

MISSION ACCORDING TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ASIA  
A NEW WAY OF BEING CHURCH

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I. Introduction

This is an age of the manifestation of the Spirit and at the same time a *kaliyuga*<sup>1</sup> as the Hindu tradition would call it. On the one hand we realize that the world is on the brink of despair. What we see and experience is just the tip of the iceberg. *Terrorism* has become a modern metaphor all over the globe. It is creating an atmosphere of suspicion and prejudice, fear and anguish and above all disintegration and unpredictability in our societies. Revenge and hatred seem to be spreading their venom in many sectors of human life. At such times of despondency one naturally looks up to religion to find solace and guidance. Even here in this spiritual domain we have to admit that religions on the whole are going through a testing period in their history. They are losing their dynamism as reconcilers and spiritual guides. According to *Swami Agnivesh* almost all institutionalized religions of Asia have gone far away from the quintessence of spirituality. Instead they are degenerating into “irreconcilable dogmatic belief systems, superstitions, Idolatry and hotbeds of religious fundamentalism.”<sup>2</sup>

Despite this dark picture, thank God, all over the world people from diverse religious and secular traditions are gradually becoming aware that the way the world functions will only lead to destruction and despair. This awareness is also founded on the realization that humans are inter-dependent beings and that they are part of the earth. That is why today there is, for example, a retrieval of the insight that the universe is sacred, that humans are a community and that life becomes meaningful only when there is a harmonious relationship between humans and nature. Even in the midst of confusion there is a quest for something that brings one stability and wholeness, a search for that which makes one truly happy and peaceful. A sense for the spiritual is quite visible in spite of the ongoing materialistic mindset. This awareness is a great step forward. It can usher in a *metamorphosis*, a transformation of our whole being. In this regard significant efforts are seen everywhere. This growing self-understanding is bringing the world together as a community. There is also increasing solidarity among nations. Nations are trying to come closer to one another in peace despite constant threats of war and conflicts. Religions are attempting to come together in dialogue in order to build bridges of understanding and to work together for common concerns.

Such ‘people of good’ will be the hope of this world and they do have a special ‘mission’ today. Their awareness of an inner quest for meaning in life, to commit their lives selflessly for the cause of justice, reconciliation and peace, to work relentlessly to bring about healing and wholeness on this planet is a sign of the breakthrough of God’s Kingdom on earth. These people are able to cross the limits or barriers created by religion, caste, class, race, color, gender and nations. They listen to the promptings of the Spirit and discern the signs of the times. Their concerns are universal. Such people are indeed filled with the Spirit and are led by the Spirit.

Any movement towards peace, justice, healing, wholeness and wellbeing is from the Spirit of God, the giver of hope to humanity. It is the Spirit that opens us up to the signs of the times. The Spirit of God “renews the face of the earth.” We cannot imprison the Spirit within our ways of thinking and acting for She blows where She will, works when, where, how and in whom She will and moves the hearts of anyone whom She will.

The Spirit is the primary Agent of mission in the Church. The awareness that the Church is a reality deeply rooted in this world and among its people diverse in cultures, languages, religious beliefs, and ideologies is a gift of God’s Spirit to the modern world. She cannot exist in isolation. For centuries we have been living in isolation, in our own self-made wells. The question of respect for other religions, cultures, and the “otherness” of the other was strange

to us. But there seems to be a sweeping change in such a mindset. That is why the mission of the Church can become significant only when she has a better grasp of her context. John Paul II's *Ecclesia in Asia* (EA) makes this point clear when it says: "...Likewise, the Church lives and fulfils her mission in the actual circumstances of time and place. A critical awareness of the diverse and complex realities of Asia is essential if the people of God on the continent are to respond to God's will for them in the new evangelization. The Synod Fathers insisted that the Church's mission of love and service in Asia is conditioned by two factors: on the one hand, her self-understanding as a community of disciples of Jesus Christ gathered around her Pastors, and on the other hand, the social, political, religious, cultural and economic realities of Asia" (EA 5).

## II. Asian Reality

Asia is rich in human resource and human potential. Asians constitute 54% of the world's population and the Christian population is just 2.3%.<sup>3</sup> This is despite the fact that Christianity had its genesis in Asia. Considering the vast population, the percentage of Christians after 2000+ years is still very small. The rationale behind this poor response to the message of the Gospel seems to be the failure of the Asian Church in articulating and communicating the Christian faith in a way suited to the Asian genius and relevant to the signs of the times. This is evident in the western life style adopted by Christians, the western ecclesial structures, art and architecture, liturgies, music and above all western theological thought patterns, Christological and ecclesiological formulations, etc. It is only after Vat. II that there is a move towards the development of Asian theology - which however is still looked upon with suspicion. For example, the Asian Church is afraid of being misunderstood by Rome. Ever since the then Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, Cardinal Josef Tomko's description of India as "the epicenter of certain theological tendencies and Asia their main territory"<sup>4</sup>, there has been a sort of suspicion and mistrust of the Indian/Asian theologians on the part of the Vatican. The Church has not taken seriously the specific Asian multicultural and multireligious context.

### 2.1 Cultural and Religious Plurality

In Asia great distances are spanned by a multiplicity of races, religions and cultures. Sharp contrasts exist among peoples, cultures, religions and conditions of life from country to country and within the countries of Asia. EA remarks on the most striking feature of the continent: the variety of its peoples who are "heirs to ancient cultures, religions and traditions" (EA 6). Positively Asia is the birth place of diverse religious traditions like Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Taoism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, Jainism, Sikhism, Shintoism etc. All these religious traditions embody deep-rooted religious values. "The Church has the deepest respect for these traditions and seeks to engage in sincere dialogue with their followers" (EA 6).

### 2.2 Colossal Poverty

Seen economically, a number of countries of Asia have made considerable economic progress, but there still exist degrading and inhuman poverty, widening inequality, unequal distribution of resources and opportunities etc. Poverty is a telling forecast of Asia's future. Regardless of its many positive effects globalization has "worked to the detriment of the poor, tending to push poorer countries to the margin of economic and political relations. Many Asian nations are unable to hold their own in a global market economy" (EA 39).

### 2.3 Oppressive Social Systems

Oppressive systems based on class, caste, race and gender disparity are very rampant in Asian countries and they are the factors of division in the societies. Migration within Asian countries and to other countries is also a major problem facing Asia. Migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers are inhumanly treated. There are also a number of life-threatening and destructive tendencies such as flesh-trade, human rights abuses, disrespect for human life,

institutionalized inequality of women etc., in Asia. Terrorism has become an organized body that is spreading seeds of revenge and hatred among people.

#### 2.4 Political Disturbance and Militarization

Politically Asia is diverse: Dictatorship, Democracy, and Militarization – all these are at home in Asia. Constant political upheaval and uncontrolled corruption at all political levels is common to her. “In certain countries, the whole of life is politicized, affecting every sector, making implementation impossible. Governments are forced to adopt policies and practices such as the Structural Adjustment Policies (SAP), dictated by the IMF, the WB and the WTO. These policies are devoid of a human face and social concern.”<sup>5</sup>

Allegedly militarization is aimed at national security. But despite these apparent security-complexes nations live in constant insecurity and under threat of wars. The effects of militarization are manifested today more than ever in the huge number of refugees. In the face of such militarization we cannot deny the possibility of a nuclear holocaust!

### III. Mission According to Vatican II

The Second Vatican Council is experienced as the new *Pentecost* in the life of the Catholic Church. The ‘windows’ were opened for the fresh air of the Spirit to flow in freely. The Council’s central theme was renewal and updating (*aggiornamento*). The aim was to meet the challenges of the modern world through dialogue. *Ecclesiam Suam*<sup>6</sup> (ES) of Pope Paul VI summarizes this radical change in the Catholic Church in the following words: “The Church must enter into dialogue with the world in which it lives. It has something to say, a message to give, a communication to make” (ES No.65). The two significant phrases of the encyclical are ‘Mission and Dialogue’. The mission of the Church is to encounter the contemporary world through dialogue. The Pope refers to four different types of dialogue: Dialogue with the world and cultures, Dialogue with other religions, dialogue with other Christians and dialogue within the Church (Cf. ES Chapter III).<sup>7</sup>

*Redemptoris Missio* remarks: “The Church's task is described as though it had to proceed in two directions: on the one hand promoting such 'values of the kingdom' as peace, justice, freedom, brotherhood, etc, while on the other hand fostering dialogue between peoples, cultures and religions, so that through a mutual enrichment they might help the world to be renewed and to journey ever closer toward the kingdom” (No.17). And again: “A commitment to peace, justice, human rights and human promotion is also a witness to the Gospel when it is a sign of concern for persons and is directed toward integral human development” (No. 42).

According to the CBCI Evaluation Report “Evangelization is no more considered solely a work of conversion as the concept of evangelization is broader today, as taught by the Council Documents, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* and *Redemptoris Missio*. According to this understanding, evangelization includes not only religious and spiritual upliftment of the people but also the physical and economic development. Thus today there is a shift from the concept of presence amongst people to programmes for and with the people. In other words, evangelization work should be Kingdom-centred in which people are important. Hence emphasis should be on spreading and sharing the Good News and its concrete implications to all people of good will. Evangelization, therefore, includes the promotion of peace and justice, the running of educational institutions, hospitals, working for the needy and poor, etc.”<sup>8</sup>

### III. Mission in Asia Today

Mission in Asia is inconceivable today if we do not take into consideration Asia’s rich cultural diversity and multi-religiosity. Expressions like ‘Mission, Evangelization, and Conversion’ so vital to Christian faith, are greatly misunderstood in many Asian countries. This should make us realize that the ‘how’ of the Mission is as important as its ‘why’ and

‘what’ if it has to be intelligible in a given context. In presenting the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Asia* (EA) of Pope John Paul II to the Bishops of Asia, Cardinal Paul Shan had pointed out that "the big question presently confronting us, given the religious and cultural context of Asia, is not *why* we should proclaim the Good News of Christ's Salvation but *how*" (EA 29).<sup>9</sup>

EA also speaks of "new evangelization" (EA 29). This new evangelization is about the Churches in Asia taking on the "face of Asia" so that they respond to the specific needs of Asia and become more meaningful for Asian society, particularly the poor and the downtrodden.<sup>10</sup> Evangelization, inculturation, mission, dialogue etc. are not mere words but worlds in themselves. They are expressions of an interconnected reality. If witnessing is to be the core of mission, and if dialogue is not to deteriorate into disputation and mere discussion, then collaboration and communion will have to enter the mainstream of this enterprise. Both presuppose the fundamental disposition of openness of heart and mind. Such openness implies the ability to listen and to receive – both built on the attitude of hope! Today's understanding of mission has to include "listening" and "receiving" because they embody par excellence openness of our being. Indeed it is these that make dialogue possible. Listening and receiving are important aspects of dialogue.

The Asian Church has to listen to the Spirit operative within her own life. She should listen to the contemporary prophets both within and outside the Church who through their writings, theological reflections and through various movements of the Spirit are pointing to a new direction for a meaningful understanding of mission in Asia. Besides, the Asian Church has to listen to the poor and the underprivileged; to the women whose voice is not heard; to the youth who search for meaning in life; to the cry of the earth that is being constantly devastated; to the truth embodied in various religious traditions so that she is able to recognize the workings of the Spirit who gathers and unites. In short she has to listen to the Spirit of God who blows how and where *She* wills.

### 3.1 A New Way of Being Church in Asia: The Triple Dialogue

Asian mission suffered very much from the colonial attitude of "conquest" i.e., conquering peoples, cultures and religions. Consequently, the missionaries had, speaking generally, a very negative attitude towards the cultures and religions of Asia. The missionary methodology consisted in importing the western models of churches, thought patterns, prayers, liturgies, theologies, spirituality, art and architecture, music etc. rather than initiating processes of inculturating the Christian faith in the cultural and religious forms of the people of Asia. By and large missionaries were planting Churches and increasing the Church membership as if this alone constituted mission. They were not very much involved in transforming Asian society with the leaven of the Gospel.

The Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) looks at evangelization as an integral activity involving the whole human community, every group, and every person. It has to do with inculturation, dialogue, the Asian-ness of the church, justice, the option for the poor, etc. Thus evangelization is an all-encompassing activity that mutually involves all other activities of the Church including interreligious dialogue. Accordingly "there will be no complete evangelization unless there is dialogue with other religions and cultures. There is no full evangelization if there is no answer to the deep yearning of the peoples of Asia."<sup>11</sup> Concretely, the focus of the FABC is on the new way of being Church in Asia. This 'new way' is the triple dialogue: dialogue with the poor of Asia, dialogue with the religions of Asia and dialogue with Asia's diverse cultures. The dialogue with cultures takes place through the process of inculturation; the dialogue of religions takes place through interreligious dialogue and dialogue with the poor is in view of facilitating integral human development and liberation. "These three ministries are mutually involving components of the evangelizing mission of the Church and constitute what has come to be referred to as the New Way of Being Church in Asia"<sup>12</sup>

As Asians, we claim harmony as a core value. Our 'new way of being Church' is a communion of communities. The triple dialogue to which the Asian Church has committed herself, asks us to stretch our capacities for relationships that are more inclusive.

To put it succinctly, this triple immersion of the Asian Churches into the life of Asia's poor, into Asia's vibrant cultures, and into Asia's living and fertile religious traditions is the need of the hour. If this triple immersion takes place, Asian Churches will emerge with vitality, newness and originality. The Western Church could follow this method of dialogue with the context in its venture of evangelization.

Finally, evangelization in Asia requires concrete pastoral action. For this a new method has to be adopted which the FABC calls the pastoral spiral methodology. It consists of 4 steps: (i) exposure and immersion in the Asian realities; (ii) analysis of socio-economic-religio-cultural realities; (iii) theological reflection and prayer on these findings and experiences; (iv) pastoral planning in an ongoing process of praxis. This has to be introduced in the centers of formation and theological education.

In the new understanding of evangelization - liberation, dialogue, and inculturation are seen as essential constituents. But the Asian Church has to keep in mind her triple responsibility while accomplishing this task:

Firstly, she has to take her mission of evangelization seriously – she cannot give it up. She is called to proclaim the Good News!

Secondly, this mission of evangelization must be proclaimed in such a way that others (i.e. the other religious traditions) understand it. That implies “listening” to their spiritual quest and faith-expressions and from there learning to express in a way that they understand our faith-expressions. This is the function of dialogue.

Thirdly, the mission of evangelization has to be relevant in today’s context i.e., it must be contextualized and concretized in our commitment for justice, peace and the well-being of all, inclusive of the earth. This is called diakonia or evangelization in service.

Evangelization in service is a means of sharing the Good News of God's Kingdom with the whole of creation i.e., the recipient of this Good News has to be the whole of creation. This Good News is: caring for the poor and the downtrodden, bringing comfort, healing and hope to the broken hearted, freedom to those in bondage, light to those who grope in the darkness of ignorance, and proclaiming peace and reconciliation where hatred, revenge and injustice abound in the whole world (cf. LK 4:18-19). The Church should make brave attempts to work towards this goal. Consequently we need to have some basic understanding of dialogue.<sup>13</sup>

### 3.2 Mission of Dialogue

The Catholic Church from the time of Vatican II with its Decree on *Nostra Aetate* has been gradually opening itself up in the direction of dialogue. The openness of the Church has also occasioned interreligious dialogue at various levels (though in a more cautious way!). Hence we have today the document ‘Dialogue and Proclamation’ issued in May 1991 by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) and the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. The Council insists on the constructive and positive interreligious relationship between various religious traditions in order to enhance mutual enrichment and understanding. It recommends a fourfold dialogue:

*The dialogue of life*, where people strive to live in an open and neighborly spirit, sharing their joys and sorrows, their human problems and preoccupations.

*The dialogue of action*, in which Christians and others collaborate for the integral development and liberation of people.

*The dialogue of experience/testimony*, where persons, rooted in their own religious traditions, share their spiritual riches, for instance with regard to prayer and contemplation, faith and ways of searching for God or the Absolute.

*The dialogue of theological exchange*, where specialists seek to deepen their understanding of their respective religious heritages, and appreciate each other's spiritual values.<sup>14</sup>

Dialogue does not mean we agree with whatever the dialoguing partner says or that we give up our own position. If this were so, dialogue would be a mockery, not a genuine sharing. In this regard we could take a cue from what the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue [PCID] said about its methodology a few years ago in its self-introduction:

Dialogue is a two-way communication. It implies speaking and listening, giving and receiving, for mutual growth and enrichment. It includes witness to one's own faith as well as openness to that of the other. It is not a betrayal of the mission of the Church, nor is it a new method of conversion to Christianity. This has been clearly stated in the encyclical letter of Pope John Paul II *'Redemptoris Missio'*. This view is also developed in the two documents produced by the PCID: *The Attitude of the Catholic Church towards the Followers of Other Religious Traditions: Reflections on Dialogue and Mission* (1984), and *Dialogue and Proclamation* (1991).<sup>15</sup>

Before entering into an interreligious dialogue certain misunderstandings need to be clarified: Raimon Panikkar points out that there is in interreligious dialogue no merging of religious traditions. The aim is not merging of world's religions into a universal religion. Nor is it to arrive at a total agreement between religious traditions. Instead the ideal foreseen by interreligious dialogue is: To foster communication between diverse religious traditions and different cultures of the world in order to bridge the gulfs of mutual ignorance and misunderstandings, giving them the chance to speak their own mythical/mystical language, to share the richness of their faith experience. He also points out that there may be moments when some may reach this ideal of communion, but this does not imply a reduction of the rich variety of religious experiences into a single system or tradition.<sup>16</sup>

However we must keep in mind certain prerequisites before entering into such a dialogue:

Firstly, one must be deeply rooted in, convinced of and be faithful to one's own religious tradition. One must remain loyal to one's own tradition. Panikkar reminds us that remaining loyal to one's own tradition does not mean obeying blindly without a critical understanding of the beliefs and doctrines that have been handed down by a religious tradition. Neither is it just a mechanical repetition of rituals. Instead tradition in its real sense means "continuation and growth". That which is handed over in a tradition for future generations is the "crystallized experience of what has happened" long ago in a particular context. It can become stagnant and mechanical if it does not cater to the changing situation of the recipients. In fact tradition has within itself an inner dynamism of growth, open to change to suit the needs of the receivers. A tradition that remains unchanged over the years has no relevance for changing generations and so is bound to degenerate into a dead symbol. In such a case it cannot be called an authentic tradition.<sup>17</sup>

Secondly, one must be genuine and be able to understand rightly the traditions of others.<sup>18</sup> We must not violate other traditions; they (other traditions) must be interpreted according to their own self-understanding i.e., we have no right to interpret the religious beliefs and faith of other religious traditions from our perspective. Doing this would be a great violation of these traditions. Violating these traditions is equal to absolutizing one's own religion. This means that we are called to enter and share in the same myth and its beliefs, sacred as they are to their believers.

Thirdly, one must also be open to the 'New' i.e., to listen to the Spirit of God and be open to be guided and led by the Spirit.

What we need to avoid is aggression and insensitivity. Our whole project of evangelizing mission will suffer if we are aggressive and insensitive in dealing with other religious traditions. In other words our mission is: to unite and not to divide; to discern and not to destroy; and to heal and not to hurt. Our path is the path of love (Cf. I COR: 13). The basic principle to be kept in mind in dialogue is: To understand others as they understand themselves so that they understand us as we understand ourselves.<sup>19</sup>

### 3.3 Mission to be the Light of the World, Salt of the Earth, Leaven in the Dough

The three common examples of light, salt and leaven in the dough which the Gospels give us are powerful symbols of how we need to go about our mission of evangelization in Asia. The light en-lightens so that we can see the lighted objects. No one can see pure light – we only see lighted objects. The salt loses itself in the process of giving taste to the food. It does not convert everything into salt. The leaven is silent in its action and transforms the whole dough. It does not convert everything into leaven!<sup>20</sup> The Asian Church is called to be the light

of the world, salt of the earth and leaven in the dough in order to bring about transformation of our societies.

#### IV. Conclusion

The FABC recognizes the presence of the Spirit of God in history, guiding the salvation of all people. Hence dialogue with other religions, positively recognizing the authentic values present among them, and holding dialogue with also the historical socio-cultural movements is very important. Since the poor masses of Asia are deeply religious, seeking God and longing for spiritual fulfillment, the Church has to become the Church of the poor catering to their needs and aspirations. The cultural elements that are oppressive should be challenged by the Church. Therefore, evangelization of cultures, dialogue with other religions, the challenge of transforming the unjust and inhuman social and political structures are understood today in Asia as the essential aspects of evangelization, and these cannot be separated from the proclamation of Jesus Christ and the Gospel.

In view of this, efforts to work out indigenous contextual theologies do abound. This does not mean that full fledged theologies of this kind have arrived. It only means that Asian theologians have become more deeply aware of the fact that traditional creedal formulae become meaningless in the cultural contexts of Asia. These formulae were worked out on the cultural and religious background of the Jewish, Greek and Roman worlds. This is the main reason why the salvific story of Jesus has not made any substantial impression on the Asian peoples as a whole. Asia's peoples have admired Jesus enormously but, for example, His 'way of the cross' as the way of salvation doesn't make sense on their religious and cultural horizon. Asian women and men theologians have been absorbed in this enterprise in diverse ways.<sup>21</sup> More contextually, theologians from the "dalit" (suppressed and oppressed) community are coming up with ideas which will constitute the bricks of a meaningful and relevant dalit theology. Asian theologians have also been articulating their own brand of a theology of liberation which is constructed on the quest for justice and peace. Last but not least women theologians have been creatively working towards a theology that is more intuitive and meditative, highlighting a dimension that traditional theology either overlooks or neglects or perhaps even denies.

In short, in the context of religious and cultural plurality the Asian Church has the responsibility of critiquing, opposing and taking a clear stand against the oppressive systems that abound in her continent and of inspiring the people to reach their human/communitarian destiny. In this sense every genuine religious tradition has a mission to fulfill in today's Asia. This mission is to be reconcilers and bridge-builders between God, world and humans. Propagating hatred and cultural superiority would only worsen our situation. The Asian Church can lead the way in such a venture.

Furthermore, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) pleads for such interreligious collaboration. It points out that interreligious cooperation is no longer an option but a necessity.<sup>22</sup> It expresses the need for dedicated efforts to "examine how, in a world that is increasingly interconnected, we can find new ways to respect our religious differences while forging peaceful bonds based on our common humanity."<sup>23</sup> It also states emphatically that "Religion will prosper in this century only to the extent that we can maintain a sense of community among people of different religious beliefs who work together as a human family to achieve a world peace."<sup>24</sup>

We have enough opportunities to collaborate with one another. There are common concerns that affect all religious traditions such as: oppressive and unjust systems that are widespread in our societies; rampant corruption at various levels; the agony of the poor, the marginalized, the downtrodden, women, dalits, tribals, children; religious fundamentalism leading to terrorism and despair; the devastation of mother earth etc. It is the Spirit of God alone that can guide the Church to engage in such Kingdom-centred activities.

I would like to conclude this article with a citation from Patriarch Ignatius on the role of the Holy Spirit in the work of mission:

"Without the Holy Spirit –  
 God is far away,  
 Christ stays in the past,  
 the Gospel is a dead letter,  
 the Church is simply an Organisation,  
 authority, a matter of domination,  
 mission, a matter of propaganda,  
 the liturgy no more than an evocation,  
 Christian living a slave morality.  
 But in the Holy Spirit –  
 the cosmos is resurrected  
 and groans with the birthpangs of the kingdom,  
 the risen Christ is there,  
 the Gospel is the power of life,  
 the Church shows forth the life of the Trinity,  
 authority is a liberating service,  
 mission is a Pentecost,  
 the liturgy is both memorial and anticipation,  
 human action is deified"<sup>25</sup>

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Kaliyuga – Age of spiritual entropy.

<sup>2</sup> Swami Agnivesh, "Asia the Reconciler", in: *REPORT of the Sixth Assembly of the Asian Conference on Religion and Peace (ACRP)*, Yogyakarta, June 24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, 2002, Indonesia, 39-47, 41

<sup>3</sup> Cf., Michael Jaffarian, "The Statistical State of the Missionary Enterprise", *Missiology XXX:1* (January 2002) pp. 15-32.

<sup>4</sup> Cf., Cardinal Josef Tomko, "Proclaiming Christ the World's only Saviour", *L'Osservatore Romano*, (Eng.), April 15, 1991, 4.

<sup>5</sup> *For All The Peoples of Asia*, Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Documents from 1997 to 2001, Vol.3, Edited by Franz-Josef Eilers, Claretian Publications, Philippines, 2002, 7.

<sup>6</sup> *Ecclesiam Suam*, Encyclical of Pope Paul VI on The Church, August 6, 1964, [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/paul\\_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_enc\\_06081964\\_ecclesiam\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_06081964_ecclesiam_en.html)

<sup>7</sup> See Edmund Chia, *Towards a Theology of Dialogue*, Schillebeeckx's Method as Bridge between Vatican's Dominus Iesus and Asia's FABC Theology, Bangkok, 2003, 31.

<sup>8</sup> See CBCI (Catholic Bishops Conference of India) Evaluation Report, 1995, CBCI Evaluation Committee, New Delhi, at 215.

<sup>9</sup> "Presentation of Ecclesia in Asia in New Delhi by Cardinal Paul Shan," General Relator, Synod of Bishops for Asia in *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas*, vol. LXXVI, No. 816 (Jan-Feb 2000) at 136, quoted in Edmund Chia, "Interreligious Dialogue in Ecclesia in Asia," in *Jeevadhara*, vol. XXX, No. 177 (May 2000) 300-312, 301.

<sup>10</sup> Cardinal Darmaatmadja, "A New Way of Being Church in Asia," *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection* 63 (1999), 888.

<sup>11</sup> Cardinal Julius Darmaatmadja, "A New Way of Being Church in Asia", *Vidyajyothi* 63 (1999), 891.

<sup>12</sup> Edmund Chia, *Towards a Theology of Dialogue*, Schillebeeckx's Method as Bridge between Vatican's Dominus Iesus and Asia's FABC Theology, Bangkok, 2003, 83.

<sup>13</sup> Clemens Mendonca, *Dynamics of Symbol and Dialogue: Interreligious Education in India*, Tübinger Perspektiven zur Pastoraltheologie und Religionspädagogik, Bd.13. LIT Verlag Münster, 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue & Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, *Dialogue and Proclamation: Reflections and Orientations on Interreligious Dialogue and proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ* (1991), n. 42. Also cf., n. 8-9.

<sup>15</sup> The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/interelg/documents/rcpinterelgpro20051996en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rcpinterelgpro20051996en.html).

<sup>16</sup> Raimon Panikkar, *The Intrareligious Dialogue*, Asian Trading Corporation, 150 Brigade Road, Bangalore, 1984, 36-37.



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<sup>17</sup> Raimon Panikkar, „In Christ There Is Neither Hindu Nor Christian: Perspectives on Hindu-Christian Dialogue,” in: *Religious Issues & Dialogues*, C. Wei-hsun Fu & G.E.Spiegler (eds.), Greenwood Press, New York, 1989, 475-489, 479.

<sup>18</sup> Raimon Panikkar, „In Christ There Is Neither Hindu Nor Christian.

<sup>19</sup> Francis X. D’Sa, “Missionarisch Kirche sein in Asien. Dialog der Religionen als Herausforderung“, in: André Gerth/Simone Rappel (Hrsg.), *Global Message – Weltmission heute* (München: Don Bosco Verlag, 2005), 53-74.

<sup>20</sup> Cf., Raimon Panikkar, *Transforming Christian Mission into Dialogue*, 26

<sup>21</sup> See, e.g. Francis X. D’Sa, „Ecclesia Semper Reformanda aus der Sicht anderer Religionen“; in: Erich Garhammer (Hg.), *Ecclesia semper reformanda. Kirchenreform als bleibende Aufgabe* (Würzburg: Echter, 2006), 231-247.

<sup>22</sup> Symposium on Interreligious Dialogue held in Rome by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Jan. 16-18, 2003 (Zenith News).

<sup>23</sup> Symposium on Interreligious Dialogue held in Rome by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Jan. 16-18, 2003 (Zenith News).

<sup>24</sup> Symposium on Interreligious Dialogue held in Rome by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Jan. 16-18, 2003 (Zenith News).

<sup>25</sup> [http://www.orthodoxresearchinstitute.org/articles/dogmatics/harper\\_holy\\_spirit.htm](http://www.orthodoxresearchinstitute.org/articles/dogmatics/harper_holy_spirit.htm)

