male missionaries who were members of the Catholic religious congregations who were responsible for the initial evangelization in PNG and the Solomon Islands. The members of these missionary congregations felt responsible for animating the Christian communities which they had founded, to create a Melanesian Christianity which is rooted in Catholic tradition and at the same time in the tradition of Melanesian cultures.

The MI “saw a gradual opening up of the initiative, mainly because the same needs existed across the boundaries. First the CBC took over the venture; then the doors were opened for Roman Catholic Sisters, then also for members of other denominations (both on the level of direction, funding, staff, and students), and eventually even for people of nearby countries.”⁴⁰

In those years there was much discussion of the need to promote a “Melanesian Christianity” after a century of christianization of Melanesia and that the new century would be a century of “melanesianisation of Christianity.” In other words, there was a request to contextualize and inculturate the Christian faith of Catholic tradition into the cultures of Melanesia and life style of Melanesian peoples.

The further development of MI can best be understood by looking at the inputs of the people who have directed and shaped the Institute. In the years from 1968 to 1975, Dr. Hermann Janssen as founding director of MI put the vision mentioned already into a set of sustainable working methods. Equally Joseph Knoebel was able to contribute to this achievement in his function as co-founder and Deputy Director, and as Director from 1975 to 1977.⁴¹

⁴⁰ T. AERTS, *Romans and Anglicans in Papua New Guinea*, Goroka 1991, 86.

⁴¹ Joseph Knoebel (1933-1990) was born in the USA. He joined the SVD in 1947, was ordained priest in 1961 and arrived in PNG in 1963. In 1963 he became the founder of the Catholic mission at Lake Kapiako (nowadays part of the Mendi diocese). During his years of pastoral experience and ministry he developed a vision of a truly Melanesian church. He was the co-founder and Deputy Director of the MI from 1970 to 1975, and Director from 1975 to 1977. In October 1977 he returned to the USA. He contributed essentially to the foundation

The years before as well as those following the declaration of independence of PNG in 1975 are the years when the MI established its typical approach to carry out its mission in Papua New Guinea and in Melanesia.⁴²

The “Self-Study Program” of the Catholic Church in PNG, carried out from 1972 to 1975, and then the “Self-Study Program” of the Lutheran Church of PNG from 1975 to 1977 were an expression of the spirit of those years in search of an adequate identity for young local Churches in a young nation.⁴³

In 1978, Fr. Ennio Mantovani SVD was made director of MI. Since the first orientation course in 1969/70 Mantovani had been a regular guest lecturer at MI.⁴⁴

As a missiologist with fourteen years of experience in evangelization work among highlanders of PNG, he shaped especially the second phase of the Institute, which led to a deeper theological and missiological debate in the Institute and among the members of different ecclesial backgrounds and traditions.

Practical theology and the proclamation of the Good News required a better connection and confrontation with leading theological ideas and principles. There was the need to develop an ecumenical and Melanesian contextual theology and a contextual theology of religion at the service of all Melanesian Christians. The appointment of Sr. Mary Burke SSps as Director for the first time opened the leadership position to women.⁴⁵

and direction of MI; Cf. In memoriam Fr. Joseph Knoebel, S.V.D.: *Catalyst* 20 (1990) 307.

⁴² Cf. Annual Report of the Melanesian Institute (AR), 1972.

⁴³ Cf. AR, 1976 and 1977.

⁴⁴ AR, 1977 and 1978. – Ennio Mantovani was born in 1932 in Riva, Italy. In 1948 he joined the SVD seminary. He studied theology at St. Gabriel’s, Austria, where he was ordained in 1958. In 1962 he completed his missiological studies at the Gregorian University in Rome with a doctorate. For fourteen years he worked as a pioneering missionary in the southern part of Simbu, before he joined the MI staff in 1977. Twice he served the MI as director (1978-1984 and 1987-1994). In 1997 he left the MI.

⁴⁵ Cf. AR, 1984. – Maria Burke (1945-2012), a Holy Spirit Missionary Sister, was born in Chicago, USA. For seven years she taught religion, social science and English at Bogia Holy Spirit High School in Malala, Madang. 1975-1977 she worked with the St. Therese Sisters of Alexishafen developing formation programmes and was vocation directress of the archdiocese of Madang. She was a member of the first “Movement for a Better World” team in PNG. From 1979 to 1983 she studied at the Loyola University of Chicago, where she completed her Master of Pastoral Counselling degree in 1982 and did additional studies in

1.6 An Ecumenical Project

As a matter of fact, the Protestants of the main Churches – Lutheran, Anglican, and United Church – heard about the OC and soon asked to be allowed to send their members to the courses. Their request was granted and from the early 70s the courses became ecumenical. One condition for their participation was their providing lecturers as well. From this cooperation in the courses grew the ecumenical cooperation and eventually the ecumenical structure of the Melanesian Institute itself.⁴⁶

In 1974, a few years after its foundation, MI had changed its identity by becoming an ecumenical institute under the responsibility of the four major Churches of PNG: the Catholic, the Lutheran, the Anglican and the United Church. Describing the genesis of MI Mantovani explains in 1987:

It was not an ecumenical ideal which originated the ecumenical cooperation but the common need felt across the barriers of denominations which was answered in an ecumenical spirit. Without ecumenical spirit on the side of the Institute and on the side of those who asked for help there would not have been an ecumenical venture. But one must realize that from the beginning the Melanesian Institute was geared to serve in the field of understanding of traditional religions and cultures and of the role of the church in such context. It was not an institute with ecumenism as its aim. It was the praxis which shaped the theory. It was service for the sake of service and because the need was across the barriers of denominations it crossed those barriers and so became ecumenical.⁴⁷

Mantovani also admits that “this ecumenical venture had a price to pay, the theological issues were pushed to the back in favor of common

Community Organization and Development. In October 1983 she joined the staff of MI as coordinator of the Marriage and Family Life (MFL) Project. From 1984 to 1986 she served the MI as Director. In 1990 she returned to the USA. In 2001 she finished her thesis, *Befriending Difference, Intercultural Sensitivity Training for Ministers*, and received her Doctor of Ministry Degree at the Catholic Theological Union Chicago; cf. Maria Burke: *Catalyst* 13 (1983) 331.

⁴⁶ Cf. MANTOVANI/ZOCCA, Introduction, 46.

⁴⁷ E. MANTOVANI, Melanesian Institute and Common Witness: *Verbum SVD* 28 (1987) 77.

socio-anthropological ones.”⁴⁸ A neglect in the MI history which is criticized by the Papua New Guinean theologian Colman Renali.⁴⁹

Theo Aerts MSC, scripture scholar and for many years active participant and promoter of the ecumenical movement in PNG, describes the ecumenical character of MI as a gradual development.

What was not ecumenical by purpose, became ecumenical in fact, and there the Anglican Church was first represented when in 1978 Bishop Jeremy Ashton joined the Governing Body. Consequently the Constitution was changed to make the Institute fully interdenominational. The founding members of the Institute were originally not evangelically minded, and leaned rather towards the mainline Churches. However, as time went on, an observer of the Evangelical Alliance was invited to the Annual General Assembly, and on another occasion a couple of missionaries from the Churches of Christ attended one of the orientation courses.⁵⁰

In 1986, the German Lutheran theologian and missionary Gernot Fugmann was appointed the first non-Catholic director of MI. Since 1983 the members of the “Board of Management” represented the different member Churches.⁵¹ In 1987 E. Mantovani was appointed again director of MI.⁵²

In 1994, the Melanesian Institute celebrated its first 25 years of service⁵³ and in the same year the Lutheran theologian and former Presi-

⁴⁸ Ibid., 79.

⁴⁹ Cf. C. RENALI, *The Roman Catholic Church's Participation in the Ecumenical Movement in Papua New Guinea*, Dissertation at the St. Thomas University, Rome 1991, 176.

⁵⁰ AERTS, op. cit., 86. Simultaneously published in: *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 7 (1991) 84.

⁵¹ Cf. AR, 1987.

⁵² Cf. *Catalyst* 18 (1987); cf. G. FUGMANN (ed.), *Struggling for Lutheran Identity: The Relevance of Lutheran Theology in an Afro-Melanesian Context*, Neuen-dettelsau 1983; ID., Fundamental Issues for a Theology in Melanesia, in: B. SCHWARZ (ed.), *An Introduction to Ministry in Melanesia*, Goroka 1985, 72-103; ID., An Initiation Ceremony Today: *Catalyst* 8 (1978) 263-274; ID., Salvation in Melanesian Religions, in: E. MANTOVANI (ed.), *An Introduction to Melanesian Religions*, Goroka 1984, 279-296.

⁵³ MANTOVANI, *25 Years*; cf. ID., *Mission: Collision or Dialogical Encounter? A Chronicle of St. Paul's Parish, Yobai, Papua New Guinea*, Nettetal 2011; ID., *Mandati a battezzare o ...? Lettere dalla Papua Nuova Guinea 1962-1977*, Lavis (TN) 2012; ID., *Mission: Collision or Dialogical Encounter? Reflections on My Missiological Journey: Australian Journal of Mission Studies* 2 (2010) 43-50; ID., *Sent to Baptize or what? Letters from Papua New Guinea 1962-1977*, Ballan, Vic. (Australia) 2011.

dent of the Martin Luther Seminary in Lae, Kasek Kautil of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of PNG, became the first Papua New Guinean director of MI. In 1995 Rev. Simeon Namunu, a former bishop of the United Church in PNG, who had an M.A. in Religious Studies from the UPNG, became assistant director. In 1989 Alphonse Aime, a Papua New Guinean Catholic from the Sepik region and a linguist, was appointed editor of *Catalyst* and general editor of the MI in 1991.⁵⁴

The large number of Catholic staff members, many of whom were Catholic priests, decreased over the years through the increasing process of becoming more ecumenical and inter-ecclesial. In addition, there was an increasingly strong insertion of Catholic religious sisters, first in the administrative field, then also in the field of teaching and research.⁵⁵

The pastoral and socio-economic services of MI, its courses, its publications and its research work, were addressed from the beginning to the whole society of PNG. They wanted to overcome the self-sufficiency inherited from the missions of the various missionary congregations by practicing a more creative exchange and cooperation between the various Churches and dioceses of PNG and the Solomon Islands.

The MI followed a networking philosophy among the various Catholic dioceses and among the various Christian Churches in the country, which fostered a fruitful ecumenical climate and openness. The founders of MI were convinced that the confessional boundaries and limitations had to be overcome. This was reinforced by the awakening of the ecumenical movement and the general ecumenical openness fostered through and after the Second Vatican Council.⁵⁶ The Churches had to support and help the country during the years before and after independence which occurred in 1975.

The “Melanesian Council of Churches” (MCC), founded in 1965, and the Catholic Church in PNG in those years were making their first attempts at rapprochement, which reached the first big milestone in 1970, through the full participation of the Roman Catholic Church as a mem-

⁵⁴ The directors of the first 25 years were: H. Janssen MSC from 1969 to 1974, J. Knoebel SVD from 1975 to 1978, E. Mantovani SVD from 1978 to 1984, G. Fugmann from 1986 to 1987, E. Mantovani from 1987 to 1994, and from 1994 Kasek Kautil. Cf. MANTOVANI, *25 Years*, 164.

⁵⁵ AR, 1970 up to 1988.

⁵⁶ Cf. MANTOVANI, *Melanesian Institute and Common Witness*, 75-81; see also ID., *P. Alfonso Schäfer SVD. Missionario Verbita, Pioniere dell'altopiano centrale della Nuova Guinea. La sua opera missionaria ed il suo metodo*, Ph.D. thesis in Missiology at the Faculty of Missiology of the Pontifical Gregorian University, Roma 1962.

ber of the MCC. The Churches were striving for more joint efforts to support and help the country during the independence process.⁵⁷

Especially the development of the constitution and its important preliminaries needed the ecumenical contribution of the Christian Churches in the country. The Melanesian Institute was aware of the need to contribute to the relevant challenges of the time. Mantovani noticed that divisions and consensus among staff members and course participants did not necessarily follow denominational lines.⁵⁸

In consequence, the relativity of confessional distinctions became apparent, not on a theoretical, but on the experiential level, so that theological pluriformity was experienced before it was being discussed theologically. In this way too the Melanesian Institute became a teaching ground of true ecumenism in PNG.⁵⁹

1.7 The Participation of Non-Catholic Churches

The scientific preparation of the incoming missionaries was necessary not only for the Catholic Church. The Lutherans soon showed a strong interest in this programme. In 1971, with Theodor Ahrens for the first time a Lutheran missionary and missiologist of German origin gave some missiological input in the Orientation Course, which was organized in the Catholic Major Regional Seminary in Bomana, Port Moresby. "It was a kind of flying institution then. No property, no houses, no permanent office. Just a crew of committed friends who ran orien-

⁵⁷ In 1965, the Melanesian Council of Churches was founded by four Churches: the Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, and Methodist Church. In 1969 it was decided to invite the Catholic Church to participate in the MCC. This was made possible since the Catholic Church had opened herself to ecumenical contacts after Vatican II. In 1970, the Catholic Bishops' Conference responded to the invitation and became a full member of the MCC. So the Catholic Church in PNG was worldwide among the pioneers of the Ecumenical movement. Today the Salvation Army is also one of the members of the MCC. Other associate members are: the Church of Nazarene Mission, the Summer Institute of Linguistic Studies (SIL), the Kristen Radio, the National YWAC, the Campus Crusade and the Bible Society (PNG); cf. R. JASPERS MSC, *The Catholic Church, a member of the Melanesian Council of Churches*, in: *Papers Prepared for the Visit*, 73-74; cf. D. AVI, *Ecumenism and the Melanesian Council of Churches: Catalyst* 10 (1980) 185-194.

⁵⁸ Cf. AERTS, *op. cit.*, 87.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

tation courses for newly arrived missionaries, once at Rabaul and then in Alexishafen.”⁶⁰

In 1972 Fr. Knoebel met with the Melanesian Council of Churches to discuss a possible participation of members of other Christian Churches, in the orientation courses MI was running. Successful discussions made it possible so that in 1972 already the first ecumenical orientation course could take place at the centre of the Divine Word Mission in Alexishafen near Madang. For six weeks eighteen non-Catholic missionaries – nine Anglicans, four Lutherans and five missionaries of the United Church – along with twenty Catholic missionaries studied the local Melanesian culture and the context of their future missionary field together.

The ice had been broken and the way for further collaboration had been opened. If in 1971 the Catholic course participants had only listened to lectures from Catholic lecturers, a year later space was given to contributions and interventions of the other major Churches of the country. In 1973 the next significant step was taken by the “Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea” (ELCPNG), when this Church decided to propose Dr. Theodor Ahrens as a staff member to MI. Ahrens was the first non-Catholic staff member of MI who made a significant contribution in the teaching and research activities of the MI.⁶¹

In 1976 the United Church appointed the Reverend Brian Turner as its first representative on the staff of the institute, which had seven members.⁶²

⁶⁰ T. AHRENS, *Ecumenical Springtime. A Personal Look-back at MI as an Ecumenical Endeavour*, in: MANTOVANI, *25 Years*, 70; ID., *Das Versprechen neuen Lebens. Zur Dynamik des Christentums in Ozeanien: ZMR 77* (1993) 263-287; ID., *Unterwegs nach der verlorenen Heimat. Studien zur Identitätsproblematik in Melanesien*, Erlangen 1986; ID./W. HOLLENWEGER, *Volkschristentum und Volksreligion im Pazifik. Wiederentdeckung des Mythos für den christlichen Glauben*, Frankfurt 1977; ID., *Mission – Globalization with a Difference: ZMR 84* (2000) 286-296.

⁶¹ Theodor Ahrens was born in a German missionary family in Orissa, India in 1940. He came to PNG in 1971 and worked at the Lutheran Mission Bongu near Madang as pastor and did field studies. In 1972 he taught at the OC of MI and in 1973 was made the first non-Catholic staff member of the MI. In 1978 he returned to Germany. In 1987 he was made Professor for Missiology and Ecumenism at the Faculty of Protestant Theology in Hamburg. – Cf. AHRENS, *Ecumenical Springtime*, 70-77.

⁶² Cf. D. WHITEMAN, *The Melanesian Institute. A Venture in Interdisciplinary and Ecumenical Cooperation*, in: A. CROCOMBE/E. MCCLAREN (eds.), *Religious Cooperation in the Pacific Islands*, Suva 1983, 133-143; B. SCHWARZ, *The Ecumenical Setting*, in: H. WAGNER/H. REINER, *The Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea. The First Hundred Years 1886-1986*, Adelaide 1987, 329-359.

Soon the Anglicans followed also. This process made it necessary to re-write the Constitutions of MI.⁶³ The CBC of PNG and the Solomon Islands, as well as the AHCS of the same region, had given their consent to create a new Constitution.⁶⁴ The new Constitutions of 1983 conclude the twelve years of growth into an ecumenical Institute.

Number 8 of the Constitutions of the “Melanesian Institute for Pastoral and Socio-Economic Service Incorporated” listed the Churches that were members of the MI:

- a) the Anglican Church of PNG;
- b) the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of PNG and the Solomon Islands;
- c) the Evangelical Lutheran Church of PNG;
- d) the United Church of PNG and the Solomon Islands.⁶⁵

Number 7 of the Constitutions prescribes the conditions of membership:

- a) a religious body or Church working in the area can be elected to become a member of the Institute;
- b) an applicant making request for membership must send a written request to the Director;
- c) the Board shall consider each application for membership and shall, at its discretion, approve or reject requests;
- d) the Director will respond to each candidate by referring to the decision of the Board as described in clause 7 (c). At the same time the Director will have to address the candidate for paying the entry fee fixed by the Council, on how it should be paid and what are the conditions of membership;
- e) the rights of the members are not transferable or transmissible.⁶⁶

According to Number 11 of the Constitutions, the Council must be formed by the Director, a representative of the AHCS of the Catholic Church, as well as a person appointed by all the members of the institute.⁶⁷

The objectives of MI according to the Constitutions include:

⁶³ Cf. AR, from 1977 to 1983.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Cf. MI Constitutions of 1983, 4.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid., n. 11, 5.

- a) assisting staff members of the Churches in their work and in their activities;
- b) providing educational programmes for the staff members of the Churches;
- c) providing and promoting research on religious, pastoral, social matters and on economic conditions;
- d) making available and disseminating literature relevant to the aim of the institute;
- e) supplying financial assistance and technical advice or helping in any other way a project that serves the objectives of the institute;
- f) assisting and helping centres and other functions used in accordance with the objectives of the institute.⁶⁸

According to the Constitutions the Board of the MI is the legal authority of the institute. It meets once a year with the staff of the institute to discuss the issues, events and future programmes of the institute. The Board has the task of approving all important decisions of the institute after it has consulted the staff. The staff of the institute, however, must draw up the programme before submitting it to the Board. Today the institute has a cooperative relationship and a well-established connection with numerous and different institutions.

The MI is part of the Melanesian Council of Churches – now called PNG Council of Churches – as an associate member and has collaborated on numerous common projects. The contact with the “Evangelical Alliance” was developed through associations, such as the “Melanesian Association of Theological Schools” (MATS). MATS unites various theological schools associated to the MCC or the Evangelical Alliance.⁶⁹ MI kept in touch with the Catholic Theological Institute (the former Holy Spirit Seminary) at Bomana in Port Moresby and the Martin Luther Seminary in Lae.⁷⁰ The staff members of MI have regular input in those theological schools.

Currently there is an affiliation with the Institute of Theology and Culture of the Catholic Theological Union of Chicago in the U.S., and also with the International Association of Mission Studies, the Ameri-

⁶⁸ Ibid., n. 3, 3.

⁶⁹ The Evangelical Alliance was founded in 1964 by 24 Evangelical missions in PNG.

⁷⁰ The Martin Luther Seminary is in the process of becoming the Faculty of Theology at the envisioned Lutheran University in Lae. See: <http://lupng.org/> (15-01-2014)

can Society of Missiology, and the Australian Association for the Study of Religion.

Through individual members the institute keeps constant relationships with the Anthropos Institute of Sankt Augustin (Germany), the School of World Mission at Fuller Seminary (USA) and the Pacific Missionary Institute (Australia).

MI collaborates regularly with the University of Papua New Guinea in Port Moresby, especially with members of the Department of Anthropology and History. It maintains further close relations with the state-run "Institute for Applied Social and Economic Research."⁷¹

MI always had contacts with and cooperated with other Catholic institutions, such as the Institute of Communication of Goroka (CI), the Liturgical-Catechetical Institute (Goroka), the Xavier Institute of Bomanana and the Divine Word University in Madang. A survey of 1983 indicated 20 MI staff members from the following countries: Australia (6), USA (6), Germany (2), New Zealand (2), France (1), Netherlands (1), Italy (1) and Solomon Islands (1). Of these, six were anthropologists, five theologians and missiologists, three editors, two experts in the field of Pastoral Counselling, two experts in Sociology and Socio-economic Development and two specialists in Science of Religions. Fourteen members were Catholics, mainly members of different Catholic orders, and three were members of the Lutheran or United Church.⁷²

The Melanesian Institute could not fulfill all its expectations. For example, for a long time it was not successful in putting the leadership position into the hands of Melanesians, as it had hoped. But over the past five years, the MI has been directed by Papua New Guinean directors, two Lutherans and one from the United Church.

MI has made a great contribution by creating bridges of exchange between the Christian Churches in PNG and the Solomon Islands and has assisted in the process of becoming an authentic local Church with its own contextualized mission to evangelize and inculturate the Christian faith in Melanesia. Learning is a process of transformation "for the learner and their context,"⁷³ rather than a process of transmission and information.

⁷¹ Cf. WHITEMAN, *The Melanesian Institute*, 139.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 141.

⁷³ S. OXLEY, *Creative Ecumenical Education. Learning from One Another*, Genève 2002, 70.

2. The Activities of the Melanesian Institute

2.1 The MI Publications⁷⁴

Over the years the Melanesian Institute has created several journals with specific pastoral, cultural, social and theological content and orientation, like “Catalyst,” “Point,” “Occasional Papers” and “Umben.” Since 2004 “Melanesian Mission Studies” are being published. Those publications are aiming to serve the pastoral and social workers, and also all people interested in the development and welfare of the country. The Institute owes the success of its publications particularly to its outstanding editors.⁷⁵

2.2 Catalyst⁷⁶

In 1971 the first edition of the magazine called “Catalyst” was published, the quarterly journal of the MI with contributions and articles on anthropological, socio-economic and pastoral issues in Melanesia. With *Catalyst*, the MI had an instrument to contribute to pastoral reflection and to promote ideas and concepts of a sustainable social and economic development in PNG.⁷⁷

The readers of *Catalyst* are mainly from PNG and the Solomon Islands, but also libraries and institutions around the world are subscribers to the publications of the MI.⁷⁸

From the beginning, the review addressed not only a Catholic public and Church workers, but all those who were confronted with the religious, political, social and economic issues and challenges not only of the Churches, but also in public life and civic society.

With the increase of participation of non-Catholic mainline Churches, the number of Protestant authors also grew, as well as the number of subscribers belonging to these Churches.

⁷⁴ P. RICHARDSON, Publishing at the MI, in: MANTOVANI, *25 Years*, 117-120.

⁷⁵ Like Fr. Kevin Murphy MSC (1971-1974); Rev. Robert Jamieson (1974-1977); Fr. James Knight SVD (1977-1979); Sr. Helen O'Brian (1979-1984); Mr. Paul Roche (1985-1989); Mr. Alphonse Aime (1989) and recently Fr. Maurice McCalum; cf. MANTOVANI, *25 Years*, 163.

⁷⁶ Cf. M. MACDONALD, Addressing Social Pastoral Concerns in Melanesia. Catalyst Celebrates its 20th Volume: *Catalyst* 20 (1990) 9-19.

⁷⁷ Ibid.; “In the editorial of the first issue of CATALYST (March 1971) a ‘catalyst’ is defined as an agent, that ‘without undergoing change itself, aids the chemical change in other bodies’,” in: H. JANSSEN, An Agent of Change and Exchange. CATALYST Completes 15 Years of Publication: *Catalyst* 16 (1986) 42-44, here 42.

⁷⁸ Cf. *Catalyst* 3 (1973) 3.

In 1978 *Catalyst* had 754 subscribers, in 1984 as many as 800 and in 1988 the number had dropped to 540 subscribers.⁷⁹ In 1986 H. Janssen looked back on fifteen years of *Catalyst*. For him MI and *Catalyst* contributed a lot to positive changes in Melanesia.

It was the policy of the Melanesian Institute and of CATALYST in particular, to overcome the lack of communication between the various communities and to make use of the communication values within communities. I do believe that CATALYST has been a very effective agent of change in the field of human communication.⁸⁰

On the inside of the cover of the first year *Catalyst* listed 15 issues the journal wanted to address. The 15 issues can be divided into three main groups:

- a) Human Sciences: Anthropology, History, Linguistics, Sociology and Psychology;
- b) Church: Missiology, Pastoral Theology, Sacred Scripture, Liturgy and Catechesis;
- c) Society: Social Assistance, Adult Education, Formation, Politics and Economics.

When *Catalyst* celebrated twenty years of publication, its Papua New Guinean editor, Alphonse Aime, wrote: "The purpose of CATALYST has been that of presenting views, opinions and new developments which will generate discussion aimed at searching for better alternatives in addressing the issues that are affecting people here and now, with application to the future."⁸¹

For the institute it was important to have experienced authors. Unfortunately, very few were local authors.⁸² Since 1992 *Catalyst* is no longer published four times per year, but only twice. In 2013 MI could look back on 43 years of having published *Catalyst*. Over these years

⁷⁹ Cf. AR 1978, 1984 and 1988; since 1985 MATS has published their own theological review: *The Melanesian Journal of Theology*, Lae/PNG; the number of readers might have diminished since then.

⁸⁰ JANSSEN, *An Agent of Change and Exchange*, 43.

⁸¹ A. AIME, Editorial: *Catalyst* 20 (1990) 3.

⁸² Authors from abroad for instance: P. KALLOMBE, *The Salvific Value of African Religion*: *Catalyst* 13 (1983) 227-243; J. FUELLENBACH, *The Appropriation and Rejection of Marxism in Liberation Theology*: *Catalyst* 16 (1986) 186-200; S. FUCHS, *The Catholic Church in India: In the Past and Today*: *Catalyst* 17 (1987) 109-132; L. MERCADO, *Renewal Movements in the Philippines*: *Catalyst* 17 (1987) 20-29.

Catalyst remained faithful to the declared intention to be a “Social Pastoral Journal for Melanesia.”⁸³

“Who will be leading *Catalyst* to change from a Social Pastoral Magazine for Melanesia to a Social Pastoral Magazine of Melanesia?”⁸⁴ This question which H. Janssen raised in 1986 continues to be the challenging litmus test or touchstone for the journal. Janssen also wrote in 1986:

Recently *Catalyst* has published some outstanding articles of missionary exchange, especially in the realm of spirituality, culture, youth, development, liberation and environment. There can be no doubt that Melanesian writers are discerning the real issues of their countries.⁸⁵

Janssen also observed that the Melanesian writers who had the chance to visit overseas countries and to experience the problems of the churches in other parts of the world published reports that proved that they “realize that there is mission between the churches and that they have a missionary responsibility towards the post-Christian Western societies.” Completing his observation Janssen confronts us with a challenging question: “Does this forecast that *Catalyst* is changing from an agent that aids change to an agent that aids exchange?”⁸⁶

2.3 The “Point” Series

In December 1972 the first issue of the scientific series “Point – Forum for Melanesian Affairs” was published. In this series, each issue addressed a certain relevant topic in a comprehensive way. Several authors normally contributed to the understanding of the specific issue, investigating different aspects of the topic in question.⁸⁷

The first issue of the series treated the topic: The Church as the local Christian community. In 1976 a new version of Point was created, now called “Point Series,” to distinguish it from the issues of the previous years.

Perhaps the most successful publication in the Point series was printed for the first time in 1984-85 and since then reprinted several times:

⁸³ Cf. *Catalyst* 40 (2010); see also the list of publications which can be found on the website of the MI: <http://www.mi.org.pg/Home.html> (16-01-2014)

⁸⁴ JANSSEN, An Agent of Change and Exchange, 43.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 44.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ *Point – Forum for Melanesian Affairs*, n. 1, 1972.

In 1984-85 the institute published a trilogy, based on the orientation courses and consisting of introductions to Melanesian cultures, Melanesian religions, and ministry in Melanesia (Whiteman 1984; Mantovani 1984; Schwarz 1985) ... The trilogy has been translated in an abridged Tok Pisin version and has become a popular handbook for Church workers.⁸⁸

Thirty-six issues of the “Point Series” have been published up to now which truly represent a great variety of themes and activities which MI has conducted in the past forty years.

The West Papuan Fr. Neles Tebay, is the author of Point Series, Number 36, which was published in 2012. It has the title *Reconciliation & Peace. Interfaith Endeavours for Peace in West Papua*.⁸⁹ The latest Point Series, Number 37, was edited in 2013 by Nick Schwarz under the title *The Politics of Give and Take. The 2012 Papua New Guinea General Elections*.

2.4 “Melanesian Mission Studies”

In 2004 the “Melanesian Mission Studies” were started, which have up to now produced five volumes. This series shows the nature of the Melanesian Institute as a missiological institute of contextual practical theology. The new series was launched with a study by the missiologist Ennio Mantovani under the title *Divine Revelation and the Religions of PNG: A Missiological Manual* (Number 1, 2004). Michael A. Rynkiewicz was the author of *Cultures and Languages of Papua New Guinea: The Story of the Origins, Migrations and Settlement of Melanesian People, Languages and Cultures* (Number 2, 2004). In 2008 three numbers were published by MI. Number 3 on *We Live Like in a War: An Anthropological Investigation into Criminal Gangs in the Rural and Urban Areas of Papua New Guinea* is a work of Janko van der Werf. Number 4 on *Melanesian Religion and Christianity* is written by G. W. Trompf and Number 5 *Sorcery, Witchcraft and Christianity in Melanesia* was edited by Franco Zocca and Jack Urame.

The majority of the authors of the treated themes were missionaries from different religious congregations and churches, who, in addition to being experts in various fields, based their academic reflection on pro-

⁸⁸ MACDONALD, *Writing about Culture*, 160.

⁸⁹ He obtained his PhD in Missiology from the Pontifical Urban University in Rome in March 2006 under Prof. G. Colzani as moderator and Prof. P. Steffen as co-relator of his thesis.

found pastoral experience in Melanesian societies. This reflects the ecumenical nature of the institute and its mission in Melanesia.

2.5 “*Umben*” and the “*Occasional Papers*”

Besides the Point Series and the Catalyst journal, MI also publishes the so-called “Occasional Papers.” With this published series MI wants to make available monographic studies. In addition to the journals published in the English language, since 1974 MI also publishes a quarterly magazine in Melanesian Pidgin English (Tok Pisin) called “Umben.”⁹⁰ The title and subtitle of “Umben – Liklik Buk bilong helpim ol Lida bilong Ples na Sios” in English means: The Network: the little book to help the leaders of the local community and Church leaders.⁹¹

“Umben” magazine aims at reaching out to the local rural community and Church leaders in the villages and to all ordinary citizens and Christians in village life.⁹²

Each *Umben* edition dealt with a particular case of ethical relevance in the fast changing Melanesian society and tried to help the local leaders to find an adequate social identity.

Umben developed its own style, although for the first two years the magazine had mainly copied its form and content from *Catalyst*. Many articles were translations from English articles previously published in *Catalyst*. Unfortunately, the publication of *Umben* was suspended in 2005 for technical and economic reasons.⁹³ The decline of subscribers did not allow continuing this unique Pidgin English magazine.

The series of *Occasional Papers* started in 1982 with No. 1: *Christ the Life of Papua New Guinea* by E. Mantovani and had reached No. 14 in 2011. It was published in English and in the latest editions also in Pidgin English. The editor Nick Schwarz gave it the title: *Thinking*

⁹⁰ T. AHRENS, A Journal for Pidgin Speaking Church Workers: *Catalyst* 4:1 (1974) 78-81. – On the webpage of Theodor Ahrens, Professor at the Institute for Missiological, Ecumenical and Religious Studies of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Hamburg, Germany: www.theologie.uni-hamburg.de/imoer/ahrens.html (18-01-2014) he writes “that from 1971 to 1978 he has been co-founder of the institute for Contextual theology” meaning the MI.

⁹¹ “Umben” is a word from Pidgin English which means “fishing net.” The subtitle means: “Review for the leaders of Church and local communities.”

⁹² Cf. *Umben* 1 (1984) 1.

⁹³ Another reason is most probably the lack of subscriptions from potential Pidgin-speaking leaders. The pastors and parish priests had earlier served as mediators reaching out to the rural population. They had been the major supporters and they often subscribed to and distributed the journal. The increasing number of local clergy did not follow up with this practice.

Critically About Sorcery and Witchcraft. This publication is the result of a five year research project into sorcery and witchcraft in PNG carried out by the Melanesian Institute from 2003 to 2007.⁹⁴

3. The Practical-Pastoral Activities of MI

Among its various practical-pastoral activities, MI always offered orientation courses and courses for updating. The topics selected and taught very much reveal the mission and ministry of the institute in the field of the education and training of pastoral workers of the member Churches of the young nations of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

3.1 The Orientation Course (OC)

The Melanesian Institute was born out of a practical pastoral need. The missionaries, as pastors and founders of the missionary Churches, needed a new orientation in the transition process from “Mission Church” to “Melanesian local Church,” in order to avoid being an obstacle in this process. The orientation courses became the hallmark of the Melanesian Institute. From 1969-1970 onwards an entire generation of missionaries coming from all continents were introduced to the key issues of culture and pastoral ministry in Melanesia.

“The initial vision of giving special orientations to new missionaries soon unfolded.”⁹⁵ At first, the course lasted nearly three months, but was soon reduced to six weeks (in 1971) and finally to only four weeks. From 1972 the courses were ecumenical and new missionaries of the Anglican, Lutheran and United Church were included. Since 1973, non-Catholic lecturers have been part of the teaching staff.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Some titles of the series are: M. MACDONALD, *Symbols of Life. An Interpretation of Magic*, No. 2, 1994; B. NAROKOBI, *Concept of Ownership in Melanesia*, No. 6, 1988; E. MANTOVANI, *Traditional and Present-day Melanesian Values and Ethics*, No. 7, 1993; ID., *Male-female Relationships in Melanesia. A Pastoral Reflection, with Particular Reference to Domestic Violence*, No. 8, 1993; ID., *Meaning and Functions of Culture: An Introduction for Melanesia*, No. 9, 1995; F. ZOCCA, *God's Salvific Presence Outside Christianity (A Roman Catholic Perspective)*, No. 10, 1997; J. GIRIS/T. RYNKIEWICH, *Emerging Issues for Women and Children in Papua New Guinea*, No. 12, 2005; P. GIBBS, *Bountiful Harvest: The Churches in Papua New Guinea*, No. 13, 2007.

⁹⁵ JANSSEN, *Vision and Foundation of the MI*, 31.

⁹⁶ Cf. AHRENS, *A Journal for Pidgin Speaking Church Workers*, 78-81.

The courses required continuous updating of the staff members to improve the level of their teaching and writings, which often were published in *Catalyst* or *Point*.

Regarding the teaching methodology, the MI shifted after some years from a lecture-type style to a more participatory teaching approach.

In later years the educational approach changed from lecture based to case study based. The “notes,” which many would take back to their stations to read and think about, were discontinued. From then on the MI sought to have participants bring written case studies to the course and to reflect on their own experiences in Melanesia, making use of the resources the institute offered to put them in a larger perspective.⁹⁷

Fr. Knoebel in 1972 explained the significance and usefulness of the Orientation Courses. They help to

- a) know the situation in Papua New Guinea;
- b) know each other (i.e. the Catholic and Protestant missionaries);
- c) know the most important personalities of the country;
- d) understand the reason of their being in PNG;
- e) learn to see the problems and challenges from a national angle;
- f) understand the relationship of the nation to other Pacific nations;
- g) become aware of their cultural background, their attitudes and prejudices.⁹⁸

The Orientation Course of 1976, for instance, had 12 Lutheran, 3 Anglican, 6 United Church and 24 Catholic participants.⁹⁹ Among the participants there were also two Papua New Guineans. The course was held in Alexishafen in the Madang Province, and was divided into six main themes:

- 1) a look at the present political, religious and socio-economic situation in PNG;
- 2) aspects of traditional culture, including the cargo movements;
- 3) missionary motivations;
- 4) the local Christian communities;

⁹⁷ MACDONALD, *Writing about Culture*, 160.

⁹⁸ Cf. Ecumenical Orientation Course: *Catalyst* 2:1 (1972) 67-68.

⁹⁹ Orientation Course for New Missionaries and Church Workers: *Catalyst* 6 (1976) 76.

- 5) theology and methods in relation to pastoral activity/ministry;
- 6) attempts and methods for sustainable socio-economic development.¹⁰⁰

There were 72 contributions which showed the broad spectrum of the topics treated. It was not just a course on pastoral duties, but rather a course based on applied anthropology, science of religion, sociology and contextual practical theology. The orientation courses also included discussion groups and the watching and analyzing of films relating to missionary and anthropological issues. Additionally social and sports activities played a significant role in getting to know each other and in developing trust and friendship among the course participants and with the staff members.

The ecumenical worship and prayer services, or the liturgies of a specific denomination, made it possible for the participants to experience the richness of various Churches and their traditions. The orientation course also offered an introductory course in “Tok Pisin.”¹⁰¹

The joint activities and dialogue gave the participants the opportunity of mutual understanding that went beyond their particular language, culture and Church membership. The course was given and organized by eight permanent lecturers from the MI staff (two Lutherans, one belonging to the United Church, five Catholics) and by seventeen guest lecturers invited from outside.¹⁰²

3.2 Recent Developments

In the last fifteen years the necessity to make some changes in the orientation courses had become more and more obvious.

From January 1995 up to January 2002 the Melanesian Institute has held 13 Orientation Courses for expatriate missionaries in Goroka, with a total of 297 participants. Among them 219 were Catholics (73%), 53 Lutherans (18%), 17 Anglicans (6%), 5 from the United Church (2%) and 3 from other Protestant denominations. In average each course

¹⁰⁰ Cf. AR 1976.

¹⁰¹ That is “Melanesian Pidgin language” or in English “Papua New Guinean” or “Melanesian Pidgin English”; cf. F. MIHALIC, Tok Pisin: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow: *Catalyst* 16 (1986) 89-99.

¹⁰² The talks were published in *Verbum SVD* 18 (1977): L. BROUWER, How to Communicate Salvation in Melanesia, 223-231; N. DE GROOT, Christian Morality in PNG, 208-222; A. KLIJN, An Alternative Approach in Ministerial Training, 43-54; J. KNIGHT, Clan Communities and Christian Communities, 254-262; H. TE MAARSSSEN, Vom Schweine-Festival zur Eucharistie, 257-262; cf. AR 1976.

was attended by 23 people. Among the Catholics, 38 were members of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) and 12 of the Congregation of the Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS).¹⁰³

Obviously the participation of Protestant missionaries has continuously decreased. There are various reasons for this development. One is that these Protestant Churches, such as the Lutheran and Anglican Church, received less new foreign missionaries and Church personnel from abroad. The increasing number of local ministers no longer required the influx of expatriate Church personnel, which is a positive sign that the Church can provide its own personnel. The two courses MI used to offer each year could be reduced to only one per year.

Another trend, which is becoming more and more visible, is the change in the composition of the participants. There are less and less missionaries from Europe, North America and Australia while the presence of those from Asia and Africa is increasing. In the Orientation Course held in January 2002, out of 39 participants 17 were from Asia (India, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam and Korea) and 6 from Africa (Nigeria, Zambia and Mauritius). Only 5 were native English speakers.¹⁰⁴

In 2011 the three-week “Cultural Orientation Course” was attended by sixteen expatriate missionaries from all over the world at Kefamo Conference Centre in Goroka. The participants, who work in PNG and the Solomon Islands, came from Britain, Chile, India, Korea, Australia, Italy, Germany, Argentina and the Philippines.

The main aim of this course is to “equip the new missionaries with the different traditions, customs, beliefs and cultures of different tribes, clans, and societies in PNG” and the Solomon Islands. The participants “were given talks on Melanesian Peoples Origins and Present; Tribes, Clans, Lineages; Present Social and Political Organization; Land Issues; Traditional Leadership; Traditional and Present Gender Relationships; Traditional Marriage and Family Life; and Present Situation of Marriage and Family Life by the MI staff.”¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ E. MANTOVANI/F. ZOCCA, Introduction of New Missionaries in Papua New Guinea: *Verbum SVD* 43 (2002) 41-53, see especially 48.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 49.

¹⁰⁵ [http://www.mi.org.pg/Newsletter/swf/Mi%20e-Newsletter\[March%202012\].swf](http://www.mi.org.pg/Newsletter/swf/Mi%20e-Newsletter[March%202012].swf) (28-01-2014)

This recent course shows that the MI Orientation Course has remained faithful to its orientation and contents over the past four decades and that this course is still in demand. The OC represents the continuity factor and trademark of MI teaching activity.

3.3 *The Various Courses and Seminars of MI*

The In-Service Training Program of MI was from the beginning the second reason and purpose of its foundation. The MI not only wanted to introduce the new missionaries, but to assist the already established missionary community in the country. They were to be given the opportunity to be updated and to find assistance in their struggle and to find appropriate ways of doing ministry cross-culturally. The In-Service Training Program was initiated only in 1973. For the first course the director of the East Asian Pastoral Institute (EAPI) was invited, Fr. Alphonse Nebreda SJ, coming from Manila, Philippines. The course was held for 40 Catholic missionaries (30 priests and 10 nuns), and the theme was “The Church.”

The twelve-day program treated various aspects of the given theme: the Church and mission; basics of Biblical Theology in the light of the Second Vatican Council; the anthropological background of the Church in Melanesia; the Church as a sign; the Church as seen by non-Catholic Christians; the pastoral mission of the Church; the relationship of the Church to the secular world and its involvement in the secular field; leadership in the Church; catechesis in the Church.¹⁰⁶ Fr. A. Nebreda and Fr. Arbuckle, a former member of the MI, taught those topics. Some other courses and seminars were developed in collaboration with other institutes. In this way MI, together with the Liturgical Catechetical Institute (LCI), in 1973-1974 organized a four-month training course for catechists and religious instruction teachers.¹⁰⁷

The course content was: God’s call and man’s response; biblical themes, Christ and his message, sacraments, and the local Church in Melanesia; traditional religions; Melanesian and Christian morality, marriage, interpersonal relationships, liberation theology, the Church’s service to the community, pastoral and catechetical methods; workshops in small groups. In addition to members of the MI and LCI, lecturers of the Regional Seminary Bomana and A. Nebreda of the EAPI were also part of the teaching staff of this course.¹⁰⁸ The course “The Church” was offered again in 1974.

¹⁰⁶ Institutions and Courses: *Catalyst* 3:1 (1973) 74-75.

¹⁰⁷ Catechetical Course: *Catalyst* 3:1 (1973) 73-74.

¹⁰⁸ Pastoral Courses: *Catalyst* 3:1 (1973) 77-78.

In 1975 five different in-service courses were offered:

- a) a two-week course for “Church Workers” with the following topics: family and married life; Wantok-system, leadership and the importance of the sacraments for life in PNG;
- b) a two-week catechetical course with the topics: Leadership in times of rapid change with special attention towards social and community issues;
- c) a one-week “Indigenous Church Workers” course with the theme: changes in family and marital life and in the leadership functions;
- d) a one-week course for Lutheran Church Workers with the following topics: changes, independence, indigenous theology and leadership.¹⁰⁹

1976 was a very busy year for the MI staff. Besides the Orientation Course, three other main courses were offered:

- a) a one-week seminar on “Theology in Melanesia” for the seminarians and teachers of different theological colleges in Melanesia;
- b) a five-week course on Culture for the seminarians of the Martin Luther Seminary in Lae;
- c) a one-week “writers’ workshop” for local authors, reflecting on “Theology in Melanesia.”

The articles of this course were published in *Point* in 1977.¹¹⁰ In addition, the MI staff members had to give a number of inputs and talks in numerous smaller training courses on diocesan or parish level. They gave, for instance, a special ten-day orientation course for 25 German-speaking development workers.¹¹¹

In 1977, after a year of giving various courses, the MI decided to have a year of research. In collaboration with the “Church Planning Survey” of the Lutheran Church the MI staff held courses in various districts of the Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea. Three important seminars were held in 1978, organized and held by the MI in collaboration with other institutes.

A one-week seminar on religion in Melanesia was organized together with the “Australian Association for the Study of Religion.” The 27 participants were experts from universities or coming from field research

¹⁰⁹ Pastoral Courses: *Catalyst* 5 (1975) 78.

¹¹⁰ Cf. AR 1976.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

projects; among them were also some Melanesians. Another one-week seminar on Religion and Development was held in conjunction with the Melanesian Council of Churches and had about 50 participants.

The Director of the Centre for Socio-Religious Research of the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium, Prof. F. Houtart and Fr. Rayan SJ from the *Vidya Jyoti* Institute in New Delhi, India, came as guest speakers from overseas. The third seminar on Christian Basic Communities was organized together with the LCI, Goroka, and had 20 participants.¹¹²

In 1988 the members of the MI were involved in 25 courses and seminars. The most discussed topics were: Melanesian cultures and religions in their relationship to Christianity; marriage and family life, husband-wife relationships; traditional and modern values and ethics; healing and today's theology of mission. Worth mentioning is also the seminar "Bible, Culture and Communication," which was organized in conjunction with the "Summer Institute of Linguistics" and the Bible Society of PNG.

On that occasion new ecumenical contacts were developed with the more fundamentalist-oriented Churches of the "Evangelical Alliance," who are all members of the Bible Society of PNG.¹¹³

3.4 The Research Department of MI (RDMI)

The RDMI has taken up several areas of research over the past four decades. This department always played a decisive role in the symposia convened by the MI director. "The main symposia so far convened have been that on Cargo Cults and Charismatic Movements, on Ethics and Development, on Human Sexuality in Melanesian Cultures, on Development and Environment in PNG, on Politics in PNG, and the latest on AIDS and churches in PNG."¹¹⁴

The RDMI played a special role in two very important research projects for the development of the Churches in PNG. Especially the two Self-Study projects in the 1970s and 1980s, first of the Catholic Church and later of the Lutheran Church in PNG, and the project "Marriage

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Cf. AR 1988. – The member Churches of the "Evangelical Alliance" do not believe in the principles and aims of the ecumenical movement. They have a tendency to practice proselytism and show little respect for other Christian traditions. Therefore they differ very much from the so-called "mainline" Churches, which believe and practice an open and constructive ecumenism.

¹¹⁴ <http://www.mi.org.pg/pages/MI%20Research.html> (28-01-2014). – The proceedings of the symposia have been reported in the various MI publications.

and Family Life” had an impact on the process of identity finding of the Churches in Melanesia.

3.5 The “Self-Study of the Catholic Church in PNG”

The experience of the year of the self-study of the Catholic Church in Tanzania (1969) served as a model for the Self-Study of the Catholic Church in PNG.¹¹⁵

The director of MI Hermann Janssen himself had come in contact with the Self-Study Project of the Catholic Church in Tanzania on a study trip in October 1971. He was enthusiastic about the possibilities of such a project for the Church in PNG.

In February 1972, Janssen successfully proposed the Tanzanian study model to the members of the MI and the Executive Committee of the AHCS as an example for the Church in PNG. The plan matured so much that it could be proposed to the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of PNG/SI. The CBC decided in April 1972 to conduct a similar study project for the Church in PNG and delegated the MI staff to organize and conduct such a project.

The organizer of the Tanzanian study year, Fr. Francis P. Murray MM, was invited as expert and consultant for the project in PNG. For that purpose, between May and June 1972, he visited eleven of the fifteen dioceses in PNG. As a result of his visit he gave a report, which highlighted four points as problem areas for the Church in PNG:

1. the History and Mission;
2. the specific function and organization of spiritual and pastoral service;
3. the specific function and organization of social and socio-economic services;
4. the ministries, religious life, lay leadership and other special organizations.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Cf. *A Church Self-Study in Papua New Guinea*, Pro Mundi Vita Dossiers, Asia – Australasia Dossier 2, Brussels 1976, 16; J. KNOEBEL, Interim Report. The Self-Study of the Catholic Church of Papua New Guinea: *Catalyst* 4:1 (1974) 79-81; ID., *Final Report of the Self-Study of the Catholic Church in Papua New Guinea*, Goroka 1976, 28; from now on quoted as FR; C. HALLE, *Self-Study – The Church Looks at Itself in PNG*, Goroka 1975, 36; F. MURRAY, *Renewal Through Dialogues – Self-Study of the Church in Tanzania: Catalyst* 2:1 (1972) 40-49; H. JANSSEN, *Von Mission zu Kirche in Papua-Neuguinea. Reflexionen zur Geschichte und Erneuerung der Kirche: ZMR* 59 (1975) 286-294.

¹¹⁶ Cf. FR; cf. F. MURRAY, 1969 – A Study Year for the Church in Tanzania: *AFER* 12 (1970) 71-73.

After his visit Murray wrote: “Among the hundreds of people that I could interview during my visit in eleven dioceses in the country, nearly all the bishops, priests, religious and laity felt the need of change in the church activities and in the image of the Church.”¹¹⁷

The four categories provided by Murray were taken into account by the Self-Study project as it was developed for the Catholic Church in PNG. In August the Executive Committee of the CBC announced its approval of the specific plan of the Self-Study. Then the MI organization began its work. The MI established a secretariat for the Self-Study project and put a staff member in charge of this work. 120 people consisting of laity and clergy were interviewed about the situation of the Church in PNG.

A two-week workshop for bishops, missionaries and lay people from every diocese in the country was convened in Alexishafen. Guide booklets in English and Pidgin were prepared, containing instructions for guiding the proposed discussions in the dioceses, parishes and villages.¹¹⁸ The discussions on grass root level should promote:

- 1) dialogue in Christian communities;
- 2) the experiences of the local Churches;
- 3) the establishment of realistic goals and priorities for the Church in PNG.¹¹⁹

From February to June 1973 the discussions on these topics with its specific participative methodology were carried out by members of MI in five regional seminars for the fifteen dioceses of PNG. The diocesan and religious priests, the religious sisters and brothers, and the laity were instructed on how to carry out the Self-Study at parish and community levels. Between 1973 and 1974, the Self-Study was made in hundreds of discussion groups in villages and cities in all parts of the country. 200,000 participants were counted, i.e. one-third of all Catholics took

¹¹⁷ Cf. JANSSEN, Von Mission zu Kirche, 292.

¹¹⁸ Cf. FR, 2.

¹¹⁹ JANSSEN, Von Mission zu Kirche, 292. – According to H. Janssen “[t]here are at least three possible interpretations of the Self-Study. Some missionaries saw the Self-Study as a planned attack on the hierarchical model of the church. They did not participate in the dialogue at all, neither would they accept the results. A small minority of local lay leaders tried to use the study as their attempt to put the hierarchical model upside down; i.e. putting the lay people up and the hierarchy down. They became rather frustrated after a short time and lost interest in local church leadership. The vast majority of those who participated in the Self-Study, however, experienced tensions as well as liberating moments.” JANSSEN, Vision and Foundation of the MI, 37.

part in this process of discernment and evaluation. There were two difficulties that characterized the carrying out of the Self-Study:

- 1) the Melanesians were not experienced in the model of a structured dialogue;
- 2) the lack of self-confident lay people in the country.¹²⁰

The bishop of Rabaul, the leader of the oldest and most populous Catholic region in the country, cancelled the participation of his diocese in the Self-Study.¹²¹ Nevertheless, a third of Catholic Christians participated directly and another third indirectly in the Self-Study project. Never before had such a dialogue among the church members ever taken place. Between February and April 1975, the MI members, together with diocesan coordinators, guided the various diocesan Self-Study groups and helped them to prepare Diocesan reports for the proposed National Assembly. 78 delegates, including 7 bishops, 21 priests, 10 religious, 40 lay people who were Catechists, teachers, students and young politicians, took part in the National Assembly held between May 20 and 23, 1975 in Goroka. Exactly two-thirds of the delegates were Papua New Guineans: 2 bishops, 5 priests, 1 sister, 3 brothers, 2 seminarians, 39 lay people.¹²²

The Australian Catholic Church sent three delegates, the Anglican Church one and the Lutheran Church two delegates. The themes were discussed intensively in nine groups. Five discussion points were fixed by secret ballot during the General Assembly:

- 1) the identity of the Church;
- 2) couples and family;
- 3) the role and formation of catechists;
- 4) the role of the laity and the leadership of the community;
- 5) the role and training of the priest.¹²³

The MI staff was occupied with the Self-Study project for three years. The MI was convinced that by this work they could help the Church in PNG to assume its leadership role at the dawn of independence of the country. The effect was significant for the further development of the Catholic Church in PNG, but this can hardly be proved empirically. Only the strong inclination for sociological research in those years made such an approach possible.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 293.

¹²¹ Cf. FR, 9; Directory of the Catholic Church in PNG/SI, Port Moresby 1985.

¹²² Cf. FR, 6.

¹²³ JANSSEN, Von Mission zu Kirche, 293-294.

The initiators of the Self-Study of the Church in PNG were animated by a spirit of renewal and updating according to the visions of the Second Vatican Council and the Apostolic exhortation *Evangelii nuntiandi* of Paul VI, who advocated an ecclesiology of communion and a participative pastoral approach in the Melanesian Christian communities. Those years of discernment have contributed greatly to the further development of the Catholic Church in PNG.

H. Janssen gave a balanced interpretation of the outcome of the Self-Study. For him

[t]he vast majority of those who participated in the Self-Study ... experienced tensions as well as liberating moments. They began to believe in the church as a difficult but hopeful process of dialogue between people and church leadership. The people had become aware that they themselves are subject rather than object of evangelization. This was the beginning of a movement from mission to church in PNG – with a worldwide mission. It was also the rediscovery of the vision of the church as a community of communities.¹²⁴

3.6 The “Marriage and Family Life” (MFL) Research Project

The second multi-year research project of the MI was dedicated to the area of marriage and family life in Melanesia. In the first edition of *Catalyst* in 1980 the MI announced that, due to the request of the member Churches in MI, it had decided to carry out a long-term major research project on marriage and family life, because this question troubles the Melanesian people.¹²⁵ In the initial phase the greatest possible amount of anthropological and sociological material and data would be collected in order to achieve an adequate picture of the “state of affairs” in this field.¹²⁶

The first questionnaire for data collection was prepared and published at the anthropological section of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, with the assistance of Wendy Flannery and Sally Pye.¹²⁷ In 1982 the objectives of the project began to become clearer. The institute wanted to help the Churches to develop a sharper understanding and an effective evaluation by finding answers to the following questions:

¹²⁴ JANSSEN, Vision and Foundation of the MI, 37-38.

¹²⁵ Research Project: Marriage and Family Life: *Catalyst* 10 (1980) 1-2; Questionnaire: MFL: *Catalyst* 10 (1980) 3-20.

¹²⁶ Research Project, 2.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

- How was Melanesian marriage and family life in the past?
- How is it affected by the current changes in society?
- How could family life become fully Christian, while remaining genuinely Melanesian?

The MI organized the objectives of the MFL research project according to pastoral, sociological, anthropological and theological goals and divided them into their respective differentiated sections.

1) The pastoral objectives were:

- to learn that pastoral care is a function of the whole Christian community and not just the work of paid Church leaders;
- to help Christians to a better understanding of the changing role of family;
- to encourage Christian communities to reflect on Melanesian forms of marriage and the Christian understanding of marriage;
- to encourage the use of existing Christian ministries and to develop new ministries at the service of families.¹²⁸

2) The socio-anthropological objectives were:

- to help to understand the Melanesian marriage and family life;
- to be informed about the existing ideals of marriage and family life and the gap between ideal and reality;
- to organize an analytical research on past and present family and marriage life within 50 different ethnic groups;
- to find out what forces have influenced the present changes in marriage and family life.

3) The theological objectives were:

- to find a way for the development of a Christian understanding of marriage and family life in Melanesia;
- to promote an incarnational understanding as a basis to observe the relationship between Christianity and culture;
- to stimulate an understanding of the Church as a sign and instrument of the salvific will of God and the local Christian community as a place of Christian life;

¹²⁸ G. BAYS, Marriage and Family Life Research: *Catalyst* 12 (1982) 324-328.

- to stimulate a discussion among Christians about marriage and family life with underlying Melanesian, Biblical and Christian values;
- to reflect on the changes in the economic, social and political dimension of human life and the quality changes.¹²⁹

The research project among the fifty ethnic groups had thirteen specific areas: Melanesian attitudes towards Christian marriage; the institution of marriage and its shape; relationships; sexuality; marriage advertising; children; polygamy; divorce; law and constraints; economy; urbanization; social problems; and education for marriage and family life. In 1983 the first research results were published and they served as a working basis for further research: “Yumi Toktok long Marit na Famili” in Pidgin English and the English edition “Let’s talk about Marriage and Family,” a study book that aimed at stimulating the discussion on the subject at all levels.¹³⁰ The study book of the MI staff was the result of numerous consultations with experts at home and abroad and was the beginning of the Marriage and Family Life project.¹³¹

The second paper, published in 1983 was the “Anthropological Interview Schedule.” The anthropological questionnaire was created by the MI after some experimentation. Here the expertise of Aylward Shorter, an experienced anthropologist from the Anthropological Research Department of AMECEA Pastoral Institute in Eldoret, Kenya, was successfully used.¹³²

Shorter had carried out an intensive research project on marriage and the family in seven East African countries, covering a population of 200 million people and fifteen Churches.¹³³

The goal of 1984 was as follows: to initiate the MFL project on different levels up to the establishment of discussion groups and surveys in

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ The Pidgin expression stands for “we talk about marriage and family life.”

¹³¹ E. MANTOVANI, Interim Report: *Catalyst* 13 (1983) 308-311.

¹³² A. SHORTER, *Towards a Theology of Inculturation*, London 1988. – Aylward Shorter, born in 1932 in England, a Catholic priest and member of the Missionaries of Africa (MAfr), is a pioneer mission anthropologist and leader in the effort to understand the principles of inculturation. In the 1980s he built up the Anthropological Research Department at AMECEA Pastoral Institute in Eldoret, Kenya. He has served as President of the Missionary Institute, London, has lectured in African Studies at the Catholic Higher Institute of Eastern Africa, and has served as consultant to the Vatican secretariat for non-Christians. He is Principal Emeritus of Tangaza College Nairobi, Catholic University of Eastern Africa.

¹³³ MANTOVANI, Interim Report, 309.

the villages; to organize meetings with the bishops and heads of Churches; and to train the Church personnel to understand and accompany the project.

The MI organized courses for the local interviewers and guides of the discussion groups to learn how to handle their function and their role in the communities of the country. Local men and women with an academic education were instructed about their role in handling the anthropological interviews. A research officer did research among the numerous ethno-linguistic groups who had settled in urban centres (including the fifty groups of the project).

Part-time researchers administered the interviews with women from the Upper Simbu valley. The collection and cataloguing of the material on the 50 ethnic groups was done by a person hired specially for that purpose. That made it possible to publish the first dossier on the studied ethno-linguistic groups.¹³⁴

Working aids were already offered in 1984. In 1988, a total of twelve such “working papers” were made available by the MI. In 1987 E. Mantovani published the first results of the pastoral research department. 118 reports of 200 discussion groups from nine provinces of the country were received. Between 2000 and 3000 people took part in the discussion groups.¹³⁵

In 1988 a team of sociologists, anthropologists, and pastoral and social workers discussed the sociological data and prepared it for publication. Out of this work three volumes of Point Series were published: *Marriage in Melanesia: a theological perspective* in 1987; *Marriage in Melanesia: a sociological perspective* in 1990; *Marriage in Melanesia: an anthropological perspective* in 1992.¹³⁶

Each volume focused on a different perspective in order to better understand the complexity of the topic. With this program the institute applied an interdisciplinary research approach which was carried out in close contact with the life context of the research people. That made it possible for the research results to relate closely to the concrete situation of the families and couples in the country, so that those studies

¹³⁴ AR 1984.

¹³⁵ E. MANTOVANI, Reflections on the Analysis of Data from the MFL Project: *Catalyst* 17 (1987) 76-92.

¹³⁶ J. CONWAY/E. MANTOVANI, *Marriage in Melanesia: A Sociological Perspective*, Point Series No. 15, Goroka 1990; E. MANTOVANI, *Marriage in Melanesia: A Theological Perspective*, Point Series No. 11, Goroka 1987; ID., *Marriage in Melanesia: An Anthropological Perspective*, Point Series No. 17, Goroka 1992.

were able to give orientation to the families in a rapidly changing society.¹³⁷

3.7 The Various Research Projects of the MI

In addition to all the research work described above, over the years the institute has conducted numerous other research projects. The most important ones are mentioned here briefly.

The “Urban Pastoral Concern Study” was conducted by Fr. W. Seifert SVD. He studied the urbanization process in Lae to find out the consequences urbanization would have for the urban Christian communities and urban ministry.¹³⁸

Just as the Catholic Church had been conducting a Self-Study program, the Lutheran Church PNG organized a “Lutheran Church Survey” in 1976-1978, under the guidance of Theodor Ahrens.¹³⁹

In 1976 the “Union of Women Religious” asked MI to conduct a “Religious Women Survey” in order to gain more insights into the situation of expatriate missionary sisters.¹⁴⁰

In 1977-1978 Fr. Gideon Waida carried out a research entitled “Communicating the Christian Message in PNG.”¹⁴¹ Other studies focused on the dialogue between Christianity and traditional Melanesian religions and the process of inculturation of Christianity in Melanesia.¹⁴² Another aspect of inculturation was the study of the impact of changes on the value system and the cosmologies in Melanesian societies.¹⁴³ Finally, the MI did a lot of research in order to understand more profoundly the meaning of salvation in Melanesia.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁷ Cf. Brother ANDREW, The Institute’s Research Program, in: MANTOVANI, *25 Years of Service*, 101-110.

¹³⁸ Cf. AR 1977 and 1978; W. SEIFERT, Identifying Areas of Urban Pastoral Concern: *Catalyst* 7 (1977) 61ff.

¹³⁹ T. AHRENS, The Lutheran Fact Finding and Planning Survey 1976-78: *Catalyst* 8 (1978) 134-141.

¹⁴⁰ T. FLAHERTY, *Challenge at the Crossroads. National Survey: Pastoral Work of Expatriate Sisters in PNG in 1977*, Goroka 1977; cf. AR 1976 and 1977.

¹⁴¹ G. WAIDA, Communication of the Gospel: *Catalyst* 7 (1977) 223-224.

¹⁴² Especially E. Mantovani treated such topics, cf. AR 1988.

¹⁴³ W. Beben SVD became a member of the MI in 1988 and he was put in charge of this research.

¹⁴⁴ V. David occupied himself with this question, cf. AR 1988.

3.8 The Research Projects of Recent Decades

Over the past fifteen years, the MI has conducted several new research projects. The result of the project “Young Melanesians” appeared in 1997 in *Point Series* No. 21, called: “Young Melanesian Project: Data Analysis.”¹⁴⁵

The MI research for the years 2003 until 2007 was focused on the theme of magic and Christianity in PNG. In 2005 MI released the book “Death, Witchcraft and the Spirit World” and in 2008 “Sanguma in Paradise: Sorcery, Witchcraft and Christianity in Papua New Guinea.”¹⁴⁶ The research on “Land and Churches in Melanesia” wished to study the various contexts of this very relevant and timely issue in PNG.¹⁴⁷

We will not understand the purpose of all of the MI research over forty years if we do not see their intention. They always wanted to be at the service of the evangelization mission and pastoral ministry of the Churches in PNG, and at the same time, at the service of the entire civil society of the country. MI is always ready to pick up the most urgent issues of human society. That is why the institute in recent years has given more attention to the study of HIV/AIDS and ecological problems in the country.

At the moment a group of MI Research Staff is involved in an observation of exploring the lived experiences of students and youths with disability in mainstream schools in Papua New Guinea. ... At present there are plans to continue the investigation on marriage and family life in PNG rural and urban contexts and to participate in a research study on the social impact of the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project.¹⁴⁸

The Major MI Research Investigations of the last four decades were on the following topics:

- Self-Study of the Churches
- Marriage and family life in PNG rural and urban contexts

¹⁴⁵ F. ZOCCA/N. DE GROOT (eds.), *Young Melanesian Project: Data Analysis*, Goroka 1997.

¹⁴⁶ N. BARTLE, *Death, Witchcraft and the Spirit World in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea*, Goroka 2005; F. ZOCCA (ed.), *Sanguma in Paradise: Sorcery, Witchcraft and Christianity in Papua New Guinea*, Goroka 2008.

¹⁴⁷ M. RYNKIEWICH (ed.), *Land and Churches in Melanesia: Cases and Procedures*, Goroka 2004; ID., *Land and Churches in Melanesia: Issues and Contexts*, Goroka 2001.

¹⁴⁸ <http://www.mi.org.pg/pages/MI%20Research.html> (28-01-2014)

- Attitudes of PNG youth
- Problems concerning the land owned by or leased to PNG Churches
- Inclusive education on disability
- Religious affiliation in Melanesia
- Sorcery, witchcraft and Christianity in PNG
- Social impact of the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project.¹⁴⁹

The amount of different research projects the RDMI has conducted over four decades shows its role in the vision and mission of MI. The “Melanesian Institute for Pastoral and Socio-Cultural Service” sees its priority as “Researching, Teaching and Publishing on all aspects of Melanesian cultures since 1970.”¹⁵⁰

The Institute uses an integrated approach of research, teaching and writing to help its member churches. Some areas of research already undertaken by the MI are: dialogue with Melanesian religions/cultures and Christianity; change and continuity in the Melanesian cultures; integral human development; Christian communities and ministries in Melanesia; and popular Christianity and Melanesian movements.¹⁵¹

It is obvious that all three pillars of MI are interrelated and each domain and activity depends on the other domains and activities. There is no good teaching without the research and without the publications MI is doing.

3.9 MI's Contribution to the General Assembly of the Catholic Church in PNG

From July 5 to July 11, 2004 the entire Catholic Church in PNG celebrated a *National General Assembly* in Vunapope, East New Britain. Delegates chosen from the nineteen dioceses of the country met in this assembly on a national level to discuss and plan the future direction of the Catholic Church in PNG.¹⁵²

The MI was invited to attend the meeting together with other institutes and committees that contributed to the mission and ministry of the Church in this country. Between January 2003 and July 2004, all

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ <http://www.mi.org.pg/home.html> (28-01-2014)

¹⁵¹ RENALI, *The Roman Catholic Church's Participation*, 88.

¹⁵² Cf. N. DE GROOT, Report on the General Assembly of the Catholic Church in Papua New Guinea: *Catalyst* 34 (2004) 185-191.

Catholics (one and a half million) were invited by the bishops of the country to participate and contribute in discussion groups organized on a diocesan level to discuss the current situation of the Church and to plan together for the future of the Church in the country.¹⁵³

The MI was commissioned by the bishops of the country to study, analyze and systematize the numerous records of the discussion groups made before the assembly took place. The MI director, Fr. Nick De Groot SVD, was made responsible for this work.

The assembly of 2004 continued the process begun by the Self-Study thirty years before. The experience gained thirty years earlier and all the development in Church life since then was the foundation to build up a self-consciousness of being Church in PNG, a Church where all baptized Christians are called to participate in the mission of the Church in the young nation of PNG. The Church has contributed substantially to the development of the civil society in the country before and since it achieved independence in 1975. In all those years the Church was experiencing the joys, the hopes and sufferings of the people and denounced all the attempts of corruption of certain sections in the civil society of PNG. The Church did not hesitate to admonish the people in political office if their conduct did not serve the welfare of the whole nation. In recent years a new generation of citizens and Christians who are aware of their responsibility for the mission and future of the Church and civil society has come up. The future of a more just society lies in their hands.

4. The MI in Its Role as “Catalyst”

The MI plays a catalyzing function, because the MI has always been a stimulator for change and for renewal in the Churches of PNG and all of Melanesia.¹⁵⁴

For a long time there were a lot of complaints that the Churches did not do enough to encounter, understand and integrate the rich traditional heritage of the Melanesian peoples they had evangelized and made members of their Churches, a reproach which indicates some weakness in the traditional approach of converting members of the tra-

¹⁵³ D. YOUNG, *Kairos in PNG: The General Assembly of the Catholic Church*, in: P. GIBBS (ed.), *Alive in Christ. The Synod for Oceania and the Catholic Church in PNG 1998-2005*, Goroka 2006, 189-197.

¹⁵⁴ E. Mantovani said: “I think the term Catalyst describes the possibilities of our institute better” (my translation from German) in: P. STEFFEN, *Die Kirche in Papua-Neuguinea wird mündig. Ein Gespräch mit dem Direktor des Melanesischen Pastoralinstitutes: Steyl Korrespondenz* 13:10 (1985) 1-4.

ditional Melanesian society into practicing Christians. On the other hand, the circumstances under which the pioneer missionaries worked have to be taken into account. The missionaries were shaped by their cultures, and the anthropological knowledge and skills at their disposal were deficient. Considering Mantovani's statement that only anthropology built the foundation on which contextual theology could develop, we have to admit that stages of incomplete understanding could hardly be avoided.¹⁵⁵

We cannot underestimate the contribution that cultural and social anthropology and sociology of culture and religion have made for the development of contextual theology in recent decades. Even the beginning of a practical (pastoral) theology in the local Churches of Melanesia would not have been possible without these scientific disciplines.

Despite a growing appreciation of anthropology by missionaries, for a long time there remained a lack of evaluation and application of cultural anthropology to the theological disciplines. Nevertheless, one has to keep in mind the role the first missionaries had in the first evangelization period. Furthermore, we should remember that what we today call inculturation is a process that can be done only by the members of the local Christian community themselves. Foreign missionaries can only accompany such an inculturation process, the local Church, which means all local Christian communities, are the agents of such a process.¹⁵⁶

In this regard, foreign missionaries can give their contribution in their role as initiators and facilitators. In the long and complex transition period from mission Churches to local Churches, the MI understood that its mission was in assisting all the expatriate and local Church personnel to find a better understanding of all the Melanesian religious traditions and to help build bridges between the Christian message the Churches stand for in their various traditions and the Melanesian people, who want to recognize and understand both traditions they have received and inherited.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ E. MANTOVANI, What Does a Missionary Expect from Anthropology?, in: J. PIEPKE (ed.), *Anthropology and Mission*, Nettetal 1988, 39-48, here 43.

¹⁵⁶ L. LUZBETAK, What Can Anthropology Offer to the Missions?, in: PIEPKE, *Anthropology*, 50.

¹⁵⁷ See P. STEFFEN, From Church to Mission. Assessment and Perspectives of the Catholic Church in Mainland New Guinea after Its First Hundred Years, in: *Divine Word Missionaries in Papua New Guinea, 1896-1996*, Nettetal 1996, 231-258, simultaneously in: *Verbum SVD* 37 (1996) 231-258. The article describes the different stages of evangelization from the beginning until today in the Catholic Church in mainland New Guinea. ID., Die katholischen Missionen in Deutsch-Neuguinea, in: H. HIERY (ed.), *Die deutsche Südsee*, Paderborn 2002, 343-383; ID., Limbrock, Eberhard SVD (1859-1931): *BBKL* 33 (2012) 774-784.

4.1 *The Catalyzing Function of MI*

Six Melanesians already were participating in the first orientation course in 1969/70. In the subsequent courses there has always been a small number of Melanesians among the participants and among the speakers and guest lecturers. Since its beginning the MI was aware of its function as mediator in all its research, teaching and publication activities. MI had to play a role as mediator between local and foreign Church and social workers.

It had according to its own objectives to assist expatriate and local pastoral workers in their function of accompanying and stimulating the process of incarnation of Christianity into the Melanesian cultures.¹⁵⁸ And this, in multiple ways:

- 1) Through the work of the Melanesian staff members. This, however, had only limited success for a long time. Until 1983, five Melanesian research officers and a couple of lecturers had been involved in the work of MI, besides a good number of employees who worked in the administration of the institute;¹⁵⁹
- 2) through its efforts to prepare and motivate the expatriate staff members for a dialogue and encounter with the Melanesian cultures;
- 3) through its commitment to offer Melanesian thinkers and leaders a forum where they could dialogue with each other;
- 4) through its contribution to the development of a Melanesian Theology and the support of the MI for Melanesians in their attempts to build up a local theology;¹⁶⁰
- 5) through its contribution to the development of a practical (pastoral) contextual theology for Melanesia which corresponds to the socio-cultural, economic and religious Melanesian context and the aspirations, desires and visions of its people.

Over the past forty years, the staff members of the research department of the Melanesian Institute have completed various tasks, such as conducting various types of courses, doing research surveys, writing and

¹⁵⁸ WHITEMAN, *The Melanesian Institute*, 133-143, here 142.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.* – In fact, the Reverend Esau Tuza of the Solomon Islands was until 1989 the only local member engaged in the scientific research of MI.

¹⁶⁰ G. W. TROMPF, *Geographical, Historical and Intellectual Perspective*, in: ID. (ed.), *The Gospel is not Western. Black Theologies from the Southwest Pacific*, Maryknoll, NY 1987, 3-15, here 10.

evaluating articles for the publications of the institute, selecting books and journals for the library, working together with the MI director in conducting symposia, and assisting local and foreign students in their various studies, research projects and academic theses. The members of the research department have so far been allocated by the member Churches of the MI, while other people were employed according to the necessity of the particular research project undertaken. The staff had usually between four and nine members.

4.2 Courses

Giving courses was the first task undertaken by the staff of the Melanesian Institute even before its formal inauguration on January 11, 1970. Various types of courses were given, such as orientation courses for new foreign missionaries (religious and secular), assessment courses for missionaries with long experience of pastoral work in PNG, and courses for local pastoral workers.

Most of the courses organized by MI were directed to the pastoral workers of the member Churches of MI, especially to their expatriate personnel. For them the MI has in the past 21 years conducted 32 orientation courses, attended by over 900 people. During the first 20 years the venue of the courses varied, while in the past 21 years, all the courses have been held in Goroka at the Kefamo Conference Centre, an institution of the Catholic Diocese of Goroka, Eastern Highlands Province.

The length of orientation courses varied greatly over the years. From six weeks they dropped to four weeks and from 2003 they were given in three weeks. During the first 20 years of the Institute a number of courses or workshops were organized for missionaries with long working experience in the country, while in the last 20 years six workshops were given for local pastoral workers of the four member Churches of MI. A total of 96 people participated in them. Unfortunately, not all member Churches have sent representatives to participate in these courses.

These workshops were conducted as “modules,” in which a special focus was given to only one important topic and therefore the workshop lasted only a week. The topics presented and discussed were: marriage and family in PNG, the inculturation of Christianity in Melanesia, the land donated to the churches but now requested by the tribal communities, witchcraft and Christianity in PNG, and the HIV epidemic and the response of Churches in PNG.

In addition to courses organized by the Melanesian Institute over the past 40 years, the staff of the research department has taught courses

or has given talks on various occasions, such as academic or pastoral meetings organized by dioceses, districts, parishes, non-governmental organizations, universities, seminars and religious communities.

The most numerous requests have so far come from institutions and communities linked to the Catholic Church.

The number of participants in the orientation courses for foreign missionaries from various Christian Churches between 1990 and 2011 consisted of 914 persons (600 men and 314 women), of whom 669 were Catholics and 245 were Protestants of various Churches.¹⁶¹

4.3 The Staff of the Melanesian Institute (1969-2011)

The assignment of MI staff members was always done by the member Churches or the religious orders on behalf of the Catholic Church. In this way MI has over the years received very qualified staff members from all over the world with high qualifications as theologians, anthropologists, sociologists, etc.¹⁶²

From the very beginning in 1969 the Catholic Church offered personnel to the Melanesian Institute, followed by staff made available by the Churches that joined the Institute in 1974. In the publication “Silver Jubilee of Melanesian Institute,” a list is given of 33 people assigned by the Churches during the first 25 years. In the following 16 years another 17 people were assigned, which gives a total of 50 people assigned by the different Churches to MI.

In the first 25 years, there were only two local persons among the 33 people assigned to MI. At the date of their assignment 16 appointees had a Ph.D. and three gained an academic degree in subsequent years. Over the past 20 years, the MI has contributed financially to the study

¹⁶¹ Cf. Report of the research department of MI from November 14, 2011.

¹⁶² Cf. Research and Teaching Staff, in: MANTOVANI, *25 Years of Service*, 161. – To name just some of the outstanding names, beside the ones already mentioned earlier, there were: Fr. James Knight SVD, 1976-1979; Rev. Brian Turner UC, 1976-1977; Rev. Esau Tuza UC, 1977-1979; Sr. Wendy Flannery, 1978-1983; Sr. Mary MacDonald 1980-1984 and 1988; Dr. Darrell Whiteman UC, 1980-1984; Rev. Brian Schwarz ELC, 1982-1986; Sr. John Paul Chao SMSM, 1982-1987; Sr. Judith Montfort SMSM, 1983-1985; Rev. David Vincent UC, 1987-1992; Rev. Joel Ingebritson ELC, 1987-1991; Fr. Nick De Groot SVD, 1991-; Dr. Martin Schöll ELC, 1991-; Rev. Kasek Kautil ELC, 1993-; Rev. Simeon Namunu UC, 1993-; Dr. Philipp Gibbs SVD, 2001-; Dr. Franco Zocca SVD, 1994-; Roland Seib ELC, 1997-; Dr. Michael Rynkiewich, US American Methodist, 1998-; Martin Tnines SVD, 2008-; Rev. Hermann Spingler ELC, 2003-, and many more.

of 8 staff members (2 for the Baccalaureate, 5 for the Masters, and 1 for the Doctorate).

The length of time spent by staff members assigned by the Churches to the MI varied greatly, from a maximum of 19 years (E. Mantovani) to a minimum of one year (in nine cases). On average, the staff have been assigned to the Institute for 4.8 years.

This figure also includes the years spent on further studies outside of the MI. Only six people assigned by the Churches worked more than ten years in the MI (four Catholics, one Anglican and one United Church member).

At the moment there are five staff members assigned by the member Churches: two are Catholics, two Lutherans, and one is assigned by the United Church. Three are from abroad and two are from the country. Three have done post-graduate studies. In accordance with the statute of MI, the staff sent by the member Churches should also be supported financially by those Churches. But that has not worked well in recent years. For this reason, beginning from January 2011, the staff members assigned by the various member Churches are also paid by the Institute, even though the Churches are still required to pay back the salaries to MI. It seems that member Churches find it increasingly difficult to provide qualified personnel for the Melanesian Institute and to support the Institute financially.¹⁶³

4.4 The Leadership of the Melanesian Institute (1969-2011)

According to the Constitutions of the Melanesian Institute its directors are appointed by the Governing Council and they have to be selected from the staff of the MI. The list of MI directors and their assistants since its foundation in 1969 are given below:

1969-1975 Dr. Hermann Janssen (MSC), Catholic.

1975-1978 Fr. Joseph Knoebel SVD, Catholic.

1978-1984 Dr. Ennio Mantovani SVD, Catholic.

1984-1986 Sr. Maria Burke SSpS, Catholic.

1986-1987 Rev. Gernot Fugmann, Lutheran.

1987-1994 Dr. Ennio Mantovani SVD, Catholic – Assistant: Fr. Nick De Groot, Catholic.

¹⁶³ Personnel assigned to the Melanesian Institute by the member Churches (1969-2011). MI Staff Seconded by the Member Churches (1969-2011), information received from the MI on November 14, 2011.

- 1994-1995 Rev. Kasek Kautil, Lutheran – Assistant: Fr. Nick De Groot, Catholic.
- 1996-2002 Fr. Nick De Groot SVD – Assistants: Rev. Namunu, Fr. Paroi OP, Catholic.
- 2002-2004 Dr. Franco Zocca SVD, Catholic – Assistant: Sr. Jeline SMSM, Catholic.
- 2004-2006 Fr. Nick De Groot, Catholic – Assistant: Rev. Hermann Spingler, Lutheran.
- 2006-2008 Rev. Hermann Spingler, Lutheran – Assistant: Dr. Franco Zocca SVD, Catholic.
- 2008-2010 Rev. William Longgar, United Church – Assistant: Miss Maria Tankulu, Catholic.
- 2010- Rev. Jack Urame, Lutheran – Assistant: Bro. Martin Thines SVD, Catholic.

5. The Contribution of the MI to Intercultural Exchange

The mediating role of MI between local and foreign forces leads to an exchange between cultures. Through an integrated approach to research, teaching and publishing activities the institute achieves its main objective: to help the Churches of Melanesia to have a better understanding of the genuine needs and longings of the Melanesians.¹⁶⁴ According to L. Luzbetak, it is not possible to proclaim the Good News effectively until it is preached in the cultural “language” of the community to which it is directed, that is, through the symbolic system of a concrete local culture.¹⁶⁵ E. Mantovani expected from the missionaries a thorough study of the symbols in the context of the local culture. The symbolic language has to be rightly understood; otherwise there is the danger of false interpretations caused by insufficient anthropological knowledge. Often it is not possible for missionaries to distinguish between religious symbols and their meaning. However, according to E. Mantovani, for that reason missionaries must be open to learn from their experience of not understanding the symbols. The local Church workers, as well as the foreign workers, must therefore give importance

¹⁶⁴ WHITEMAN, *The Melanesian Institute*, 133; cf. ID., *Melanesians and Missionaries. An Ethnohistorical Study of Social and Religious Change in the Southwest Pacific*, Pasadena 1983.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. LUZBETAK, *What Can Anthropology Offer?*, 49.

to the study of anthropology, which explains to them the symbolic system of a particular culture.¹⁶⁶

As a starting point the work of the Melanesian Institute is based on two premises:

1. The thesis that the gospel is a universal truth, which is important for all people.
2. But the truth of the gospel must be contextualized, which means the faith must be based and rooted in the faith and practice of a concrete community.¹⁶⁷ The universal nature of Christianity can only be expressed in a concrete way and through a specific culture.¹⁶⁸
3. It is necessary that the many different cultures in Melanesia are understood in all their depth, since only then is it possible for Church workers – local and foreign – to announce the Good News in a language that is comprehensible and significant for the life of Melanesians.¹⁶⁹ Thus, the universal nature of Christianity can only be expressed in the concrete context of a specific culture.

The lived Gospel values of the local faith communities on the one hand and the inherited Melanesian cultures on the other are constantly in a process of exchange, which needs to be understood and studied. An institute like MI can accompany this process since it has the possibility to take both sides seriously, which would give it the role of a facilitator between both sides.

6. Its Contribution as Mediator between the Universal and the Local Church

The contribution of mediation between the universal Church and the local Churches in Melanesia is for both sides a mutual enrichment. Thanks to the activities of the Melanesian Institute the dialogue between the universal dimension of Christianity and the many specific cultural contexts in which it plays an important role in the lives of individual Christians and communities is going on. The dialogue protects both parties from isolation, from wrongly understood absolutism or a truncation of the Christian message.

¹⁶⁶ MANTOVANI, *What Does a Missionary Expect?*, 40 and 42-43.

¹⁶⁷ WHITEMAN, *The Melanesian Institute*, 133.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

As the Christian message wants to be inculturated in Melanesian cultures, it needs a continuous and new challenge and an enlargement of its form and its content. On the other hand a Melanesian Christianity offers to the universal Christian movement and Churches its own specific contribution.

Although in fact only one part of this universality, in this exchange the Melanesian Churches can contribute and bring their own specific point of view also to the Asian, Western, African and American Churches. Here we refer for example to the great importance of the community and to the significance of Melanesian bio-cosmic thinking and specific Melanesian ways of theological thought.¹⁷⁰

All this developed in the last forty years, thanks to the ecumenical and dialogic approach practised by the Melanesian Institute.

7. The MI Contribution to Theology in Melanesia

The very fact that there are today strong independent contributions to theology, Church practice and piety coming from the young Asian and African Christianity is for mission theologian Horst Bürkle the clearest refutation of all hostile attitudes towards mission. The non-European and non-Christian cultures have for Bürkle a theological significance that goes beyond the recognition and appreciation of their benefits and values. Bürkle said:

It is a theology statement. Only if these peoples can present themselves with their own history will there be the possibility that there will be an autonomous expression in the Church and theology of these peoples. The value of pre-Christianity is not confined to its temporary function, which would become superfluous when Christianity takes its place. The heritage which lies in the cultural and religious history of the various peoples remains rather of great importance for the development of the proper thesis of spiritual colonialism in Christian shape.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ E. MANTOVANI, Traditional Ethics and Values, in: D. WHITEMAN (ed.), *An Introduction to Melanesian Cultures*, Goroka 1984, 192-212.

¹⁷¹ H. BÜRKLE, Theologische Entwicklungen in der Dritten Welt: *Zeitschrift für Mission* 4 (1979) 78-88. – As a Protestant theologian between 1968 and 1987 the author was Professor of missiology and Director of the Institute of Missiology and Religious Studies at the Protestant Theological Faculty of the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, Germany. In 1987 he became a member of the Catholic Church. After his conversion he received a professorship in the faculty of philosophy.

This interpretation of a permanent process of evangelization and inculturation can also be found in a statement made by Mantovani when he talks about the tasks of MI in Melanesia:

I think the term catalyst best describes the role of our institute. It is about assisting the Church in Melanesia in her way of finding her own identity and mission. The Church has to be enabled to conduct a dialogue between the traditional religions and Christianity, and to investigate and compare their ecclesiastical structures and services in the light of their own traditional structures and community services. The existing religious movements can help the Melanesians to find answers in their search for salvation, to which Christ has given his saving answer. The whole present social context has to be opened up for the Church of Melanesia.¹⁷²

The history of the Institute proves that the MI has analyzed its missiological task in an intensive and holistic way. Therefore, where should this theological work of the institute be inserted? H. Janssen provides us with a key which indicates the different levels of doing theology.

There is a theology of the seminar, the University, the pastoral institutes, the Conferences and a basic narrative theology. All these levels make a proper contribution to theological developments that cannot – or possibly only partially – be taken into account by the other levels.¹⁷³

Under the concrete inspiration of Vatican II (SC 44, CD 17, OT 22, AG 31) centres and institutes have come up in the 1960s and 1970s in Africa, Asia and Oceania, which can be divided into three basic categories:

- a) Biblical pastoral, catechetical, and liturgical institutes;
- b) Cultural institutes of the science of religions or anthropological-pastoral study;

¹⁷² Quoted in: STEFFEN, Die Kirche in Papua-Neuguinea, 1. Here the original German quotation: „Ich denke, der Begriff Katalysator umschreibt am besten die Rolle unseres Instituts. Es geht darum, der Kirche in Melanesien in dem Prozess des Findens einer eigenen Identität und Aufgabe beizustehen. Sie soll befähigt werden, den Dialog zwischen den traditionellen Religionen und dem Christentum zu führen, sowie ihre kirchlichen Strukturen und Dienste im Lichte der eigenen traditionellen Strukturen und Gemeinschaftsdienste zu untersuchen und zu vergleichen. Die bestehenden religiösen Bewegungen können dazu verhelfen, die Fragestellung des Melanesiers nach dem Heil ausfindig zu machen, auf die ja Christus seine heilsbringende Antwort gegeben hat. Der ganze heutige gesellschaftliche Kontext soll für die Kirche Melanesiens erschlossen werden.“

¹⁷³ H. JANSSEN, Theologische Durchblicke – Entwicklungen und Ebenen der Theologie in der Dritten Welt: *Theologie der Gegenwart* 24 (1981) 121.

c) Centres of inter-religious dialogue.

In addition, there are several hybrid forms, some of which pursue developmental targets.¹⁷⁴

In the group of cultural institutes Janssen includes: the Oriens Institute for Religious Research in Tokyo (founded in 1963 by Fr. J. Spae SJ), the Melanesian Institute for Pastoral and Socio-economic services, the Institute for Indian Culture in Mumbai (founded by Dr. Stephen Fuchs SVD), and the Centre d'Étude ethnologique in Bandundu in the Congo (founded by Fr. Hermann Hohegger SVD).¹⁷⁵

These institutes have entered into a more or less intense and systematic dialogue with non-Christian religious and cultural traditions. Despite the diversity of staff, activities and objectives, these centres can be united by their main common functions.

According to H. Janssen:

At a crucial time in church history, institutes and centers did fundamental preliminary work for a substantial theological process, namely the transition of the mission churches to independent local churches. The theology done by the Institutes has therefore taken theological functions that are not perceived or only reluctantly by the seminary and university theology.¹⁷⁶

This position of Janssen confirmed the thesis put forward by H. Rzepkowski:

The pastoral and cultural institutes are required for the missionary work, because only adapted missionary activity can, according to the Vatican Council Decree on Missionary Activity, be evaluated as authentic missionary work. But in addition to that they have their own function in the fact that they help to finish the stage of being mission church and that they assist in the process of becoming a mature local church.¹⁷⁷

Gernot Fugmann¹⁷⁸ sees in the seminaries hardly the place where such work can be done. Through the built-in method of the MI, the In-

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Quoted by H. CZARKOWSKI, *Zur Bedeutung und Situation der Pastoralinstitute in der Dritten Welt: ZMR* 59 (1975) 112-126, 182-200, here 114.

¹⁷⁸ Gernot Fugmann was born in New Guinea where his father Wilhelm Fugmann (1909-2007) worked in the business and administration section of the

stitute had started the dialogue between traditional religion and the Christian message. Especially the study of religious movements as a phenomenon of Melanesian epistemology was part of the research work done by the MI, which earned international recognition for the MI.¹⁷⁹

In addition, MI today sees itself as a forum where open dialogue between experts, Church leaders and the ruling class of civil society has become a reality.

Fugmann's reflection is a further indication regarding the distinctive theological contribution of the institutes within the local Churches or even between Churches of different traditions that cannot be achieved by other academic institutions to the same extent.¹⁸⁰

Social anthropology research always played an important role in the work of MI, but had always been oriented to a pastoral need: to bring all pastoral workers, both local and foreign, as well as Melanesian and Christian communities to a better understanding of Melanesian cultures and religions and, in so doing, to make dialogue among them possible.

The results of the MI studies were not disclosed in a language of specialists, but rather related to pastoral situations and translated into a language understandable to social and pastoral workers. Only in this way could the academic insights and knowledge be made accessible and

Lutheran Mission. He was raised in Bavaria and Australia. Before returning to PNG as an ordained Lutheran pastor, he did graduate studies at the School of World Mission at the Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. His maternal grandfather Christian Keyßer (1877-1961) was a leading Lutheran pioneer missionary in New Guinea. With several books on the missionary work in New Guinea his father and grandfather made a substantial contribution to the missionary history documentation and reflection. Since 1984 Gernot Fugmann has been a member of the MI. Already in 1972 he began teaching at the OC of the MI. For health reasons he had to retire from his office as MI director, which he held from 1986 to 1987. He returned to Germany and worked there at the Mission Centre of the Bavarian Lutheran Church in Neuendettelsau, the former Neuendettelsau Mission Society; meanwhile it is called "Mission EineWelt, Centrum für Partnerschaft, Entwicklung und Mission der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche in Bayern" (Mission One World – Centre for Partnership, Development and Mission of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Bavaria); cf. The MI has a new director: *Catalyst* 16 (1986) 57.

¹⁷⁹ G. FUGMANN, Tertiary Religious Education in Relation to the Melanesian Institute: *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 3 (1987) 42-46, here 44.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid. – Cf. K. VELLGUTH, Katalysator einer inkulturierten Mission. Das Melanesische Institut: Zwischen ethnologischer Forschung und pastoraler Wegbegleitung: *Verbum SVD* 53 (2012) 427-440.

clear in their eminently practical (pastoral) meaning to pastoral and social workers and the Christian and civil communities in Melanesia.¹⁸¹

8. *The Methodology Used by the MI Staff Members*

For the fourth director of the MI, Maria Burke, “there are many images used to explain the work of the MI.” For her “the work is meant to be a catalyst that initiates change among church people and systems; it is a pointer indicating direction amid the confusions of rapid change, and is an analytical net sieving the current trends, concerns and issues, surfacing what can serve as nourishment for communitarian action.” The challenge for the MI staff lies in balancing three tasks. “Fulfilling any one of these tasks is a constant and enlivening challenge for the staff of the MI. Balancing all three of these tasks requires continuous dexterity.” She continues explaining the work the MI is trying to fulfil. “In all our research, teaching, and publication work we try to be catalytic, indicative and analytic. Simultaneously we are aware that we personally are called to be connective; we are links joining several distinct chains of Christian efforts.”¹⁸²

To achieve these three tasks and use the three academic approaches above mentioned the MI staff members have developed a very specific approach which enables them to be faithful to the mission the MI wants to carry out. The following description of the MI approach shows how interdisciplinary and highly academic the MI working approach has always been. In this approach the MI strives

to integrate significant insights available through multiple academic disciplines. Missiology continually challenges how we are, and how we ought to be furthering the dialogue between the Gospel and culture. Anthropology decodes for us elements of culture functioning confusedly before our eyes. Sociology distinguishes for us the effects from causes amid the kaleidoscope of current problems. Theology constantly re-focuses the difference between genuine human openness to God and the cultural expressions of this openness. Ecumenics provides us with a method to share commonalities and to sincerely face differences. Insights of Organisation Development enable skills to strategize the “next step,” of how to move groups from the glory of good ideas to the reality of shared achievement. Councelling teaches us how to

¹⁸¹ MANTOVANI, What Does a Missionary Expect?, 44.

¹⁸² M. BURKE, Missing Melanesian Links: *Catalyst* 16 (1986) 51-57, here 51.

stand with others and to enable them to untangle their own personal and group confusions.¹⁸³

The MI staff has always been staffed with highly trained personnel from various academic disciplines.

The academic staff includes both Melanesians and expatriates. Their dialogue about culture and religion has a variety of genres. The discussants are sociologists, theologians, anthropologists, economists. There is a theological underpinning, multivoiced as it may be, to their enterprise. The sociologist who works for the institute, whether s/he be Melanesian or German, understands that the institute serves the work of its four member churches, which are all promoting Christian religious and social values.¹⁸⁴

9. The Challenges and Possible Task of the MI for the Churches and Society in Melanesia: Melanesian Perspectives

Rev. Kasek Kautil, the first national director of MI and former Principal of Martin Luther Seminary in Lae, answered the question: How do I see the Church, the Nation and the role of MI in the light of its aims? He writes:

While the Institute needs to be realistic in its goals and programs, it would be a mistake for it to be bound by its stated objectives to the extent that it is handicapped from being open to changes. This is especially so, when the aims are not reassessed from time to time in accordance with these trends and developments in church and society. One way to view this is the fact that the institute was initially set up to aid expatriate missionaries in Melanesian cultures to better serve the church and the people. Gradually this purpose will not be the prime purpose to justify costs which will require local support. Therefore, an orientation toward greater needs of local churches and the society at large will become increasingly important.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³ Ibid., 52.

¹⁸⁴ MacDonald, *Writing about Culture*, 158. – The MI “has generally drawn its academic staff – with qualifications in anthropology, economics, missiology, religious studies, sociology, theology – from its member churches.” Ibid., 161.

¹⁸⁵ K. KAUTIL, *The Future in the Eyes of Melanesians*, in: MANTOVANI, *25 Years of Service*, 122. - Rev. Kasek Kautil was born on Karkar Island in the Madang Province of PNG. He studied theology at Martin Luther Seminary in Lae (1969-1974). In Warburg, USA he did Graduate Studies in theology. He held various

Kautil believes that “the unstated role of the Institute could be thought of simply as a ‘think tank’ facility.”¹⁸⁶ For him two social issues are of growing concern which “will have far greater impact on Churches and life in PNG society”:

- the new sects, religious groups and revived expansionist activities, and
- the tremendous impact of economic development on PNG’s cultural and social heritage.¹⁸⁷

For Kautil there is an ambivalent challenge in PNG society when individual freedom takes precedence over family and community. “To the church, the phenomenon of new religious groups is already creating a crisis in doctrinal unity and theological accountability among Christians. There is a danger of Christianity disintegrating into ideological factions and rival groups which may in turn take ethnic forms in society.”¹⁸⁸ Religious conflicts can escalate to major conflicts in society. “In the absence of theological unity, there is every opportunity for Christianity in PNG to be secularised into a form of state religion or civil religion. Or it may disintegrate into rival factions without theological and ideological accountability.”¹⁸⁹

Colman Renali indicated another aspect which relates to the concern of Kautil about the many religious groups bringing more disharmony into the families, communities, and the whole society. For Renali, “the MI has to incorporate the study of ecumenism among its aims and objectives.”¹⁹⁰

positions in the ELC-PNG, like Chaplain of Bumayong High School, Lae (1975-1983); Lecturer (1984-85) and Principal of the Martin Luther Seminary (1986-1991); Lecturer (1993-95) and Director of the Melanesian Institute (1995); Publishing Manager (1996-2003) and Director of Kristen Press, Madang (2004-2009). Currently he is PhD candidate at DWU Madang.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 123. He continues saying: “The development trends have profound effects on the life of established major churches and the general public, and raise ideological, structural, and theological problems.”

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 124.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 125.

¹⁹⁰ RENALI, *The Roman Catholic Church’s Participation*, 176. – He continues saying: “At present the MI does not include the study of ecumenical issues and questions.” Renali continues by quoting Mantovani: “The MI is not an ecumenical institute in the same sense that it sets out to develop ecumenical theologies and studies ecumenical issues.” This quotation is taken from: E. MANTOVANI, *Melanesian Institute and Common Witness: Verbum SVD* 28 (1987) 81. – Mantovani confirms Renali’s concern when he writes about the evil effect of religious divisions in Melanesia: “Unless Christianity helps this young nation overcome

The MI needs to incorporate ecumenism for several reasons. First, as an ecumenical project, it has to have a solid ecumenical basis. That can happen only if ecumenical theologies are developed and particular ecumenical issues are studied within the Institute.

Among the different arguments Renali brings one which will convince easily when he writes:

The MI has to scrutinize its aim and goals in the light of the present context. In a situation where over 80 percent of the people profess the Christian faith, the ecumenical imperative becomes a compulsory dimension of the church's mission in PNG.¹⁹¹

Herman Boyek considers "the MI as the brain in terms of directly challenging both traditional and new Western values."¹⁹² He sees the Churches very much associated with the grassroots and the MI through its various courses in touch with them.

Carl Elsolo suggests "to work toward having MI as a Post Graduate Research Institute Campus under the bylaws of one of the churches' universities in the future like the Divine Word University."¹⁹³ Elsolo finally proposes that

MI needs to encourage female academics if we are to promote a strong sense of equality among Melanesian men and women. Bearing in mind that this direction was not a serious question in traditional Melanesian Society, it is becoming an important issue in the world of today.¹⁹⁴

The MI has also to take more seriously the often heard critique from local and expatriate pastors, that the MI is too theoretical.¹⁹⁵ Maria

its divisions, there will be not a single nation but a multitude of clan interests, making use of the political and economic structure to get as much as they can for themselves forgetting the well-being of the others One is tempted to say that in this case it was not Christianity which converted Melanesians but Melanesians used and converted Christianity to express the fragmentation which characterized them in the past." Ibid., 75-76.

¹⁹¹ RENALI, *The Roman Catholic Church's Participation*, 176-177.

¹⁹² H. BOYEK, My Vision for the Future, in: MANTOVANI, *25 Years of Service*, 136.

¹⁹³ C. ELSOLO, Some Thoughts on the Future Trends of the MI, in: MANTOVANI, *25 Years of Service*, 139.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 141.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. MACDONALD, *Writing about Culture*, 161.

Burke, the fourth MI director, in 1986 published the article “Missing Melanesian Links.” She writes:

Our team efforts link a variety of national heritages ... Each has his own special token to contribute. But precisely here, amid all this richness is our outstanding weakness. WE have so little direct, on-going Melanesian input. Oh, yes, we always dialogue, we make special efforts to consult with our co-workers from Mt. Hagen, Rabaul, Mendi, We-wak, Chimbu and Kerema; we interpret data drawing on our own field experience in Madang, Morobe, Chimbu, Fiji, and the Solomons. But this is not the same as direct, continuous, mutual input by Melanesians.¹⁹⁶

Burke sees clearly the need for Melanesians “who can verbalise the Melanesian expression of Christianity from the inside.” For her “Melanesian Christians become more confident and and more available to share special gifts of community-mindedness and religious integration with the entire Christian world ... A more non-Western academic approach would help to bridge the gap between theory and praxis and would make the MI really more Melanesian. That is the next challenge for the MI. Meeting it depends on having full-blooded, dedicated, qualified Melanesian staff members. Only then can the MI evolve to meet the emerging challenges of a Christian future.”¹⁹⁷

10. The Latest Self-description and Mission Statement of the MI

The MI website gives the latest up-dated description of what MI is all about:

The **Melanesian Institute (MI)** is an ecumenical research, teaching and publishing institute. It is designed to help churches, government and other organisations speak more clearly to the needs of the people in Melanesia. Melanesian Institute staff have experience of living in Melanesia as well as qualifications in areas like anthropology, sociology and theology. MI’s research focuses on topics of pastoral and social concern to people in Melanesia.¹⁹⁸

The latest MI mission statement indicates the broad spectrum MI has made its own:

¹⁹⁶ BURKE, Missing Melanesian Links, 52-53.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 53-54.

¹⁹⁸ <http://www.mi.org.pg/home.html> (28-01-2014)

The Melanesian Institute (MI) is an ecumenical research, teaching and publishing body in Papua New Guinea that:

- is mandated to focus on pastoral and socio-cultural issues,
- engages in ongoing dialogue between Christian values and Melanesian cultures,
- promotes peace and reconciliation; dignity and respect; and social, economic and ecological justice.¹⁹⁹

This self-description and mission statement reveal once more the unique character the Melanesian Institute has among all pastoral and cultural institutes worldwide, which goes far beyond the usual category of being just pastoral or of being just cultural. It is the unique blending of the sociological, anthropological and theological reflection and insights that makes it so special. Its research, teaching and publications do not give concrete pastoral models which are ready-made for instant application to the Churches in Melanesia; rather, the MI services are the foundations for further pastoral discernment and they indicate the way the individual Churches should go if they want to remain faithful to their mission to announce the Good New to all peoples in Melanesia. To understand MI we have to understand its special link to cultural anthropology at the service of Christian mission. That is the field where missionary theology and missionary experiences are scientifically studied and put at the service of pastoral ministry. Luzbetak sees “three major areas where cultural anthropology might be of special service to mission action: (1) in communicating and contextualizing the Gospel; (2) in carrying out the social mission of the Church; and (3) in training for mission.”²⁰⁰

The insight of Luzbetak, the pioneer of missiological anthropology, surely guided all the services of MI.

As far as anthropology is concerned, the concepts communication and contextualization are like two sides of the same coin To me, contextualization is in the last analysis nothing more than effective communication. And that is exactly what missiological anthropology is all about.²⁰¹

With its own approaches and means MI has always aimed at this way of effective communication.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ LUZBETAK, *What Can Anthropology Offer?*, 49.

²⁰¹ Ibid.; cf. L. LUZBETAK, *Church and Cultures. New Perspectives in Missiological Anthropology*, Maryknoll, NY 1988.

CHAPTER 3

THE AMECEA PASTORAL INSTITUTE At the Service of an African Contextual Theology of Ministry

The African continent has two renowned pastoral institutes of the Catholic Church that are recognized internationally and whose influence goes beyond their national borders. One is located in East Africa and the other one in South Africa. The development of these pastoral institutes cannot be understood without knowing their historical development and the particular ecclesial and socio-cultural context in which they developed.

PART ONE

The first part of this chapter deals with the development of a contextual African Theology, the pastoral priority of the AMECEA (Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa) bishops, and the significance of the Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa as the context of the AMECEA Pastoral Institute.

1. The Development of a Practical African Theology

“The foundation of most of the African Churches ... took place during the colonial period: 1880-1960. This age brought to Africa much of the modern infrastructure which greatly facilitated the work of evangelization. What the white man failed to understand at the time was how much the African had to suffer from this European invasion that placed a whole continent into a position of inferiority.”¹

The four missionary encyclicals published before the Second Vatican Council encouraged the process of indigenization, localization, and the so-called acculturation of the Church. But the door to a deeper process of dialogue with the cultures and the religions of Africa was only opened with the Second Vatican Council.

¹ J. BAUR, *Two Thousand Years of Christianity in Africa. An African Church History*, 2nd rev. ed., Nairobi 2001, 18. – In 1969 the “Jus commissionis” was replaced by the “Jus mandati,” that means that with that date a new era of missionary responsibility of the local Church has begun. Cf. “Jus commissionis” and “Jus mandati,” in: H. RZEPKOWSKI, *Lessico di Missiologia*, Città del Vaticano 2000, 352-353.

Even before the Council, the missionaries began to carry out studies and make ethnographic collections for the sake of understanding better the philosophy, customs and religion of the Africans. But only with the beginning of theological studies did the Church begin to confront openly the question of inculturation and contextualization of Christianity in non-Western cultures. The slogan “after a century of Christianization of Africa follows a century of Africanization of Christianity in Africa” expresses clearly the changes of this new era. And so it is not surprising that the latest generation of Western missionaries were very much engaged in questions of inculturation by trying to accelerate the process of localization and inculturation of the Christian faith and the Catholic Church as such in Africa.² Their evangelization experiences and the momentum of the Council inspired this generation to start with enthusiasm a new stage in the history of the Church in Africa. The new awareness of the mission of the local Church and the vocation of the laity in the Church promoted a process of discernment, which recognized the whole community of the faithful as the subject of pastoral care. This new approach aimed to overcome the traditionally practiced one-way approach, which saw the faithful as the object of pastoral care.

Gradually the Church realized the great task that arose after initiating a process of conversion from the ecclesiology of the Church as an institution, to that of the Church as communion, to being a participative Church where each member has to be co-responsible in accordance with each one’s ability. The first generations of African priests, bishops and theologians especially felt the impetus and encouragement to be more deeply involved in the construction, practice and theology of a truly African Church. The first synod of the Church in Africa, three decades after Vatican II, served as a forum and workshop for the shepherds of the Church in Africa, where the local Churches had undergone a rapid process of contextualization and where the Churches had consciously begun to promote the process of inculturation of the Christian faith into the cultures of the African Christians.

In his post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa*, the Church in Africa, Pope John Paul II states:

² Cf. J. M. WALIGGO, *A History of African Priests, Katigondo Major Seminary 1911-1986*, Masaka, Uganda 1988. – Inspired and guided by the vision of their founder Lavignerie the Missionaries of Africa had begun to train Africans for the priesthood already many years before promotion of the formation of an indigenous clergy in the missions by the papal encyclicals of 1919, 1926, etc. In 1903 they began this formation work with a minor seminary and from 1911 with a major seminary in Katigondo in Uganda. In 1913 the first African priest of this seminary was ordained. Cf. J. PAAS, *Das Silberjubiläum des Priesterseminars Katigondo: KM 56 (1928) 330-339, 361-368.*

Inculturation includes the whole process of evangelization. It includes theology, liturgy, the Church's life and structures. All this underlines the need for research in the field of African cultures in all their complexity. Precisely for this reason the Synod invited Pastors to exploit to the maximum the numerous possibilities which the Church's present discipline provides in this matter.³

In 1988 the well-known African theologian Laurenti Magesa described six principles for Pastoral Ministry in Africa, which reveal a deep wisdom in ministry and pastoral theology.

The first principle in the procedure leading to a theory and practice of justice in a parish community is the principle of scepticism. Scepticism, which calls for critical evaluation of experienced reality, is a prerequisite for starting appropriate movements towards a liberating pastoral ministry.⁴

His second principle is the principle of *locality* which "focuses upon the local pastoral situation"; the third one is *historicity*, which aims at an "adequate understanding of the history of the locality" in order to achieve "an accurate and relevant appraisal of pastoral ministry." The fourth principle is called *structural relativity*. For Magesa a "proper understanding of the history of the locality is necessary for a re-adjustment of parish structures, and consequently of Christian praxis ... structures need to be modelled, and re-modelled as necessary, in order to bring life and dignity to people." "The nobility of the human person constitutes the fifth principle for liberating pastoral ministry," and Magesa calls this principle: *centrality of the person*. "Everything will fall short of expectation if it does not converge upon the promotion of the nobility of the human person, individually and communally." The sixth principle is called: *need for theological realism*. Here the author makes clear that "the above mentioned principles will lead to a liberating pastoral ministry only in relation to a sixth principle, which involves a realistic appraisal or a human-theological context." He continues saying: "The pastoral agent must be clear about this context, if disillusionment and despair about efforts at liberating ministry are to be obviated, as well as the temptation to return to previous alienating pastoral practice."⁵

³ JOHN PAUL II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa* (14 September 1995) 62; AAS 88 (1996) 39.

⁴ L. MAGESA, *Liberating Pastoral Ministry. Six Recommended Principles: AFER* 30 (1988) 345-350, here 345.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 346-349.

The same theologian published in 2006 a critical evaluation on evangelization in Africa, where he gives important suggestions for new ways of authentic evangelization. In his final pages he comes to the conclusion that it

may be the most important aspect of the process of proclaiming the Gospel in our own community and elsewhere: the realization that evangelization is not a state but a process, an ongoing task. We are not Christians, we continually become Christians. This is true of individual persons, but it is even more so of cultures, and the responsibility of any person in mission is to help enhance this process.⁶

2. The Choice of the Small Christian Communities as a Pastoral Priority

The new interest of the universal Church in the original forms of Christian community life, and the renewed interest in the house Churches of early Christianity were similar to the nature of the African peoples and their cultural traditions. In this context the promotion of Small Christian Communities received priority in the vision and pastoral programs of most Regional Episcopal Conferences in Africa. In 1973 and 1976, the plenary assemblies of the bishops of AMECEA chose the Small Christian Communities (SCC) as their pastoral priority.⁷ In 1979 the AMECEA bishops wrote:

Small Christian communities are means by which the Church is brought down to the daily life and concerns of the people to where they actually live. In them the Church takes on flesh and blood in life-situations of people. In them people are enabled to recognize the mystery of Christ among them.⁸

Small Christian Communities were increasingly seen as an African way to contextualize the *communio-ecclesiology* of Vatican II. The SCCs are in line with the nature of Africans and are often the only way to combat the negative aspects of globalization, which means in practice to build Christian communities which support their members in their con-

⁶ L. MAGESA, *Rethinking Mission. Evangelization in Africa in a New Era*, Spearhead 179-180, Eldoret 2006, 145.

⁷ Although the years 1973 and 1976 are considered the official beginning of Small Christian Communities in the AMECEA region, they are already found in 1966 in the parish of Nyarombo in the diocese of Musoma in Tanzania. Cf. J. HEALEY, www.maryknollafrica.org/History8.htm (15-01-2014)

⁸ AMECEA, *Conclusions of the Study Conference of the AMECEA Plenary 1979: AFER 21* (1979) 266.

crete or real life situations as extended families. The reality allows us to speak of a process of building Small Christian Communities in Africa which develop according to the traditions and customs of the culture of Africa and that, unlike Latin America, do not originate in a society of socio-political conflicts that often have influenced the movement of the Latin American Basic Ecclesial Communities. The SCC movement also expresses a reawakening of African traditions and a strengthening of the African identity as being authentically African and Christian.⁹

The Church is in constant need of reform, and today, it needs to return to the aim of building meaningful, interpersonal communities, to a stress on the local church as the vital cell of the universal Church. If the local churches, at the most local level (village, out-station, block of flats, factory) do not experience a sense of common Christian living, then the Universal Church is only a hollow shell. If we are looking for priorities in pastoral work today, here is the first one.¹⁰

The movement became a tool of inculturation of the Church in Africa in which authentic African religiosity could be encountered. Here the African Christian encounters the God of the covenant as he was revealed in Jesus Christ.¹¹

Today more and more African Christians live in ethnically mixed communities and this phenomenon is the constitutive reality of the SCC. This is why the African theologian Francis Oborji stresses the importance of a language of relationship that accepts and respects all groups in African society. The construction of mixed multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious communities is part of the mission the SCCs have in Africa. The role of African Christians living in these mixed communities is an indispensable model of relationships among all groups.¹² The Tanzanian bishop Christopher Mwoleka saw in the

⁹ Cf. ATR and the Building of Relationships in Pluralistic Societies, in: F. A. OBORJI, *Towards a Christian Theology of African Religion. Issues of Interpretation and Mission*, Spearhead 173-175, Eldoret 2005, 103-137. The author also explains in his book the characteristics of the extended African family, the traditional African society and the way relationships are built up in African Christian Communities.

¹⁰ B. HEARNE, Community – a Jargon Word?: *AFER* 15 (1973) 195-205, here 203.

¹¹ Cf. M. SCHOLZ, Das AMECEA Pastoral Institut – Ort des Theologisierens und Geburtsstätte Neuer Wege der Kirche: *Ordensnachrichten* 21 (1982) 336-342; ID., Stadtpfarre Thika in Kenya – Ort des Realisierens neuer Wege der Pastoral: *Ordensnachrichten* 21 (1982) 343-348.

¹² OBORJI, op. cit., 136-137.

mid-1970s in the SCCs a replacement of the traditional African extended family. He wrote:

Providentially, the small Christian communities, developed on the right lines, will eventually replace the traditional African extended family or the clan. Just as baptism transforms a natural baby into a child of God a small Christian community is nothing else but a baptized clan. The clan with all its culture, ethos, relationships and institutions is not destroyed but purified and transformed.¹³

The “Guidelines for the Catholic Church in Eastern Africa in the 1980s” from 1973 were a breakthrough for official promotion of SCCs in Eastern Africa. The bishops wrote:

While the Church of Christ is universal, it is a communion of small local Christian Churches, communion of Christians rooted in their own society. From the Bible we learn that such local Churches are born through apostolic and missionary preaching. But they are meant to grow so that with time they become firmly rooted in the life and culture of the people. She is led by local people, meets and answers local needs and problems, and finds within herself the resources needed for her life and mission. We are convinced that in these countries of Eastern Africa it is time for the Church to become really “local,” that is: self-ministering, self-propagating and self-supporting. Our planning is aimed at building such local Churches for the coming years. We believe that in order to achieve this we have to insist on building Church life and work on basic Christian communities, in both rural and urban areas. Church life must be based on the communities in which everyday life and work takes place: those manageable social groupings whose members can experience real inter-personal relationships and feel a sense of communal belonging, both in living and working.¹⁴

The AMECEA plenary assembly of 1976 reflected on the significance of the Gospel sharing in SCCs:

The Gospel thus presented must be seen by the local people as a challenge to their actual life: a force that questions their way of life, confronts their problems in the way that

¹³ J. HEALEY, *A Fifth Gospel: The Experience of Black Christian Values*, Maryknoll, NY 1981, 109.

¹⁴ AMECEA, Guidelines for the Catholic Church in Eastern Africa in the 1980s: *AFER* 16 (1974) 10.

these problems are seen by the people, and answers their needs and aspirations. The local believers then take up the challenge and start living the Gospel in the local context of their real life of everyday. They assume the responsibility of being the Church in their locality.¹⁵

For the Malawian bishop Patrick Kalilombe

[t]he Parish is a communion of basic Christian communities within the parish area, the diocese a communion of parish communions of communities – and so on up to the worldwide level. Someone has put it nicely by saying that the Church as a whole is nothing but Communion of communions.¹⁶

In 1979 the AMECEA bishops declared:

We, the Bishops of AMECEA, have spent several days together, reflecting on the progress made since 1976 in the task of building small Christian communities as a means of renewing the Church in Eastern Africa, a task which we then accepted as the pastoral priority for our times in our countries.¹⁷

In their concluding document the AMECEA bishops give an insightful description of what SCCs are:

Small Christian communities are means by which the church is brought down to the daily life and concerns of people to where they actually live. In them, the Church takes on flesh and blood in the life situations of people. In them, people are enabled to recognize the mystery of Christ among them, “Emmanuel,” God with us In them, they can truly experience the Church as a new way of being together, and it is in them that they are saved in hope.¹⁸

In the Plenary Assembly of 1979 the Kenyan bishop Raphael Ndingi Mwana a’Nzeki reflected on “Implementing AMECEA’s Pastoral Priority.”

Here, a true sense of co-responsibility and the principle of subsidiarity permeate very member of the community. Im-

¹⁵ P. KALILOMBE, An Overall View on Building Christian Communities: *AFER* 18 (1976) 264.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 272.

¹⁷ Conclusions of the Study Conference of the AMECEA Plenary 1979: *AFER* 21 (1979) 265-272, here 265.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 266.

plementations of agreed and accepted priorities, policies and duties, e.g. that of self-ministering, self-propagating and self-supporting, become not only easier but also almost spontaneous. It is in a small Christian community that the Universal Catholic Church becomes localized here and now.¹⁹

3. The Image of the “Church-as-Family”

The family is of utmost importance in African cultures and hence for African people. It is the normal and most natural African way of experiencing life as a member of a larger community. “‘I am because we are, we are, therefore I am’ is a proverb often quoted by John Mbiti. This traditional communitarian dimension of African life gives a sound basis to the task of ‘building small Christian communities’ which is the official policy of the AMECEA Bishops.”²⁰ The well-being of the community is constituent for personal well-being. For the Ghanaian theologian Gabriel Afagbegee

[t]he African has inherited a very precious gift, namely the non-compartmentalization of life into secular and sacred, or put positively, has received two very important and dynamic heritages: a dynamic spirituality, and community life. Life is seen and lived as a whole with a beautiful blending of the traditional African’s social, economic, political and religious spheres. Religion is the essence and the motivating force in the African’s life and is the element which unites all the different areas of that life The secular and sacred spheres of life which are cohesively and intrinsically inter-related to form one reality are lived in a dynamic community context.²¹

¹⁹ R. NDINGI MWANA A’NZEKI, Implementing AMECEA’s Pastoral Priority: *AFER* 21 (1979) 286-298, here 288. – “The structures of a small Christian community, to be effective and meaningful to the community, must be based and dependent on the charisms of the community, its various ministries (ordained and non-ordained) and its services to its members,” *ibid.*, 290. – Regarding leadership the bishop wrote: “The evangelical concept of authority and leadership is service to and by the community, that is the Church as the People of God. The one who serves is part and parcel of that community,” *ibid.*, 292.

²⁰ B. HEARNE, Small Christian Communities – Let’s go ahead!: *AFER* 26 (1984) 262-273, here 273; cf. G. N. GICHUHI, *The Spirituality of SCCs in Eastern Africa*, Spearhead 5, Eldoret 1985, 2.

²¹ G. AFAGBEGEE, Inculturation and Small Christian Communities: *AFER* 27 (1985) 279.

The outcome of the first African synod demonstrated that the theme of “Church-as-family” is central to the ecclesiological and pastoral image of African Bishops, “because it rests on an anthropological basis in the African context.”²²

In the two synods on Africa, in 1994 and in 2009, the African bishops underlined the importance of the African understanding of the Church as God’s Family.

Pope John Paul II wrote already in 1995 in *Ecclesia in Africa*:

Not only did the Synod speak of inculturation, but it also made use of it, taking the *Church as God’s Family* as its guiding idea for the evangelization of Africa. The Synod Fathers acknowledged it as an expression of the Church’s nature particularly appropriate for Africa. For this image emphasizes care for others, solidarity, warmth in human relationships, acceptance, dialogue and trust. The new evangelization will thus aim at *building up the Church as Family*, avoiding all ethnocentrism and excessive particularism, trying instead to encourage reconciliation and true communion between different ethnic groups, favouring solidarity and the sharing of personnel and resources among the particular Churches (EA 63).

Therefore Pope Benedict XVI could write in his post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Africae munus* of 2011:

The Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa* made its own the idea of “the Church as God’s Family,” which the Synod Fathers “acknowledged ... as an expression of the Church’s nature particularly appropriate for Africa. For this image emphasizes care for others, solidarity, warmth in human relationships, acceptance, dialogue and trust.” The Exhortation invited Christian families in Africa to become “domestic churches.”²³

A Ugandan theologian notes: “They repeated the concept several times to emphasize its importance. All reality expressed in this message must be implemented in the Church-family which must always be at

²² F. OBORJI, *La teologia Africana e l’evangelizzazione*, Roma 1998, 207. To deepen this topic I recommend reading the last chapter 7: “L’Africa e l’immagine della *Chiesa-come-famiglia*,” 207-228; see also A. E. OROBATOR, *The Church as Family. African Ecclesiology in Its Social Context*, Nairobi 2000.

²³ *Africae Munus* 7: AAS 104 (2012) 239-314; Pope Benedict XVI referred here to EA 63: AAS 88 (1996) 39-40 and EA 92: AAS 88 (1996) 57-58.

the service of the community.”²⁴ The voice of an African cardinal expresses the basic concept and the belief underlying this journey towards “the Church as God’s Family.” For Cardinal Hyacinthe Thiandoum

[t]he concept of family, which is very strong in Africa, expresses in concrete imagery the profound ecclesiological idea of the communion of believers, a fellowship of diversities of roles and persons.²⁵

We can conclude this brief reflection with the recognition that the African Church has found the proper *communio-ecclesiology* that allows the development of appropriate and relevant pastoral models, both theoretical and practical, and of ecclesial communities (SCC) of the local Churches as an authentic expression of the universal Church.²⁶

4. The Symposium of Bishops of Africa in July 1969 in Gaba

In July 1969, the Gaba Pastoral Institute hosted the first symposium of the bishops of Africa. Cardinal Paul Zoungrana,²⁷ Archbishop of Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso, during a meeting in Rome in 1968 conceived the idea of organizing a meeting of bishops who would represent all regions of Africa and together with Cardinal Laurence Rugambwa²⁸

²⁴ J. M. WALIGGO, *Africa Synod. The Church as Family of God and Small Christian Communities*, AMECEA Documentation Service – ADS, 22, n. 429 (1994) 1. Waliggo recognizes the limits of this image of the Church when he writes: “The theology of Church-as-Family is a two-edged-sword. It can be profitably used but it may also lead to benign paternalism. Before it is applied, the image of the family must be fully liberated. We should not once again end up with a pyramid structure of the Church but rather a circular one of communion. Meanwhile, the challenge is for African theologians to evaluate this theme and show how it can be positively used to create a new understanding of the African Church and Society.” See also the critique of Waliggo quoted in: OBORJI, *La teologia Africana*, 222-223; ID., *Towards a Christian Theology of African Religion*.

²⁵ Report before the interventions, ADS, 22, n. 429 (1994) 2.

²⁶ Cf. C. NYAMITI, *Ancestor-based Ecclesiology and Ministry*, in: L. MAGESA (ed.), *The Prophetic Role of the Church in Tanzania*, Spearhead 115, Eldoret 1991, 33-42.

²⁷ Paul Zoungrana was born in 1917 in Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso. He was ordained a priest on May 2, 1942 as a member of the Missionaries of Africa, became Archbishop of Ouagadougou on April 5, 1960 and the second African Cardinal on February 26, 1965; he retired on October 10, 1995 and died June 4, 2000.

²⁸ Laurence Rugambwa was born on July 12, 1912 in Bukongo in Tanzania, became the first African cardinal March 28, 1960, Archbishop of Dar-es-Salaam on December 19, 1968, and died December 8, 1997.

planned the conference. The AMECEA was responsible and offered Gaba as a place of meeting. This was organized in the days before the arrival of Pope Paul VI in Kampala, Uganda from 28 to 31 July 1969.

First of all, let us say clearly, our very being must not be conferred upon us from outside; the Gospel is a germ of life and the Church of Africa must develop itself and build itself up thanks to its own apostolic priorities.²⁹

Cardinal Zoungrana explained in his opening speech of the symposium in 1969:

Almost 3 years passed after the Council. An evolution occurred in pastoral and sociological matters leading several African and Madagascan Bishops ... to experience the need to have more co-ordination concerning precise objectives in their efforts towards an over-all pastoral view with regard to problems common to our regions

He continues saying,

that a meeting of the Presidents of the great Regional Conferences would result in the proposing of something which might satisfy this new need, i.e. of co-ordination in view of the evolution of our pastoral situation in the post-conciliar period.³⁰

Cardinal Zoungrana was aware of the general conviction of African bishops that they had a great need for a common pastoral vision to address the common problems and challenges in the region.³¹ The explicit expression of the pastoral concerns of the African bishops of the various regions of the continent was not merely accidental but providential, because it expressed very clearly the reason and the task which the bishops of AMECEA gave to their pastoral institute, founded in Uganda.

Gaba Institute wanted to overcome all forms of isolation or separation in the Churches of Eastern Africa and intended to demonstrate its ability to develop its own pastoral priorities and its model of ministry in a way that was relevant and meaningful for Africans.

The institute wanted to develop its own methodology in planning, theory and pastoral practice. The Bishops of AMECEA inaugurated their school, in the belief that the young and vital Churches in Eastern

²⁹ Paul Cardinal Zoungrana, in: *The First All-African Episcopal Symposium. A Documentary Dossier*, Gaba Pastoral Papers 7, Gaba 1969, 17.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 14.

³¹ Cf. *ibid.*, 14.

Africa were able to achieve the best results autonomously, because everything would be done in the context of African life and in the midst of the African people and above all with the African people. No prefabricated and imported theory and practice in Africa would be able to build an adequate pastoral model in this regard. The task of Gaba was the promotion of a discernment process of the pastoral reality in order to develop a more adequate and contextualized pastoral praxis and theory for the local Churches of Eastern Africa.

Pope Paul VI was present in the final section of this first symposium of the presidents of the regional conferences of Africa. He supported the necessity to have pastoral centres with a rhetorical question which actually is a supportive proposal: “how useful it will be for the African Church to possess ... centres of pastoral training.”³²

5. Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa (AMECEA)

5.1 The Beginning of AMECEA

In December 1967 the Institute was founded as Gaba Pastoral Institute of the “Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa,”³³ but the actual work began in February 1968.

The Second Vatican Council was a watershed for African Churches that allowed them to grow and enter into the transformation process from missions into authentic local Churches.

Encouraged by the Vatican II decrees they got engaged in dialogue with their own cultures, customs and their inherited African religiosity. The Council challenged – and this was even more important – the pas-

³² Ibid., 51; cf. Paul VI, Address to SECAM at Kampala (31 July 1969): AAS 61 (1969) 575. – Pope Paul VI described the task of the Church in Africa with these words: “The African Church is confronted with an immense and original undertaking; like a mother and teacher she must approach all the sons of this land of the sun; she must offer them a traditional and modern interpretation of Life; she must educate the people in the new forms of civil organization; while purifying and preserving the forms of family and community; she must give an educative impulse to your individual and social virtues: those of honesty, of sobriety, of loyalty; she must help develop every activity that promotes the public good! Especially the schools and the assistance of the poor and sick; she must help Africa towards development, towards concord, towards peace.” Ibid., 51.

³³ Cf. ADS, 9-10, n. 537 (2001) 1.

toral options of the Church in Africa and called for a shared responsibility and participation on the part of the clergy and all the faithful.³⁴

The first General Assembly of the Episcopal Conference of East Africa of 1961 had also discussed the idea of a common catechetical centre. During the Second Vatican Council in Rome this idea matured into a concrete plan to establish a Regional Pastoral Institute for the five member countries of AMECEA.

AMECEA was a vision created by the bishops of Tanzania. In 1960 they had already proposed through the Apostolic Delegate, Monsignor Guido del Mestri, to start the project with the collaboration of the bishops of the region. After the consultation and approval of the bishops of the region, the Apostolic Delegate consulted Rome which was in favour of building a structure for regional consultation. The Apostolic Delegation of Nairobi was responsible for the following countries: Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Sudan and Zambia.

The bishops of the region – most of them were in those years still of foreign origin – asked themselves how the local Churches could be prepared for the changes brought by the council and how the indigenous clergy and religious could be sufficiently prepared to assume the responsibility and leadership of the local Church.

The first meeting “was inspired by a desire to coordinate the pastoral approach of the Church in Eastern Africa as much as possible.”³⁵ The meeting was held in Dar-es-Salaam from 17 to 26 July 1961 with the theme: “The future of the Church in Africa.” Among the various topics treated at the meeting, the bishops also discussed the need for a centre for pastoral renewal and permanent formation.

The participants at this first Conference were what I would call “bridge builders.” These bridges would cross from missionary work in colonial times to evangelization within the context of an Independent Africa. They would cross into an atmosphere of evangelization and missionary work that recognizes the “signs of the times.” They would lead to forming a truly Local Church, which by virtue of Christ’s presence, the complete reality of His Church is verified in every Christian community.³⁶

³⁴ K. CIESLIKIEWICZ, *Small Christian Communities: Pastoral Priority and a Vital Force for Evangelization in the Archdiocese of Dar Es Salaam (Tanzania). An Evaluation and New Perspectives*, Dissertazione, Pont. Università Lateranense, Roma 2004, 15.

³⁵ NDINGI MWANA A’NZEKI, *Implementing AMECEA’s Pastoral Priority*, 286.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

The bishops of the five countries of Eastern Africa founded the so-called “Inter-Regional Episcopal Board in Eastern Africa” (ITEBEA). At the beginning it had no permanent structure, because ITEBEA wanted only to be a common forum to reflect pastoral themes of common interest in the region.³⁷

5.2 The Development of AMECEA from 1960 Onwards

The bishops of Tanganyika (Tanzania) proposed to collaborate with the bishops of the region. Later the name “Inter-Regional Episcopal Board in Eastern Africa” (ITEBEA) was chosen for this collaboration project. In 1961 the first plenary meeting of ITEBEA took place in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. In 1964 the second plenary meeting of ITEBEA was held in Rome, Italy. The need to structure ITEBEA led to the establishment of the General Secretariat in Nairobi, Kenya. With the approval of the first constitution the name was also changed from ITEBEA to AMECEA. In 1967 the third plenary assembly of AMECEA took place in Kampala, Uganda. In this third plenary assembly it was decided to found the Pastoral Institute of AMECEA in Gaba, Uganda.

In 1968 the following offices were established: the Office for Social Communication of AMECEA, the office for Religious Education, the Research Department at Gaba and the Gaba Publication Department. In 1969 the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) was officially founded in Kampala, Uganda. Today SECAM is a federation composed of ten regional episcopal conferences of Africa. In 1973 the publication of the AMECEA Documentation Service (ADS) for a better exchange of information, views and pastoral models in the region was initiated. The transfer of the AMECEA Pastoral Institute from Gaba in Uganda to Eldoret in Kenya occurred in 1976. The Pastoral Department of AMECEA began in 1994. In 2002 a revision of the vision, mission and mandate of AMECEA was worked out.³⁸

5.3 Vision

A Holy Spirit filled family of God, committed to Holistic Evangelization and Integral Development.³⁹

³⁷ Cf. www.amecea.org/amecea-history.htm (08-01-2014)

³⁸ See www.amecea.org/amecea-history.htm – AMECEA is a member of SECAM and is one of the ten regional conferences confederated in SECAM (08-01-2014)

³⁹ In: www.amecea.org/amecea-history (08-01-2014)

5.4 Mission

To inspire and empower God's family in the AMECEA region to be a credible and prophetic witness to Christ, by promoting unity, justice, peace, and solidarity, through:

1. Deeper evangelization, constant conversion and prayer, inculturation, ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue;
2. relevant Formation of all agents of evangelization;
3. revitalizing and continued emphasis on the role of the Small Christian Communities in evangelization;
4. preferential option for the poor, oppressed and marginalized, particularly refugees, persons affected and infected with HIV/AIDS, and internally displaced people;
5. empowering the laity and Religious men and women to play an active role in the Church and society;
6. self-reliance in personnel and finances at all levels;
7. networking, effective communication, and advocacy;
8. poverty eradication, sustainable development and relevant responses to all issues affecting God's family.⁴⁰

5.5 Mandate

The mandate of AMECEA is by its nature pastoral and includes the following aspects:

1. To make policies through the Plenary Assembly, and entrust the execution of its resolutions to the Executive Board, Secretary General (AMECEA Secretariat), and National Episcopal Conferences, in accordance with the AMECEA Statutes;
2. to inspire and facilitate a common vision;
3. to identify priority challenges in Church and society and finding common strategies to respond to them at all levels, e.g. HIV/AIDS and poverty;
4. to facilitate exchange of pastoral programmes through the AMECEA plenaries, publications, information, and pastoral visits;
5. to undertake research into areas of common interest and analysis of important data for the region;

⁴⁰ In: www.amecea.org/amecea-history (08-01-2014)

6. to promote human rights, justice and peace, freedom of religion, advocacy for the oppressed and for good governance;
7. to coordinate and make regular evaluation of its programs, institutions, and activities, and take appropriate action.⁴¹

In 1979 the AMECEA bishops recognized the fruitful outcome of their work of the first fifteen years not only in their own region, but also on a global level:

Across the bridges built by the AMECEA Bishops and their people between 1961 and 1976 comes a vital new element to enrich the lives and relationships of our people in their varied scenes of life. These bridges also bring back to the Church in Europe, America, Latin America and Oceania some of the freshness and wider vision of Christianity which they receive through contact with us.⁴²

PART TWO

The second part deals directly with the origins, development and mission of the Pastoral Institute of the AMECEA bishops.

1. The Foundation of the AMECEA Pastoral Institute (API)

1.1 The Beginning and Goal of the Pastoral Institute

“In 1964 the AMECEA bishops, while attending the Vatican Council, held their second Plenary Meeting in Rome. At that time [they] felt the need for a pastoral institute for formation, training and up-dating of both the clergy and the laity in their respective ministries in the Church of Christ – ordained and non-ordained ministries. Following that meeting in Rome, AMECEA approved and started the AMECEA Pastoral Institute.”⁴³

The first director of API was Fr. Ton Simons, a member of the Missionaries of Africa. In 1968, he began immediately with a socio-religious research project on catechists. Since its foundation in 1968 in Gaba in Uganda, the AMECEA Pastoral Institute had been engaged in developing a common university syllabus for the teaching of religion as well as

⁴¹ In: www.amecea.org/vision.htm (08-01-2014)

⁴² NDINGI MWANA A'NZEKI, *Implementing AMECEA's Pastoral Priority*, 286.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 287.

with the preparation of books for teachers and students of East African countries. A brochure from 1969 described Gaba as an international institute for catechetical and pastoral studies and research in Central and Eastern Africa. It is also mentioned that Gaba follows the example of the East Asian Pastoral Institute (EAPI) of the Jesuits in Manila, Philippines.

The so-called Gaba Pastoral Institute offered a course of ten months with catechetical and pastoral studies. The five permanent members of staff worked closely together to offer a basic course in Pastoral and Biblical Theology, Scripture studies, social anthropology, sociology of African religions, liturgical and catechetical methodology. Various specialists contributed as guest lecturers to the enrichment of the courses.

The programme and method of these early years really reveals the influence of the East Asian Pastoral Institute, which served as the primary model for API. Fr. Johannes Hofinger SJ,⁴⁴ the founder of the first International Congress of missionary catechesis and of the EAPI in Manila, was not only a gifted organizer but also a great visionary of catechetical and pastoral renewal.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Fr. Johannes Hofinger SJ (1905-1984). The Austrian Jesuit was a disciple of Fr. Josef Andreas Jungmann SJ (1889-1975). With their Pastoral writings Jungmann and Hofinger influenced the reform of the Second Vatican Council. The most important publications of Hofinger are: J. HOFINGER/J. KELLNER (Hg.), *Liturgische Erneuerung in der Weltmission*, Innsbruck 1957; J. HOFINGER (Hg.), *Mission und Liturgie. Der Kongress von Nimwegen 1959*, Mainz 1960; ID. (ed.), *Teaching All Nations. A Symposium of Modern Catechetics*, Freiburg 1961; ID./T. STONE (eds.), *Pastoral Catechetics*, New York 1964; ID., *Evangelisation and Catechesis. Are We Really Proclaiming the Gospel?*, New York 1976; cf. P. STEFFEN, Hofinger, Johannes SJ (1905-1984). *Missionswissenschaftler, Katechetiker u. Religionspädagoge: BBKL* 34 (2013) 584-596.

⁴⁵ Cf. J. HOFINGER (ed.), *Katechetik heute. Grundsätze und Anregungen zur Erneuerung der Katechese in Mission und Heimat. Referate und Ereignisse der internationalen Studienwoche über Missionskatechese in Eichstätt*, Freiburg-Basel-Wien 1961; GREGORIUS OFMCap, Eine kritische Betrachtung der internationalen Studienwoche über Missionskatechese: *NZM* 16 (1960) 300-303; International Study Week on Mission Catechetics Eichstätt, 21-28 July 1960: *AFER* 2 (1960) 295-301; K. MÜLLER, Die missionskatechetische Studienwoche in Eichstätt: *ZMR* 44 (1960) 64-65; J. SPAE, Catechetics at Eichstätt: *Japan Missionary Bulletin* 14 (1960) 506-511; L. WIEDENMANN, International Study Week on Catechetics (Eichstätt): *Asia* 12 (1960) 812-823; M. WARREN (ed.), *Sourcebook for Modern Catechetics*, Winona, MN 1992 – especially Part One: Historical Studies. Section A: International Catechetical Study Weeks: Documentation and Interpretation, 29-109; cf. P. STEFFEN, Places and Models of Formation for Mission and Ministry. Pastoral Institutes in Africa and Asia: *Verbum SVD* 51 (2010) 423-438.

The participants in this annual course also received religious education training in primary and secondary schools during a work placement at nearby schools.

The purpose of the course, which was composed of men and women, lay people, priests and religious, was the academic preparation of the candidates in order to take over leading positions in their dioceses, such as the direction of the centres of catechist training, the organization of religious instruction in schools and teacher training colleges, and in the parish.

In addition, the students were trained to produce text books and audio-visual aids for religious instruction. The institute required the participants to have adequate experience in pastoral ministry and catechetics. The institute was always aiming to implement the pastoral renewal visions expressed by the Second Vatican Council, in the context of African society and culture. The course aimed at personal conversion and renewal. The community dimension always played an integral part in the methodology and pedagogy during the courses.

API had male and female staff members and in 1969 the position of Vice-President was given to a Maryknoll missionary sister from the United States. In addition to the above mentioned courses, the institute offered for some years a centre of information and research for all pastoral workers of the AMECEA countries.⁴⁶

The AMECEA Pastoral Institute was always closely connected with the Secretariat⁴⁷ of the bishops of AMECEA. The Secretary General of AMECEA played a very important role in the institute in this regard. Here it is sufficient to mention the constructive support Fr. Peter Lwaminda offered to Gaba in the 1990s.

The emerging reality of the Church in Africa can be described and understood by explaining two characteristic shifts that took place after the Second Vatican Council:

- a) from *plantatio ecclesiae* (church planting) to the local Church;
- b) from *salus animarum* (soul saving) to incarnation of the faith.⁴⁸

The foundation of AMECEA expresses this change in two key words: localization and inculturation. From the beginning AMECEA wanted to

⁴⁶ Cf. Venue Gaba in: *The First All-African Episcopal Symposium. A Documentary Dossier*, Gaba Pastoral Papers 7, Gaba 1969, 2-3.

⁴⁷ Father Peter Lwaminda from Zambia was the secretary of AMECEA from 1989 until 1999. He promoted the prophetic role of the Church in Africa. He was convinced that a deeper evangelization must begin with the transformation of all pastoral workers and of all the faithful in the Church community.

⁴⁸ CIESLIKIEWICZ, op. cit., 15.

promote the mission of the Church in Africa based on an authentic African theology and practice.

The institute was immediately divided into three branches that complement one another:

1. The ministry of education and training (formation) of African Church workers;
2. research work at the service of contextualization and inculturation of the Christian faith in local AMECEA Churches;
3. the “Gaba Publications” at the service of African Theology.

1.2 Pastoral Education and Formation of API

The main work of the Institute was the annual course held since 1968, with approximately 30-40 students per year. By 1986, 727 people had completed the course. In these formation and pastoral renewal courses different disciplines were integrated. The lecturers wanted to include the rich life experiences of the participants, who usually were between 30 and 50 years old.

For that purpose intercultural faith-sharing became a part of the learning approach practised at Gaba. This happened even more easily because Africans and non-Africans, clergy and laity, men and women were together in the course, and they studied and lived together. The course started from an idea of unity, was experienced as a kind of school of faith and life for all those who took part, whether they were teachers or course participants. In the period from 1972 to 1985 the institute was headed by the White Father J. C. Lemay. In 1985, with Fr. Alphonse Ndekimo, there was for the first time an African to assume the overall direction of API.⁴⁹ The courses were not only attended by pastoral workers of the AMECEA countries, but also by participants from other countries, e.g. South Africa, Botswana, Ghana, Togo and Nigeria. In this way Gaba reflected a Church in its variety, vitality and creativity.

The participants learned how to push the boundaries of cultural, national and linguistic borders in order to communicate cross-culturally as brothers and sisters.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the bishops asked the lecturers – three came from Uganda, two from Kenya, one each from Tanzania, Nigeria and Germany – to find ways to deepen the participants’ personal encounter with Christ through prayer and Bible meditations. The

⁴⁹ P. VONCK, The AMECEA Pastoral Institute (Gaba): *AFER* 28 (1986) 45-46; B. HEARNE, Teaching Theology as Praxis and Experience: *Lumen Vitae* 37 (1982) 7-25, in particular 19-21.

keyword of the method used at Gaba was “participation” in all pastoral and spiritual activities. Gaba practiced a participatory communication approach where the experience of receiving and giving, of listening and sharing, the way to communicate and exchange their own life experiences formed an essential part of an effective and proven art of participatory communication.

An analysis made by the participants in 1993 included the following points:

- We still need the experience of a personal encounter with God;
- many Catholics, including pastoral workers, are easily trapped in ethnocentric mechanisms, which often explode into ethnic conflicts;
- the almost absent appreciation and understanding of our African cultures and our languages “suffocates” many contributions in the area of inculturation and often hinders effective evangelization;
- the culture of death dominates that of life;
- there is a need for effective catechetical and religious education, which requires adequate preparation of catechists and religious educators;
- the lack of a pastoral plan in the diocese and at parish level hinders effective pastoral activities, especially collaborative ministries;
- the introduction of new methods is often viewed with skepticism and not appreciated, although the Biblical Apostolate is expanding; there is a lack of enthusiasm for spreading God’s word and for evangelization.

The participants understood their personal responsibility to

- deepen their personal relationship with God;
- strengthen their being witnesses of faith as Christians;
- intensify and nurture their collaboration with bishops and other pastoral workers and parishioners through programmes of pastoral and personal renewal;
- become aware of the faith in order to contribute generously to a more self-confident Church;
- transmit Christian values to young people;
- support the first pastoral priority of AMECEA since 1973: the Small Christian Communities, with a particular emphasis on the biblical apostolate;

- promote an understanding of their African culture;
- encourage interreligious and intercultural dialogue;
- advance the rights of women, since women are recognized as factors of stability in the family, in the church and in society.

The participants in the Gaba Institute made the following decisions:

- to intensify contemplative life in the parishes with the support of the bishops and pastoral leaders;
- to found and strengthen the structures of evangelization at the diocesan and parish level;
- that the ongoing formation of pastoral workers should not be an option;
- pastoral planning should be an outstanding characteristic, since financial support for pastoral projects depends on such an approach;
- since the family is the nucleus of the Church, there should be pastoral programs for young couples such as marriage encounter, marriage and family counselling, and special workshops and seminars for young couples;
- the use of the mass media seemed to be indispensable and must be accessible for evangelization;
- ongoing formation in religious houses and seminars at diocesan level should be re-evaluated in order to effectively equip priests and religious for their ministry.

As already mentioned, the African Synod of 1994 was another step forward for the Church in Africa and took hold everywhere. Many people and the API were involved in various capacities in facilitating and promoting the understanding of the Church's nature as Church-Family. In this regard, the API offered special workshops, seminars, etc. during the 1990s.

Since the mid-90s the pastoral institute found itself in a period of transition, due to changes of leadership at Gaba. The numbers of participants in the annual courses decreased and new efforts were made to open the institute to a wider public through short courses and seminars.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ I am very grateful for the information that I received from Sister Walburga Ballhausen in a letter to the author on 20 July 2006. Sr. Walburga taught from 1992 until 1993 in API-Gaba.

1.3 The Research Department of API Gaba

The AMECEA Research Department was founded in 1968 as an integral part of the work of the Pastoral Institute. "The Department was seen as a service to the bishops of AMECEA. Its stated aim was: To coordinate and to research on topics of important pastoral significance, in order to assess present pastoral situations and help to determine possible lines of pastoral action."⁵¹

The direction of the research department passed from Fr. Aylward Shorter (1968-1977) to Fr. John Mutiso-Mbinda (1977-1982, later Secretary General of AMECEA) and then to Fr. Alex Chima. The department wanted to study social issues and changes in social structures and what such issues and changes mean for the pastoral ministry of the Church. In this way the department wanted to establish a relationship with the pastoral ministry and to gain guidelines and ways for effective spiritual assistance. The first research project was focused on catechists and lasted from 1968 to 1971. The research touched on various aspects of the life and the work of catechists with the goal to increase the effectiveness of their service. A subsequent research project had as its content "Couple and Family" and another "Ecumenism in East Africa." The expectations expressed were the same. The goal of the research was to achieve a more effective and renewed spiritual assistance. The fourth research project sought to focus on the new understanding of priestly life, priestly ministry and spirituality.

On the basis of those research projects the content and aim of priestly ministry could be better defined. Especially the pastoral ministry of priests in regard to the establishment and promotion of Small Christian Communities had become clearer. The bishops of East Africa had given priority to the SCCs, because they saw in them the best way to develop a practical and contextual theology corresponding to the vision of the Second Vatican Council.

Since 1977 the research department was headed by an African priest who also taught anthropology at Gaba.⁵² With the Gaba Institute the

⁵¹ Quoted in: A. CHIMA, AMECEA Research Department: *AFER* 28 (1986) 47.

⁵² See CHIMA, AMECEA Research Department, 47; the following works of A. Shorter are based on the results of his research at the Gaba Institute: A. SHORTER, *African Culture and the Christian Church. An Introduction to Social and Pastoral Anthropology*, London-Dublin 1973; ID. *The African Contribution to the World Church*, Gaba-Kampala 1973; ID./E. KATAZA, *Missionaries to Yourselves. African Catechetics Today*, London 1972; this book is based on a three-year research project in AMECEA countries and is one of the more detailed reports on catechists. See the discussion of this work in *ZMR* 58 (1974) 304; see also ID., *Towards a Theology of Inculturation*, London 1988.

idea of a Regional Pastoral Institute for the Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa had become a reality. In the first twenty years of its existence an intensive exchange and collaboration between the local and foreign Church workers was achieved for the benefit of the whole society and the local Churches in the countries of Eastern Africa.

1.4 The AMECEA Gaba Publications

API was from the beginning engaged in publication work in order to spread its vision and thoughts in articles and booklets to pastoral workers of the whole AMECEA region and beyond to African and non-African countries worldwide. Similar pastoral institutes were very interested in the approach and results of this new pastoral institute. In those years there was no fax nor Internet, so the press was the most important medium to spread the ideas and vision of Gaba worldwide.

The API publications reveal clearly the main target, in other words the pastoral priorities of AMECEA. Among the various themes they treated, the main topics were: the Small Christian Communities, dialogue with the culture and African traditional religions and Islam, the need for an adequate and sustainable development, social justice and liberation, the family and marriage in African and Christian traditions, the formation of the laity, African religious and secular clergy, holistic evangelization and inculturation, African ecclesiology of the Church as Family of God, advocacy of human rights – particularly women, children and homeless people – in the context of African reality, and the modern means of communication.

2. Publications

The African Ecclesial Review (AFER) is one of the best-known theological journals in Africa and in the non-Western world. In addition, API publishes the well renowned “Spearhead Series” and the so-called “Reprints.” The latter are reprints of important articles of a pastoral and missiological nature which were previously published in international journals, which are often not available to a wider African audience. The readership of API publications is found in more than forty other countries worldwide.⁵³ The publications of Gaba are an important source of various pastorally significant study materials of and for the Churches in Africa. Questions of inculturation and the edification of *Small Christian Communities* are of outstanding importance in those

⁵³ See F. R. RWEHIKIZA, API Gaba Publications: *AFER* 26 (1984) 63-66.

publications.⁵⁴ With its publications Gaba follows the same goal the API courses have: personal and pastoral renewal of the pastoral workers.

Therefore, the following issues are the key points of the API publications: better and more meaningful ways and methods of religious education, pastoral criteria for the development of SCCs, the need for inculturation of Christianity in Africa, efforts for the unity of Christians and the dialogue with Islam and traditional African religions, sustainable development projects and integral human liberation policies, justice and peace promotion, and the modern means of communication of the Word of God.⁵⁵

2.1 African Ecclesial Review – AFER

The White Fathers, who had founded the journal “African Ecclesial Review” in the major seminary of Katigondo in Uganda in 1959, agreed in 1967 that the editorial office of AFER be taken over by API. Originally AFER was published six times a year. Now there are only four issues annually. AFER reached its 50th volume in 2008. In the five decades of its publication many of its articles of a theological, pastoral and social nature have gained a high reputation in Africa and beyond. It has become the main platform for communicating theological and pastoral issues of African authors.⁵⁶ With AFER the Pastoral Institute wanted to contribute to an efficient and adequate way of communicating the Word of God in Africa. This should be achieved through discussion, reflection and information, and with available documentation materials. AFER wanted to offer those publications to all people active in apostolic work in Africa as a platform for exchange of views and experiences. The overall purpose of the publication is therefore more practical and pastoral.⁵⁷ As already mentioned, the promotion of Small Christian Communities has been of outstanding significance for API publications since the 1970s.

⁵⁴ See *AFER* 28 (1986) 1.

⁵⁵ See RWEHIKIZA, API Gaba Publications, 63.

⁵⁶ “It is a scholarly journal distinguished for its open discussion and unbiased commitment to pastoral issues affecting the church. It aims at making Christ’s message relevant through disseminating reflection, discussion, informed views, documentation and pastoral ministry. AFER provides a medium of publication for writers to share ideas on issues affecting the church in Africa,” www.amecea.org/gaba-publications.htm (02-02-2014)

⁵⁷ See *AFER* 28 (1986) 1.

2.2 Spearhead

“Spearhead Monograph Series” or “Gaba Pastoral Papers” as they were called in the early years from 1968 until 1975, have their origin in the essays of lecturers and students of Gaba. In the following years more and more professionals from outside published their studies in the series that was increasingly known and appreciated in the world of scholars and pastoral workers. Many of the published research papers inspired similar studies abroad. It can be said that much research, carried out between the 1970s and 1980s, was considered avant-garde, as e.g. the publications of A. Shorter in *Pastoral Anthropology*.⁵⁸

The *Spearhead series* of API also inspired research and publications of the Melanesian Institute in Papua New Guinea, which often was inspired by API projects, for example the Melanesian Institute marriage research project with its special anthropological, sociological and theological perspectives. Therefore it can be said that API had pioneered in new research fields which made its research projects a model for other pastoral institutes worldwide. Today, the Spearhead series no longer holds a monopoly in the field of pastoral and theological publications in East Africa. The Paulines Publications Africa founded in 1980 in Uganda and transferred to Nairobi, Kenya, in 1985 has become in fact the most important publishing house for theological and church-related topics in Anglophone Africa, so that e.g. “Tangaza Occasional Papers,” from Tangaza College in Nairobi, is published by them.

But the Spearhead Monograph Series continues to make a significant contribution to the entire African continent with issues on theology, pastoral formation, development and social justice themes. The intention of this apostolate is to serve the African people with a theology and practice of evangelization and with the promotion of inculturation of the Christian faith in African communities.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ “Gaba Pastoral Papers”: A. SHORTER, *Essays in Pastoral Anthropology*, Spearhead No. 5, Gaba 1969; ID., *The African Contribution to the World Church and Other Essays*, Spearhead No. 22, Gaba 1972; *Christian Family Power in Africa*, Spearhead No. 48, Gaba ²1977.

⁵⁹ In 2005, the series reached number 175, but this does not mean that 175 books or titles were published. The number 173-175 was a so-called triple publication; this practice reduced the number of published monographs: F. A. OBORJI, *Towards a Christian Theology of African Religion*, or J. B. KATO, *Awakening the Laity. Ugandan Pastoral Approach*, Spearhead No. 161-163, Eldoret 2003.

3. The Tasks of API

3.1 At the Service of a Contextualized Practical Theology

The pastoral institutes serve primarily as a place where a variety of perspectives encounter each other, as the religious experience of particular Christian communities is put in relation to that of the people of God as it is preserved in Sacred Scripture and the Tradition of the Church, as it is kept in the Church's magisterium. Christians want to understand their life experiences in all aspects: the social, economic, political, cultural-religious and spiritual perspectives; and they want to make them a part of their Christian world view or their Christian conception of the world. The Christian community is the first place where this can and should be achieved.

3.2 The Development of an Appropriate Methodology and Didactics⁶⁰

In the beginning, the courses followed a very scholastic methodology and didactics, where teaching classes and giving homework were the centre of all activities. The history of Gaba is also the history of a theological development. All the studies were composed of several basic courses in theology, exegesis, anthropology and catechetics. The emphasis was on biblical pastoral ministry and catechetics. The orientation was purely academic with lessons and exams that filled the school year. When the institute received the task of developing a syllabus for religious education for secondary schools in East Africa, the main method of studying was stress on learning for life. This choice also influenced the study of theology. After a period of giving only theological inputs Gaba developed a new approach based more on pastoral reflection on practical issues.

In 1975 when the institute moved from Uganda to Eldoret in Kenya courses could not be given for one year. The staff had the chance to use this "free period" to evaluate the methodology and find a new way to integrate the individual disciplines. The outcome of the joint research on new ways of doing theology was the annual course that became the heart of Gaba since 1977.

So even for the Gaba Pastoral Institute the starting point for all forms of reflection and for the learning process is the personal life and life experience. The educational objective is not only academic study

⁶⁰ My main source for this chapter is the article of Sister M. SCHOLZ, *Das AMECEA Pastoral Institut. Ort des Theologisierens und Geburtsstätte neuer Wege der Kirche: Ordensnachrichten* 21 (1982) 336-342.

with required exams and papers, but perhaps even more the successful integration and fruitful participation of a course participant in the Christian community life. With the active participation of its members the Christian community is a primary place of theological reflection. The most important task of all course participants is holistic renewal, which includes spiritual and intellectual healing and reconciliation with God, oneself, and the other in order to renew their own vocation and call for ministry.

Out of various individual courses Gaba developed an integrated course in which the different disciplines were all focused on a common theme. To accomplish this, the lessons of the different lecturers were prepared together with a consensus on the content. The teachers elaborated additional elements of the various courses to focus all aspects on the main theme.

The integration also included the active participation of all teachers in the various courses. The participation, criticism and support of the course participants have always been essential to the methodology of the courses because the proposals and ideas and especially their pastoral context influenced the content of the subject. The journey towards an integration of the study material into that new approach was not easy and took time, but at the end it was appreciated by the participants as an essential part of their Gaba experience.

The teaching approach of the courses thus compensated for the lack of formal education in the major seminaries. The priests often complained that the theological knowledge they had received was too fragmented and that they had studied a lot, but with little integration of the various contents into a comprehensible common perspective, and thus they did not receive the necessary orientation for their pastoral ministry in the everyday life of the people.

There was little or no relationship between the content studied and their own lives, including the pastoral service of priests and personal questions. Themes such as justice and structural change in the socio-political context have often been largely ignored. Too often the lessons communicated only information to learn. The teachers used the pre-formulated arguments and so modern pedagogical methods were not practiced. In the seminaries the African context of African life was largely ignored and theology was taught as an independent factor without any relevant connection to the country and the customs and traditions of the people. These and other experiences of training places inspired the attempt to teach a theology based on human experience and a life-oriented theology that is also acknowledging the insights of human sciences. God reveals Himself in the "humanum," therefore theology must know all the human aspects of life in order to serve human

beings on their way to the fullness of salvation in God. The concrete human person is the ordinary way of salvation.

The annual Gaba course is based on knowledge gained during the long years of experience with the participants. According to M. Scholz four elements can be distinguished:

1. Course participants study theology in the context of a vital Christian community. The Christian community becomes the priority of the lecturers and participants. So the participants form groups of eight to ten members within the larger community. In all of these grass-roots groups a teacher plays the role of “facilitator,” but other members of the house administration staff are part of these groups also. The groups share and reflect, fulfil their pastoral duties, prepare the liturgy, study, celebrate and have recreation together. In the basic group each member is affirmed, supported and promoted, but also challenged in his behaviour, attitudes, and thoughts and in his practical doings. The groups pray together and learn to articulate their own religious experiences and they learn to work together. In a word, they learn teamwork, the ability to work together, an approach seldom practiced which will be very useful for pastoral work and projects. The teamwork of lecturers is often mentioned as inspiring and it proves that teamwork is not only possible but also fruitful. Study groups with faculty members and participants are composed of men and women, priests, religious and lay people who form a unique community with each other. One can imagine that this composition offers a unique opportunity to develop fraternal bonds of trust and mutual respect. API is for all an experience of communion beyond their national and cultural origins.
2. The programme of lectures is organized thematically. Dogmatic theology, Christology, Ethics, Ecclesiology, etc. All themes are studied from a theological, anthropological, catechetical and communicative perspective, so that they complement each other. The method of study is a combination of work and group reflection. In addition, two or three weeks of lessons in a seminary are offered where particular themes can be explored and deepened, and finally there are the weeks of workshops in practical work or ministry.

3. All themes begin with a personal reflection. Specific questions help them to become aware of their own life experiences and to connect these experiences to theological themes. The questions are specific and personal and therefore they are treated and resolved in the basic groups. This method allows the development of deep relationships, where each one learns without special effort to listen and to be open-minded. This experience encourages the participants to use the same approach in their own parish and thus build the community. Working in groups is the method of study, learning and conversion. At the end of a thematic cycle the group makes an assessment of its learning experience, where the new things learned and experienced are reflected. Even this is part of the learning process.
4. The African context is taken seriously in all its cultural, political, economic aspects. This context is used in all disciplines as a starting point and as a framework for pastoral reflection. The traditional symbols and rituals are part of the liturgical and catechetical work. Myths, fables, songs and proverbs are understood as human experiences that contain a base for theological reflection that can be of great help if it is connected to Christian theology. The meaning of community in African life helps them to understand the nature of the Church. The various traditional ministries of the community, the ministry of healing, of helping and decision making, invite them to create new ministries in the Christian community. The African context has to be studied also from the socio-political point of view. Therefore invited specialists conduct socio-economic workshops. There are seminars offered at national and regional levels, which aim to connect theological themes with the socio-political situation of the country. Some pastoral programmes are intended to remove a defect in society, e.g. in the field of ethics Gaba offers rehabilitation courses for people affected by traumatic experiences as was the case in Uganda or Rwanda. Some courses aim to build up a moral consciousness against corruption or exploitation. Moral formation is intended to help individuals and communities to recognize sinfulness as an experience of a person, a society and of an entire nation.

Inhumane conditions, injustice, exploitation, dysfunctional administration and political systems, all of these are issues that need to be addressed pastorally in the context of ministry formation. It requires a formation that can make Christians aware and animate them, so that they are able to counteract those situations and can free themselves from all forms of oppression and slavery. Obviously, the liberation from sin has a much more existential dimension that only the social, economic and political dimension can reveal. Participants learn to recognize very concrete steps for Christian behaviour and can conceive an existential change, which they will put into practice in their countries of origin. So the theological aspects can be connected to African life and be applied to everyday life. Practical or pastoral theology is bound to human life and daily life experience. This practical theology walks with the people and knows the real challenges; therefore it can develop appropriate, relevant and meaningful responses.

The pastoral experience teaches them also that all pastoral approaches need to mature and grow. Without a permanent process of discernment which includes corrections and change, no improvement of a pastoral model of building up a mature Christian community can be achieved.⁶¹

3.3 A New Path

API wanted to develop a practical theology that meets the needs of the people in East Africa, which means it aimed at constructing a contextualized theology. In this method, theology and practice are two interrelated realities. The influence of the institute and its faculty is also found in the pastoral programmes of local Churches in the AMECEA region. The Gaba lecturers have often accompanied the bishops to Roman synods and they were consultants to the bishops at the Plenary Assemblies of AMECEA, which are held every three years.

The core of practical African theology can be expressed with two terms that characterize African life. Both can be considered as new ways of the African Church, and both can indicate the path of inculturation of the Christian faith in African life on all its levels. These are the words integration and community.⁶²

⁶¹ SCHOLZ, Das AMECEA Pastoral Institut, 339-340.

⁶² Ibid., 341.

3.4 Integration

The African vision of the world expresses the total integration of all dimensions of life. We can imagine a stone falling into water. The stone creates many small, expanding waves. In a similar way the African includes the world. The Supreme Being at the centre of activity is the origin of all that lives and exists. Its existence is dynamic, constantly falling and always producing new ripples. All life has its origin in Him, is inseparably connected to Him. There is a hierarchy in the order of creation.

The first circle belongs to the ancestors, the dead who are “living.” The second circle belongs to the people not yet born. The third circle belongs to all living things and to the animals as our neighbours, then come the plants and then the stones. As these waves expand into more circles and mingle in the water, so every order of life or project of life is part of the lives of others. The ancestors are involved in the lives of the living and nature. All events and every human and divine act are experienced and articulated in the vision of life. The integration of all things towards a centre and between them is a spontaneous outcome of this way of understanding the world. The oral tradition most clearly expresses this view of the world. Storytelling is the best African way of doing theology (theologizing): the narrator is at the service of others and creates a common understanding in and of the community, an act that unites, and all understand the common origin and common future, in which the human experiences are understood as divine revelation.

Christian theology intervenes precisely at this point, when it integrates all things and all human life towards a transparent centre. The centre is the revelation of the mystery of the love of God which is given free in Jesus Christ.

This gift is objective, but it is always subjectively lived in human history. Therefore the history of the concrete human person has to be taken seriously. Life reality is given precedence over theory and speculation in the Gaba method. In simple words one can say that the essence of the act of theologizing is the way they live and how they express their creativity and knowledge, their love, hope and faith. That is the way they can tell their personal and common story and the way they put it in harmony with the story of Jesus.

In this process they connect their personal history with that of the people of God in its long history of salvation until they can re-discover God’s presence among them. The living God is present in their history, which in turn is part of his story. This process creates a total vision of life that allows them to put their attention towards the world and towards all people. Theologizing leads to communication and communion,

hence, also to the transformation of the world and of humanity. The attempt of integration as a method of learning and practice naturally has its consequences. It requires an absolute frankness and respect for all human situations and it requires staying in dialogue with life.⁶³

3.5 Community

Integration is a term that refers to life, to human history. Community refers to the way we live our history. It is the place where we tell ourselves and where we hear the story of God among us. Despite the growing individualism that spreads with urbanization and industrialization in Africa, obligations to the community are still taken seriously but they are limited nowadays to the extended family. The Christian community exceeds the limits of family and constructs a new social reality: the people of God which becomes the family of God. Course participants learn through their own experiences how they can build a community. They are made aware of all the elements and attitudes that hinder the process of community growth. That makes them increasingly aware of their role and they can appreciate the contribution of others and of the whole community as the primary agent of the evangelizing mission of the Church. They also learn through mistakes they made, through their common discernment and evaluation. They learn intercultural collaboration and that makes them feel united in the Church as a family of God that knows how to unite people of different linguistic, ethnic, and social backgrounds. The Church as family of God is the only place in modern society that possesses this ability. Almost *en passant* at Gaba they learn leadership skills, how to animate groups, how to communicate effectively, how to evaluate and how to plan. In this way unexpected talents and abilities are discovered among the participants and in the staff. A religious experience made in the community – where Christ is present – is the core of Christian African life.⁶⁴

In 1999 the executive committee of AMECEA instructed a team of experts and theologians to assess the work and method of the API. The

⁶³ Cf. *ibid.*, 341-342.

⁶⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 342. – In 2001, the community life of the staff was described as: “Our Community life at the Institute is a concrete way of living out a vital aspect of the mystery of the Church as rediscovered by Vatican Council II. This same idea was echoed by the recent African Synod, which has further developed the model of the Church as a ‘Family of God.’ In order to experience fully God’s call to communion (Koinonia), the API community of Facilitators and Participants forms itself into Small Ecclesial Communities (SECs). This provides an opportunity for personal growth, study, research, reflection, prayer and celebration.” In: AMECEA Pastoral Institute with a New Face, ADS 9-10, No. 537 (2001) 2. The author is not mentioned.

result was a renewed approach and methodology that focuses more on current pastoral needs and practical skills in ministry.⁶⁵

The new objectives were:

- Provide pastoral, practical and modern leadership skills, which are relevant in today's democratising culture.
- Enhance critical thinking and encourage desire for positive change and promotion of human rights and dignity.
- Foster spiritual renewal and deep personal witness to the Gospel, as well as human formation and growth.
- Promote effective communication in areas of liturgy, inculturation, Biblical apostolate, and religious education.
- Provide pastoral opportunities and skills in family, youth and destitute children apostolate and care of those infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS.
- Foster an integral, holistic development in evangelization, i.e. the development of human beings as body, mind and soul.
- Enhance self-reliance and sustainability in all aspects of the Church and ministry.
- Promote among participants a strong spirit of teamwork that should cover all necessary ministries in their apostolate.

API has undergone various stages of growth, adaptation and change. Therefore it can be said that all these changes have helped to realize the true purpose of the institute. And this was in accordance with the goal the founding fathers had set themselves. There is a thread in its history that unites all its phases: the development of a theory and practice which is authentically Christian and African.

4. The Historical Development of the Pastoral Institute of Gaba

4.1 From 1967 until 1976, the Year of Transfer to Eldoret, Kenya

The idea of further studies in cultural anthropology at the service of a more adequate missionary pastoral care was at the centre of the vision the missionaries had in mind. At the same time they wanted to provide updated and contextualized training for the new missionaries and priests, religious and laity of the East African countries.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

The methodology and practice of education in the early years of the foundation had been designed and implemented by the missionaries, especially the Missionaries of Africa, but the Mill Hill and Maryknoll Missionaries also contributed a lot to reach that goal during the foundation years of API.

With the break in the year of transfer the first phase of the Gaba Pastoral Institute was completed. The knowledge of anthropology, received from Father Aylward Shorter,⁶⁶ certainly has left a particular impact in the institute's curriculum which can be best defined as a pastoral anthropological approach.

4.2 From 1977 to 1985

There were no courses taught in 1977, the year the Pastoral Institute was transferred from Gaba in Uganda to Eldoret in Kenya. The staff used the year to evaluate and discern the method used in previous years.

The joint investigation of the staff led to the introduction of an annual course of nine months. This annual course has remained the core of the institute since 1977. The formation of priests, religious and laity of the AMECEA member Churches since then has become the main task of API. The management remained in the hands of foreign missionaries, who prepared the first indigenous collaborators. The era ended in 1985 when an African priest took over the guidance of API from expatriate missionaries.

In the second phase the teaching and the whole work of the institute focused on the promotion of Small Christian Communities as the main instrument for inculturating the Christian faith and ecclesial structures into the life context of African people and communities. One cannot imagine the outcome of this phase without A. Shorter's contribution who conducted with his team various field studies to investigate the reality of African life using sociological and anthropological methods. All this research work was done to develop contextualized methods of ministry and a contextualized African Pastoral theology.

4.3 From 1986 to 2006

The management of the institute was handed over to the African clergy together with the progressive takeover of all of the teaching and administration positions. And the department of anthropological, socio-economic and pastoral research changed its form. The transition from European to African leadership lasted a few years. At first this caused

⁶⁶ Fr. Aylward Shorter, born in 1932 in England, a member of the Missionaries of Africa, began to teach at Gaba Institute in 1968.

some interruptions, for example in the department of publications, but over the years an efficient administration system was developed. The Tanzanian priest Fr. Alfonse Ndekimo became the first African director from 1986 until 1992. During this period an executive committee chaired by the local bishop of Eldoret was established. The Kenyan priest Fr. Joseph Gatamu was made the second African director from 1993 until 1995. From 1996 to 2001, Fr. Joseph Kato from the Archdiocese of Kampala in Uganda administered the institute as director.

From 2001 until today, Fr. Benjamin Kiriswa leads the institute as its fourth African director. The contribution of African religious congregations to the Pastoral Institute should not be forgotten. Sister M. Joseph Therese Agbasiere taught anthropology at Gaba⁶⁷ and Sr. Agata Radoli was the editor of AFER from 1992 to 2000.

4.4 The Staff of the Pastoral Institute Gaba

During the first sixteen years the staff and administration were made up of foreign missionaries. Especially the Missionaries of Africa, the Maryknoll Missionaries, the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, but also the Consolata and Mill Hill missionaries generously offered staff for the Gaba Pastoral Institute.

From the beginning the pastoral approach included the human sciences for the study of African reality, especially cultural anthropology and sociology were used for this purpose. Also the pastoral theology taught at Gaba, based on an interdisciplinary approach, played a central role in the Pastoral Institute.

The Irish Spiritan priest Fr. Brian Hearne for example, taught Pastoral Theology and Liturgy at Gaba for twelve years from 1972 until 1984; he was also the editor of AFER from 1976 to 1984 and a very much appreciated councilor of the bishops. During these years he published a considerable number of articles for AFER and books in the Spearhead series.⁶⁸

African sisters soon took over appropriate positions in the institute. After the changes of 1986 almost all the positions were in the hands of African diocesan clergy and African sisters, so they were able to demonstrate their capability to conduct the institute. It gave them especially the chance of expressing a more African perspective of ministry and pastoral theology. In summary it can be said that the AMECEA Pastoral Institute was able to

⁶⁷ Sister M. Joseph Therese Agbasiere in 1953 entered the Missionary Congregation of the "Holy Rosary Sisters" as the first African woman; a congregation founded in 1922 in Ireland; she died in 2001.

⁶⁸ See B. HEARNE, Mission, Ecumenism and Fundamentalism: *AFER* 37 (1995) 105-113.

smoothly undergo the transition period of a pastoral institute run by foreign missionaries to one run by African priests, religious and laity. In this development API expressed its ability to promote the inculturation process, in order to serve better the people(s) of Eastern Africa.

In 2008 the Bishops of AMECEA incorporated the Pastoral Institute into the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA).⁶⁹ This incorporation changed the typical character of the Pastoral Institute quite a bit as well as the advantages which were part of this kind of training and formation centre at the service of the local churches in Eastern Africa. On the other hand it brought certain new possibilities to the AMECEA Pastoral Institute, which is now able to offer three Diploma courses. But what is perhaps most important, it guarantees an assured future for the AMECEA Pastoral Institute for API's mission in Eastern Africa.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the Pastoral Institute of the Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa was able to implement the vision of a Church of communion, and has found a way to give adequate and updated training to priests, religious and, above all, to the laity.

The contribution API made especially to the process of inculturation and contextualization of theology should not be underestimated.

This chapter finishes with an observation of an African theologian which shows the work of the Pastoral Institute Gaba:

If the Church in Africa, in its effort of evangelization, had paid little attention to the laity in the past, preferring to focus more on training local priests, today she is called to demonstrate greater willingness in the formation of a mature and responsible laity, ready to engage itself in the pastoral activities of the local Church.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ "In July 2008 at the AMECEA Plenary in Lusaka – Zambia, the Bishops elevated the Institute to the level of a Campus of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA)," in: <http://www.cuea.edu/gaba/index.php/amecea-pastoral-institute> (16-01-2014)

⁷⁰ KIPOY-POMBO, Dall'Ecclesia in Africa alla Novo Millennio Ineunte: Continuità di impegno missionario, in: R. BALLAN (ed.), *Partire dal Suo volto: lettura missionaria della Novo Millennio Ineunte*, Bologna 2002, 123. He continues: "Guardando la realtà africana da vicino, ci si accorge che in gran parte la storia sociale e politica dell'Africa post-coloniale è stata condizionata dalla mancanza di preparazione di un laicato cristiano. Oggi ci ritroviamo con una classe politica africana che non è all'altezza del proprio compito, per cui la maggiore parte della popolazione è allo sbando."

CHAPTER 4

THE LUMKO INSTITUTE Lumko Institute's Contribution to Building a Participatory Church

1. Introduction

The Lumko Institute had its origins in the missiological stream of thought that was developing already before the Vatican Council and which found its fullest expression and encouragement in the Council. The need was being increasingly felt of developing more holistic approaches to evangelization, based on new ways of formation of laity and clergy at the service of the Christian community. It was providential that already since the 1920s the Church was being prepared for the innovative approach of the Council.

In 1951 Pope Pius XII stressed in *Evangelii Praecones* the importance of indigenization and acculturation to secure an effective evangelization. Besides the promotion of clerical formation, he mentioned for the first time the need to give a more specific formation to laity. Pope John XXIII took this further in his mission encyclical *Princeps Pastorum* in 1959 by demanding for the first time the idea of founding "cultural centres." Half of the encyclical is dedicated to the laity and the need to allow their vocation to be fully developed in the missionary work of the Church. It was providential that the Church was formed in the period since the 1920s to be ready for the great event of the Second Vatican Council. "They will thereby gain a general knowledge of peoples, cultures, and religions, a knowledge that looks not only to the past, but to the present as well. For anyone who is going to encounter another people should have a great esteem for their patrimony, their language and their customs" (AG 26). Furthermore *Ad Gentes* 26 demands specifically a sound missiological, pastoral and catechetical formation of the future missionaries. "These types of formation should be completed in the lands to which missionaries will be sent."

With this statement the Second Vatican Council stimulated an already ongoing discussion among the missionaries around the world, a discussion which resulted in concrete plans for developing places where this demanding formation could be carried out. *Ad Gentes* 31 recommended that Episcopal Conferences should establish "pastoral, catechetical and liturgical centres, as well as communications centres."

For the sake of the missions the Council stipulates in *Ad Gentes* 34:

Since the right and methodical exercise of missionary activity requires that those who labor for the Gospel should be scientifically prepared for their task, and especially for dialogue with non-Christian religions and cultures, and also that they should be effectively assisted in the carrying out of this task, it is desired that, for the sake of the missions, there should be fraternal and generous collaboration on the part of scientific institutes which specialize in missiology and in other arts and disciplines useful for the missions, such as ethnology and linguistics, the history and science of religions, sociology, pastoral skills and the like.

Summing up, we can say that AG paved the way for a lot of new places of formation and collaboration in different academic disciplines to create a better platform for a fruitful encounter between cultures and the Church's mission to announce the Gospel. "For the mystery of Christ to become credible to contemporary Africa, it must appeal to the African religious imagination."¹ This statement from A. Shorter was surely shared by the experienced and open-minded visionaries and missionaries who founded and developed Lumko Institute. The Lumko Institute was such a place to train laity and clergy with an African religious imagination for a pastoral ministry of communion and evangelization for a participatory Church according to the dominant ecclesiology of Vatican II.²

2. *The Visionaries: Archbishop Martin Lucas SVD and Bishop John Baptist Rosenthal SAC*

In 1950 Archbishop Martin Lucas SVD,³ the Apostolic delegate for Southern Africa from 1948 to 1952, had already proposed the erection of

¹ A. SHORTER, *Christianity and the African Imagination*, Nairobi, 1996, 7. – Shorter concludes his book with the remark: "African imagination is still widely ignored in the communication and celebration of the Christian message." *Ibid.*, 128.

² Cf. P. B. STEFFEN, Places and Models for Formation and Ministry. Pastoral Institutes in Africa and Asia: *Verbum SVD* 51 (2010) 423-438; *Id.*, Gli Istituti pastorali dell'Asia e dell'America Latina: *Nurt SVD* 46:1 (2012) 55-77; *Id.*, L'AsIPA – un nuovo modo di essere chiesa in Asia: *Verbum SVD* 54 (2013) 356-362.

³ Archbishop Martin Lucas SVD (1894-1969), at the age of 19 joined the Society of the Divine Word in his home country the Netherlands, where he was ordained priest in 1924. He worked successfully as novice master and superior, before the Holy See appointed him Apostolic Delegate for South Africa in September 1945. In October 1945 he was ordained Titular Bishop of Adulis. In December 1952 he was appointed Apostolic Internuncio for India and from 1959 to 1961 Apostolic Delegate to the Scandinavian countries. When Lucas arrived

a missiological institute. Several religious orders were willing to help with staff but none wanted to take over the project to found such an institute.

In 1952 the South African bishops strongly recommended the foundation of an Institute of Anthropology and Missiology. Even the necessary money and staff had been found. Bishop John Baptist Rosenthal SAC,⁴ of the diocese of Queenstown agreed to assume the formal responsibility for a Missiological Institute for the Catholic Church in South Africa, which was to a great extent, especially among the Black population, still a missionary Church, totally dependent on foreign missionary societies and their personnel.

Being himself a foreign missionary and being responsible for his flock of African Christians, Bishop Rosenthal immediately saw the need for such an Institute for South Africa, to help to develop a Church rooted in African soil and carried on by South Africans. The Catholic Church had had a late start in comparison to various Protestant Churches and as a minority Church in South Africa hardly reached above 5% of the total population. The missionary input of various Catholic orders and mission societies was tremendous, but the goal of a Church with sufficient vocations of its own was far from being reached. The attraction of African initiated Churches for South Africans revealed at the same time the lack of inculturation of the Catholic community in South African peoples and their cultures.

The Lumko Institute opened formally in Queenstown in 1951, with three Pallottine priests (SAC) released for research work. Bishop John B. Rosenthal became the first director of Lumko. The very first Lumko staff functioned under the guidance of Rosenthal from January 1952 to April 1953.

Father Martin Wilson MSC gives a very precise record of the challenges and obstacles in the first attempt to found a Missiological Institute at the service of the whole Church in South Africa:

in South Africa, he had to care for 18 Apostolic Vicariates. Among a population of 16 million people there were only 61,000 Catholics (4.3%) besides six million Protestants. He visited all parishes and convents of the country. The masterpiece of his work as Apostolic Delegate was the preparation for the erection of the hierarchy. Following his proposals Rome created 4 archdioceses, 16 dioceses, and 5 vicariates for 900,000 Catholics in 1951. Cf. Erzbischof Martinus Lucas 1894-1969, in: J. FLECKNER, *So waren sie*, vol. 2, St. Augustin 1995, 189-191.

⁴ John Baptist Rosenthal (1903-1975) was born in Germany. He entered the Pallottine (SAC) Congregation and after his priestly ordination was sent to the Pallottine mission in South Africa. In 1940 he was appointed Prefect Apostolic, in 1948 Vicar Apostolic of Queenstown. From 1951 to 1972 he was bishop of Queenstown.

Various religious orders were willing to help with staff but none wanted to assume formal responsibility. Bishop J. B. Rosenthal of Queenstown diocese agreed to set it up in his own diocese and the Pallottines (SAC) agreed to staff it. Rosenthal's idea was to make a lot of use of guest lecturers at seminars conducted on a regional basis. The institute opened formally in Queenstown 1951, with 3 SACs released for research work.⁵

However, Bishop Rosenthal became the pioneering founder of the Lumko Missiological Institute since he believed in the vision that founding such an institute would mean reading the signs of the times. Thus he found a suitable place in his diocese and a small beginning was made in January 1952. Rome, in the person of Cardinal Giovanni Montini (later Pope Paul VI), withdrew its permission to found such a Missiological Institute for the whole of South Africa because it feared it would be left shouldering the financial burden.⁶

Nevertheless, Bishop Rosenthal made it his own project for his diocese of Queenstown, a predominantly missionary diocese among the Xhosa people in the Eastern Cape Province. He was forced to discontinue his plan in 1952 but he continued to look for a new possibility to revive his plan to found such an institute. In 1959 he approached the Irish

⁵ This team operated from January 1952 to April 1953. The Apostolic Delegate proved to be mistaken in believing that he could get a subsidy from Propaganda Fide. Not only did the Propaganda refuse a subsidy but asked him to cancel all the arrangements. When the SACBC (Southern African Bishops' Conference) was informed of the matter, they decided to stick by their resolution of April 1952, viz. "The development of Missionary Research was strongly recommended to the Administrative Board." The Board decided to go ahead, even without financial aid from the Propaganda. However, the Pallottines decided to discontinue. In: M. WILSON, Lumko Missiological Institute: *Nelen Yubu* No. 33 (summer 1988) 22-23.

⁶ In 1938 the Prefecture of Queensland entrusted to the German Pallottines was erected, which in 1948 was made a Vicariate Apostolic and in 1951 it became the diocese of Queensland. The *Annuario Pontificio* of 1953 indicates 33 parishes with 2 diocesan and 20 religious priests, but no indigenous priests. The number of Catholics was 4,563 among a population of 220,000 people (p. 350). In 1963 the same source indicates 20 parishes with 30 religious and 5 diocesan priests and 4 seminarians. The total number of the population had increased to 591,757 and that of Catholics to 10,499 (p. 354). – The percentage of the Catholic population has slightly increased from 2.1% in 1969 to 2.3% in 2010. The total number of Catholics increased from 18,815 in 1969 to 58,500 in 2010. But the total number of priests decreased in that period from 38 to 23. See: <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/diocese/dqueue.html> (20.08.2013). Another source indicates 56,000 Catholics (2.7%) in a population of 2,110,000 (as of 2004). See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Diocese_of_Queenstown (20.08.2013)

Province of the Sacred Heart Missionaries (MSC) “with the hope of solving the staffing problem of the institute. In August 1961 he was informed that the Irish MSC Provincial had decided ‘to take on the responsibility to staff the Institute in accordance with the conditions you [Rosenthal] prescribed in your letter.’”⁷

With this promise by the Irish Province to staff the institute, the resurrection of the Missiological Institute became a reality in 1962 on the property called Lumko, 13 kilometres east of Lady Frere in the Cape Province. The Bishop of Queenstown built a church and a house for the parish priest on the Lumko property. In 1958 Bishop Rosenthal had already established a Catechist Training Centre on the Lumko property, which was the first one in South Africa. The whole diocese of Queenstown was part of the Xhosa-speaking area of South Africa. Christian influence had been strong among the Xhosa people and many of them belong to one of the present mainline Churches. David Dargie estimated that in 1989 there were 300,000 Xhosa Catholics among 5 to 6 million Xhosa people.⁸ But the number of Xhosa Christians belonging to African initiated Churches (AIC) was even higher.

In the early 1960s with the help of African Sisters of the Precious Blood (CPS) an African Art and Craft Centre and a Domestic Science School were added.

The mission and service of Lumko Institute in its first decade was heavily oriented towards or focussed mainly on, the needs of incoming missionaries. Therefore the Missiological Institute developed a scheme of language learning. Another branch dealt with producing church music in South African languages. The courses for the missionaries included studies in a local language, anthropology, catechetics and homiletics.⁹

3. The Contribution of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC)

Without the contribution of the Irish Sacred Heart missionaries, who had their own mission territory in Transvaal, the Lumko Institute would not have developed. In 1962 Fr. Sean O’Riordan left his post as lecturer in Bantu languages at a state university to become the Organizing Secretary and first MSC priest to settle in the newly opened Lumko Institute. In 1963 Fr. Patrick Whoolley was made its first director, and Fathers Thomas Nicholson, Sean Coffey and Hugh Slattery, all

⁷ WILSON, *op. cit.*, 23. – Bishop Rosenthal promised the MSCs that he would take care of their maintenance and livelihood.

⁸ Cf. D. DARGIE, *Xhosa Church Music: Concilium* 26 (1989) 64.

⁹ Cf. WILSON, *op. cit.*, 21-34.

MSC priests, arrived to work full time for the mission of the institute. All had developed a specific competence. Nicolson was teaching the Sotho language, Whoolley social anthropology and Slattery the Zulu language. In 1973 Fr. Hugh Slattery became the second rector of the Lumko Institute, followed in 1981 by Fr. Richard Broderick.¹⁰ Further MSCs, like Fr. J. Coffey and Bro. K. McAteer, worked for a limited time at Lumko, and others like Fathers M. Maher and M. J. Kelly taught as guest lecturers in the institute. In June 1984 Fr. Hugh Slattery was appointed Bishop of Tzaneen.¹¹ At the time of its maximum size the teaching staff of Lumko comprised 6 priests (5 MSCs, 1 SAC) and three lay members.

In 1985 the chairman of the SACBC Commission for Christian Education, Bishop J. L. Brenningmeijer OP, made a personal appeal that the MSCs would continue to provide staff to Lumko. In 1988 only one MSC priest, the rector of Lumko, Fr. Broderick, was assigned to Lumko Institute. For over 25 years the Congregation of the Sacred Heart Missionaries provided most of the qualified staff members and gained the merit of running, developing and securing the growth of the Missiological Institute Lumko in that period, a development which would not have taken place without their dedication to the mission and ministry of the Lumko Institute.

4. The Visionary Reformers: Fritz Lobinger and Oswald Hirmer

In 1969 Bishop Rosenthal invited Fathers Fritz Lobinger and Oswald Hirmer, two German Fidei Donum priests, to join the staff. Both had already worked in missionary parishes among the Xhosa people in the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa since 1956 and 1957 respectively.

Fritz Lobinger¹² had worked as parish priest among mainly Xhosa-speaking people in Aliwal diocese from 1956 to 1969. From 1969 to 1972

¹⁰ Cf. R. BRODERICK, *Look-Listen-Love*, Training for Community Ministers 3, Lady Frere 1981; R. BRODERICK/C. RICHARDSON, *Love Your Neighbour*, Training for Community Ministers 7, Germiston 1989; A. NOLAN/R. BRODERICK, *To Nourish Our Faith: The Theology of Liberation for Southern Africa*, Hilton 1987.

¹¹ Hugh Slattery retired from his office as bishop of Tzaneen after over 25 years of service on January 28, 2010.

¹² Fritz Lobinger was born in Germany in 1929. In 1955 he was ordained priest for the diocese of Regensburg. In 1956 he came as Fidei Donum priest to do pastoral work in the diocese of Aliwal, South Africa. In 1969 he joined the staff of Lumko Institute, but left in the same year for doctoral studies in Germany. From 1972 to 1986 he was a member of the Lumko Institute staff. From 1986 to

he studied missiology under Prof. Joseph Glazik, MSC at Münster University in Germany. In his dissertation he researched the role of lay catechists as community leaders. David Dargie wrote in 1989 about the role Lobinger had played in Lumko Institute and the SACBC: “Perhaps the main figure in shaping the direction of Lumko, and producing much of its materials, was Fr. Fritz Lobinger Lobinger has been one of the leading theologians assisting the Southern African Catholic Bishops’ Conference in formulating the Pastoral Plan which is presently being brought into action in the Church in South Africa.”¹³

His research was of great relevance for the Church in South Africa and all African Churches. After returning to the Lumko Institute in 1972 he was made responsible for the catechist training course. He changed the content of the course. Previously trained catechists could attend a three-month course to adjust to the new role of the catechist favoured by Lumko. Being the teacher was not given importance but rather the role of being the animator of the Christian communities they served. Under Lobinger’s influence Lumko Institute changed its main focus “into that of an instrument for implementing the new pastoral vision of ministry.”¹⁴

The new Pastoral Department, opened by Lobinger in 1973, from then on became the prime mover of the new orientation of Lumko.

From the end of 1969 up to the middle of 1972 Oswald Hirmer¹⁵ studied under Adolf Exeler, Professor for Pastoral Theology at the Catholic Faculty of Theology in Münster, Germany. With his doctoral studies he wanted to understand better the role of the Catholic laity in Catholic communities by comparing it to that of Protestant laity in their respec-

1987 he was Apostolic Administrator of Aliwal diocese and from 1987 to 2004 bishop of Aliwal. He lives now in Mariannhill, South Africa.

¹³ DARGIE, *op. cit.*, 67.

¹⁴ WILSON, *op. cit.*, 26.

¹⁵ Oswald Hirmer was born in Amberg, Bavaria (diocese of Regensburg) on February 28, 1930. In 1955 he was ordained priest for his home diocese. In 1957 he left to work as a missionary among the Xhosa people in Umtata diocese in the Eastern Cape Province, which was in those days the Transkei homeland. From 1969 onwards he did doctoral studies in Catechetics at Münster University where he made his PhD in 1972. Since 1977 he was a full staff member of Lumko. In the 1990s he travelled extensively in Asian countries giving courses on the Lumko method of building SCCs and Gospel Sharing groups. From 1993 he had his main residence in the Singapore Pastoral Institute. From 1997 to 2008 he was bishop of Mthatha (Umtata). He died 2011 in Mariannhill, South Africa, cf. P. STEFFEN, Hirmer, Oswald, Bischof (1930-2011), in: *BBKL* 34 (2013) 535-545.

tive communities.¹⁶ Hirmer could base his research on twelve years of pastoral ministry in Catholic parishes among the Xhosa people in the diocese of Umtata. His dissertation study revealed the outstanding deficiencies in the Catholic parish model, where the laity was mainly considered as the receiver of the sacramental services of the clergy.

Returning to South Africa in 1972 and before joining the Lumko staff again at the end of 1975, he had to function as rector of the minor seminary Zingisa in Umtata. Being yet again a staff member of Lumko, in 1977 Hirmer was given the task to start with the *Gospel Group Department*, later called *Department for the Promotion of the Gospel*. The aim of this department was to promote a practical approach to biblical ministry in parishes. Hirmer immediately started to develop methods which would bring the Holy Scripture closer to ordinary parishioners and Christians. In many places new Bible Sharing methods were tried out but it was Fr. Hirmer and his team who finally could present and promote internationally the new Seven Steps Bible Sharing Method as part of the Neighbourhood Christian community model developed and promoted by Fritz Lobinger and the whole staff of Lumko.

In 1977 Hirmer was appointed by the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC) the National Director of the Catholic Bible Federation (Catholic Biblical Federation, CBF). As such he had to coordinate the Bible apostolate of all the Catholic dioceses of South Africa, and he had to represent the South African dioceses in the international assemblies of the CBF.

The President of the Bishop's Conference of South Africa, Archbishop Joseph Patrick Fitzgerald OMI,¹⁷ gave the following task and mission to the Missiological Institute Lumko: "You should find ways in which the laity can take over real responsibility in our [Christian] communities!"

The staff of Lumko took this mission they had received from the Conference President seriously and started traveling to the 30 Catholic dioceses of South Africa giving talks to conventions of priests in the whole country. They wanted to transmit the new vision of Church, which they had found in the documents of the Second Vatican Council. The perpetual ques-

¹⁶ His dissertation was published under the title: *Die Funktion des Laien in der katholischen Gemeinde: Untersuchungen in der afrikanischen Mission unter Berücksichtigung entsprechender Erfahrungen nicht-katholischer Gemeinden im Xhosagebiet der Republik Südafrika*, Münsterschwarzach 1973 (The function of the laity in the Catholic [parish] community: Studies in the African Mission in consideration of respective experiences in non-Catholic communities among the Xhosa people in the Republic of South Africa).

¹⁷ Joseph Patrick Fitzgerald OMI (1907-1986) was born in Ireland. From 1966 to 1976 he was archbishop of Bloemfontein and from 1976 to 1984 of Johannesburg. He was President of SACBC from 1974 to 1981.

tion of the priests in pastoral ministry was: "That surely sounds very well, but what can we do? How can we make this great theology comprehensible to our faithful in our Christian communities? How can we give practical advice and training to our lay people?"¹⁸

5. Developing the Various Lumko Programmes

5.1 The Awareness Programmes

Reading the signs of the times and knowing the urgent request of the bishops and all priests in pastoral ministry, the Lumko staff saw the need to develop various training programmes. The focus and task was: to become a Christ-centered community that is enabled to participate and continue to proclaim God's reign in our time.

To achieve such a goal the first step the Lumko staff took was to develop awareness programmes. The aim of such programmes was to bring to awareness that the responsibility of all believers is necessary, and not just the services of ordained ministers and full-time pastoral workers and of certain ecclesial lay organisations like the Legion of Mary or Catholic Women's Association. Lumko was convinced that the common responsibility of all members of the Church would guarantee and activate the mission of Jesus Christ in our times. One of the main agents of the Lumko work in the 1970s and 1980s, Bishop Oswald Hirmer, wrote: "In other words, our awareness programmes wanted to provide the decisive impulse: We all of us are Church! We have a common vocation and a common mission!"¹⁹

The Lumko courses in the 1970s were first oriented towards the ongoing formation of priests. The focus of the training and discussions with the priests was centred around the question of how to carry common responsibility and shared ministries in the parish communities.

The course participants asked for more practical formation material that could help the parish priest to train local community ministers and leaders. That is how the famous "Training for Community Ministries" series came into being. The self-discovery method was used for this approach to adult learning. The Lumko vision of parish renewal is mainly built on Bible sharing and the parish as communion of communities. The transformation of a model of a "providing" Church towards a participatory Church is expressed in its published course materials which

¹⁸ Cf. O. HIRMER, Von Südafrika über Asien nach Europa. Die Erfolgsgeschichte der Lumko-Programme: *KM* 116 (1997) 128.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 129.

found a great audience not only in South Africa but in most African countries and under the heading of AsIPA it gained an amazing popularity and recognition as well in many local Churches in Asia.

Lobinger was convinced that leadership should not provide for people, but must build up people. The animator idea became the nucleus of all the manifold ministry training programs Lumko has developed since then. The leadership role of the priest is very much that of the sign of unity through the common Sunday Eucharistic celebration, but his ministry is not seen only in administering the sacraments, but is needed especially as animator and formator of the whole Christian community as such and the emerging new lay ministries. Lumko is convinced that all members of the community need an adequate formation and that the expectation of the faithful can be very helpful for the ministry of the priest as leader of the parish community and for the leaders of the neighbourhood communities. The expectations of the whole community and the individual Christians are – according to the Lumko vision – being formed more profoundly and according to the mission and ministry of Jesus and the Good News he proclaimed.

5.2 The Need for the Training of Lay Leaders

Lobinger was aware that in the decades after Vatican II many members of the clergy who had expressed a need for training materials were still working out of a “providing” model of leadership. Among other influences, they had been won over to the possibility of lay involvement by the spirit of updating in the Church, which found expression in such popular concepts as the “People of God.” However, he realized that if lay people could be trained to operate successfully as parish leaders, then the change would be long-lasting. If not, the clerics would revert to their previous role model if they saw that this new model of leadership did not work. For these reasons Lobinger was convinced that the key to a changed ecclesiology was in the training material. Proper training material would give both priests and the faithful a feeling of security and knowledge that the new type of leadership would work.²⁰

At a meeting with the clergy of Umtata (Mthatha) in 1974 Lobinger presented them with his vision of the “trainer catechist.” As a group they accepted that more lay people could be trained for Church leadership. They had in mind skill training, that is, the training of people in the ability to perform actions such as leading the Sunday service in the

²⁰ L. P. PRIOR, *A Communion of Communities: The Mission and Growth of a Local Church as reflected in the Publications of the Lumko Institute*, unpublished dissertation for the Master of Theology at the University of South Africa, 1993.

absence of the priest, distributing Holy Communion to people during the Church services as well as to the sick at home and in hospital, knowing how to visit the sick, and how to read the Scriptures in the liturgical assembly. However, it would only work, they said, if they had the training material in their hands, and it would be the task of Lumko personnel to produce this literature. Lobinger immediately went to work on the first book which dealt with the training of leaders for conducting the Sunday services, ministers of Communion and readers.

This material was eventually to appear as three books:

Training Assistant Ministers of the Eucharist (1976),
Leading the Community Service (1976),
Training Readers (1979).

Since Bishop Rosenthal insisted that Lumko should serve the whole Church in South Africa, the South African bishops were aware of the great support they got from Lumko and the Institute's contribution to the renewal of pastoral ministry in all of the South African dioceses and pushed for an increasing relationship between SACBC and the leaders and staff of the Lumko Institute. "During the years 1967 and 1968 the SACBC bishops discussed the situation of the Lumko Institute in regard to the Pastoral Institute it wanted to establish. In July 1968 the Conference recorded its intention to accept complete responsibility for the Lumko Institute as soon as it would be in a position to do so"²¹ Since then the SACBC was ready to accept co-responsibility for the Institute, which had also a very concrete and material expression, since SACBC had agreed to contribute annually to the running costs of the Institute.

According to Fr. Prior the Institute had been taken over by the SACBC in 1972 so that since then it can in effect be considered a National Pastoral Institute of the South African Bishops' Conference.²² The original vision of the Apostolic Delegate to South Africa, Monsignor Martin Lucas SVD, and of the Bishop of Queenstown had finally been reached. Thanks to the unwavering and steadfast belief and perseverance of Bishop Rosenthal the original vision was realized over 20 years after its original inception in 1951.

²¹ WILSON, op. cit., 24.

²² PRIOR, op. cit., 15. – In the article of M. Wilson we get another date when he writes: "The SACBC formally voted in February 1974 to accept responsibility for the Institute." Ibid.

6. The Lumko Departments

6.1 From Catechist Training Centre to Catechetical Department

The Catechist Training school, the first in South Africa, was opened in 1959 by Bishop Rosenthal, and had its first course in 1959. In the first year there were only three participants from Queenstown diocese. The second course for 1960-1961 had thirteen participants, of whom five came from Queenstown and four from Port Elizabeth, three from Aliwal and one from Outshoorn.

In the third course (1962-63) there were 18 and in the fourth course 22 students. From 1959 to June 1980 the total number of courses reached 18 with a total number of 403 participants. Listed according to dioceses of origin the largest number of participants came from Queenstown with 102 students, followed by Umtata with 55, Aliwal with 54, Durban with 28, Port Elizabeth with 22, Mariannhill with 21, Bethlehem with 19 and so forth.²³ The shift from a regional Xhosa-speaking audience to a national audience which occurred in 1974 proved the success of the new model of catechist Lumko had implemented.

Initially the courses were of 2 years' duration aimed at giving a general catechetical training. In 1972 a one year course for Sisters was incorporated into the usual 2 year course. In 1973 and 1976 there was a one year course while in 1974-75 there were 4 courses of 3 months each. These were re-orientation courses with a strong emphasis on skills-training to help catechists become trainers rather than providers. This emphasis has been maintained in subsequent courses.²⁴

The above-mentioned figures reveal that the catechist training at Lumko served mainly the dioceses in the Eastern Cape Province. In this

²³ "During the period 1959-69 only one student came from outside the Xhosa region but from 1971 onwards they increased steadily. By 1976 no less than 60% of the participants came from outside the Xhosa-speaking area." *Lumko Report 1980*, 4.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 3. – Cf. E. LAPOINTE, *An Experience of Pastoral Theology in Southern Africa. Inculturated and Committed Christian Communities*, Roma 1986. In his book, which focuses on the Catholic Church in Lesotho, Fr. Eugene Lapointe promotes the same Church model of communion of communities (SCCs) and he emphasizes the need of a trainer catechist which should substitute the previous model of the teacher catechist as the personal representative of the priest. He writes: "From 1973-74 onwards, the need for another type of catechist was felt because of the new understanding of the Church. To put it simply, what was needed was not somebody who could do everything in the Church; the need was for animators who would teach Church members to carry on the works of the Christian community by themselves." *Ibid.*, 106.

period mainly Xhosa-speaking catechists were trained. From 1974 onwards the three-month renewal courses attracted also participants from all the other provinces of South Africa to the dioceses of the Eastern Cape Province. The new model of training catechists had therefore since 1974 a nationwide influence in the Catholic Church of South Africa. The Lumko Report of 1980 gives the following assessment:

With a qualified Staff consisting of at least one Priest, a Sister and an experienced lay catechist who could conduct courses in various languages, the Lumko Catechist Training Centre could continue to render a valuable service to the Church of South Africa not only in training catechists but also in producing simple materials in the various African languages.²⁵

6.2 Contents of the Courses

Father Joseph Balzer, a German Pallottine priest, was responsible for the Catechist Training Centre at Lumko from 1959 to 1968. From 1969 to 1973 Fr. Arnold Fischer SAC, Fr. F. Lobinger and Mr. B. Nofemela belonged to the staff.²⁶ Under their guidance the first six courses took place and received a form which served the need of the mission dioceses among the Xhosa people in the Eastern Cape Province.

The early courses of two years' duration consisted of a general training in theology and catechetics to prepare catechists who would teach catechism to children and catechumens under the guidance of a priest. The wives of the trainee catechists were also given some training in catechesis as well as in domestic skills so that they could give some help to their husbands in their work.²⁷

It has to be said that it was very realistic that the Centre had introduced a holistic training methodology which included the wives of the trainee catechists. That the wives of the future catechists also received a certain amount of catechesis training, uplifted not only their educational knowledge, but it recognised also the possible female contribution they could make to the catechetical ministry of their husbands in the parish. The training of the catechists' wives in domestic skills uplifted

²⁵ *Lumko Report 1980*, 5.

²⁶ *Ibid.* In 1974-75 Fr. Lobinger and Mr. S. Nkabinde belonged to the staff, then from 1976-79 Fr. A. Book and Mr. S. Nkabinde; in 1980 it was for the first time totally African with Mr. S. Nkabinde together with Sr. Dionys CPS.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

their professional skills and potentially offered an additional income for the catechist family.

From 1974 onwards the Lumko Catechist training courses

have been more and more geared to train or retrain catechists to fulfil their new role as trainer catechists. The catechists had to be trained to cooperate with the priest in training parish leaders such as leaders of Sunday services, parish councillors, parent catechists, funeral leaders etc. The courses for the future trainer catechists became shorter and more focused. They wanted to give participants a certain vision and outlook drawn from Scripture and Theology on the Church as the Community of God's People. To try to implement this vision we have concentrated a great deal on the practical skills necessary for the building up of the Christian Community. In training catechists we make extensive use of the Lumko Training Manuals for Community Ministries to foster awareness as well as impart skills.²⁸

This shows how much the Lumko Catechist Training programme was linked with the new vision of Building Christian Communities as it appears especially in the Training for Community Ministries series and the Bible sharing methods developed and promoted by the Lumko Institute since the 1970s.

There is another important shift which took place in 1972. In the first period of its existence (1959-69) the Catechist Centre trained only male students. From 1972 to 1976 approximately 50% of the participants were African Sisters, a number which increased to 58% in 1978.

In the Lumko Report of 1990 we find a new name and obviously also a new direction of the catechetical department of Lumko. It appeared now under the name "Department of Animator Training." In 1990 the department offered courses in the Catechumenate with an overall vision of the Rite for Christian Initiation of Adults. In those workshops, a catechetical approach based on an adult education methodology, was also taught and practised. In 1990 Fr. Eoin Farrelly SDB conducted the annual seven-week course in catechetics as he had in the previous years.²⁹

²⁸ Ibid. – The usual language of instruction was Xhosa, except for one course in 1977 which used Sotho and one course conducted in 1979 in Natal which was taught in Zulu. Zulu-speaking students could easily adjust to Xhosa, while Tswana and Senedi-speaking students followed Sotho without any problem.

²⁹ Cf. Report on the Work of Lumko Institute 1990, 3-4. – Fr. Eoin Farrelly SDB left the Lumko staff in 1995 after three years of service as lecturer and Associate director (1993-1995). But he had been before that a regular guest

In the Lumko Institute 1995 Report a Department of Catechetics appears, which was responsible for the Animator Training Course for 1995.³⁰

7. Lumko Language Department

It would be wrong to underestimate the significance and contribution the Language Department had for a fruitful evangelizing ministry that was able to reach out to the various ethnic and linguistic communities in South Africa, even after the shift of the main emphasis to the newly established Pastoral and Gospel Group department in the 1970s. The statistics published in the Lumko Report of 1980 show that there was a total of 1,043 participants in 102 courses³¹ in African languages from 1965 to 1980, and 593 participants in European languages, that is, Afrikaans (218) and English (375), in 19 courses in the same period.

From 1965 to 1980 there were 43 Zulu language courses with 437 participants, 42 Xhosa courses with 407, 13 Sotho courses with 177 participants besides four smaller language courses in Venda, Tswana and Sepedi with a total of 22 participants.

The courses were by nature intensive crash courses focussing on pronunciation, simple conversational practise and basic grammar. Lumko Institute was a pioneer in African language courses in South Africa and Lumko installed the first language laboratory in South Africa. The participants were predominantly Church personnel, coming mainly from the Catholic Church but also from other Churches, particularly the Anglican Church.

Several MSC priests made a special contribution to the Lumko language department by developing the language courses in Xhosa, Sotho and Zulu.³² The language department also treated themes of social an-

lecturer at Lumko. He is now parish priest and acting dean in Cape Town archdiocese.

³⁰ Lumko Institute 1995 Report, Germiston, SA, 1-2.

³¹ "In 1967 there was one four-month course in Xhosa, Zulu and Sotho. All the other courses were of 3 to 4 weeks' duration and a few were as short as two weeks. Usually two or three short courses followed one another as stages in an introduction to a language and many participants took all the stages Of the 102 Courses all except 13 have been conducted at Lumko If at all possible the language courses are best given in the areas where they are spoken." Cf. *Lumko Report 1980*, 6.

³² Fr. S. O'Riordan MSC gave Xhosa courses in the years 1963-70 and Fr. H. Slattery MSC in 1979-80. Fr. T. Nicholson MSC and Fr. J. Coffey Sotho gave language courses in 1965-67 and 1969-72 respectively and Fr. Slattery gave courses in Zulu between 1967 and 1977. African teachers were also teaching

thropology. From 1966 to 1973 Fr. Whooley gave courses in social anthropology (lasting two to three weeks) in conjunction with African language courses. He also conducted research on African marriage. "The aim of these courses was to give an understanding of African culture through lectures and discussions on such topics as marriage, initiation, systems of belief, social change etc. and also introduce people to important literature in these areas."³³

Teaching the catechist students in the Xhosa language, Fr. Arnold Fischer used his time at Lumko to deepen his knowledge of the Xhosa language, so much so that in 1985 he came out with the Xhosa-English dictionary. Up to 2003 it was reprinted eleven times.³⁴ The Lumko report from 1980 makes a critical self-evaluation of its commitment to teach African languages:

While Lumko has been able to help Church personnel in the task of learning African languages it has not been able to meet the rapidly increasing needs in other sectors, particularly in education and industry, for courses and materials in the various African languages. It would seem that among Church personnel there are still many who do not fully appreciate the need of having knowledge of at least one African language.³⁵

8. The Pastoral Department

Since its inception in 1973 the Pastoral department saw "its task mainly in assisting the dioceses of Southern Africa in their progress of building up truly local Churches, since only such Churches could be of

African languages at Lumko, like Mrs. E. Mathiso Xhosa from 1963 to 1972, Mr. S. Tsabe Xhosa from 1974 to 1977 and Zulu was taught by Mr. P. Dlungwana Zulu (1968-1970) and Miss C. Ngcongco (1972-1975); cf. *Lumko Report 1980*, 8.

³³ Ibid., 7. – "In 1974 Fr. H. Bucher, following the methods of Social Anthropology, organised two seminars on the topic 'Pastoral Orientation in a Changing World.' He then went for further studies after joining the Lumko staff with the aim of starting a Missiology department at Lumko. On the completion of his studies towards the end of 1976 he became bishop of Bethlehem. In 1977 he was replaced by Fr. Heinz Kuckertz CSSp who finally started the Missiology Department." Ibid.

³⁴ A. FISCHER ET AL., *English-Xhosa dictionary*, Cape Town 1985, eleventh impression 2003.

³⁵ *Lumko Report 1980*, 6.

service to the people of this country. This aim was pursued through mobile courses and through publications.”³⁶

Striking and outstanding in the Pastoral Department approach was its mobility. First of all the Lumko staff were willing to reach out to all the dioceses and seminaries of South Africa, and even to dioceses and Pastoral Centres in other African countries. From 1974 to 1980 Fr. Lobinger and his staff gave courses in all South African dioceses, often even several times. In some dioceses, like Port Elizabeth, Johannesburg, inputs were given four times, and in Durban even six times. Lumko described the methodology of the courses in this way: they

are not lectures-series, but are designed as experience-based learning and as group interaction. For this reason the majority of the courses were given not at centres but in the dioceses. Each diocese decided on its own when to invite the Lumko team for such seminars for its personnel. This was found to be the most effective way of assisting the bishop, priests and other pastoral leaders to find and implement a new pastoral plan.³⁷

With such an approach Lumko proved how much it was at the service of the local Church and its ministers.

Among the topics the staff treated in its courses “Community ministries” was the most requested, but also topics such as Parish Councils, Community Building, Methods of Lay Training, Leading the Liturgy, the Message of Resurrection in African Perspective, Pastoral Orientation in a Changing World, Church Administration, Communication Media and Building Small Christian Communities were taught frequently according to the requests of the dioceses of Southern Africa.³⁸

A major part of the work of the Pastoral Department was always doing pastoral research. The department researched, for instance, the local Church structures in Catholic parishes, and the structures of other Churches. A survey of the diversification of lay ministries in the dioceses of Southern Africa, and a survey of the Pastoral and Catechetical Institutes of the IMBISA countries³⁹ was done. Another survey studied

³⁶ Ibid., 19.

³⁷ Ibid., 20. – To allow parish priests to take part in such courses they lasted only four days.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ IMBISA: The Inter-Regional Meeting of the Bishops of Southern Africa. It is an organ of Liaison and Pastoral Cooperation between the Episcopal Conferences of Angola and São Tomé & Príncipe (CEAST), Lesotho (LCBC), Mozambique (CEM), Namibia (NCBC), South Africa which is made up of Botswana,

the socio-catechetical work of the Catholic dioceses of the Xhosa-speaking area of South Africa.⁴⁰

The first programmatic publication of Fritz Lobinger was already published in 1973: *How much can lay people do?*⁴¹ With this book the main goal of all further publications of the Training for Community Ministries series was already clearly expressed.⁴² The whole Christian community is not only at the receiving end of pastoral care, but it is called to participate in the mission of the Church, the mission to bring the Good News to all parts of human society, and this not only inside the Church community but to all humankind beyond the borders of the visible Church community. Only with a laity which is encouraged to live up to its own vocation, a laity being made co-responsible in the evangelization work of the Church, can such a goal be achieved. Since there was a lack of formation and of programming in most of the parishes in the country, Lumko Institute applied a series of eleven methods in its courses and publications. “Most of them are based on the famous See Judge Act Method of Cardinal Cardijn. They provide means which the communities can use should they so wish and which animators and trainers can have available to help groups struggling in this area.”⁴³

South Africa and Swaziland (SACBC) and Zimbabwe (ZCBC). See: [http:// www.imbisa.org.zw/Social%20Communications%20Department.html](http://www.imbisa.org.zw/Social%20Communications%20Department.html) (12-01-2014)

⁴⁰ Cf. *Lumko Report 1980*, 20. – Staff members were: F. Lobinger & M. Malilwana (1973), Lobinger, Malilwana and L. Balink (1974-1976), and F. Lobinger (1977-1980), cf. *ibid.*, 20. – Father Lewis Balink, born in the Netherlands, worked many years preparing local Church leaders in the diocese of Kroonstad. In 1974 he became a member of the Lumko staff. He made, together with F. Lobinger, a significant contribution to the development of the Lumko Leadership training vision, methodology, and the courses and publications on this issue. Before his death in 2007 he worked for 15 years in the St. John the Baptist parish in Parys-Tumahole (Kroonstad diocese). For his commitment to disadvantaged people during the apartheid period, he received the “Peace Award” from Nelson Mandela. In October 2008 the “Father Lewis Balink Therapy and Counselling Centre” for the medical and psychological treatment of HIV and AIDS patients was founded in Parys.

⁴¹ F. LOBINGER, *How Much Can Lay People Do?*, Lady Frere 1973.

⁴² Up to 1980 the series Training for Community Ministries already counted 20 different training kits and booklets by various authors, which were widely used in Southern Africa. In 1980 the series was already translated into Bemba and Swahili, and had become a training model in many parts of Africa and in many Churches worldwide.

⁴³ S. BATE, *Evangelisation in the South African Context*, Roma 1991, 79. – “Whilst methods can prove useful it is also important that each group develop its own style of being a Small Christian Community. This will depend on the people, the community, the needs of the area, and especially on the inspiration the group receives in faith-response to God’s call. For this reason methods can

9. Gospel Group Department

The aim of the Gospel Group department was described in 1980:

The department has chosen as its priority the establishment of Gospel Groups in the Local Churches of Southern Africa. It will assist such groups in their efforts to discover the message of Christ for us today, taking into account that such groups are established in very different environments, e.g. Basic Christian Communities, family groups, youth groups, convents or associations.⁴⁴

Through mobile courses for priests, pastoral workers and lay leaders various Bible sharing methods, developed by the Institute, were made known all over the country and spread internationally. The method was simple enough to be conducted by average leaders after very short training. It aims at discovering the message of Christ for our situations of today, not at academic study. It aims also at interpersonal sharing which builds up community spirit. Beside courses given at Lumko and in all the dioceses of South Africa and beyond, the department pursued its aim through publications. Especially within the series Training for Community Ministries the Gospel Group department published several training kits to assist pastoral workers in establishing Gospel Groups and in training leaders of such groups in the method of gospel sharing. Other publications aimed at deepening of such gospel sharing, so that theological guidance was offered to gospel groups.

10. The Lumko Missiological Department

Since the beginning missiological studies were part of the Missiological Institute Lumko. From 1977 Fr. H. Kuckertz was in charge of this department. "The emphasis in this department is on ground-level research and training for persons of a tertiary education."⁴⁵ In other words, this department was especially involved in field research pro-

never be imposed, but only suggested." Cf. NOLAN/BRODERICK, *To Nourish Our Faith*.

⁴⁴ Gospel Group Department, in: Report on the Aims and Activities of the Institute, Lumko Institute 1980, 21. Cf. O. HIRMER, *The Pastoral Use of the Bible*, Germiston 1990.

⁴⁵ H. KUCKERTZ, Progress Report of Missiology Department, Lumko, in: *Lumko Report 1980*, 9-10. – Kuckertz explained the policy his department followed: It is the nature of this department to yield only slow progress as far as visible (in form of publications) output is concerned. We prefer thoroughness to "quick results." *Ibid.*, 10.

jects and in organizing and conducting seminars at universities and in major seminaries. From December 1977 till June 1978 Fr. Kuckertz⁴⁶ and his African assistant Mr. S. Tsabe, B.A. (Fort Hare) did a field research study in an Mpondo village among Xhosa people in the Eastern Cape Province. S. Tsabe had worked from 1974 to 1977 in the Language Department of Lumko; in 1977 he joined the Missiological Department as a second staff member. Both were given the task by the Lumko staff to investigate questions related to traditional African moral concepts. The transcribed research material served as a base and was shared in courses given by Fr. Kuckertz at Witwatersrand University for students of social anthropology under the title of “Ancestral Belief in Africa,” and in a course at John Vianney Seminary, Johannesburg, under the title “Introduction to Social Anthropology.” Based on the insights gained in research studies, in February 1979 the missiological department of Lumko organized a seminar week in Lumko, and contributed two papers to the seminar. In addition four African social anthropologists from different South African universities gave inputs. The collected papers of the seminar were published by Lumko in 1979 under the title “Culture and Morality. Theological and Social Anthropology.”

It should be pointed out that the widespread number of speakers indicates a point of policy of this department in conducting courses. The type of research which is conducted here requires definite specialisation in a particular area so that co-operation with social anthropologist departments and hopefully with other related departments of studies of man becomes imperative.⁴⁷

Here the department leader, Fr. Kuckertz, explained what status and importance specialisation and networking in the field of social anthropology and an applied interdisciplinary approach had for the missiological department of Lumko Institute. The relatively small staff of the department of two trained and two semiskilled assistants was able to enter into relations and co-operation with recognised university and seminary lecturers in South Africa. In 1981 a second seminar organized by this department and again with lecturers from various South African universities under the title “Ancestor Belief – As Call and as Challenge” took place at Lumko. Fr. Heinz Kuckertz published the talks of this

⁴⁶ Heinz Kuckertz (1939-2013), a member of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit (CSSp), was born in Germany and served as a missionary priest in South Africa. Together with A. Kremer-Schillings he published the history of the CSSp missions in South Africa since 1924: “*Cor unum et anima una*”: *The Congregation of the Holy Spirit in Southern Africa*, Bethlehem, SA 1984.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 10.

seminar in 1981 as “Ancestor Religion in Southern Africa: Proceedings of a Seminar on Ancestor Belief.”

11. Lumko Music Department

Already as missionaries working in Xhosa-speaking communities Lobinger and Hirmer promoted African Christian hymns and music.

In 1964, Fritz Lobinger and Oswald Hirmer, then working as missionaries in the diocese of Aliwal North, commissioned the best-known Xhosa composer of his day, the soloist B. K. Tyamzashe, to compose music in Xhosa style for the Catholic Church ... Tyamzashe had never had such a request before ... Among the many successful church songs he produced was the famous Gloria of his Missa I, published in 1965.⁴⁸

Hirmer edited this first Xhosa Hymn and a new and enlarged one together with D. Dargie in 1977.

In 1976 the South African priest composer David Dargie already published, together with Fr. Hirmer, “The training of hymn-leaders” in the series Training for Community Ministries.⁴⁹ Already before the official opening of the Lumko Music Department on January 1, 1979 he held many workshops at Lumko to promote African Church music.

Prior to that date, D. Dargie began the work which was continued by the Lumko Music Department, activating Af-

⁴⁸ DARGIE, op. cit., 67.

⁴⁹ “Dargie’s interest in Xhosa music developed during his days at Lumko Missiology Institute in the then Transkei (Eastern Cape), from where he pioneered the study of music in the indigenous Churches, African methods of music education, and traditional music. Author of many recordings and academic publications, his best known work is *Xhosa Music: Its Instruments and Techniques*. Prof. Dargie taught at UNISA, Rhodes, and the University of Ford Hare, and now divides his time between Germany and South Africa.” D. DARGIE, The Music of Ntsikana, in: C. LUCIA (ed.), *The World of South African Music: A Reader*, New Castle upon Tyne 2005, 109. – D. Dargie specialized in ethnomusicology and obtained a doctorate from Rhodes University in 1986. His dissertation was published under the title: *Techniques of Xhosa Music – A Study Based on the Music of the Lumko District*, Ph.D. thesis, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa, 1987; cf. Singing Freedom: David Dargie and South African Liberation Song, in: C. MICHAEL HAWN, *Gather Into One: Praying and Singing Globally*, Grand Rapids 2003, 104-147. – Hawn writes: “Dargie sees his role as one of helping the Xhosa people and other Africans with whom he works to have a pride in themselves so that they can use their music as a means to liberate themselves.” Ibid., 118.

rican composers to compose music for the Liturgy and other religious purposes. This was done through composition workshops, following the example of pioneers in this work in Zimbabwe. It was at the request of the National Liturgical Commission of the SACBC that the work was begun in South Africa.⁵⁰

The Lumko Music Department Report from 1980 states that since April 1977 thirty composition workshops had been conducted, over about 113 days. These workshops produced about 640 compositions and 163 adaptations in 13 African languages, and 2 European languages. Up to July 1980 the Music Department had already published 30 cassette tape recordings, containing all the workshop music, and a further nine tapes containing variant combinations and music selections. In April 1979 the first 400 compositions, printed by offset, were published. Father David Dargie headed the African Music Department at Lumko for twelve years. Under him Lumko Institute became a promoter of inculturation in the field of African Church music. In just three years over 1600 musicians participated in the Lumko workshops.⁵¹ The publication “Workshops for composing local Church music: methods for conducting music workshops in local congregations” in 1983 was a result of Fr. Dargie’s work at Lumko. Dargie concludes:

It is no doubt excellent that now many congregations are using attractive genuinely African songs, incorporating African rhythm and other musical concepts. What is of greater value to the Church is that through music local congregations are able to contribute to their own development as basic Christian communities. Not only is the music accessible to all who attend worship, it is also something given by themselves for the glory of God.⁵²

It was the vision of Hirmer and Lobinger to promote African music already before they joined the Lumko Missiological Institute. But by engaging D. Dargie Lumko became a platform to promote African music and composers nationwide. This branch has done much for the inculturation of the Christian faith in the Catholic Church in South Africa.

⁵⁰ *Lumko Report 1980*, 11; *Report on the Work of Lumko Institute, Jan. – Dec., 1990*, 9.

⁵¹ Cf. *Lumko Report 1980*, 11.

⁵² DARGIE, op. cit., 68.

12. The Liturgical Centre

After some years of hesitation the leadership and staff of Lumko Institute in 1990 gave a positive answer to the request of the South African bishops. "The Bishops' Board of the SACBC has requested Lumko to set up a liturgical centre at the institute for the purposes of liturgy research, the training of liturgical leaders in the country and to give assistance to parishes in the enrichment of their liturgical celebrations."⁵³ The Institute had quite legitimate concerns regarding the bishops' request to open another department at Lumko Institute. "We hesitated for some years over this project because of its enormity – in commitment of personnel, funds and other resources, to say nothing of the wide area of competence required and large number of people to be contacted and trained."⁵⁴

The Lumko Institute was able to win the Malawian priest anthropologist Fr. Alex Chima, known for his efforts in the field of inculturation in Catholic liturgy in Africa, to spend a minimum of three months a year for three years in South Africa at the service of the new department.

13. Aim of Lumko as Defined in 1980

The aim of Lumko is to be of assistance to the Church in the work of evangelization in Southern Africa by providing help in the key areas such as Christian leadership training, incarnation of the Christian message in the local cultures and cross cultural communication. Lumko tries to react quickly to various needs which arise in building and developing the local Church. In fulfilling its aim, Lumko does not hesitate to try out new initiatives, take on new tasks and pioneer new ventures.⁵⁵

In 1980 Lumko also described its own activities thus:

Lumko is involved in three main inter-related activities: conducting of courses, writing and publishing of materials, and research work. Some of the courses are conducted at Lumko but most of them are conducted at various centres

⁵³ "The project will build on and incorporate much of the work of Fr. Dave Dargie who headed the African Music Department for 12 years." *Report on the Work of Lumko Institute, Jan. – Dec., 1990*, 9.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ *Lumko Institute. Report on the Aims and Activities of the Institute 1980*, 1.

throughout Southern Africa at the invitation of Bishops and other Church leaders. Through its publications, especially its series of training manuals for community Ministries, Lumko has become known far beyond the confines of Southern Africa. We try to ensure the continuing relevance and fruitfulness of our courses and publications through ongoing research and reflection.⁵⁶

This description of the activities was written only eighteen years after the foundation of Lumko and eight years after its new orientation towards lay ministries, and six years after its gospel group promotion activities had started. In retrospect the 1980s can be seen as the most fruitful years of the Lumko Institute. The production of Lumko materials was at its height, they had become a bestseller which had become known and was requested internationally from all parts of the worldwide Catholic Church and even from other Christian Churches.

How did Lumko achieve such worldwide recognition? What was the secret of its obviously extremely successful networking activities? The Lumko Report from 1980 tries to answer these questions, at least to a certain degree, in an open and honest way.

In our activities we try to cooperate as much as possible with other bodies, learning from them and helping them wherever we can. We foster a close relationship with some of the Commissions of the SACBC, the Seminaries, Khanyisa, several of the Universities, various pastoral and catechetical centres, the South African Council of Priests, the Pastoral Conference of the Xhosa Region and also local educational authorities.⁵⁷

This description of Lumko reveals how the relational approach it developed to ministry had contributed to its own success. It shows also how much a relatively small number of staff members, dedicated to such a ministry approach, inspired by a common vision and working for the same mission, was able to achieve.

The 1980 Lumko Report admits that “[o]ur efforts over the years to have more Africans on the Staff have not met with the success we had hoped for.” It must be said that the presence and contribution of “African Precious Blood Sisters have played an increasingly important role in the administration and day-to-day running of the Institute and more recently on the Lumko staff.”⁵⁸ According to the Lumko Report of 1980,

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ *Lumko Report 1980*, 2.

it was very grateful “for the valuable support and continual interest in the progress of the institute” coming from the local ordinary, Bishop Rosenthal and his successor Bishop Rosner SAC⁵⁹ of the diocese of Queenstown. “Since coming under the Bishops’ Conference in 1974 we owe a special debt of gratitude to the Chairman of the Commission for Christian Education and Worship, Archbishop Hurley OMI, and to its tireless, efficient, and most obliging Secretary, Sr. Brigid Flangan, and also to the Secretary General of the SACBC, Fr. D. Scholten OP, all of whom have made our association with the SACBC a happy and fruitful one.”⁶⁰

According to this statement the cooperation with the responsible partner of the SACBC and their staff functioned extremely well, which can be again attributed to the honest and transparent relational approach of the Lumko staff that were faithful to their basic beliefs and vision.

14. The Evaluation Report of the Lumko Missiological Institute of July 1988

14.1 An Overview of the Various Stages of Development

The year 1988 was a remarkable year for the Lumko Institute. The need to professionally evaluate the mission, aim and work of the Lumko Institute was felt. The Lumko Institute had already undergone various stages of development in its history since 1962. The work of the 1960s was mainly geared towards the new incoming missionaries and the training of local catechists, since the previously founded Catechist Training Centre (1958) was made a part of the Institute.⁶¹ The Lumko staff helped the new missionaries to be introduced into pastoral ministry among the various ethnic and linguistic communities of South Africa by providing linguistic and anthropological skills and knowledge for

⁵⁹ Bishop John Baptist Rosner SAC (1908-2008) was born in Germany and ordained priest in 1934. He became a missionary in the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa. In 1972 he succeeded Bishop Rosenthal as Bishop of Queenstown. In 2004 he retired as bishop and died four years later.

⁶⁰ *Lumko Report 1980, 2.*

⁶¹ “This Centre was not taken over by the SACBC when it assumed responsibility for Lumko Institute in 1974. ... For some years the Centre and the Institute functioned independently of each other but as both developed so too did the cooperation between them to their mutual benefit, resulting in one administration for both, with the two staffs forming one community, and finally with all the buildings and other facilities being shared as needs dictated.” *Lumko Report 1980, 2.*

them. Part of the main task of the Lumko staff in the 1960s was also to translate the Catechism and compose liturgical Song and Prayer books. "Its main area of endeavour was in developing learning programs in some five languages: Xhosa, Zulu, Tswana, Sotho, and Afrikaans. It had pioneered new methodology in language teaching."⁶² Such functions were taken over by South African universities. The lack of new missionaries coming to South Africa since the early 1970s demanded a new orientation of the Institute.

With the opening of a new Pastoral department in 1973 by Lobinger a new era was begun in Lumko. The implementation of the new pastoral vision of ministry according to the communion ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council gave a new direction and purpose to the Institute. The Gospel Group Department started in 1977 by O. Hirmer and the African Church Music Department started in 1978 under the care of the South African priest-composer Dave Dargie were, besides the Pastoral Department, very visible and efficacious instruments in promoting a new and contextualized approach to ministry for the dioceses in South Africa and, as time proved, far beyond the country. In 1982 the Faith and Life department was added under the care of Fr. Richard Broderick MSC. The task of this new department was to care for justice and peace issues as an integral part of Christian faith and life. When the SACBC took over the official and full responsibility for Lumko, the shift was immediately felt, because it was not really a change of direction but a needed recognition by the SACBC and a taking over of the responsibility, which in the long run could not be shouldered by the Bishop of Queenstown and the MSC missionaries alone.

The shift of the location of the Lumko Institute from rural Eastern Cape Province to a place near Johannesburg in 1985 was a real watershed experience for the Lumko Institute and its staff.

The isolation of its first location had not only had disadvantages. The staff had a lot of time to do research and found the time to prepare all the Lumko publications of those years: The staff members had the time to concentrate on the courses and to relate to and communicate with the course participants. "Had it not been for the remoteness of the Institute, it is probable that the enormous output of written material would have never seen the light of day."⁶³

Even before the move to Germiston in Transvaal at the end of 1985, the Lumko Institute had developed a strong network of relationships with all the South African dioceses and the religious communities work-

⁶² WILSON, *op. cit.*, 25-26.

⁶³ PRIOR, *op. cit.*, 17.

ing in the country. Also a network of exchange and service to African Churches outside South Africa developed before 1985.

It is interesting to observe how much all the Pastoral Institutes in the non-Western world kept very close contacts and were ready to assist each other in their respective mission and ministry. In Africa such contacts and mutual help were strongly developed with the GABA Pastoral Institute at Eldoret in Kenya, the Pastoral Institute of AMECEA. But good relationships were also developed with NBCLC, the National Biblical, Catechetical and Liturgical Centre of the Indian Bishops' Conference in Bangalore, the East Asian Pastoral Institute of the Jesuits in Manila and even the ecumenical Melanesian Institute for Socio-Pastoral Service in Goroka, Papua New Guinea. All those pastoral institutes in the non-Western world were deeply involved in assisting their respective local Churches to find new ways of contextualizing and inculturating the Gospel message among their peoples and non-Western cultures.

Lumko had concentrated on awareness programmes and very practical skills that would help the community leaders and the community members to build up a participatory parish community as a community of communities. This was called a "New Way of Being Church," a slogan which many regional and continental bishops' conferences in Africa, Asia and Latin America had made their own.

The issue of transferring Lumko Institute was already discussed in the 1970s, but did not yet get the needed support of the majority of the Lumko staff. That did not stop the debate on the disadvantages and advantages of the location in a distant rural place or in a more populated urban context. In 1985 a decision was made to take the risk to transfer the Institute to Germiston in Transvaal,⁶⁴ where the SACBC was able to rent a suitable property from the Oblates of Mary Immaculate to host the National Pastoral Institute Lumko. The new location at Germiston had the advantage that the National Pastoral Institute was now nearer to the majority of the Catholic population, which was to be found in Transvaal and nearby Natal.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Nowadays Germiston is part of the 1994 newly founded province of Gauteng. The former Transvaal province ceased to exist after the fall of the Apartheid System in South Africa in 1994. "The new Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces lie fully within the borders of the old Transvaal as does most of the North West and also a tiny segment of KwaZulu-Natal." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transvaal_Province (21.08.2013)

⁶⁵ "According to the government census taken in May 1980, of the 2,930,092 Roman Catholics in the country, 33% lived in Transvaal and a further 27.6% lived in [neighbouring] Natal." PRIOR, *op. cit.*, 17. – The former Natal province was in 1994 united with the former homeland of KwaZulu and nowadays is the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

The findings of the Evaluation Report of 1988 indicated that “Lumko made an option for the pastoral training of black communities. The decision was based on the fact that a disproportionate number of Church personnel were working with Whites,”⁶⁶ who lived mainly in urban areas. The Evaluation Report saw that Lumko material and courses should address more the increasing urban society and its members. The Report of 1988 addressed

[t]he chief problems confronting Christian consciences in South Africa at present [which] are of the political order: they concern the acquisition and use of political power on the part of a clearly defined minority and the consequent powerlessness of the majority ... A Christian response to the challenge presented by this situation of political injustice can only be worked out with the aid of a biblical hermeneutic which involves a re-reading of the Bible in social and historical terms. This reading of the Bible is new to most Catholics who were used to individualistic and moralistic readings of Scripture.⁶⁷

With the Amos Programmes for Small Christian Communities, published by O. Hirmer in 1984, Lumko already emphasized such a Scripture reading approach which should animate a community to get more involved in concrete peace and justice issues of the society. But the third recommendation is nevertheless justified, which says:

The publication and courses of Lumko Missiological Institute should: be clearly focused on the justice issues of Southern Africa; incorporate, explain and develop the statements of the SACBC related to apartheid and other forms of injustice; support Small Christian Communities; relate to the urban population of South Africa; cater for the Youth of Southern Africa; cater also for the pastoral needs of educated black and white people in Southern Africa; be frequently evaluated and monitored for relevance by means of workshops attended by those who use the training materials and those who have attended Lumko courses; enlist the services of experts in black theology ...⁶⁸

With this statement the Report has clearly indicated the neglected fields which should be given more attention and care in the mission the

⁶⁶ *An Evaluation of the Lumko Missiological Institute, South Africa, July 1988*, 15.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Recommendation 3, 12.

Lumko Institute had received from the SACBC for the Church and the society in Southern Africa. One question remains unanswered. Can one Pastoral Institute working for all the dioceses of the SACBC do justice to all the mentioned pastoral fields, or has it to be selective in specific pastoral fields? But the recommendation to focus more on the urban population, and especially on the Youth and the educated population, to address more the injustice issues, especially those related to the apartheid system of those days in South Africa, were well founded and had to be given more attention and space in the Lumko work.

15. The Directors and Staff Members of the Lumko Institute

The following served the Institute as directors since its beginning:

1962-1963: Fr. Sean O’Riordan MSC

1963-1972: Fr. Patrick Whooley MSC

1973-1974: Fr. Arnold Fischer SAC

1974-1981: Fr. Hugh Slattery MSC

1981-1989: Fr. Richard Broderick MSC

1990-1999: Fr. Anselm Prior OFM

2000-June 2001: Acting director Fr. Sean O’Leary MAfr

Since June 2001: Fr. Gabriel Afagbegee SVD

The English Franciscan Fr. Anselm Prior⁶⁹ followed and continued from 1986 the Lumko method of training lay community leaders.

Father Michael Wüstenberg, a German Fidei Donum priest working since 1992 in South African rural parishes, was a member of the Lumko staff from 2003 to 2006; he taught theology at the St. John Vianney Seminary in Pretoria. On December 17, 2007 he was appointed bishop of Aliwal, where he succeeded Bishop Lobinger. In 2001 Wüstenberg obtained a doctorate in theology from the University of South Africa (UNISA). His theme was “The ‘big things’ bowed: the community ministry of Catholic Funeral leaders in a rural South African context.” His

⁶⁹ Laurence Paul Prior was born in 1944 in Ipswich, England. In 1960 he joined the Franciscans. As a friar he has the name *Anselm*. After his ordination in 1967 he came to South Africa, where for six years he did pastoral work in a parish in Natal. Then he attended the 9-month pastoral course at the AMECEA Pastoral Institute Gaba in Eldoret, Kenya, before he became the director of Religious Education in the diocese of Dundee for ten years. Before joining the Lumko staff at the end of 1986, in 1985-86 he did a Masters in Pastoral Theology at the Loyola University in Chicago. From 1990 to 1999 he served Lumko as director. In 1993 he completed a Masters in Missiology and in 2001 a doctorate in Missiology at the University of South Africa. In 2000 he became a lecturer for Pastoral Theology at the St. John Vianney Major Seminary in Pretoria.

study was done among the Xhosa people in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa.⁷⁰

In the late 1990s Fr. Guy Theunis and Fr. Sean O’Leary,⁷¹ two members of the Society of Missionaries of Africa, joined the staff of Lumko. Father Guy Theunis, a Belgian member of the Society, worked at Lumko Institute from September 1998 until May 2003. Theunis and O’Leary have contributed to various Lumko publications.⁷² The Lumko staff member Prisca Radebe coordinated the translation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church into several South African languages, as it was decided by the SACBC, after its English publication in 1994.

16. The New Context of Lumko in a Post-Apartheid Society

“Between 1980 and 1990 the number of Christians belonging to mainline Churches such as Methodist, Catholic, Dutch Reformed Church declined by 25% from 12.1 million to 9.1 million. During the same period the number of Christians belonging to those Churches offering religious and faith healing increased by 23% from 5.6 million to

⁷⁰ M. WUESTENBERG, A Comparison between the SCCs of Burkina Faso with those of Southern Africa: *AFER* 37 (1995) 180-186. – Michael Wüstenberg was born in 1954 in Dortmund, Germany, and ordained a Catholic priest for the diocese of Hildesheim in 1982. Since 1992 he worked as *Fidei Donum* priest in South Africa. Besides being parish priest in Sterkspruit, Aliwal diocese, he completed a PhD in missiology at the University of South Africa in 2001. From 2001 to 2003 he was Vicar General of Aliwal diocese; from 2003 to 2006 he was a staff member at Lumko Institute in Germiston. In 2007 he started teaching at St. John Vianney Seminary in Pretoria. In December 2007 Pope Benedict XVI appointed him bishop of Aliwal. In the SACBC he was made responsible for Lumko Institute.

⁷¹ Cf. contributions of Fr. Sean O’Leary, The Peace Aspect of Justice and Peace Work: South Africa: *Petit Echo* 1007 (2010) 34-35; Lumko, Instituto Pastoral de la Conferencia Episcopal Sudafricana: *Misiones Extranjeras* 196/197 (2003) 460-467; The Struggle for Democracy and the Role of the Church in South Africa: *Petit Echo* 1030 (2012) 211-213; *Understanding Reconciliation*, No. 33B – Social Awareness Series, Germiston 2000.

⁷² E.g. B.-R. TIERNAN/L. ENSING, *Leadership for Growth. A Handbook for the Called to Serve Program*, 2000, and *Marriage. A Community Reflection*, No. 035B – Community Ministry Series, published in 2002 and the *Leadership for Growth Participants’ Book for the Called to Serve program*, No. 151P – Called to Serve Series, 2004. – Fr. Guy Theunis has been for some years now in charge of the renewal course centre St. Anne in Jerusalem. Since 2008 Fr. O’Leary is director of the newly founded Denis Hurley Peace Institute of the SACBC in Pretoria.

6.9 million.”⁷³ These figures indicate a major trend among South African Christians looking for healing and reconciliation in a society with much violence and conflicts.

Lumko never operated in a neutral zone, it fulfilled its mission for the Church and society always in a concrete cultural and political context, and that was the Republic of South Africa with its policy of racial separation and exclusion of the majority of its population in the decision-making process. The majority of the Lumko staff members were missionaries and priests from abroad, who had opted to work for the Black community in South Africa. Lumko had in its first decade two major groups of clients: first, the catechists, mainly Xhosa-speaking South Africans, and secondly, the new missionaries, who were trained in South African languages and culture to serve normally Black African communities in South Africa. Naturally Lumko had a bias for the Black community in South Africa. Oswald Hirmer admitted once that he and Lobinger had to undergo a learning process in their pastoral-missionary approach from a colonial attitude of implementing a European Church model to discovering and promoting a local Church.⁷⁴ The Catholic Church in South Africa had opposed the Apartheid system in principle for four decades. In June 1952, shortly after the erection of the hierarchy in South Africa which took place in 1951, the bishops of South Africa made a public statement on Race Relations, followed by a statement on Apartheid in 1957, where the bishops declared:

From this fundamental evil of apartheid flow the innumerable offences against charity and justice that are its inevitable consequences, for men must be hurt and injustice must be done when the practice of discrimination is enthroned as the supreme principle of the welfare of the state, the ultimate law from which all other laws derive.⁷⁵

There was no lack of declarations from the side of the bishops, but the influence those statements had especially on the white Catholic population had been very limited. After 1976 the Catholic Church under Archbishop Denis Hurley more and more lost its fear to be actively in-

⁷³ S. BATE, Does Religious Healing Work?: *NZM* 55 (1999) 259; cf. ID., Inculturation in Process: The Influence of the Coping-Healing on the Attitudes and Praxis of Main-Line Churches in South Africa: *NZM* 55 (1999) 208-228.

⁷⁴ See O. HIRMER, Von der Kolonialkirche zur afrikanischen Identität: *Ordensnachrichten* 27 (1988) 5-13; cf. STEFFEN, Hirmer, 535-545.

⁷⁵ <http://www.sabc.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/STATEMENT-ON-APARTHEID-.pdf> (12-01-2014)

volved in the field of politics and it started to give moral support to the Black Consciousness Movement.⁷⁶

The 1988 Evaluation report already made the recommendation that Lumko should focus more on social problems. The booklet “Discipleship in God’s Family. Reflections on Our Call to Development, Empowerment and Growth in Christ” in the Training for Community Ministries series No. 21 published in 1996 aimed at addressing social issues in South Africa. In the preface the authors wrote:

In the new South Africa, in particular, we may well say that we are experiencing a Kairos, a special time when a number of forces seem to be coming together and at one and the same time to open opportunities for unprecedented change in society and in the Church It is in the spirit of working together for the holistic development of the peoples of Southern Africa in the light of the Gospel that we offer this book as a tool to help communities develop themselves.⁷⁷

The SACBC had decided during their plenary meeting in January 1996:

The Catholic Church in Southern Africa actively supports and promotes the vision and philosophy of reconstruction and development which seeks to redress economic imbalances and inequalities, and further resolves, within this context, to help to promote human well-being comprehen-

⁷⁶ Cf. P. STEFFEN, Für eine friedliche Lösung. Kirche und Rassenpolitik in Südafrika: *Steyl Korrespondenz* 11:2 (1983) 5-7; ID., *Der Rassenkonflikt in der Republik Südafrika und die Stellungnahmen der katholischen Kirche*, Wissenschaftliche Abschlussarbeit im Fach Missionstheologie an der Phil.-Theol. Hochschule SVD St. Augustin, Oktober 1982. Cf. D. HURLEY, *Evangelisation Today in Southern Africa*, Durban, SA 1977; ID., Catholic Social Teaching and Ideology, in: A. PRIOR (ed.), *Catholic in Apartheid Society*, Cape Town, SA 1982; ID., The Role of the Churches and the Responsibility of the Faithful in South Africa: *Louvain Studies* 13:2 (1988) 99-108. – Denis Eugene Hurley (1915-2004) was born in Cape Town, the son of Irish immigrants. In 1931 he joined the Congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) in South Africa. From 1933 to 1940 he did his philosophy and theology studies at the Angelicum and the Gregoriana in Rome. In 1946 he was appointed Vicar Apostolic of Durban, Natal, SA and in 1951 he was made archbishop of Durban. In 1952 he became the first president of SACBC, a position he held until 1961 and he became president of SACBC for a second time from 1981 to 1988. In 1992 he retired as Archbishop of Durban.

⁷⁷ A. REYNOLDS/A. PRIOR, *Discipleship in God’s Family*, Training for Community Ministries No. 21, Germiston 1996, 6.

sively in its economic, social, cultural and spiritual aspects.⁷⁸

The bishops had decided to cooperate with the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), which had been worked out by the African National Congress (ANC) and its Alliance partners, but they mentioned its weakness in the cultural, spiritual and moral aspects.

Two more publications focused clearly on social issues and aimed at promoting more awareness in the Catholic communities for those issues. In 2000 Anselm Prior published in the Social Awareness Series: "Social Problems: What Can We Do? Amos Programmes," and Guy Theunis and Gabriel Neville published in 2001: "Acting against Poverty. An Economic Justice Workbook on HIV/Aids, Democracy and Peace for Parish Groups."⁷⁹ What D. Dargie stated in 1989 has proved to be correct and continues to be valid: "Just as the Christian Churches stand by the Xhosa and other peoples of South Africa in their struggle for civil and political rights, so too should the Church play a part in the cultural liberation of the people. The results can only benefit the World Church."⁸⁰

17. The International Course

The Lumko publications, especially the series Training for Community Ministries, were not only in high demand in Southern Africa, but on the whole African continent and increasingly were ordered from Church people involved in pastoral formation and renewal in Asia, Latin America and Oceania, orders even came from Europe and North America. The readers of the Lumko publications asked to be introduced to the Lumko materials. Lumko staff members could travel to certain places to respond to such demands, but it proved to be better to organize an introductory course to the Lumko method in Southern Africa itself. In 1986 the first International Course took place in Lesotho. The South African Government was not giving the needed visa for interested course participants. Lumko work was observed and their methodology to train community leaders was seen as being a threat to the oppressive Apartheid system of the government. Only after the collapse of the Apartheid system could the courses be held in South Africa itself. The

⁷⁸ SACBC, Jan. 1996, Resolution 4.2, quoted in *ibid.*, 10.

⁷⁹ A. PRIOR, *Social Problems: What Can We Do? Amos Programmes*, No. 024B – Social Awareness Series, Germiston 2000; G. THEUNIS/G. NEVILLE, *Acting against Poverty. An Economic Justice Workbook on HIV/Aids, Democracy and Peace for Parish Groups*, No. 34B – Social Awareness Series, Delmenville 2001.

⁸⁰ DARGIE, *op. cit.*, 68.

influence Lumko exercised increased considerably with the introduction of the annual International Course. Between 1986 and 1991 alone, 160 participants from 25 countries took part in this course. Lumko courses could now be held all over the world. Martin Wilson MSC describes the goal of the course he had followed in 1987:

The general object of the course was to introduce us to the various kits that Lumko had produced to enable parishes and Small Christian Communities to fully live the gospel in belief, worship and action. The specific object was to enable us to train group facilitators in the use of the kits. Pastoral teams trained in this method act as animators of the Christian communities. This means that on a purely practical level priests and pastoral teams can multiply their effectiveness in these days of priest shortage by sharing out their ministry with others.⁸¹

Wilson continues to describe the method:

The method followed was one of learning by doing. There was very little formal lecturing, and what there was was always accompanied by poster displays and “chalk talk” ... Such a method drew upon the personal experience of the participants ... It was an intriguing combination of practice and real life. Our liturgies were both learning experiences and the real thing. The stable method was: Show, Do and Evaluate.⁸²

18. The Constitution of the Lumko Institute of 2003

18.1 Its Objectives and Activities

According to the Constitution of the Lumko Institute of 2003: “The Institute carries out an educational, social and religious research.” The document continues saying:

Aware of the contribution the Institute has made to the world Church, members of staff shall make themselves available for

⁸¹ WILSON, op. cit., 8. – The course of 1987 for instance had 26 members, except for one Australian Sacred Heart priest all came from the African continent: eleven African priests from 5 African countries and eight missionary priests working in Africa, one Catechist from Zimbabwe. Except for Fr. G. Afagbegee SVD from Ghana, who worked in Botswana, the African priests belonged to the secular clergy. Cf. *ibid.*, 6.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 8.

courses in other countries, provided that this is not to the detriment of the needs of the SACBC region. To this end the Institute shall: Provide training courses for Church Leaders (laity, religious and priests) in:

- a) community ministries;
- b) parochial leadership;
- c) social justice and development ministry;
- d) the relationship between faith and life;
- e) Christian formation;
- f) Catechetics;
- g) Adult leadership training;
- h) the development of an inculturated liturgy;
- i) the promotion of the biblical pastoral apostolate;
- j) develop and publish resource materials; in the light of pastoral needs, to conduct research in the fields of culture, intercultural influence and human relations generally; [and] undertake any work which falls within its general purpose and competence in a spirit of cooperation with various pastoral agencies of the Church within the territory of the SACBC.⁸³

This official declaration of the SACBC bishops of 2003 describes in a very detailed way the task and aim of Lumko Institute in the 21st century.

18.2 The Vision and Mission Statement of 2003

We find there also the vision and mission statement of Lumko. In the Vision Statement we find the following:

We wish to respond with initiatives which challenge the Church to renew itself. And so we promote a Church which is a prophetic sign of God's Reign and which acts as an instrument for the transformation of society. We wish to build community and trustful relationships among its members based upon equal dignity. We wish to promote local leaders who serve in the spirit of Jesus (cf. Mark 9:33-35; John 13:12-17).⁸⁴

The Mission Statement in this document has sections on: aim, target group, means and method.

⁸³ SACBC, *The Constitution of the Lumko Institute*, 2003. Appendix A, 9.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 14.

I Aim

The aim of Lumko is to promote a Church which is a sign and instrument of God's reign in a society struggling for liberation. This aim encompasses three areas of action and reflection:

A Helping the Church to move towards becoming a Communion of Communities (which finds its best expression in Small Christian Communities) where:

- the Gospel is the source of its faith;
- people are invited to the fullness of their humanity;
- human dignity is respected;
- there is work for justice and full human promotion;
- traditional values are reflected upon and appreciated;
- people are given a real experience that they are the Church;
- people are invited to engage in ministry within the Christian Community;
- people gather to celebrate life and faith in liturgy and worship.

B Working towards a leadership of service which:

- emerges from the active participation of the people themselves in the mission of the Church;
- is prophetic and enables the people to search for the will of God and implement it together.

C Promoting communities which share the aspirations of those who work for justice and respond:

- by being communities in which a new society becomes visible;
- by addressing immediate social issues, together with others.

II Target group

We address our efforts to pastoral workers whom we envisage primarily as animators who promote a Community Church at parish level.

III Means

We achieve our aim by:

- studying Church teaching and researching the needs of the people and the socio-political situation in the light of God's Word;
- offering courses and workshops both in Lumko and elsewhere;
- preparing and writing resource material;

- making publications available to Christian communities in Southern Africa and beyond;
- promoting African creativity in worship, liturgy and music; by inspiring local talent through group work backed up by research.

IV Method

In giving courses and preparing material we use an adult education method which includes life experience, input and modern media. Other methods are used as appropriate. Emphasis is put on skill training and theological reflection.⁸⁵

The very elaborate vision and mission statement builds on Lumko's half century of experience in the field of teaching, reflection, research and dialogue with ordinary Christians, theologians, anthropologists and bishops alike coming from the various ethnic, linguistic and cultural communities in South Africa and beyond on the international level. It shows what a rich experience Lumko had accumulated since 1962.

19. The Contribution Lumko Has Made

19.1 Lumko at the Service of the SACBC

Since its inception the Lumko Institute has been at the service of the dioceses situated in the Republic of South Africa and those in Botswana and Swaziland, which all together were members of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference.⁸⁶

Aim of the Conference is to foster the spirit of communion within the universal Church and between the particular churches. The particular aim of the Conference is to provide the bishops of the territories mentioned above with facilities for consultation and united action in such matters of

⁸⁵ Ibid., 14-15.

⁸⁶ "**Nature** – The Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (which is comprised of the Catholic Bishops of Botswana, South Africa and Swaziland) is an organisation, approved by the Holy See, of diocesan Bishops and others equivalent in Canon Law, serving in the ecclesiastical Provinces of Cape Town, Durban, Pretoria, Johannesburg and Bloemfontein, in and through which members exercise their pastoral office jointly through the pooling of wise counsel and experiences in matters concerning their common interest in order to promote that greater good which the Church offers humankind especially through formation and programmes of the apostolate which are fittingly adapted to the circumstances of the age." <http://www.sacbc.org.za/about-us/> (12-01-2014)

common interest to the Church as consultation and co-operation with other hierarchies; the fostering of priestly and religious vocations; the doctrinal, apostolic and pastoral formation of the clergy, religious and laity; the promotion of missionary activity, catechetics, liturgy, lay apostolate, ecumenism, development, justice and reconciliation, social welfare, schools, hospitals, the apostolate of the press, radio, television, and other means of social communication; and any other necessary activity.⁸⁷

The declared aim of the SACBC shows how much the aim and mission of Lumko Institute was tied to the aim of the bishops of Southern Africa, especially in the field of pastoral promotion of the clergy, religious and laity, of lay apostolate, catechetics, justice and reconciliation and social welfare.

Within the Commission for the Laity a Department of Ministries headed by Fr. Lobinger was established by the SACBC in the 1970s. Lobinger and with him the whole Lumko staff received the support of the SACBC bishops for their ministry formation programmes and community building activities. In a similar way Fr. Hirmer was put in charge of the animation and coordination of the Bible apostolate for all dioceses of the Southern African bishops' conference. The Bible Sharing methods developed and promoted by Lumko as the core element of building Neighbourhood Christian Communities became in a similar way part of the pastoral approach favoured by the SACBC. "In this way the idea of a community-oriented Church began to be heard by the bishops of the country on a regular basis. At the meeting of the Bishops' Conference in February 1974 Lobinger and Balink addressed the assembly on the question of ministry."⁸⁸

The bishops established a commission to study the question of ministry. As a result of this study on ministry the bishops in 1976 made the Small Christian Communities their pastoral priority. On Pentecost 1989, a few years before the fall of the Apartheid system, the SACBC published a Pastoral Plan called "Community Serving Humanity." In that document the South African bishops share the vision they have for the Church and society in South Africa: "Our plan is to be a Church which is a true community where all feel they are brothers and sisters. Our plan is to be a Church which serves all people helping them to a life

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ PRIOR, *A Communion of Communities*, 15.

which is truly human, truly formed in the image of God.”⁸⁹ The bishops do not speak concretely about the problems of their society, but they reveal what they are hoping for.

The Pastoral Plan of the Catholic Church has indicated two key Gospel values which assume particular importance at this time. The building of community and the mission of service within the greater society indicate the way in which the local Community of Faith will be able to authentically fulfil its role as an evangelizing community seeking to transform the society and the cultures which comprise it. “Community serving humanity” provides a model within which the Gospel may be effectively preached today as well as an important content of such preaching.⁹⁰

The plan shows also the great influence Lumko had in those years on the SACBC.⁹¹ The same can be said about the document the SACBC published in 1994: “We Are the Church. Pastoral Directive on Co-responsibility in the Church.”⁹²

In 2013 the Lumko Institute in the name of the SACBC edited a paper called “Piloting Operationalizing of SACBC ad intra Priority ‘A.’ Strategic Plan.” In that paper the bishops say under “Ad Intra”: “Mindful of the challenge of Africae Munus and the call for a new evangelisation, the Conference recognises the need to deepen the faith and Catholic identity of our people so as to promote a real sense of ownership of the faith and of the Church which will be expressive of its African nature, and commits itself to the following priorities:

A. With regard to the

“Religious education and the formation of adults, youth and the family, the Conference commits itself to:

1. Implementing a vision of the Church as a community with a strong emphasis on developing a sense of belonging and ownership among the people;
2. Focussing on the family as the primary source and locus for developing faith, spirituality and Christian

⁸⁹ SACBC, *The Community Serving Humanity*. Pastoral Plan of the Catholic Church in Southern Africa, Pentecost 1989, Series: Pastoral Action No. 50, Pretoria 1989, 5.

⁹⁰ BATE, *Evangelisation in the South African Context*, 102.

⁹¹ SACBC, *The Community Serving Humanity*.

⁹² SACBC, *We Are the Church. Pastoral Directive on Co-responsibility in the Church*, Pretoria 1994.

living so that our communities can truly be a leaven in society;

3. Promoting well trained and motivated laity who will participate in leading their communities towards self-reliance and to evangelise the socio-economic and political realm;
4. A catechetical programme which promotes the growth of a personal relationship with Jesus through prayer, reflection on the word of God and teaching of the Church, including Catholic Social Teaching, and through faith sharing and witness to Christ in parish communities, sodalities, Small Christian Communities and professional bodies, e.g. teachers and nurses.”⁹³

This declaration also shows clearly the impact of the Lumko practical theology on the pastoral policy and priority setting of the SACBC. “Between 1994 and 1996, to ascertain the progress made in initiating, nourishing and sustaining SCCs (particularly their strengths and weaknesses), Lumko Institute conducted a research by visiting SCCs and other groups in all the dioceses of the SACBC ... Between April and September 2006, Lumko Institute carried out another research – ‘issues finding’ visitation to dioceses of the SACBC to interview Bishops, Administrators and some key diocesan personnel.”⁹⁴ Finally the bishops write:

Over the years Lumko Institute has promoted the Second Vatican Council’s vision of Ecclesiology of Communion and the General Directory for Catechetics (GDC) directive for all catechesis to be modelled on the baptismal catechumenate (RCIA). It has promoted the vision and exercise of leadership after the example of Jesus Christ and championed efforts at involving the laity in their appropriate ministerial functions in the Church. These, the Institute has done and continues to do through its formation/training programmes and its development and production of formation/training materials geared towards: “providing the practical ‘know how’ and ‘tools’ for the systematic initiation, revitalizing, strengthening and consolidating SCCs in order to realize the vision of Church as community of communities.”⁹⁵

⁹³ SACBC, *Piloting Operationalizing of SACBC ad intra Priority “A.” Strategic Plan*, Germiston/Johannesburg 2013, 2.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

The whole paper shows how much Lumko Institute was at the service of the SACBC and its pastoral priorities.

19.2 The Essence of the Contribution of the Lumko Institute

The English Franciscan priest Anselm Prior joined the Lumko staff in 1987. From 1990 onwards he was the director of Lumko for ten years. Prior could fully identify himself with the ministry, vision and concept developed by the Lumko staff, especially by the outstanding promoters of its ministry and practical biblical formation, teaching and publications. He followed up the work and vision of Fritz Lobinger by re-editing and improving his publications on ministry and community building. In the 1990s Lumko Institute became very much identified with his name. A long list of Lumko publications carries his name. In 1993 he had submitted his dissertation "A Communion of Communities: The Mission and Growth of a Local Church as Reflected in the Lumko Institute."⁹⁶ In his doctoral dissertation from 2001 he gave a very synthetic description of what Lumko Institute had done and achieved:

The teaching of this institute, as presented in its workshops and its publications, presents a distinctive ecclesial style. The Lumko Institute staff has taken the documents of Vatican II as the basis of their teaching and over the years have situated this, along with post-Vatican II thinking, in the context of the Church in South Africa. For their workshop they have employed an educational methodology from Paulo Freire and the corporate world. The fact that they have been successful is attested to by the enormous interest that the Institute's publications have aroused throughout the world. To date, these books have been sold in 78 countries.⁹⁷

In this dissertation Fr. Prior also gave the reason why he had undertaken his research and what goal he pursued with it:

A further pressure I had to keep in mind was the possibility of an expectation on the part of the Lumko Institute's staff that I justify the Institute's theory with the result of my research. The Institute enjoys a widespread influence in the

⁹⁶ By L. P. Prior, submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master in the subject of Missiology at the University of South Africa (Supervisor: Prof. J. N. J. Kritzinger), June 1993.

⁹⁷ *Leadership as Service of a Parish in Mission* by L. P. PRIOR submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Doctor in Theology in the subject of Missiology at the University of South Africa (Promoter: Prof. J. N. J. Kritzinger), June 2001, manuscript, 12.

world, especially in Africa and Asia. Dozens of people travel from as far as Sri Lanka and Papua New Guinea, from Ghana and Ethiopia to attend the annual international course which is conducted in South Africa. During this busy month the programmes, methodology and underlying theology of Lumko are represented and adapted by the participants to suit their own cultures. The result of each course is a group of very satisfied participants who pass on their enthusiasm to others. Many of those who visit the Institute keep in touch with the staff, so there is an on-going correspondence of some magnitude. On top of that, a full-time member of staff is required to handle the sale of Lumko Institute's publications throughout the world. All the staff are enthusiastic about their contribution to Church leadership and they receive a lot of affirmation.⁹⁸

19.3 The Contribution Lumko Made to Studies in Practical Theology

Lumko animated a number of people to do further studies on the Lumko work and approach. Up to now no academic research study has been published in English. Nearly all academic research work has been done at German universities. Two of the studies have been published.

In July 1989 Norbert Kasper completed his dissertation at the Theological Faculty of the Albert Ludwig University in Freiburg, Germany, entitled "Pastoral Partnership in the World Church: Elements of a Methodological Foundation for a Comparative Pastoral Theology Shown in the Comparison between the Lumko Missiological Institute in South Africa and the International Catholic Mission Society *Missio* in the Federal Republic of Germany." The subtitle reveals the actual focus of this study.⁹⁹ The first half of this work deals with the theory for a comparative pastoral theology. The author writes also about the different places of doing theology, and lists university or seminary theology, epis-

⁹⁸ Ibid., 13. – Furthermore Prior also indicated the limitedness of the intended direction the Lumko staff had taken over the years: "To suggest, in a study of a parish where a conscious effort has been made to put the Lumko vision into practise, that Lumko does not have all the answers, or that its training needs to take another direction, could be difficult for the staff to accept." Ibid.

⁹⁹ N. KASPER, *Pastorale Partnerschaft in der Weltkirche. Elemente einer methodischen Grundlegung für eine vergleichende Pastoraltheologie gezeigt am Vergleich zwischen dem Lumko Missiological Institute in Süd-Afrika und dem Internationalen Katholischen Missionswerk Missio in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Institut für Praktische Theologie, Zulassungsarbeit zum Erwerb des Theologischen Diploms an der Theol. Fakultät der Albert-Ludwig-Universität Freiburg im Breisgau, Juli 1989, 239 pp., unpublished manuscript.

copal theology, institute's theology and basic theology, a model he took mainly from Hermann Janssen's 1981 article on this issue.¹⁰⁰ The second part of Kasper's study is called Practical implementation – comparative pastoral theology between Africa and West Germany as a pastoral partnership.¹⁰¹

In this part he describes and analyses the foundation and structure of the Lumko model and the vision of Lumko as a community-oriented service. Kasper describes the major Lumko apostolates in the field of Bible sharing, community ministry training and renewal of the community through the communion of communities image and praxis of the Church. At the end comes a reflection on how praxis is changed in the Lumko community model.

Matthias Helms was the second student of theology who wrote his final paper in theology on the Lumko Institute in 1992. His focus was on the image of the Church as community of communities. The title of his thesis is: "Church as a Community of Communities. The Church Image that Underlies the Publications of the Missiological Institute Lumko (South Africa)."¹⁰² Therefore his study deals in much more detail with the work and methodology of Lumko Institute.¹⁰³ Helms was the first non-staff member who has done very intensive research on the Lumko methodology. For this he investigates the Institute's origin and development, all its publications and the underlying theological thrust. A special section deals with the Small Christian Communities; a further section treats the topics "Bible and Life," Faith and Justice, community leaders, formation, and the last chapter reflects on "Stages of growth."¹⁰⁴ It is a pity that the author made the results of his study available only in an article in a homiletic review.

Klaus Vellguth published his doctoral thesis under the title: "A New Way of Being Church." As a leader of the theological department of the German branch of the Pontifical Mission Society, Missio Aachen, the author studies the new pastoral approaches of the Churches in Africa

¹⁰⁰ Cf. H. JANSSEN, Theologische Durchblicke. Entwicklungen und Ebenen der Theologie der Dritten Welt: *Theologie der Gegenwart* 24 (1981) 118-124.

¹⁰¹ Praktische Durchführung – Vergleichende Pastoraltheologie zwischen Afrika und Westdeutschland als pastorale Partnerschaft, 109ff.

¹⁰² M. HELMS, *Kirche als Gemeinschaft von Gemeinschaften. Das Kirchenbild, das den Publikationen des Missiologischen Institutes Lumko (Südafrika) zugrundeliegt*, Abschlussarbeit zur Erlangung des Diploms in Theologie an der Philosophisch-Theologischen Hochschule SVD St. Augustin 1992, unpublished manuscript.

¹⁰³ M. HELMS, Kirche als Gemeinschaft von Gemeinschaften: *Die Anregung* 45 (1993) 34-37, 75-79.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

and Asia. Especially the contextualized Lumko method known under the name Asian Integral Pastoral Approach (AsIPA) is the focus of his thesis which he wrote under Prof. Ottmar Fuchs, the pastoral theologian of the Catholic Faculty of the University of Tübingen. The subtitle indicates more precisely the argument the thesis followed: “The Beginning and Spread of the Small Christian Communities (SCCs) and Bible-sharing in Africa and Asia.”¹⁰⁵ The thesis is based on the author’s conviction that the Asian Integral Pastoral Approach serves as a model not only for Asia, but for Western Churches as well. After the introductory chapter, the author develops his research in seven further chapters. The second chapter is called “fundamental studies.” Vellguth examines the learning process the two Fidei Donum priests F. Lobinger and O. Hirmer had undergone since their arrival in South African parishes in 1956 and 1957. Both experienced a colonial missionary approach in the parishes of South Africa. Vatican II had brought a new fresh wind into the stagnancy of parishes which relied totally on the activities of their priestly leaders, or in other words which lacked a formation of community members to be co-responsible and participative community members. The third chapter “The emergence of the pastoral approach in Africa”¹⁰⁶ deals with the emergence of a proper African pastoral approach in South Africa as we can find it in the emerging Small Christian Communities as well as in the development of Gospel Sharing methods in South Africa and their dissemination in Africa during the 1970s and 1980s. The author focuses especially on the developments in South Africa, where Lobinger and Hirmer became protagonists of this development. As a result of this community renewal movement the South African Bishops’ Conference was able in 1989 to publish the pastoral plan “Community Serving Humanity” after a twelve-year consultation programme.¹⁰⁷ In his fourth chapter (147-175) Vellguth presents a case study about Small Christian Communities in Sterkspruit, a parish in the diocese of Aliwal. The case study shows how the pastoral plan “Community Serving Humanity” and the pastoral priority is concretely realized. The fifth chapter (177-239) changes its focus to Asia and deals with the contextualization of the Lumko pastoral approach in Asia under the name of Asian Integral Pastoral Approach. The author investi-

¹⁰⁵ K. VELLGUTH, *Eine neue Art, Kirche zu sein. Entstehung und Verbreitung der Kleinen Christlichen Gemeinschaften und des Bibel-Teilens in Afrika und Asien* (Freiburger theologische Studien 91), Freiburg 2005.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, Die Entstehung des Pastoralansatzes in Afrika, 45-146.

¹⁰⁷ SACBC, *The Community Serving Humanity*. – The consultation process started after the publication of the document “Declaration of Commitment in Social Justice and Race Relations within the Church” in 1977. Archbishop Dennis Hurley had published a paper in 1977 called “Evangelisation Today in Southern Africa.”

gates and analyzes the contextualization process from its beginning in July 1990 at the Fifth Plenary Assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences at Bandung in Indonesia up to the Third AsIPA General Assembly in 2003. In his sixth chapter (241-270) Vellguth gives an overview of the ongoing AsIPA process in various Asian countries like Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Thailand. Vellguth concludes that the AsIPA process in those Asian countries is very heterogeneous since the pastoral situation and socio-cultural context in each of those countries varies quite a bit. In chapter 7 (271-305) the author presents the city state of Singapore, a very untypical second case study, since life in Singapore is determined by economic factors. Singapore is conditioned by a highly urbanized, secular, individualistic, competitive and plural society. Singapore is first of all a state of many ethnic communities and different religions and denominations. In this context the Singapore Pastoral Institute helped to build up AsIPA teams which were commissioned in 2004 to guide a "Parish Pastoral Council Promotion" in the archdiocese. The Singapore Pastoral Institute became the centre for founding, consolidating and qualified accompaniment of up to 150 Urban Christian neighbourhood communities in Singapore. Chapter 8 (307-331) is a summary of the whole study. The published study highlights the pastoral renewal process in African and Asian local Churches (dioceses), which is not only significant for those Churches, but which is becoming increasingly of interest for the older Western Churches in their struggles to build up credible faith communities in their more and more urbanized, secular and plural societies. It can be said that the thesis of Vellguth is an important contribution to research on the Lumko method and its spread in Asia and Europe.¹⁰⁸

In 2008 Bernhard Spielberg published his doctoral thesis in pastoral theology under the title: "Can Church still Be Community? Practice, Problems and Perspectives of the Local Church."¹⁰⁹ The published thesis is divided into four chapters. The first deals with the concrete situation of the Catholic Church in Germany. He presents the so-called Sinus-Study, which divides the German Catholic population in ten different social groups or milieus. Each group has its specific relation with the

¹⁰⁸ Cf. P. STEFFEN, Klaus Vellguth, Eine neue Art Kirche zu sein: *EAPR* 49 (2012) 200-204.

¹⁰⁹ B. SPIELBERG, *Kann Kirche noch Gemeinde sein? Praxis, Problem und Perspektiven der Kirche vor Ort* (Studien zur Theologie und Praxis der Seelsorge 73), Würzburg 2008. – Bernhard Spielberg was born in 1976 and teaches Practical/Pastoral Theology at the Catholic faculty of theology at the University of Würzburg.

Church and its specific expectation of what the Church should do for them.

The second chapter studies the pastoral, personnel and structural development in ten German dioceses and how they deal with the changes in Church membership and decline of ordained ministers. All dioceses responded to these changes with structural changes of the pastoral services offered. The direction of those dioceses is consolidation and restructuring the Christian parish communities. The aim is to build up new ways of doing cooperative ministry ("Pastoral"). In recent years all the dioceses were very busy with developing pastoral plans and putting them into practice. Some dioceses in this context reflected on the transition all these structural changes cause for the parish leaders. One question remained not fully answered: What did all these changes have to do with the Christian parish communities as pastoral subjects (agents)?

To show alternative ways of how to take seriously the Christian community as the principal agent of pastoral ministry (care) Spielberg presents in his third chapter "A Perspective: The Asian Integral Pastoral Approach (AsIPA)."¹¹⁰ After explaining the African roots and methodology of this pastoral approach Spielberg focuses on its transfer and adaptation in Asian local Churches. His final chapter attempts to answer the question: How can such an approach or perspective serve for Europe with all its socio-cultural and ecclesial differences? He concludes: 1. The life in the Church and its communities depends on the capacity to inculturate; 2. A renewed ecclesial self-understanding requires a renewed form; 3. New forms do not arise spontaneously; 4. Parish and community are two different social forms of the Church.

Spielberg's fourth chapter responds to the question of how the Church can still be community by indicating the fundamentals of local parish communities. At the end the author pleads for a new relationship between parish and Christian community, the two different ecclesial and theological units in the Church. He recognizes the ongoing importance of both but also sees the need for a new correlation between both in order to be effective places of Christian formation and life.

This section shows how much Lumko has contributed to the field of pastoral theology beyond South Africa and especially in Germany.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., „Eine Perspektive: Der Asian Integral Pastoral Approach (AsIPA),“ 275-376.

19.4 The Specific Contribution Lumko Institute Has Made to the Universal Church

Oswald Hirmer summarizes the Lumko contribution in seven points which he calls “impulses.” For him Lumko gave new impetus to renew the pastoral mission and ministry of the local Church at the level where the Christians live and come together to be built up to a Christ-centred community by the Word of God, which is called to promote God’s Reign in the world.

The first impulse: We are Church – Lumko awareness programmes.

The aim of these awareness programs was to make all members of the Church aware that the co-responsibility and collaboration of all Christians is not only needed but is both just and right by the very vocation a Christian receives in baptism and confirmation. The goal of all programs was to raise awareness among all Christians that they participate in the common responsibility of all Christians to continue the mission of Christ in today’s world.

The second impulse: To become a Christ-centred community through Gospel sharing.

There is no doubt that Lumko made an outstanding contribution to the renewal of the Church worldwide with various Bible sharing methods. The Bible Sharing became the heart of uncountable Small Christian or Neighbourhood communities. In Bible sharing groups the members experience that the risen Lord is among them. In the atmosphere of having Jesus in their midst the group members can open themselves to God and each other; they grow together as a community with Jesus Christ in their midst. The various Bible sharing methods Lumko has developed are complementary to each other. Whereas some are geared more to individual awareness, others stress social awareness and responsibility of the whole community in its society.

The third impulse Lumko gave is the promotion of Small Christian Communities.

The Small Christian Communities were not discovered by Lumko but they received a lot of support and promotion through the Lumko programmes – courses and training materials. The Lumko programmes especially deepened the understanding of SCCs as the Church among the people where they live and where people can experience and practise their Christian faith.

The fourth impulse Lumko gave concerns the passing-on of faith.

The 47 catechetical sessions for Christian initiation of adults (RCIA) of the book “Our Journey together” by Hirmer enable SCCs to deepen

their Christian faith and empower them to accompany catechumens on their way to become full and mature members of the Church. The “Our Journey together” sessions always start from life situations and the Word of God helps them to experience the presence of Jesus among the catechumens. The whole catechumenate is not so much experienced as teaching lessons but as common steps forwards on the way of faith.

The fifth impulse concerns the training of lay people in the parish.

The Training for Ministries series and all the Lumko material are focused on the training of lay people for pastoral services in the parish community. Here the Lumko approach aims especially at conveying skills for the various services needed in a parish, e.g. funeral ministers, readers, communion ministers, prayer leaders, leading liturgies without a priest, taking care of the sick, serving the neighbourhood. Instead of giving long theoretical explanations, the Lumko programmes help to train with practical exercises and connect them with theological insights. The trainees are animated to live their services in the parish with inner conviction, joy, perseverance and the conviction of being co-responsible for the evangelizing mission of the Church.

The sixth impulse coming from Lumko is the non-dominating leadership methodology.

All the Lumko programmes have to be seen and understood in their intended entirety, because they represent an underlying common intention to renew the leadership style in the parish community. Lumko proposes the service leader and a so-called non-dominant leadership style, which allows the community members to be more than passive receivers. They learn to become active participants in their own faith journey which is accompanied and animated by the community leader. The non-dominant service-leader is always aiming at discovering and promoting the charisms which are found in the community. His pastoral ministry consists especially in the task to promote, together with the whole Christian community, the unique vocation each community member has received from God. The Lumko understanding of a leader aims at overcoming the provider model and favours especially the leader as animator of the Christian community. The parish priest has a special role to play as pastoral overseer of the parish and presider of the Eucharistic celebration each Sunday, which binds all SCCs together in a communion of love, openness to each other and the wider Church on the diocesan and worldwide level. Christian solidarity is not only lived inside the Christian community but reaches out to people who are in need of such solidarity. The parish priest has not only a liturgical and sacramental function, but he is particularly in demand as formator of services or apostolates lay people can perform in and outside the Christian community. The function of the parish priest as reconciler and mediator for

reconciliation among competing and fighting groups and individuals in the parish should also not be underestimated. With his special ministry to lead people closer to Jesus, he is also himself a guarantor of unity in the parish.

Individual gifts of community members are not discouraged but they are given a chance to grow in, with and for the Christian community. Training of community ministers in each stage needs the fraternal support and correction of the community as a whole and its leaders.¹¹¹

In an interview published in 1997 Bishop Oswald Hirmer explains the underlying vision Lumko Institute followed in all its activities since the 1970s:

Our main concern at the Lumko Institute was to build the local Church at the grassroots level. The programs that we developed are directed toward making people aware and conscious of “We are the Church.” It was an attempt to share with the people in the parishes the vision of the Second Vatican Council, which gives us the vision of the Church as a community. We stressed three major points in our approach. The first is being Christ-centred. The second is that we have to become community; and third is that together as a community, we have to carry on Christ’s mission. From the community aspect, or from the common mission, we talked about the vision. The vision reflects the different functions of the clergy and laity. This is what we call “participatory Church.” It is not just taking part in anything that is going on in the Church, not just any kind of activity, but the starting point is that we take part in the common mission given to us by Christ – which means the Kingdom vision of changing this world according to the Gospel.¹¹²

Lumko was very much guided by the renewed mission ecclesiology and pastoral vision of Vatican II, as it is best expressed in *Lumen gentium*, *Gaudium et spes*, and *Ad gentes*. The main concern of the Lumko staff in the post-Vatican II period was to offer a vision and a practical method that would enable parishes and their leaders to implement the new communion ecclesiology of Vatican II and thus turn the parishes into outreaching, missionary-minded communities. That Lumko was so successful in doing so was to a great extent also due to the location of

¹¹¹ Cf. O. HIRMER, Von Südafrika über Asien nach Europa: *KM* 116 (1997) 129.

¹¹² Real reason for active laity is not “too few priests.” Interview: Founder of Lumko method: *Asia Focus*, September 26, 1997, 8.

the Institute in Southern Africa, in a Church struggling to get rooted among the many African communities, where it had, compared with the Protestant Churches, a very late start. As a small minority Church the Catholic dioceses in South Africa were much more under pressure to activate the laity if they wanted to be faithful to their mission to evangelize in the context of the complex and conflictive South African society, where the struggle for equality and human rights characterized the second half of the twentieth century. Among the post-Vatican II documents, the influence of the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* of Pope Paul VI is very obvious in the Lumko vision and mission.

Anselm Prior gives Lumko the credit of having developed a renewed missiology. A look at the changed emphasis of Lumko in its first decade and the following decades shows that the service Lumko staff offered underwent a great change. The first approach practised by Lumko was based on a pre-Vatican missionary theology, where “[p]ersonnel came to South Africa to bring the faith to the indigenous population. They needed to learn the language and something of the culture in which they were to labour. Catechetics and homiletics were important tools by means of which this missionary endeavour could succeed.”¹¹³

Lumko took a new direction, when it focused, since 1973, on community building and the training of emergent lay leaders. Lumko now wanted the Christian community to discover its missionary vocation. The promotion and training of lay ministers transformed the whole community into an evangelizing community in today’s society.

The first attempts to develop skill training were eventually to flower into a renewed missiology. No longer are Church leaders to be seen as missionaries in the sense of persons who bring the faith to others. Church leaders, whether foreign or indigenous, are servants of the local Church. Their task is to serve and to enable members of the community to take responsibility for their own Church. The vision had grown from one of providing leadership to one in which all are called to actively participate in the Church’s mission to the world.¹¹⁴

Lumko clearly emphasises the image of the parish as a community of communities. The Small Christian Communities are favoured as neighbourhood communities where Christian witness, solidarity and commitment can be best lived by all members of the Church in the environment of their living places. With this approach Lumko returns to the

¹¹³ PRIOR, *A Communion of Communities*, 20.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Christian community its dignity as an agent of the mission of the Church to evangelize. The Lumko approach can be summarized as an ecclesio-genesis approach or Church (community) building approach, an approach where the Word of God is recognized as the main force which calls people into communion with God and with each other. From the outreaching and liberating message of the Word of God the Christian community is born and only by listening to and contemplating God's Word can the community fully discover its own vocation and the evangelizing mission it has in the world today.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ Cf. E. NUNNENMACHER, *Formazione missionaria*, in: Pontificia Università Urbaniana, *Dizionario di Missiologia*, Bologna 1992, 263-268; C. TORCEVIA, *La Parola edifica comunità. Un percorso di Teologia pastorale*, Trapani 2008; P. MILAN (ed.), *Evangelizzazione e comunità. Perché il Concilio viva nelle chiese locali*, Roma 1978; E. ALBERICH/J. VALLABARAJ, *Communicating a Faith that Transforms*, Bangalore 2004; J. VALLABARAJ/S. KOROTH, *Empowering through Animation. A Pastoral-Pedagogical Paradigm of Youth Ministry*, Bangalore 2010; F.-J. EILERS, *Communicating in Ministry and Mission*, Manila 2009; E. HAHNENBERG, *Ministries. A Relational Approach*, New York 2003; ID., *Awakening Vocation. A Theology of Christian Call*, Collegeville 2010.

CHAPTER 5

THE SPREAD AND IMPACT OF THE LUMKO APPROACH IN ASIA AND EUROPE

1. The Impact of Vatican II

The Church has always attempted to give adequate answers to the challenges of the time, to adapt herself to the mentality of people(s) and their culture(s) and specifically to the concrete situation of people in order to fulfill her basic task, that is, the proclamation of the Good News to all humankind. To achieve this goal she has continuously to analyze her pastoral methods and services. Is she still using appropriate and effective means to reach her goal? Is her language still capable of serving her fundamental task to evangelize? Is she still addressing the concrete human person of this particular time and society? The continuously changing world always demands such an up-dated approach in order to be able to reach out to people in their changed context and situation. That is what the Council Fathers had in mind; half a century later their pastoral vision is therefore still a valid orientation for our times.

The Vatican II documents helped the Church open herself to the changing world and to reach out and serve humanity. Being faithful to the Spirit of the Council the Church is able to rediscover and renew her evangelizing mission in today's world.

The actual situation calls for a rethinking of the mission by the Church and to determine the Church's priorities within the renewed pastoral project. How does one define the mission of the Church in the world today in adequate terms? How and where does one situate the various actions and activities of the Church in order to envisage a holistic picture of the mission of the Church? What pastoral plan must the Church assume in order to overcome the present crisis of credibility and to be fruitful in its evangelizing mission?¹

I present here some pastoral movements in various parts of the world and the specific development of pastoral renewal in Asian Churches. It is not intended to be an exhaustive treatment, but focuses on the missionary dynamics of these renewal programmes in the local Churches of Asia.

¹ E. ALBERICH/J. VALLABARAJ, *Communicating a Faith that Transforms. A Handbook of Fundamental Catechesis*, Bangalore 2004, 33.

Mission-oriented pastoral theology must try to answer two fundamental requirements of our time:

- How to translate the Second Vatican Council vision of the Church into lifestyle and action;
- How to evangelize Christians and their neighbours and how we can be evangelized at the same time.

I would agree that the Second Vatican Council is rightfully characterized as ecumenical and pastoral. The ecclesial assembly not only included participants from around the globe but, and this is true of most, was able to talk to the representatives of the local Churches of all continents. These rich experiences were well accepted by the Council, as can be noticed in its final and official Church documents. For our reflection what Wendy Louis has to say on Vatican II renewal is important.

In the documents of the Second Vatican Council, the renewed self-understanding of the Church and its mission took its inspiration not only from a new look at the Scriptures and Tradition but also from the Biblical, Catechetical and Liturgical movements developing before and during the Council towards a more dialogical understanding of mission. In the aftermath of the Council, dialogue became the attitude rather than avoidance and condemnation of difference due to fear of deviation.²

The Church has found a new self-understanding that allows her to build a new relationship with the world, cultures and various human traditions. The new “*communio*” ecclesiology of Vatican II has borne many fruits in the last decades which helped the Church to renew her mission and self-realization in the world. A new understanding of pastoral theology and pastoral ministry in the Church has opened the door for a new era of her mission. The missionary activity of the Church is no longer considered as an asset among others, but as the central activity of the Church.

The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature, since it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father (AG 2,1).

The development of missiology and pastoral theology after the Council shows that we can no longer have Pastoral Theology (Practical Theology) on the one side and missiology and missionary practice on the

² W. LOUIS, Considerations on the Pastoral Consequences of a Dialogical Understanding of Mission, in: K. KRÄMER/K. VELLGUTH (eds.), *Mission and Dialogue. Approaches to a Communicative Understanding of Mission*, One World Theology 1, Quezon City 2012, 244-245.

other, as two disciplines almost independent of each other. The pre-Vatican concept separated pastoral ministry from missionary activity as two independent realities, the first one performed in so-called Christian countries and the second one in non-Christian countries.

The renewed ecclesiology allows us to see the common ground of the Church's one mission with its different dimensions and carried out in different situations. The great gift of the Council is mainly the new understanding of pastoral ministry with a missionary perspective which is rooted in the sacraments of baptism and confirmation of all Christians. The Council has thus opened the process to overcome the dichotomy between clergy and laity by giving more importance to the local Church when the Council speaks of God's people as a temple of the Holy Spirit. That opened the gate to recognize the Christian community as the subject of pastoral care. The local Church recognizes her responsibility for all the missionary activity of the Church.

Mission is no longer understood as a separate activity done exclusively overseas, but as the task of the Church in all continents, among all peoples and people of every social background. Simultaneously the acceptance of the missionary challenges in all continents enlarged the understanding and spectrum of what pastoral ministry was all about. This ecclesiological movement paved the way for a more holistic understanding of all the Church is called to do in the mission she has received from her founder Jesus Christ. Missionary activity and pastoral ministry are only two aspects of the one mission of the Church. Pastoral ministry is called to be aware and live its missionary dimension.

The Pontiffs Paul VI and John Paul II taught us the importance of the evangelizing mission of the Church *ad intra* for all her members and *ad extra* to all humankind beyond the borders of the Church.

The tremendous contribution pastoral (practical) theology has made in recent decades is outstanding. Wherever pastoral theology is done, whether in faculties of theology at universities, major seminaries, pastoral institutes or in diocesan headquarters, it is done in order to help the Church to perform her salvific mission to humankind in the most efficient way for today. Only if the Church reaches out to the people on the margins of society can she fulfil the mission the Lord has given her.

* * *

It is here that we see the strong impact of the pastoral centres and institutes, which have the great advantage of being closer to the pastoral reality and therefore know better the real challenges of the mission of the Church in places where Christians live and act as members of their respective Christian communities. In the post-Vatican period pastoral theology has undergone a development as never before. The pasto-

ral worker in ongoing contact with the pastoral-theological research will benefit from such reflections for his ministry to communicate the gospel to people of his specific socio-cultural context.³

The two outstanding African pastoral institutes, *AMECEA Gaba Pastoral Institute* in Eldoret, Kenya, and the *Lumko Pastoral Institute* of the Episcopal Conferences of South Africa,⁴ represent two contextualized and inculturated places of ministry formation which have inspired local Churches worldwide.

The so-called Lumko approach was developed by Msgr. Fritz Lobinger and Msgr. Oswald Hirmer together with the whole staff of Lumko. From 1986 Fr. Anselm Prior OFM and from 2001 Fr. Gabriel Afagbegee SVD have continued as directors of Lumko in order to promote the Lumko approach.

2. The Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC)

The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) for the first time gave the opportunity to Asian bishops to get to know each other beyond national and cultural borders. In 1970 the Asian bishops met for the first time on Asian soil.

2.1 The Importance of the FABC for Pastoral Renewal in Asia

The seeds of the FABC were planted in November 1970 when Pope Paul VI met with 180 bishops of Asia in Manila. His initiative prompted 11 of those bishops to meet the following year in Hong Kong, to begin putting together a

³ “Difatti, nei Seminari la formazione pastorale è tutta incentrata sullo studio della teologia... La teologia non punta direttamente all’evangelizzazione e alla catechesi, né cerca in primo luogo la conversione... La stessa sollecitudine per la coerenza e intelligibilità della fede anima le tante iniziative di formazione teologica, anche non universitaria, che sono sorte dappertutto, specialmente dopo il Concilio. Sono iniziative rivolte prevalentemente ai laici, ma possono anche venire utilizzate nella formazione permanente del clero... Bisogna però notare che queste formazioni si mettano prevalentemente sul versante del sapere, lasciando spesso nell’ombra l’essere e il saper-fare, che sono dimensioni essenziali di ogni lavoro propriamente catechetico,” in: E. ALBERICH/A. BENZ, *Forme e modelli di catechesi con gli adulti. Esperienze e riflessioni in prospettiva internazionale*, Torino 1995, 212-213.

⁴ P. B. STEFFEN, Places and Models for Formation and Ministry. Pastoral Institutes in Africa and Asia: *Verbum SVD* 51 (2010) 423-438; ID., L’inizio dell’idea degli istituti culturali e pastorali: *Verbum SVD* 52 (2011) 287-307.

structure that would connect all the Catholic bishops in Asia with one another.⁵

Pope Paul VI explained in a broadcast on *Radio Veritas* in Manila, addressing “all the people of Asia,” “that his intentions were primarily pastoral and went beyond the boundaries of the Church.”⁶ The Holy See approved the FABC statutes *ad experimentum* in 1972. For Thomas Fox, the Manila meeting indicated a new maturity in thinking among Asian Church leaders. For the Indian theologian Felix Wilfred the gathering “marked the beginning of a new consciousness of the many traditional links that united the various peoples” of Asia which are, in spite of many differences, bound together “by a spiritual affinity and sharing of common moral and religious values.”⁷

The FABC webpage describes its purpose and goal in the following way:

The Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences (FABC) is a voluntary association of episcopal conferences in South, Southeast, East and Central Asia, established with the approval of the Holy See. Its purpose is to foster among its members solidarity and co-responsibility for the welfare of Church and society in Asia, and to promote and defend whatever is for the greater good.⁸

Meanwhile the FABC membership has grown from the original eleven episcopal conferences in East, Southeast and South Asia to nineteen members today, including one in Central Asia. Nine other Church jurisdictions across the continent that have no bishops’ conference belong to the FABC as associate members.⁹ In 2012 the FABC’s 40th anniversary, the Tenth Plenary Assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences, took place for the first time in Vietnam. The openness of Pope Paul VI to empower Catholic bishops of Asia to work together was the fruitful beginning of a new way of being Church in Asia during the past four decades. All documents of the FABC General assemblies and the

⁵ <http://www.fabc.org/10th%20plenary%20assembly/Documents/FABC%20History.pdf> (03-03-2014)

⁶ T. C. FOX, *Pentecost in Asia. A New Way of Being Church*, Maryknoll, NY 2002, 17. – “For their part, the Asian bishops had chosen as the theme for their gathering the Pope’s encyclical *Populorum Progressio*. It was a remarkable moment, providing a rich new opportunity for a blending of visions. Never before had the Asian bishops gathered on Asian soil to exchange their experience and deliberate on common matters facing them.”

⁷ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁸ <http://www.fabc.org/> (03-01-2014)

⁹ Cf. FOX, *op. cit.*

specific FABC offices are available up to 2006 in four volumes under the title *For all the Peoples of Asia*.¹⁰ The Indonesia-based mission theologian John Prior SVD comments on the rich material the FABC documents contain:

Here you will find the FABC's ongoing thinking on creating a culture of peace in the midst of violence, considerations on questions of migration, on the impact of rapidly changing global communications. Here is profound thought on Asian faces of Christ and on authentic Christian witness. Two new Offices have been mulling over concerns regarding consecrated life and clergy formation. There is no need for any Church to struggle on its own "like a frog under a coconut shell." Whatever the local issue, these Asia-wide reflections will add depth and breadth to both diocesan pastoral programmes and theological education. We are fast becoming a Church-in-mission that is truly Asian.¹¹

2.2 *A New Way of Being Church*

"The programmatic slogan 'A New Way of Being Church' carries the great pastoral and missionary vision of Vatican II. It expresses as well the growing awareness and concern of the Churches of those continents to discover and build up a more contextualized pastoral approach that would take into consideration the cultures, religious and human aspirations and needs of the people(s) in the local Churches of those continents."¹² The Vietnamese-American theologian Peter C. Phan reflects on the issue *A New Way of Being Church*.

This new way of being Church in Asia requires a different ecclesiology, one that decenters the Church in the sense that it makes the centre of the Christian life and worship not the Church but the reign of God. This sort of Copernican revolution in ecclesiology sees the goal and purpose of the mission of the Church to be not the geographical and institutional expansion of the Church (the *plantatio ecclesiae*). Rather, it is to be a transparent sign of and effective in-

¹⁰ See: G. ROSALES/C. G. AREVALO (eds.), *For All the Peoples of Asia, FABC Documents from 1970-1991*, vol. 1, Manila 1997; F.-J. EILERS (ed.), *For All the Peoples of Asia, FABC Documents from 1992-1996*, vol. 2, Manila 1997; ID., *For All the Peoples of Asia, FABC Documents from 1997 to 2001*, vol. 3, Manila 2002; ID., *For All the Peoples of Asia, FABC Documents from 2002 to 2006*, vol. 4, Manila 2007.

¹¹ http://www.fabc.org/pub_p1.html (03-01-2014)

¹² STEFFEN, *Places and Models for Formation and Ministry*, 436.

strument for the saving presence of the reign of God, the reign of justice, peace, and life, of which the Church is a seed.¹³

Archbishop Orlando B. Quevedo OMI, one of the earliest promoters of Small Christian Communities in Asia, is convinced, that “the FABC vision of ‘A New Way of Being Church in Asia’ includes a vision of becoming an inculturated Church, a servant-Church and a participatory Church.”¹⁴ For him “[i]t is in Basic Ecclesial Communities and among indigenous peoples that the inculturation of pastoral leadership and governance is commonly found.”¹⁵

2.3 “Journeying Together towards the Third Millennium” – The “Asian Pastoral Constitution”

The Fifth Plenary Assembly of the FABC took place in Bandung, Indonesia, in 1990 with the motto “Journeying Together towards the Third Millennium.”

The final document of this Fifth Plenary Assembly of the FABC of July 27, 1990 is often called the *Asian Pastoral Constitution* since it has had a similar importance for the Asian Churches as *Gaudium et Spes* had for the worldwide Catholic Church. In this document the bishops give us a differentiated analysis of the socio-cultural, political, economic and religious situation in which the people of Asia have to live their

¹³ P. PHAN, *In Our Own Tongues. Perspectives from Asia on Mission and Inculturation*, Maryknoll, NY 2003, 14-17, here 14.

¹⁴ O. B. QUEVEDO OMI, *Inculturating Church Leadership and Governance*, in: M. S. DIAS (ed.), *Rooting Faith in Asia. Source Book for Inculturation*, Quezon City–Bangalore 2005, 341-346, here 342-343. – He elaborates the issue further: “Vatican II renewal brought in a new organizational culture within the Church. As a result, two organizational cultures are in tension. The old emphasizes institution, hierarchy and the power of the ordained minister in the Church. The emergent organizational culture more insistently emphasizes the notions of People of God, communion, participation, and co-responsibility. The old organizational culture with its corresponding non-participatory style of leadership and governance still prevails in many dioceses and parishes in Asia. A participatory leadership paradigm is beginning to take hold in many places, but it largely depends on personal interests, inclinations and skills,” *ibid.*, 342.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 343. – “In these BEC clusters of families, family orientation, face-to-face interaction, co-responsibility, participation, transparency and accountability are most palpably demonstrated. With pastors guiding the process, due respect is given to the fundamental authoritative, not authoritarian, role that Bishops and priests have in the community by ordination. The participatory ethos in a Church of Communion is systematically developed. Leadership and governance empower people for the common good. It is transformational in view of the Kingdom of justice, truth, peace and love.” *Ibid.*, 346.

Christian faith. They do not hesitate to mention the social evils they experience in Asia like massive poverty, exploitation of women, overexploitation of natural resources, the lack of perspective for the young generation. In the same document the Asian bishops declared: "In the face of the massive problems engendered by social change and in the face of massive poverty, we can discern, however, many signs of hope."¹⁶

The Asian bishops also listed the many positive signs which give reason for hope, such as a new consciousness of solidarity, the increasing number of people fighting for human rights, democratization and interreligious and ecumenical dialogue. "Dialogue between religious traditions, the ecological movement, and aspects of the women's movement offer hope for a more holistic spirituality."¹⁷

Regarding mission, the Asian bishops declared:

Mission in Asia will also seek through dialogue to serve the cause of unity of the peoples of Asia marked by such a diversity of beliefs, cultures and socio-political structures. In an Asia marked by diversity and torn by conflicts, the Church must in a special way be a sacrament – a visible sign and instrument of unity and harmony.¹⁸

In section 7 "Living in the Spirit: Pastoral Responses" the document explained what it calls "Our Process":

Our reflection on the Asian situation in the light of our mission of evangelization has led us to realize the enduring validity of a process of: (a) *dialoguing* with the realities of Asia from within; (b) *discerning* the movement of God's Spirit in Asia; and (c) *translating into deeds* what the Spirit bids us to accomplish. This process has to be the general approach for our total response as Church in Asia.¹⁹

Regarding the need to reform pastoral formation the document favours a more inculturated approach: the imperative of re-envisioning and re-planning formation processes, with particular attention being given to cultural values and structural factors.

The Bandung assembly has a chapter on "A New Way of Being Church in Asia in the 1990s." Its ecclesiology is built on the ecclesiology

¹⁶ 2.3 Hope at the Crossroads, in: *Journeying Together toward the Third Millennium*, in: ROSALES/AREVALO, op. cit., 277.

¹⁷ Ibid., 2.34, 278.

¹⁸ Ibid., 4.0 The Mode of Mission, 282.

¹⁹ Ibid., 7.0 Living in the Spirit: Pastoral Responses, 284.

of communion of Vatican II, but this ecclesiology is creatively adapted and developed for the Churches of Asia.

Here the Asian bishops firmly declare that the “Fifth Assembly envisions alternative ways of being Church in the Asia of the 1990s. But these new ways have some common aspects:

1. The Church in Asia will have to be a communion of communities, where laity, religious and clergy recognize and accept each other as sisters and brothers. They are called together by the Word of God which ... leads them to form small Christian communities.
2. It is a participatory Church where the gifts that the Spirit gives to all the faithful—lay, Religious, and cleric alike—are recognized and activated, so that the Church may be built up and its mission realized.
3. [They] build up the hearts of people, it is a Church that faithfully and lovingly witnesses to the Risen Lord Jesus and reaches out to people of other faiths and persuasions in a dialogue of life towards the integral liberation of all.
4. It is a leaven of transformation in this world and serves as a prophetic sign daring to point beyond this world to the ineffable Kingdom that is yet fully to come.²⁰

2.4 Forty Years of FABC Pastoral and Theological Work

The latest General Assembly of the FABC took place in Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam in December 2012. In their final document “FABC at Forty Years – Responding to the Challenges of Asia – A New Evangelization” the Asian bishops summarize the pastoral vision, orientation, praxis and theology they have developed over forty years:

We thank the Lord for a challenging vision of Church in Asia. This vision of Church has been the over-all objective of the pastoral reflection, discernment, prayer, and pastoral action of the FABC through the years. We envision a Church that is:

- truly Asian, in triple dialogue with the religions, cultures and peoples of Asia, especially the poor;
- a humble servant of the peoples of Asia, accompanying them to the Kingdom of God;

²⁰ A New Way of Being Church in Asia in the 1990s, in: *Journeying Together Toward the Third Millennium. Statement of the Fifth Plenary Assembly, Bandung, Indonesia, 27 July 1990*, in: ROSALES/AREVALO, op. cit., 287-288.

- a credible herald of the Gospel, a disciple-community sent on a mission of integral evangelization to tell the story of Jesus to Asians in season and out of season;
- in herself the bearer of the Asian face of Jesus, the God who became Man, who was compassionate, loving, forgiving, self-sacrificing; a teacher, servant, healer, prophet, life-giver, ennobler of the poor;
- a communion of communities, reflecting the Trinitarian communion;
- a participatory Church of renewed servant-leaders, of prophetic Religious and empowered laity;
- a *Church of the Poor* where the sick and the needy are at home;
- a *Church of the Youth* where they find solidarity in their struggle for authentic life ;
- a Church *in solidarity with the whole of creation*.²¹

3. The Asian Integral Pastoral Approach (AsIPA)

3.1 The Way AsIPA Was Conceived

“AsIPA is a process for building awareness, providing opportunities of encounter with Christ through his word shared in the community and generating interest in the mission of the laity to be builders of the Kingdom of God.”²² AsIPA was developed after the fifth general assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences in Bandung, Indonesia in 1990. Concrete efforts started in 1991. The Asian bishops favoured a vision of the Church along the lines of Vatican II as “People of God,” and a “Pilgrim Church.” This vision has progressed to be a Church of Communion; being aware that communion and mission are intrinsically connected to one another. They, as Gerard Kelly has put it into words, “interpenetrate and mutually imply each other, to the point that communion represents both the source and the fruit of mission. Communion gives rise to mission and mission is accomplished in communion.”²³

²¹ A Vision of Church in Asia, in: *FABC at Forty Years: Responding to the Challenges of Asia*, X FABC Plenary Assembly 10-16 December, 2012, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, FABC Papers 138, 9-10.

²² LOUIS, op. cit. 246.

²³ G. KELLY, Communion and Mission: The Idea of Church in *Christifidelis Laici: Australasian Catholic Record* 66 (1989) 387-394, here 391. – The Australian theolo-

With the 1990 Bandung statement of the FABC Plenary Assembly there was a greater impetus to build a “Communion of Communities” and this went hand in hand with the understanding that such a communion can only be built out of a more participatory and collaborative Church.²⁴

The Asian bishops clearly favour: “**A Participatory Church** ... a Communion of Communities, where laity, religious and clergy recognize and accept each other as sisters and brothers. They are called together by the Word of God, which regarded as quasi-sacramental presence of the Risen Lord, leads them to form Small Christian Communities,” (FABC art. 8).²⁵

The Asian authors recognize the fundamental value of each person in the ASIIPA approach by explaining: “The participatory method believes that ‘Everybody is Somebody,’ that every person is gifted and capable of building up the Church, that every person has something to contribute to the learning process. Moreover, instead of having lectures or experts, the team of facilitators handle the sessions. Their task is to make participants become aware that each of them has something to contribute to the group, to enable them to share in the learning process and to motivate them to discover the truth by themselves and to decide to do something about their situation.”²⁶

The first courses, both international and national, were called “Lumko courses,” using the materials and methodology of the Lumko Institute in South Africa. In November 1993 a group of facilitators reflected on their experience with the Lumko courses they had given in various Asian countries under the heading “Towards Becoming a Participatory Church” and “In the Asian context: the people, their culture, their needs ... as we move towards the vision.”²⁷

gian Richard Lennan is convinced that “[p]roperly understood communion ecclesiology promote the engagement of every baptised person in shaping the Church in ways that respond to the initiative of the Holy Spirit. Such a Church must not only be constructed from the gifts and wisdom of all the baptised, but also be open, in all its dimensions, including, therefore, its structures and agencies, to that conversion which is inseparable from faithful reception of the Spirit,” in: R. LENNAN, *Communion Ecclesiology: Foundation, Critique, and Affirmations: Pacifica* 20 (February 2007) 35.

²⁴ LOUIS, *op. cit.*, 247.

²⁵ E. VAZ/C. MATEO/V. SALDANHA, *Adult Formation Towards a Participatory Church – The Asian Integral Pastoral Approach (ASIIPA)*, in: *Colloquium on Church in Asia in the 21st Century*, Manila [1998], 315-316, here 316.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

They recognized that the course should be contextualized in order to be fruitful for the people of Asia. In that meeting the name AsIPA (Asian Integral Pastoral Approach) was coined.²⁸

Through integral and contextualized formation, AsIPA aims at discovering a new way of being Church that is participatory and a communion of Small Christian Communities (SCCs).

In *neighbourhood communities* an integral and contextual formation is given. During the formation process the members discover and understand by moving in this new direction what it is all about to be Church in a new way as a participative communion in Small Christian Communities.²⁹

3.2 The Understanding of AsIPA according to the FABC Office of Laity

The FABC Office of Laity – Desk for AsIPA points out that “AsIPA is the achievement of a long process: As the importance of the role of the laity became more accepted, the local Churches also realized that there was a corresponding need for lay formation, so that lay people could play their rightful role in the Church. In some early attempts at lay formation, the emphasis was on an academic approach which led to the realization that a different model of formation was needed: A model that would incorporate the principles of adult education, respect the experience of the participants and be open to the real situation and needs of the local community.

The Meaning of AsIPA:

“AsIPA is *Asian* because it seeks to implement the vision articulated by the Asian Bishops and to face the realities of the Asian peoples that challenge the Church in Asia: our pluralism, the existence of the great Asian religions, the vast numbers of young people and their vitality, massive poverty, the women’s movement, the ecological movement, etc.

It is *Integral* in that it seeks to achieve a balance between the ‘spiritual’ and the ‘social,’ between the individual and the community, between the hierarchical leadership and the co-responsibility of the laity. It is therefore integral in both its approach and its content.

It is *Pastoral* in that its goal is to implement the vision of the new way of being Church, and particularly to train lay people to carry out

²⁸ See www.fabc.org/ol/asipa_desk and FABC-papers http://www.fabc.org/offices/csec/ocsec_fabc_papers.html (15-01-2014)

²⁹ “Through integral and contextualized formation, discover a new way of being Church that is participatory and a communion of Small Christian Communities (SCCs).” Cf. VAZ/MATEO/SALDANHA, op. cit., 315-334.

their mission in the Church and in the world. It thereby constitutes a demand that priests be trained to encourage the co-responsibility of the laity and to work in teams. This requires a new style of leadership.

As an *Approach*, AsIPA is a process of realizing the vision of a participatory Church. It addresses the entire people of God. It is a pastoral approach, which is 'Christ- and community-centred,' allowing the participants of training courses to search for themselves and to experience a 'New Way of Being Church'.³⁰

3.3 The Understanding of AsIPA according to the Singapore Pastoral Institute

Wendy Louis, the former director of the Singapore Pastoral Institute, gives another explanation of AsIPA which highlights the same vision in other words:³¹

1. Asian because we would like to be very much a part of the local culture and the gospel should take on the expression of the local people and be a part of their own way of living. Sometimes we are thought of as a foreign Church. This will be proved untrue if we are rooted in the daily lives of very ordinary people.
2. Integral because it is about bringing together all the various aspects of our parish life into community & mission in and with Christ. It is about weaving together our faith with our daily choices and actions. It is about trying to bring together the different generations and various families into our small Christian communities.
3. Pastoral because it is about caring for all who live with and around us, regardless of their race or religion. The approach is about making it possible for everyone to participate according to their gifts in the work of bringing about the reign of God. Pastoral because the work of all God's people is the same as that of their shepherd.
4. Approach. The tools used to build up the community must be such that they enable participation, build up confidence, skills in the various ministries as well as always addressing the question: "Why are we doing this?" The theological background to all we do is made available through simple texts and scripture. Scripture is

³⁰ <http://www.fabc.org/offices/olaity/asipa.html> (03-01-2014)

³¹ Asian Integral Pastoral Approach towards a New Way of Being Church. Compiled by Wendy Louis, January 3, 2006, in: <http://www.catholicspi.org/images/FAQs%20on%20AsIPA%20for%20web.pdf> (21-01-2014)

the presence of the Risen Christ in our midst and that is the main way scripture is used in the programmes of AsIPA.

For Wendy Louis “there are no ‘experts’ and receivers in this approach. All have something to offer and all have access to the same information and search together. Discovering our common mission that arises out of our common vision is the work of the people in our small communities. Just telling and expecting results is the opposite of this approach.”³²

For her AsIPA

is a process used to develop SCCs in parishes and is aimed at forging communion; encouraging laity to take up their mission and do away with dominating leadership equally under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the mission of Christ. It assures all that they are equally able to minister to neighbours and families – however poor and uneducated. There is no one who is incapable of loving and caring no matter how small the gesture. All are capable of hearing the word and sharing its meaning for their lives and living the word.³³

3.4 *The Indian Way: From AsIPA to DIIPA*

DIIPA is the abbreviation of *Developing Indian Integral Pastoral Approach*. The DIIPA vision goes back to the Lumko Small Christian Communities training programmes which became well known in Indian dioceses in the 1990s. Bishop Oswald Hirmer and Fr. Thomas Vijay SAC since 1995 held several workshops on AsIPA in various dioceses of India. In September 2001 Small Christian Communities animators introduced the Indian name DIIPA, adapting the programme to the Indian situations and needs.³⁴

DIIPA wants to recognize the Indian socio-cultural and religious context and the particular situations people are living in. In so far DIIPA is also a way to build up, contextualize and inculturate the Christian message and community into the many Indian cultures and societies.

DIIPA programmes received wide acceptance and some of the DIIPA material is translated into twelve Indian languages. For Fr. Thomas

³² Ibid.

³³ LOUIS, op. cit., 246.

³⁴ T. VIJAY SAC, *Theological Foundations of DIIPA Vision for Small Christian Communities*, in: T. VIJAY (ed.), *SCCs are Ministering Communities*, Nagpur 2013, 145.

Vijay each word of DIIPA has a special theological, pastoral and spiritual connotation.

“Developing: wants to remind ourselves and the pastoral workers in India that no pastoral programme is final. The Spirit is always present and active in the community, renewing, challenging and transforming it continuously and helping it to respond in the Kingdom way to the changing situations and needs of the people in different places and times.

Indian: places the vision given by the Asian Bishops in the Indian situation and wants to empower the people of India to respond to this vision together, as a people from within their life context. In this way they make this vision their own and take the responsibility to realize it in their life.

Integral: We seek the integral growth of the whole person and of the whole community, integrating body and soul, secular and sacred, theory and practice, faith and life and building the clergy and laity into one body.

Pastoral: Our concern is to enable our people to re-dream the dream of Jesus in their life context and respond to it together in their neighbourhood. In this way they become instruments for God to reveal the Indian face of Jesus among the people of India.

Approach: DIIPA is an approach, one way to serve the Kingdom plan of God, but a very effective and biblical way. This approach has certain characteristics.

- **It is Christ-centred** since it emphasizes Gospel sharing as the way and means through which the community is led to experience the Risen Lord in their lives and to discern God’s will for them in their life situations and respond to it decisively and positively.
- **It is community-centred** since all community members are called to contribute actively to the community building process.
- **It is mission-oriented** since it helps the whole community to become aware that through Baptism and Confirmation all have accepted the responsibility to continue the mission of Jesus in their respective places in a concrete way. All have the duty to participate actively in the building up of the Body of Christ and witness to the Gospel in their place and time.
- **It is non-dominating leadership.** In the future Church, as the Asian Bishops said, the experts and leaders are not

dominating leaders. They are not the focal point; Jesus and the community are. It is the community which will work together and evangelize the neighbourhood, to make the Kingdom of God present there. The leaders and pastoral experts are servants and animators of the community.”³⁵

3.5 Spielberg’s European Understanding of an Integral Pastoral Approach

Many Christians in European countries are fascinated by the Lumko methodology and the way it was further developed as AsIPA in many Asian local Churches. As a result of this fascination they organized study tours to Asian Churches to study this approach in the Asian context. This gain stimulated them to seriously consider how such an approach can help European Churches to build Christian communities where all members take active co-responsibility for the evangelizing mission of the Church in a plural and secular context of Europe. Meanwhile they founded a network and organize annual workshops to exchange their experiences with the *communio ecclesiology* put into practice in their home parishes and how the Church image of Community of communities, which Pope Francis has recently also used in his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* 28, can give new life to the Church in a secularized Western society.

Since 2006 the European AsIPA movement has its own website called: Small Christian Community – Church of participation. The website of local Church development.³⁶

The Pastoral theologian Bernhard Spielberg developed in 2007 his own description of what AsIPA would be in the European context:

European: the Church’s identity does not grow primarily from the historical and social role assigned to her, but rather from the ability to locate the Gospel in her own time. The development of a European pastoral approach that serves this objective starts therefore – as in AsIPA – with an in-depth analysis of the present situation. We cannot dispense ourselves from this first step – especially in the context of the “exculturation” of Christianity in Europe. Ways towards a European incul-

³⁵ Ibid., 146-147.

³⁶ Kleine christliche Gemeinschaft – Kirche der Beteiligung. Die Website zu lokaler Kirchenentwicklung, in: <http://kcg.missio-blog.de/> (02-03-2014); cf. J. SCHÄFERS, Kleine Christliche Gemeinschaften hierzulande. Bericht von einem Symposium: *Diakonia* 38 (2007) 173-177; cf. F. WEBER, Senfkorn und Sauerteig. Hoffnungs- und Wachstumspotenziale in der Weltkirche: *Diakonia* 38 (2007) 153-158.

turation of the Gospel do not imply any diminishing of the plurality that exists in the Church, nor do they hide the treasures and the weight of history. They [the European ways] resist the temptation to simplify and unify and can therefore contribute to the growth of a Church in freedom and plurality.

Integral: A pastoral approach is integral, when it no longer separates form and content. The approach highlights the point that a Church that sees herself as a communion must be experienced as such. Not just talking about it, but actually living this communion shows how seriously she takes this self-description. Many processes of change fail because, although the image may be renewed, yet the old picture frame remains. The Church in the German context, supported as she is by a variety of volunteers, has reached an institutional level that is unique worldwide, but she must be ready to be questioned whether the practice, for example, of leadership, community, communication and pastoral care also corresponds to her understanding of these principles. And whether the credibility of the Gospel can be seen in her structures.

Pastoral: The Church is far more than her professional-ministerial official structure. In the course of diocesan personnel and structure planning, particularly with regard to the change of territorial size [for her pastoral units], this theological, self-evident principle, however, seems to be hardly appreciated. Whether a Church is alive locally does not depend on whether she has a place on the overall plan for pastoral posts. The professionalization of religious life has – according to a not unjustified criticism from Asia – contributed to the disappearance of religious life from everyday life in Europe and to the perishing of any religious imagination in many people.³⁷

For Spielberg “AsIPA shows that within the professionally developed structures there needs to be room for ‘amateur’ experiences of individuality and non-professional forms of community life of God’s people. Church does not grow where people are enabled to talk theologically but where, in their own context, they are able to draw life from the Gospel.”³⁸ This European adaptation is a credible contextualization of what AsIPA is for Europe which shows that practical theology and Christian Community life is not a one-way model, but that it is a way to learn from each other.

³⁷ B. SPIELBERG, Importwarte oder Impulsgeber? Was steckt hinter dem Asian Integral Pastoral Approach?: *Diakonia* 38 (2007) 189-190.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 190.

4. The Promotion of AsIPA and DIIPA through Asian Pastoral Institutes

Nearly all diocesan and regional pastoral centres in Asia were involved in the AsIPA movement in the local Churches of Asia. But two played a very special role in this movement. One in a very specific urban city state diocese and another in the framework of ca. 160 very differing situations of dioceses in India.

4.1 The Singapore Pastoral Institute (SPI)

Up to its closure at the end of 2013 the SPI played a very important role in the Catholic Church of the city of Singapore with its over 302,000 Catholics, 142 priests (71 diocesan and 71 religious), 136 religious sisters and 36 religious brothers. The Catholics are living in 31 parishes spread over the city state. The Catholic Church in Singapore had to find ways to build up a participatory Church in the urban context. The question was: how can the urban parishes be transformed from spiritual service stations into places of Christian fellowship and fraternity, which are life-enhancing and liberating spiritual communities witnessing the faith in the Risen Lord to all members of the Singaporean society?³⁹

As a result of popular missions preached by Redemptorists in the 1970s and 1980s a movement of neighbourhood communities came up, which counted over 100 of so-called neighbourhood groups in the parishes of Singapore. When SPI took up the AsIPA methodology the institute started together with the AsIPA team to offer workshops in all parishes of the diocese with the aim to transform those neighbourhood groups into SCCs according to the AsIPA vision and methodology.⁴⁰

The former director of SPI, Wendy Louis, writes:

In the Singapore Pastoral Institute, from the 1980s, there was a strong conviction that the mission of the Church belonged to every member of the Church and until this time was very much monopolised, due to historical developments and a pre-Vatican understanding of the role of Laity, by the clergy and religious. A very deliberate decision was made by the Institute leadership to align the understanding of

³⁹ Cf. P. STEFFEN, *Places and Models of Formation for Mission and Ministry: Verbum SVD* 51 (2010) 434.

⁴⁰ Cf. K. VELLGUTH, *Eine neue Art, Kirche zu sein: Entstehung und Verbreitung der Kleinen Christlichen Gemeinschaften und des Bibel-Teilens in Afrika und Asien*, Freiburg 2005, 292-305.

the mission of the laity to the development of Small Christian Communities.⁴¹

Wendy Louis had met Fr. Hirmer for the first time on a one-month Lumko course given in Hua Hin in Thailand in 1991, in which she participated. The impulses of the workshop were taken up by SPI.

Following the Lumko-Asia workshop in 1991, the SPI decided that whenever we are invited to run a programme or give a course, we will try to implement elements of the vision of Church – participatory, Christ-centred, creating awareness of mission for all and a sense of the unity of the Church.⁴²

Father Eugene Vaz was the director of SPI from 1990 to 2001; after that, up to 2013, he was the Vicar General of the archdiocese of Singapore. He wrote in a letter in 1993:

The Archbishop and the Singapore Pastoral Institute have invited Rev. Fr. Oswald Hirmer to give an Integral Pastoral Approach seminar in October of this year. All the staff of the Pastoral Institute have experienced this approach and are convinced of its effectiveness in promoting the kind of Church that is talked of in *Lumen Gentium* and other documents of Vatican II and in recent statements of the FABC.⁴³

The AsIPA methodology and the enthusiasm the staff members of SPI had in promoting a participatory Church model in Singapore was not shared by all parish priests and lay people in the parishes. A certain resistance towards the AsIPA model even emerged and forced the Institute to pay more attention to the objections and the reservations which were expressed by some people of the archdiocese.

4.2 The Pallottine Animation Centre (PAC)

When Fr. Thomas Vijay, an Indian Pallottine priest, came into contact with the Lumko approach and in October 1990 could even meet its promoter in Asian countries in the 1990s, Fr. Oswald Hirmer, he understood that the Lumko approach would be the way to promote a new way of being Church in India. It was also Hirmer who had a great influence

⁴¹ LOUIS, *op. cit.*, 246.

⁴² W. LOUIS, Singapore Archdiocese and the New Way of Being Church. Work of the Singapore Pastoral Institute and AsIPA Team, unpublished document, Singapore 1988, quoted in VELLGUTH, *Eine neue Art, Kirche zu sein*, 278.

⁴³ Quoted in VELLGUTH, *op. cit.*, 283.

on Fr. Vijay's pastoral vision and understanding of leadership. Finally it was also Hirmer who inspired Fr. Vijay to found PAC. Even before the erection of the first buildings for the centre was started in 1996, the work of PAC had already begun by Fr. Vijay conducting Lumko workshops, from 1990 to 1995 in partnership with Fr. Hirmer, in all parts of India. By 1997 a core team of 25 people emerged who met every year for a week to study AsIPA texts, adapt the method to India, and promote it. The core group meeting in 2001 initiated DIIPA (Developing Indian Integral Pastoral Approach) as the Indian version of AsIPA. Instead of the booklets of AsIPA it was decided to put them together as workshop modules. The DIIPA Introductory Workshop material was published in twelve Indian languages. So DIIPA became the most popular SCC basic training program in India. All these developments have to do with the activity of Fr. Vijay and the PAC in Nagpur. In 2011 PAC could even host an International Conference on "Theological-Pastoral Understanding of SCCs."

The vision PAC gave itself reveals the goal of the centre: "Revive faith and renew love in the hearts of all in order to inspire and instill in them a personal conviction to build a harmonious society."⁴⁴

The PAC mission statement reveals even more how PAC has harmoniously combined the vision of Vincent Pallotti, the founder of the Pallottines, with the Lumko model of promoting SCCs, leadership of all Church members, human harmony and the commitment to build a just society in India:

- Build up Union of Catholic Apostolate (UAC) cells all over the country as a means to gather all the sections of the People of God for their own renewal and deeper commitment.
- Promote BECs/SCCs since it is the "New Way of Being Church."
- Promote leadership which ensures active participation of all and coordination of apostolic activities for better results.
- Help every Indian to understand his/her own faith as a means to promote human harmony and build a just society in our motherland.
- Prepare suitable training programmes towards this, net work with people of similar mind and become an international repository of information and action programmes.⁴⁵

For Fr. Vijay, "PAC is a faith renewal and animation body" which aims at the same time at promoting harmony in Indian society. "We aim

⁴⁴ <http://www.pacnag.in/about.html> (24-02-2014)

⁴⁵ Ibid.

at grassroots animation of Small Christian Communities to engage them in faith animation programmes – faith leading to life.” He continues saying: “We hope that the Church in India will set up a new pastoral structure which starts from SCCs and goes upward emphasizing the active participation of all sections of the people of God.”⁴⁶

Under the leadership of its director Fr. Vijay, PAC has been instrumental in popularizing the DIIPA model of participatory Church as home based Church communities with regular Bible sharing sessions as the inspirational centre of community life for the last 24 years all over India.

Looking at all the positive development in Asia and Asian local Churches, Fr. Vijay nevertheless reflects also on the negative side of the Asian reality. Therefore he writes:

Though there are scattered efforts to promote lay involvement in the Church, the Asian Church is by and large too clericalized, institutionalized and its leadership quite dominating. The parish life and activities depend very much on the interest and priorities of the parish priest, leaving the parish life very unstable and the people, helpless.⁴⁷

The Small Christian Communities movement had organized the first national convention in Goa from November 18 to 21, 2013. Fr. Thomas Vijay, the national coordinator of the DIIPA movement, was also the convenor of this convention. Bishop Fritz Lobinger even came from his retirement home in South Africa to participate in this convention. He writes:

It was the culmination of 40 years of systematic efforts to build up SCCs. The bishops of India could proudly state at the Opening Mass that there are now 68,000 SCCs in the 120 dioceses in India that now has 14 million Catholics. The Bishops’ Conference of India supports SCCs and over 70 bishops were present at the convention. The cardinal and the bishops did not come alone but came with delegates of their SCCs and with some of their priests. Seven thousand leaders of SCCs were present⁴⁸

⁴⁶ T. VIJAY, *Report of PAC Nagpur on Its Social Activity Front*, Nagpur 2013, 1.

⁴⁷ T. VIJAY, *Lay Ministries in the Renewed Church of Asia*, in: ID. (ed.), *SCCs are Ministering Communities*, 104-105.

⁴⁸ F. LOBINGER, *Celebrating the First National Convention of Small Christian Communities in India*, in: <http://www.smallchristiancommunities.org/asia/india/266-celebrating-the-first-national-convention-of-small-christian-communities-in-india.html> (25-02-2014)

And the bishop of Pune, Msgr. Thomas Dabre, stated:

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of India and Conference of Cath. Bishops of India can proudly claim that the Church in India too has as a policy decision mandated the insertion of formation of Small Christian Communities in the Pastoral Ministry of the Church at all levels from national through regional to diocesan and parish levels. As a result about 68,000 small communities are working in the various dioceses. The results over the years have been positive, to name but a few:

1. The Laity has enhanced familiarity with the Bible.
2. The clergy's greater involvement in the actual life-situation of the faithful.
3. Emergence of grass-roots level lay leadership.
4. Increase of unity, sense of belonging and joyfulness.⁴⁹

This development shows how well AsIPA impacts on Indian local Churches and how much PAC and its director have contributed to the SCCs movement in India being inspired by the Lumko approach.

5. AsIPA as a Formation Model

If the Church wants to move towards the vision of a participative Church and a Church of communion which creates spiritual links between all its members (lay, religious and clergy) she must have formation as her pastoral priority.

Most pastoral ministry is lived out on the parish or diocesan level. Therefore all formal and non-formal formation of laity is also the task of those pastoral levels. The parish as communion of communities has the task of transforming so-called outstations and all parts of the parish into Small Christian Communities.⁵⁰ The Office of the Laity and the

⁴⁹ T. DABRE, Small Christian Communities to Celebrate Year of Faith Conclusion, 08 October, 2013, in: <http://cbci.in/FullNews.aspx?ID=1321> (25-02-2014)

⁵⁰ The outstation system helped to serve the Christians living far away from the main station of the parish, but it remained deficient with respect to the pastoral needs of the people. Cf. P. KALILOMBE, *From Outstations to Small Christian Communities*, Spearhead 82-83, 1984. – M.-F. Perrin-Jassy, a cultural anthropologist, found in her research that the outstations system caused the loss of many Catholics to the African Independent Churches because it did not give sufficient opportunity to participate actively in the mission of the parish or outstation. To feel part of a group always needs affirmation through an active role in the group and being recognized by a group is always more easily done if the group is small. See M.-F. PERRIN-JASSY, *Basic Community in the African Churches*, Maryknoll, NY 1993; J. P. VANDENAKKER, *Small Christian Communities and the Parish*, Kansas City 1994.

Office of Human Promotion of the FABC wanted to develop further the model of integral formation and promote “A New Way of Being Church in the 1990s” as the fifth Plenary Assembly of the FABC had wished it. The commission declared finally:

We identified the core elements that are necessary for an integral formation and these included need for promoting “Word-centred” Communities involving a communitarian and participatory formation that gave emphasis to “experimental learning” rather than “one way teaching.”⁵¹

The new Pastoral Units which are established in many dioceses in Europe are not automatically a solution to the need of the faithful to actively participate in the mission of the Church. They bear in themselves the danger of suffocating all community life in order to offer the Church services relatively efficiently to the faithful with a smaller number of clergy, instead of promoting a participative community life of all the faithful.⁵²

6. Church as Communion of Communities

Because the Church is a communion, there must be participation and co-responsibility at all of her levels.⁵³

After Vatican II the Church experienced a great movement that wanted to implement the ecclesiological vision of communion. The movement of *Small Christian Communities* is perhaps the most significant expression of this post-Vatican II movement, which has the potential to include all members of the Christian Community in the mission of the Church or as *Evangelii Nuntiandi* puts it: “Evangelizing is in fact

⁵¹ Asian Integral Pastoral Approach towards a New Way of Being Church in Asia (AsIPA). Report of the Consultation on Integral Formation, Malaysia, 3 November 1993, in: EILERS (ed.), op. cit, vol. 2, 108.

⁵² Cf. A. PRIOR OFM, *Towards a Community Church. The Way Ahead for Today's Parish*, No. 28T in the series “Training for Community Ministries,” second revised edition, Lumko Institute, Delmenville, South Africa 1997.

⁵³ The Final Report of the 1985 Extraordinary Synod, C. The Church as Communion, No. 6; cf. W. KASPER, *Il futuro dalla forza del Concilio. Sinodo straordinario dei vescovi 1985. Documenti e commenti*, Brescia 1986. – Kasper explains the ecclesiology of communion more profoundly: “According to the Council, the mystery of the Church means that in the Spirit we have access through Christ to the Father, so that in this way we may share in the divine nature. The communion of the Church is prefigured, made possible and sustained by the communion of the Trinity. Ultimately ... it is participation in the Trinitarian communion itself. The Church is, as it were, the icon of the Trinitarian fellowship of Father, Son and Holy Spirit,” in: W. KASPER, *Theology and Church*, Norwich 1989, 152.

the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize” (EN 14). The community dimension of her vocation is developed even further in the same enlightening writing of Pope Paul VI.

For the Christian community is never closed in upon itself. The intimate life of this community – the life of listening to the Word and the apostles’ teaching, charity lived in a fraternal way, the sharing of bread; this intimate life only acquires its full meaning when it becomes a witness, when it evokes admiration and conversion, and when it becomes the preaching and proclamation of the Good News. Thus it is the whole Church that receives the mission to evangelize, and the work of each individual member is important for the whole (EN 15).

The Lumko, AsIPA and DIIPA approach is just aiming at putting the prophetic vision of Paul VI into practice.⁵⁴ In this pastoral approach “each individual member is important for the whole” mission of the Church; all are participating in and all are co-responsible for that mission. The weekly Bible sharing as it is practiced in the SCCs guarantee the access to the life-giving fountain of Christian faith that is the Word of God in its ecclesial tradition.⁵⁵ The Bishops’ Institute for Laity of the FABC recently declared:

The emergence of SCCs has directly facilitated a new awakening in thousands of laity who are inspired and motivated to serve communities. Seeing the renewal SCCs brought to the Church the Asian Synod Fathers affirmed “SCCs as an effective way to promote communion and participation in parishes and dioceses” (*Ecclesia in Asia* 25). SCCs make the Asian face of Jesus visible and through their loving services become the seed for a new society based on love (RM 51).⁵⁶

Spielberg hit the nail on the head with his conclusion:

A pastoral approach as AsIPA’s is not the goal of a Church, but the ferry towards the goal. It is not in itself the new way of being Church, but a help to live it because it offers people a

⁵⁴ F. LOBINGER, Understanding Ministries in SCCs in the Perspective of Ecclesiology, in: VIJAY, *SCCs are Ministering Communities*, 1-12.

⁵⁵ T. VIJAY, *Today this Scripture Has Been Fulfilled (Lk 4,21). A Deeper Understanding of Gospel Sharing from My Involvement in Animating Gospel Sharing Groups*, Nagpur 2013.

⁵⁶ Final Statement of BILA I on SCCs, Oct. 18-23 2010, organized by AsIPA Desk, Office of Laity & Family of FABC, 2, in: <http://www.fabc.org/offices/offices/olaity/docs/BILA%20I%20on%20SCCs%20Final%20Statement.pdf> (04-01-2014)

new way of looking at the world, a different form of experiencing the Gospel and new ways of living it. The approach builds on the resources of the local Church found in the people of God themselves. This is what the Church of Europe can learn from AsIPA, namely, that she will discover her own spiritual, social, ethical, artistic and community-building resources only when she is responding to the pressing issues of her locality. Indeed, the Church will survive – worldwide – only where she remains alive within each context.⁵⁷

Conclusion

Evangelii Nuntiandi offers us important criteria for revising our pastoral methods and for making the Christian message we have to transmit understandable to the people of our times.

“The conditions of the society in which we live oblige all of us therefore to revise methods, to seek by every means to study how we can bring the Christian message to modern man” (EN 3).

Therefore Paul VI sees it as “absolutely necessary for us to take into account a heritage of faith that the Church has the duty of preserving in its untouchable purity, and of presenting it to the people of our time, in a way that is as understandable and persuasive as possible” (EN 3).

Finally, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* describes meaningfully the challenge of evangelization work all Church ministers have to face, when it says: “This fidelity both to a message whose servants we are and to the people to whom we must transmit it living and intact is the central axis of evangelization” (EN 4).

The remark Wendy Louis made recently illustrates best the changes the Asian Churches have undergone:

In many of the Churches in Asia since Vatican II and with significant influence from the FABC, there has been a notable shift from a strictly hierarchical teaching Church to a Church of Dialogue and a Church of Small Christian Communities where laity together with the clergy and religious share and try to live out their faith. Here faith deepening and growth comes through the agency of other baptized adults as well as the traditional source of bishops, clergy and religious.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ SPIELBERG, op. cit., 190.

⁵⁸ LOUIS, Considerations on the Pastoral Consequences of a Dialogical Understanding of Mission, 245-246.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This publication wanted to give more insights and a critical evaluation of the development of cultural and pastoral Institutes in Africa and Oceania and the impact the so-called Lumko approach made on the Asian Churches. Therefore this study presents first a pastoral Institute with a strong anthropological and sociological orientation.

The *Melanesian Institute* was born out of the felt need of Catholic missionaries to understand the Melanesian cultures and peoples better. That this Pastoral Institute developed into an ecumenical institution at the service of various Churches and the secular society is peerless in the Christian world.

The contribution on MI wants to show the significance of visionaries who struggled successfully to put their vision into praxis. The study pays attention to the missionary, ecclesial, social, cultural and political context the MI was born into and in which the Institute could perform its mission as an Institute for Pastoral and Socio-Economic Service.

The main objective MI had was to help the Christian Churches in Melanesia to overcome the gap between gospel and culture. The MI worked with creative imagination in finding ways to dialogue with these cultures and their members. Especially the missionaries and all pastoral agents were addressed to participate in this process which would lead to a mutual cultural exchange and enrichment. In this way MI has made a great contribution to a more inculturated and contextualized Christianity in Melanesia.

The *AMECEA Pastoral Institute Gaba* is another example of how a vision became flesh. API was also born in a period when the local Churches in Eastern Africa were urgently looking for ways to contextualize and inculturate their pastoral ministry and approaches of evangelization. API is an example of the close interrelatedness of the birth and development of a Regional Conference of several national bishops' conferences in East Africa (AMECEA) and the birth and further growth of a Pastoral Institute at the service of AMECEA Churches to find a new way of being Church in Africa. API had the task to contextualize and inculturate ministry training for clergy, religious and lay people in a common formation project.

The research and formation approaches which API developed, especially its promotion of Small Christian Communities, had an impact on other Pastoral Institutes and Churches beyond the AMECEA region.

Especially the development of SCCs which the AMECEA bishops had declared a pastoral priority already since the early 1970s influ-

enced the leading visionaries of a new pastoral approach at the *Lumko Institute* of the SACBC in South Africa. Under Fritz Lobinger and Oswald Hirmer Lumko developed a new approach to lay ministry training which spread to the young Churches of Africa, Asia and Oceania and which was also taken up in Latin America and which inspires some people in European Churches. The chapter on the South African Lumko Institute, which for a long time called itself a missiological institute, represents a special case of fortunate circumstances of growth among the pastoral institutes. Already at its beginning the Institute was blessed with far-looking visionaries and in the post-conciliar stage with pastoral visionaries with the gift to transform their vision of a participatory Church into concrete pastoral models. Therefore it is not surprising that the Lumko approach became the most wide-spread best-seller in the field of community building and formation of lay ministers. The Bible sharing methods developed by Lumko are nowadays known and used worldwide. They have reached a global significance not only for the Catholic Church but also for other Christian Churches and communities. That in fact made Lumko ecumenical in its outreach.

The chapter on the *Asian Integral Pastoral Approach* shows what impact the so-called Lumko approach had made since the Fifth Assembly of FABC bishops in 1990 in Bandung, Indonesia. Here it was again the engagement, dedication and inspiration of a visionary who became the messenger of the Lumko approach for the Asian Churches. Bishop Oswald Hirmer advised the Asian bishops and pastoral agents of the need to adapt the Lumko approach to their context. Fr. Thomas Vijay, a Pallottine priest from India, Wendy Louis, and many more were instrumental in the fruitful process and creative adaptation of the Lumko approach and its transformation into AsIPA and DIIPA.

The Western Churches, especially in German-speaking countries in Central Europe, raised questions such as: How can the pastoral initiatives and approaches born in non-Western Churches and societies be inspirational and helpful in finding new ways of Christian life and witness in secular and pluralistic societies? Are such approaches as AsIPA transferable? Do they have any significance for fast changing Western societies where organized religion, and that means especially Christian Churches, is being ever more marginalized and obviously of less significance for the majority of people. What kind of social cohesiveness and relationships are Christians in Western society still able and willing to live? Are Christian communities still a desired alternative to extreme forms of individualisation and increasing isolation of their members in Western societies?

In a mobile society individual freedom is much greater than it has ever been for previous generations. That influences Christian communi-

ties enormously and especially the age-old institution of the parish as the most common institution of Christian socialization. The Western Churches in recent decades have experienced an ongoing crisis of that institution. Pastoral units do not automatically guarantee a way to overcome this crisis; often they even accelerate the process of decline of the traditional parish or continue the service station model of the parish of previous times. The intention of pastors and pastoral theologians to transform the parish into a parish community has somehow stopped half way through and therefore lacks a successful completion.

That situation should urge us to see in the various *new ways of being Church* coming from Latin America, Africa, Asia and Oceania not only some exotic, faraway attempts which have nothing to contribute to the international and Western search for finding viable paths for ecclesial renewal, but as realistic ways of combining Christian faith and culture.

The study wants to spotlight on the specific contribution the pastoral institutes have made to an emerging contextual practical theology.

For Eastern Africa the Gaba Institute has to be understood in the close links it has to the pastoral vision, aspirations and priority of the AMECEA bishops and theologians. The task API had was to transform a missionary *plantatio ecclesiae* model of the Catholic Church into a Catholic local Church which is contextualized and inculturated in its social and cultural life and imagination. To reach this goal the AMECEA bishops gave to their Pastoral Institute the task to assist the East African local Churches in their process by research, teaching and publications. The pastoral approach developed and used by API can be called a “lesson from life for life” or theory from practice for practice (cf. Johann Baptist Hirscher).¹ According to the German pastoral theologian Walter Fürst the practical theology derived from the *communio sanctorum* experience of the early Church gradually was transformed into a speculative theology, which finally was separated from anthropology.

“Although more and more urgent, neither the historical-social nor the existential-psychological reality of man or the Church were henceforth taken seriously. The emerging social and human sciences later filled this gap. Only reluctantly was it understood in our century that neither the tools to understand the pastoral situation nor the standards and impulses of standardization and re-orientation of pastoral practice can come solely from theology, rather it al-

¹ Cf. W. FÜRST, Pastoraltheologie, in: *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* (TRE) Bd. 26, 1996, 70-76, here 75.

ways needs the analysis and insights of human and social sciences.”²

The Christianity brought to Africa, Asia and Oceania was heavily burdened by the speculative way of doing theology which was too long separated from the knowledge of human beings as it is researched by pedagogy, psychology, sociology and cultural anthropology, to mention just the more important disciplines. Christian doctrine was synthesised in Catechisms which the catechumens had to memorize.

All the institutes presented in this study have from their beginning a strong missiological and anthropological emphasis which determined their further development. Nevertheless this development was in each case very different. Lumko was first founded as a missiological institute with a strong department of language studies, a department for African Church music, a department of missiology and a department of Catechist training. With the arrival of Lobinger and Hirmer the Institute's main emphasis was changed from those departments to the newly developed pastoral and biblical departments, which both aimed at building up participatory ecclesial communities. Their link with the human sciences is obvious. The modern knowledge of the human being which came from sociology, psychology and the science of education helped to develop new ways of formation of the whole community as such and of its ministers and leaders, ordained and non-ordained alike.

The same can be said of API in Eldoret. API also developed, with the help of the human and social sciences, new teaching approaches for its nine-month course of training laypeople, priests and religious for a pastoral goal of communion and evangelization within the local Church. API had for some time, especially when A. Shorter was in charge of this department, a well-known and very active department of Cultural Studies. The studies of this department helped the AMECEA Churches in their search for appropriate ways to contextualize and inculturate the Christian faith in Eastern Africa.

The Melanesian Institute is marked from its very beginning by a strong missiological and anthropological imprint, which was always combined with other social sciences, i.e. sociology and modern methods

² Ibid. „Obwohl immer dringlicher, wurden fortan weder die geschichtlich-soziale noch die existentiell-psychische Wirklichkeit des Menschen oder auch der Kirche ernsthaft wahrgenommen. Die aufstrebenden Sozial- und Humanwissenschaften stießen später in diese Lücke vor. Nur zögernd begann man in unserem Jahrhundert zu begreifen, dass weder die Instrumentarien zur Wahrnehmung der pastoralen Situation noch die Maßstäbe und Impulse der Normierung und Neuorientierung der pastoralen Praxis allein aus der Theologie kommen können, dass es vielmehr immer auch der Analysen und Einsichten der Human- und Sozialwissenschaften bedarf.“

of field research. The Orientation Course organized for Catholic missionaries was the key to enlarge its service to missionaries from other denominations. This went along with also asking for teaching staff from those Churches. In this way the Catholic Institute grew into an ecumenical one. The founders saw it as an appropriate way of reading the signs of the times, by doing what was opportune and entering with confidence into new ways of cooperation they had never known nor experienced before.

This becoming ecumenical and serving several Churches of very different ecclesiologies and pastoral approaches implied that an approach had to be found to be of effective service to such different Church communities. The research project on marriage and family life with its sociological, cultural and theological aspects stands for this typical MI-developed approach to basic research that would be relevant for all its member Churches. Concrete pastoral approaches as Lumko had developed them and formation training as API did, were left to each Church. The MI studies on Women, Youth, Ecology and HIV/Aids again were equally important for all Churches. They show again the typical MI approach of offering pastoral and socio-economic services to the Churches and Melanesian society at the same time. With such an approach MI remained heavily in the academic realm and its teaching in the socio-economic, sociological and cultural anthropological field.

The orientation course and other courses would mainly teach an applied anthropological missiology and missiological anthropology combined with relevant sociological insights. Thus they could add something that traditional theological disciplines could not offer.

Comparing all three institutes it can be said that the AMECEA Pastoral Institute pioneered most in new ways of ministry training and in preparing the pastoral agents it trained for the acceptance of the pastoral priority of the AMECEA bishops: to build up Small Christian Communities.

Lumko strongly pioneered first in teaching and a new methodology for learning African languages and African Church music and in its second phase in training for lay ministries and new ways of leadership training in the Christian community.

The kind of pastoral service the Melanesian Institute offered was of a different nature. Direct ministry training had to remain the task of its member Churches. With its research, teaching and publication the MI could prepare the ground for gaining a deeper insight into the cultures and societies the Churches wanted to reach out to. In this way the teaching and publication of MI helped the Churches in Melanesia to

develop effective approaches of communicating the Gospel with their worshipping services, sacraments and social services.

“Because the mission of the Church is to human beings, and because anthropology is the systematic study of such beings, a basic knowledge of this science is a must for anyone engaged in mission.”³ The three institutes treated in this study have contributed in their specific ways to building up new pastoral approaches and a contextualized practical theology by making a new link between Gospel and culture.

The presentation intended to show how such pastoral institutes have broadened the missionary horizons of the Churches as they faced new challenges. It showed that certain underlying principles were both the initial impulse for the institutes and also the Spirit-inspired fruit of their pioneering work, particularly their stress on the right of all people to encounter and live the gospel in their own cultural context, and on the desire for a fully participatory Church. To foster this growth dialogue between theology and missiology on the one hand and the social sciences on the other became the hallmark of these institutes. The Churches have benefitted greatly from this ongoing dialogue. It led to a deep appreciation that people’s human experience in their own cultural context is a locus for theological reflection. Developing contextual theology will be particularly significant in a world of globalizing tendencies which are leading to a revision of the very concept of culture as something very fluid and multiple rather than static and handed down. This globalizing, unifying process should at the same time lead to deeper respect for diversity in cultural values and in theology.

The pastoral institutes described here, as well as others that have grown up as local responses to our global yet diverse world, can play a leading role in this challenging future.

All pastoral and cultural institutes are undergoing stages of transition and all face certain common and certain particular difficulties and challenges. Finding qualified local staff members has remained one of their challenges. They are all in need of being re-founded in the sense that their mission is reformulated for the pastoral challenges of our local Churches for the 21st century.

In a world challenged by globalization the local Churches are in search of giving precise answers which must be put into practice in meaningful approaches of awareness campaigns, advocacy in favour of the victims of globalization and the downtrodden of highly competitive societies. The encyclical *Evangelii gaudium*, the Joy of the Gospel, contains many points which touch the challenges local Churches are facing

³ L. LUZBETAK, *The Church and Cultures*, Maryknoll, NY 1988, 23.

and the task pastoral and cultural institutes are committed to. “We also evangelize when we attempt to confront the various challenges which can arise.”⁴

In Number 118 of his exhortation, Pope Francis states:

The Bishops of Oceania asked the Church to “develop an understanding and a presentation of the truth of Christ working from the traditions and cultures of the region” and invited “all missionaries to work in harmony with indigenous Christians so as to ensure that the faith and the life of the Church be expressed in legitimate forms appropriate for each culture.”⁵

The pope takes this statement of the bishops of Oceania to draw his own conclusion:

We cannot demand that peoples of every continent, in expressing their Christian faith, imitate modes of expression which European nations developed at a particular moment of their history, because the faith cannot be constricted to the limits of understanding and expression of any one culture. It is an indisputable fact that no single culture can exhaust the mystery of our redemption in Christ.⁶

For that very reason the 21st century needs such institutes. The mission which regional pastoral and cultural institutes have is not completed; it has reached only a new stage of development being at the service of the local Church. Diocesan pastoral centres cannot do what regional centres are called to do in research, teaching and publication. Therefore they cannot be a substitute for regional centres. Nor can the catechetical and pastoral departments of bishops’ conferences do the work that regional centres are doing. Doing the needed scientific research and developing the appropriate pastoral approach will be their mission in the future as it has been in a different context in the past. Horst Rzepkowski indicated already in 1972 the twofold task and orientation of pastoral and cultural institutes.

A real knowledge of and anchoring in the local culture must be guaranteed, but also links with international developments must be assured. Close contact with international research needs to be striven for. This last goal can be

⁴ Pope FRANCIS, *The Joy of the Gospel. Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium of the Holy Father Francis*, Nairobi 2013, 61.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 118.

⁶ *Ibid.*

achieved by being associated with a university or an international scientific institute.⁷

The Eastern African Pastoral Institute has opted recently for such an integration into the Catholic University of Eastern Africa. The Melanesian Institute has also discussed such possibilities. The Catholic Divine Word University in Madang would also allow for such an affiliation.⁸

Lumko has already completed half a century of active service to the pastoral and catechetical needs of the dioceses in South Africa. Its approach has gained worldwide significance and is since 1990 most influential in promoting a New Way of Being Church in Asian countries. What started as a Pastoral Institute on the margins of the Catholic Church in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa has become a movement of ecclesial renewal worldwide.

The pastoral and cultural institutes are looking back at almost half a century of service to the *communio ecclesiology* model of the Church. Their constantly renewed mission and vision are as much needed for the years to come in the 21st century, as they have been in the last decades.

This study of the pastoral institutes in Oceania and Africa shows the various developments and levels at which theology is performed as described in Hermann Janssen's article of 1982. Theology is studied and developed not only at seminaries, universities and in episcopal conferences, but also in pastoral institutes. These different places of doing theology are mutually enriching each other and therefore need each other to cover more than one perspective of the whole task of doing and developing a contextual theology. This work verifies what Janssen wrote in 1982:

The institutes have contributed significantly to the practical implementation of the renewal process which the Second Vatican Council had inspired. Through religious studies and ethnological research, through training courses for foreign personnel in leadership positions, through the development of biblical, catechetical and liturgical aids, and not least by the publication of theological journals, a con-

⁷ H. RZEPKOWSKI, Die Bedeutung der Kultur- und Pastoralinstitute für die missionarische Verkündigung: *Verbum SVD* 13 (1972) 138.

⁸ Only Lumko Institute has not yet found such a solution and chance to guarantee its mission for the years to come and the SACBC has decided in 2013 to deactivate the running of their Pastoral Institute for two years. It can only be hoped that the South African bishops find ways to continue and re-found their Pastoral Institute.

temporary evangelization and pastoral ministry was made possible in the third world.⁹

Thus, the pastoral institutes have contributed to a greater communication between dioceses, religious, Churches, religions and have helped to overcome the “exotic” isolation of the mission Churches.

The fast change in the world of communication affects all Christian Churches. Pastoral and cultural institutes are also challenged by how their ways of communication are effective. They should be places where the impact of such changes on the individual Christian and the Christian community is studied more intensely, since “Christian faith is communication.” And to this communication the institutes are committed.¹⁰ Pope Paul VI makes a concluding statement, which expresses also the vision and mission of pastoral institutes in the 21st century:

What matters is to evangelize man’s culture and cultures (not in a purely decorative way, as it were, by applying a thin veneer, but in a vital way, in depth and right to their very roots), in the wide and rich sense which these terms have in *Gaudium et spes*, always taking the person as one’s starting-point and always coming back to the relationships of people among themselves and with God.¹¹

⁹ H. JANSSEN, *Theologische Durchblicke – Entwicklungen und Ebenen der Theologie in der Dritten Welt: Theologie der Gegenwart* 24 (1981) 121.

¹⁰ F.-J. EILERS, From “*Gaudium et Spes*” to a “New Culture.” Towards New Ways of Communicating: *Verbum SVD* 48 (2007) 123-134, here 130.

¹¹ Pope PAUL VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 20.

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