

# Evangelization Directory

## I. The need for Evangelization

1. A new age in the history of mankind
2. A new culture
  - 2.1. A culture signaled by secularism
  - 2.2. Return of the religious and the magic
3. Evangelization for the present
  - 3.1. Above all, evangelization
  - 3.2. Evangelization of the culture and of cultures
  - 3.3. An attitude in favor of dialogue
  - 3.4. Evangelization among the poor
4. Evangelization agents
5. Challenges we face
  - 5.1. Acculturation and Inculturation of the Gospel
  - 5.2. Facing the crisis of the Christian message
  - 5.3. Helping to encourage reflection and the desire for God
  - 5.4. Providing experiences rather than doctrine
  - 5.5. Recovering ecclesial credibility.
  - 5.6. Creating live communities
  - 5.7. Raising, promoting and forming evangelization agents.
  - 5.8. Bringing the Word to the People of God.

## II. The CSSR at the service of the Gospel

1. Constitutions and Statutes
2. XXIII General Chapter

## III. Areas of Evangelization

1. Parish Mission and Sanctuaries
  1. Parish Mission
  2. Sanctuaries
2. Popular Mission
3. Mission Ad Gentes
4. Immigration and interreligious dialogue
5. Ecology, Justice and Peace
6. Moral Theology

## IV. General Secretariat for Evangelization

1. General Secretariat for Evangelization
2. General objective
3. Specific objectives
4. Priorities
5. Strategies
6. Calendar and topics for the Sexennium

7. Relations with other Secretariats and with the Center for Redemptorist Spirituality
8. Relations with the General Government

Contact with the (Vice)-Provincial Superior and the Provincial Secretariats.

## **I. THE NEED FOR EVANGELIZATION**

### **1. A new age in the history of mankind**

At this point in history, the contemporary man has a double experience:

- On one hand, men are aware of the possibilities offered by technology and science to eliminate secular alienation, limitations, and slavery; which allows them to enjoy fragments of well being and self-liberation.

- But on the other hand, nowadays, we are aware that each one of us, and humankind as a whole, have deep wounds, enrooted in our finitude and in the seduction and power of evil, from which we cannot free ourselves so easily. Hence, man today lives with increasing awareness of his own helplessness before his own power and creativity, the constant experience of the failure of liberty in trying to live together in fairness and joy, and the wish for fulfillment which transcends satisfying one's needs and which, in fact, is not reached through science nor technology nor economy nor politics.

This double experience causes in mankind, on the one hand, a wish for a more humane and dignified future, a fairer and happier one, for everybody; and on the other hand, spread fear of a future that seems to be clouded by serious threats.

All these changes that the Council defined as profound and fast-increasing, and likely to become universal (GS 4), forces the Church to make a great effort in adapting its structures and pastoral outlines.

### **2. A new culture.**

#### **2.1 A culture signaled by secularism.**

This culture is threatening to corrode the foundations of faith and Christian life. This culture, born from rationalism and modern positivism, and an inseparable ally of the market and consumption society, is demanding a new form of evangelization, both in industrial, developed countries as in more traditional societies.

In this context of secularism and practical atheism, two realities conceal the face of God: on one hand, the religious crisis, which is not merely a crisis of religious institutions, practices and customs, but a deep crisis of the faith in God shown in the increase of indifference, the diverse forms of modern idolatry, the spread of disguised nihilism, and on the other hand, the face of God the Father of all and His love for each one of His creatures, is concealed by the exclusion and suffering of those who do not have a dignified existence.

## **2.2 Return of the religious and the magic**

A secularized culture produces resurgence of the religious and the magic. Thus, we find "religious products" offered by religious groups and sects for the "instant solution" of all kinds of problems. This search for instant solutions of a magical nature lies beneath the spirit of many Christians who come to our churches.

## **3. Evangelization for the present**

Pope John Paul II proposed as a top priority in the new evangelization, the renewal and strengthening of ecclesiastical communities:

"This new evangelization – aimed not just at every single person, but also at whole groups of population in the most varied situations, environments and cultures – is aimed at the formation of mature ecclesiastical communities, in which faith can free and realize its whole original meaning of adhesion to the figure of Christ and His Gospel, of sacramental meeting and communion with Him, through life in charity and service." (Christifideles Laici, 34).

That is to say, the new evangelization is not exclusively an inside-out movement, from the Church to the world, as if Church were a dependant reality, fixed and immune to the flow of cultural changes. We need to simultaneously talk about an introspective movement in the Church, a self-evangelization movement through which the Church answers faithfully, always new to God's plans, also shown through the signs of the time.

This evangelization cannot be interpreted as the wish to restore a situation from the past – a "state of Christendom" – which has been definitely left behind by the Council, nor can it relate to the return to old methods and pastoral planning signaled by the lack in dialogue and intolerance, nor can it exist outside the boundaries of the liberation task and integral development of man that constitutes the Mission of the Church.

From this position we dare state that evangelization today must be:

### **3.1. Above all, evangelization**

The first thing that is asked from evangelization is for it to be true evangelization. This includes the explicit announcement of Jesus Christ as the Good News of God for man, as the Savior and Redeemer of humankind: of man as a whole and of all men. It means the announcement of the Kingdom of God, the core of the message of Jesus (cf. Mc 1,15; Luke 4,43), offered to man both as a gift and as a task (cf. Mt 6,33; 11,12). It includes the proclamation of the Death and Resurrection of Christ as the culminating sign and seal of His Alliance. Let us not forget that the announcement of the Gospel implies at the same time, denouncing sin and all the powers or structures that are opposed to the Kingdom of God.

### **3.2. Evangelization of the culture and of cultures**

In the *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Paul VI identified the drama of our days as the fracture between the Gospel and culture (EN 20). So, he insisted that "what is important is to evangelize – not as a decorative activity, as a superficial varnish, but in a vital way, deeply and right to the roots of cultures and the cultures of man "; and this evangelization involves "reaching and transforming with the strength of the Gospel the criteria for judgment, determining values, interest points, lines of thought, inspirational sources and life models for humankind, which are contrary to the Word of God and the plan for salvation." (EN 19).

When there is true evangelization of culture even when the synthesis between faith and culture may never be total or definite, we may speak of a Christian culture, which tends to favor the birth and harmonious development of faith and the behaviors that come from it.

### **3.3. An attitude in favor of dialogue**

Neither the new evangelization as a whole, nor the inculturation of faith in particular, may be carried out through imposition or violent coercion. In order to carry out its evangelization task, the Church should not pretend to have more power than the one granted by its moral authority, nor more privileges but the ones derived from fair religious liberty. Furthermore, the search for efficiency in spreading the message cannot be done at the expense of using less evangelic methods.

In this sense, dialogue is still the fundamental method for the evangelizing action. The teachings of Paul VI in the encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam* are fully compelling and must always be present when talking of the new evangelization. Thus, "the Church's dialogue model is the dialogue of God's salvation and His mercy on us. Everything is dialogue in religion and in the salvation of God Jesus Christ. Because everything in it is respect, love, liberty. Our dialogue with the world must be clear, friendly, candid, and prudent."

This attitude in favor of dialogue will permit the Church to acknowledge the existing core values in the cultures it aims to evangelize, and even to be evangelized by them, to discover the seeds of the Word and the action of the Spirit of God, which secretly acts in each man and in all the people.

The willingness to engage in dialogue and brotherly collaboration is even more urgent and necessary in relation to other Christian Churches. The new evangelization cannot be done disregarding ecumenism: apart from being ineffective it would be contradictory.

### **3.4. Evangelization among the poor**

Another line of power of the new evangelization is that it must be done through poverty. Such poverty does not only refer to the evangelizer's personal modesty or the simplicity in the media to be used, but, more radically, to choosing the poor and sharing their situation, rediscovering and reformulating the message to be announced from their viewpoint.

As written by A. González Dorado: "The new evangelization expects to generate a cultural environment in which some men will feel ashamed of the abundance of goods while others lack the bare necessities, due to the constant progress of well-being fed by the progressive suffering of others; and in which generations will feel proud and fulfilled as human beings in their own austerity out of generous solidarity to the poor, dignified as human beings, in human life and in man's openness to the transcendence."

#### **4. Evangelization agents**

"Church as a whole is a missionary and the task of evangelization is a fundamental duty of the People of God" (AG 35). Evangelization is a responsibility for all the People of God. The whole Christian community is responsible, all and each one of the groups that make it, according to their charismas and ministerial character. It is apparent that the task of the New Evangelization can only be carried out by a community of believers.

The subject of the new evangelization is the community rather than the individual, the brotherhood of believers rather than very driven individuals, and this is due to concrete realization reasons: if the new evangelization involves the difficult task of reformulating faith, or even interpreting it according to the culture and society of today, this process will require a series of attentions and implications that a single individual could hardly carry out on his own.

The promotion and complementation of the several vocations is one of the points on which the new evangelization project coincides with the Church inner renewal.

#### **5. Challenges we face**

It is convenient for us to see the challenges we face today in evangelization in order to advance towards a more committed response, better adjusted to our world's needs.

And this, because the new evangelization demands from us "full awareness of the theological sense of the challenges of our day" (VC. 81 ). These challenges should be carefully assessed with common discernment in order to achieve the renewal of the Church's evangelizing Mission.

##### **5.1 Acculturation and Inculturation of the Gospel**

The process of acculturation and inculturation of the Gospel, somehow extends the mystery of the savior Incarnation: "An essential feature of Evangelization is that it will be realized through a constant process of incarnation, assuming the concrete, cultural and historic man of each time and place (AG 22), in such a way that this man is the first path the Church must walk to comply with the Mission" (RH 14). All of this involves a complex process that is carried out at different levels and has multiple implications.

The acculturation of faith in the context of the new evangelization implies the reformulation of the "Good News" in the Gospel. Or translating the gift given to us into the dialect of each place.

The inculturation of faith is the result of the process and it means that the faith has been embraced by those who have received the announcement of the "kerygma", according to their own culture, life experience, existential situation, vital stimuli...

In order to achieve acculturation and inculturation it is necessary to have communication. But we know that communication is only possible when it is based on a common linguistic code between the transmitter and the receptor. When it comes to sharing spiritual gifts, communication must take place in the receiver's cultural environment, not in the evangelizer's. The evangelizer has to be "bilingual", that is, an expert in his own cultural language and an expert in the cultural language of the receptor.

In order to face the challenge of acculturation of faith, evangelization would have to denounce the spiritual impoverishment that causes the secularization process in which we live, but at the same time it would have to learn the "secular language" with all its sensitivity and open-mindedness and with its values and counter-values, in order to express, with richness of form, faith in Jesus Christ. We would have to understand secularization as a new way, a more mature and adult one, of expressing faith. If we formulated it this way, we would feel more stimulated to search and discover clues and new paths to announce the Gospel in a world in which not everything is so negative nor should it be considered to be lost.

In order to do this, evangelizers need to be empathic and driven by love; empathy will make us see the world through the eyes of others. From the viewpoint of the apostle, to be empathic is to enter another person's life and their culture so deeply, that we can discover, beyond appearances and immediate feelings, the wish for God which rests deep in their hearts and cultures.

## **5.2 Facing the crisis of the Christian message**

We know that language which cannot be understood will not transmit values that could awaken personal or collective awareness.

It seems that religious language in general, and especially the Christian language, could only be understood by the church-goers, as if it were a special language spoken by small and limited groups.

It is apparent that we need to translate our faith and spirituality into a simple and available language, so it could be understood by everyone and it can communicate something to all. It is not about reinventing everything. It is rather, being aware that we have been given a true treasure, where old and new things can be found (cfr. Mt 13,52) and from where it is necessary to take an always current wisdom, enrooted in the past, but at the same time enriching and showing human wisdom.

Now, more than ever before, taking into account the problem of the lack of meaning of the Christian language for so many, evangelizers are asked to express their faith through meaningful words and signs that can be understood by the common

man, in regular language, with words that are alive and can be quickly understood. It is urgent to use a verbal and symbolic language that will encourage questioning and dialogue; that will bring about answers and faith options. It is necessary to leave aside the kind of religious language that is too pious and worn out. Aside from being abstract and having little to do with life worries, they have an anthropologic reference that is not according to the culture and sensitivity of modern man.

The paradigm of our communication is Jesus. Jesus' parables, showing theological communication that can be understood by all, were said with everyday words, through a non-religious, but incisive language, full of wisdom and not lacking in emotion, and so clear that not even the temple doctors could, with a load of sophisms, prevent their impact.

The evangelizer should prefer fresh language with instant impact, narrative, evocative and pedagogic, showing the commitment of the narrator and which engages the listener, rather than cold and conceptual or homiletic language that is distant and abstract.

### **5.3 Helping to encourage reflection and the desire for God**

The fundamental problem we face nowadays is that it seems man's sense of search has become numb. He does not wonder, he seems to be paralyzed and has a passive and superficial attitude.

On the other hand, we know that a man who is not capable of wondering, doubting, and reflecting carefully, cannot walk the path of faith. "Doubts" and "questions", force man to keep on looking and searching for new horizons. Doubts, questions, interrogations, could be the waiting room for an act of faith. Faith appears when man starts asking questions, when someone helps him order them and not just settle for partial or incomplete answers and when someone walks with him along the path to answer, God. This is the reason why evangelizers have to be convinced that behind each question there is a question about God.

In order to do so it is necessary that the evangelization outlines, actions, content and language be connected to the deep needs in every man and that in our world are concealed by so many things that do not let them flourish. The need for sense, grace, reconciliation, liberation from sin, hope...

Evangelizers have to be convinced that the man of our day is still asking for something that is not science, technology, development and well being, but the "experience of salvation."

### **5.4 Providing experiences rather than doctrine**

No one doubts the need for and significance of knowledge in the evangelizing activity. The act of faith has to do with knowledge, truth; truth has to do with doctrine... Furthermore, the Christian experience is unthinkable without some knowledge of God who reveals Himself... although He is always partially hidden in the mystery.

But Christianity is not just about knowledge of a doctrine; nor is the Christian message a mere doctrinal system.

Evangelizing is not just announcing a doctrine, proposing ethics or promoting some religious practices, but updating the humanizing and hopeful experience of salvation which started with Christ and in Christ. There will be evangelization as long as there is an announcement of the love of God and as long as the Christian community offers concrete life experiences, especially about life in the community or group. The new evangelization has to recover strength in experience. Christian faith is a vital fact rather than a doctrinal fact. It comes from the experience of having been found by God in life and in the death of Jesus Christ, of having been loved and reached by His grace.

If Christianity is an experience of faith and life, that is the reason why we have to care more about providing experiences in evangelization than elaborating doctrines. Hence, the need to prioritize, in the outlines and actions, the initiation or strengthening of:

- The experience of faith, born from the explicit announced of the Word or the proclamation of the Kerygma.

- The addition of believers to the community.

- The concrete practice of Christian life, which involves the practice of personal and shared prayer; frequent participation in the communitarian celebration of faith; the practice of charity, justice and solidarity; and personal and communitarian understanding of the Word and events.

### **5.5 Recovering ecclesial credibility.**

The Church's evangelizing capacity in our pluralist and secular society is put to test in its social credibility. Credibility meaning the capacity to reveal and communicate the mystery that constitutes the Church, to place man before his deep humanity, before his most vital questions.

A credible Church for its own members and for the alienated and non-believers has to be today a clear place of union and communion, with a sense of belonging and less fragmented, with more dialogue and communication; a home to everyone, intellectually inhabitable, where the search for truth prevails over any kind of obscurantism or authoritarian imposition; a home of liberty, capable of showing that accepting Jesus God is a source of permanent liberation for human existence; a Church that is humanely fecund, expert in humanity, creator of humanization; a family where the poor are the first, in the heart and in the assumptions; a Church that serves men, society and the world, following the example of Jesus.

We shall present the image and build a Christian community that lives in communion with God and the brothers and that is out there because it has a vocation for people and lives in the service of life, truth, solidarity, justice and peace.

## **5.6 Creating live communities**

Evangelization has to create true communities where faith is lived and shared, as well as the Christian testimony and commitment. Communities of a human nature in which it is possible to survive anonymity and where each person can communicate what is most valuable and original: their experience of God as the Good News in their existence.

Recovering the communitarian dimension is urgent for a Church as ours which has focused on institutional elements in the past and has suffered the individualism of a church-less faith by many groups in our population.

The creation of true Christian communities must be accompanied by the concrete and patient effort of strengthening the ties of communion between them, respecting their diversity and the complementary nature of charismas, services and responsibilities that exist in the common heart of Church (cf. LG 7; ChL 20).

## **5.7 Raising, promoting and forming evangelization agents.**

We know that evangelization consist of the irradiation and communication of the salvation experience lived by the community of followers of Jesus Christ. There is no evangelization without evangelizers. Is it possible to lay the foundations for a new evangelization without awakening the potential evangelizer in believers, in families and Christian groups, in communities and parishes?

The news is that evangelization would come from those who, following Jesus Christ, can tell their own experience of a friendly and savior God and who can present their frail but convinced testimony of a life changed and healed by and by the grace of Christ, at the same time living in a state of higher commitment to the integral liberation of the human being. There is a need then for authentic Christians who are aware of their evangelizing Mission and who are adequately trained.

One of the fundamental challenges of evangelization is getting the whole parochial community to enter a "Mission state", and when we say the whole community we are referring to the parish's priest team, the pastoral council, the local religious people with their specific charisma and the laity, devoted to specific evangelizing tasks and the growth of the Kingdom in their working places and in their homes... In order to do so it is necessary to motivate, encourage and offer training processes that allow people to perform their mission according to their own charisma.

## **5.8 Bringing the Word to the People of God.**

Taking the Bible back to the people, after having deprived them for so many centuries of direct access to the Word of God, is one of the most remarkable fruits of the Council and post-Council period. This has revolutionized catechism and has shown the importance and efficiency of the Word of God in the evangelizing process. This is because:

- The Word of God has the strength and vitality lacked by any catechism or material we might come up with.

- The Word of God urges the person that is listening to it and calls him to the faith, prayer and conversion.

- Its language is more narrative, dialogic, personalized and close (and understanding is adequately guided), than that of professional theologians.

In order to avoid individualistic, fundamentalist or self-serving interpretations that would not favor the new evangelization, reading the Bible would have to be encouraged in the public context of the community and in relation to the signs of the times, so that its interpretation is subjected to the understanding of the community.

## **II. THE CSSR AT THE SERVICE OF THE CONGREGATION**

### **1. Constitutions and Statutes**

In our General Statutes and Constitutions our mission within the Church is clearly stated: evangelization, the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the poor. These are:

#### **Constitutions**

1 – The Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, founded by Saint Alphonsus, is a clerical missionary religious Institute of pontifical right, enjoying the privilege of exemption. It comprises members of various rites, and its purpose is to "follow the example of Jesus Christ, the Savior, by preaching the word of God to the poor, as He declared: 'He sent me to preach the Good News to the poor'".

In this way the Congregation shares the mandate of the Church, which, since it is the universal sacrament of salvation, is missionary in nature. It does so by responding with missionary dynamism, and by devoting itself to evangelize the most abandoned ones, especially the poor, in the pastoral emergencies.

The Congregation follows the example of Christ in the apostolic life, which comprises at the same time a life especially dedicated to God and the missionary work of the Redemptorists.

3 – The most abandoned, to whom the Congregation is sent in a special way, are those for whom the Church has not yet been able to provide sufficient means of salvation, those who have never heard the message of the Church, or at least do not accept it as the "Good News", and finally those who are deeply affected by the division in the Church.

At the same time the Congregation directs its apostolic zeal towards the faithful who enjoy ordinary pastoral care; so that strengthened in faith, they can renew themselves in their constant conversion to God, and bear witness to the faith in everyday life.

4 – Among the groups of people more in need of spiritual help, the Redemptorists will give special attention to the poor, the deprived and the oppressed. Their evangelization is a sign of the arrival of the Kingdom of God (cf. Luke 4:18), and Christ, in a certain sense, wished to identify with them (cf. Matt. 25:40).

5 – Preference for situations where there is pastoral need, that is, evangelization in the strict sense of the word together with the choice in favor of the poor is the very reason why the Congregation exists in the Church, and is the symbol of its fidelity to the vocation it has received.

The Congregation's mandate to evangelize the poor aims at the liberation and salvation of the whole human person. The members have the duty of preaching the Gospel explicitly, of showing solidarity with the poor, and of promoting their fundamental rights of justice and freedom, employing means which are effective and consistent with the Gospel.

#### Art. 1 – The good news of salvation

6 – All Redemptorists, faithful to the Magisterium of the Church, must be humble and courageous servants of the Gospel of Christ, the Redeemer and Lord, who is the head and model of the new humanity.

In their message they proclaim, in a special way, plentiful redemption, i.e., it proclaims the love of the Father "who first loved us and sent His Son to be the expiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10) and through the Holy Spirit gives life to all who believe in Him.

This redemption affects the entire person, brings to perfection and transforms all human values, so as to unite all things in Christ (cf. Eph. 1:10; 1 Cor. 3:23), and thus lead them to their completion in a new earth and a new heaven (cf. Rev. 21:1).

#### Art. 2 – Evangelization Itself

7 – The Redemptorists, as witnesses of the Good News of the grace of God (cf. Acts 20:24) proclaim first and foremost the very high destiny of the individual and of the whole human race. They know very well that all are sinners, but they also know that, at a deeper level, all have already been chosen, redeemed and gathered together in Christ (cf. Rom. 8:29 ff)

Therefore, they will strive to encounter the Lord where He is already present and at work in his own mysterious ways.

8 – According to the situations in which they find themselves, they will eagerly try to discover what they should do or say: whether to proclaim Christ explicitly, or to do it, at least, with the silent testimony of brotherly presence.

9 – Should circumstances make it impossible for them at times to proclaim the Gospel directly and immediately or to preach it fully, then the missionaries, with patience and prudence, but at the same time with great confidence, must bear witness to the charity of Christ and do all in their power to become brothers and sisters of all mankind.

This charity will show itself in prayer, in genuine service to others and in testimony of life whatever form it may take.

This way of evangelization gradually prepares the ways of the Lord, and intensifies the Redemptorist missionary vocation

10 – The testimony of life and charity leads to the testimony of the word (cf. Rom. 10:17), according to real circumstances and personal capabilities. Indeed Redemptorists have as their fundamental mission in the Church the explicit proclamation of the word of God to bring about fundamental conversion.

When the opportune time comes, and the Lord opens the door for the preaching of the word (cf. Col. 4:9), the members of the Congregation, always ready to give witness to the hope in them (cf. 1 Pet. 3:15), bring to completion the silent testimony of their brotherly presence, and preach the mystery of Christ with courage and constancy (cf. Acts 4:13, 29, 31).

They will never grow tired of invoking the Holy Spirit, so that they may always be able to cooperate more completely in bringing the mystery of redemption in Christ to full effect. For the Spirit has command of every event, puts the appropriate word on the lips of the preacher and opens hearts.

### Art. 3: The Aim of the Missionary Work

11 – Chosen by the grace of God for the ministry of reconciliation (cf. 2 Cor. 5:18), the members of the Congregation announce the good news of salvation and the "favorable time" (2 Cor. 6:2), so that people can be converted and believe in the Gospel (cf. Mark 1:15), so that they can really live their baptism and put on the new self (cf. Eph. 4:24).

Redemptorists are thus "apostles of conversion", as the main object of their preaching is to lead people to a radical choice of life or decision for Christ, and encourage them firmly and gently to a constant and total conversion.

12 – The conversion of the individual, however, is made in the ecclesial community. And therefore the object of all the missionary action is to develop communities that, living their vocation with dignity, exercise the priestly, prophetic and royal function entrusted to them by God.

The missionaries lead those who have been converted to take part in the mystery of redemption which is at work in the liturgy, especially in the sacrament of reconciliation, where the Gospel of God's mercy in Christ is so wonderfully proclaimed and celebrated, but most of all in the Eucharist, through which the Church is built.

In this way the Christian community becomes the sign of God's presence in the world. For, nourished by the divine word, it bears witness to Christ and continually goes with Christ to the Father in the mystery of the Eucharist, makes progress in charity and arouses the apostolic spirit.

### Art. 4 – Missionary Dynamism

13 – The Congregation strives to carry out its mission with bold initiative and boundless dynamism.

Since it is called to perform faithfully the missionary work entrusted to it by God from age to age, the Congregation develops the form of its missionary activity.

14 – Indeed the apostolic work of the Congregation is characterized more by its missionary dynamism than by any particular forms of activity; in other words, by evangelization in the true sense, and by offering service to people and groups that for Church and society are poor and more neglected.(cf. CC. 3-5).

15 – The mission of the Congregation, then, demands of its members that they be free and available in their choice of the groups to be evangelized and the means to be employed in the mission of salvation.

Since they should always seek new apostolic initiatives under the guidance of legitimate authority, they cannot allow themselves to settle in situations and structures in which their work would no longer be missionary. On the contrary, they will diligently pioneer new ways of preaching the Gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15).

16 – For this reason they should hold in high esteem the different forms of missionary activity born of the missionary zeal of the members in the past, according

to the needs of each place. Likewise, in time to come the Congregation will adopt any new initiative which, in its judgment, corresponds to its pastoral charity.

17 – The decision whether certain priorities, established or to be established in relation to apostolic works in the (vice)province correspond to the missionary character of the Congregation, belongs to the (vice)provincial Chapter, with the consent of the General Council.

It is evident, then, that all the members, especially when assembled in Chapters, must periodically ask themselves whether the means of evangelization employed in their region answer to what is expected of them by the Church and the world. They should consider, too, whether their missionary methods need to be renewed and how this should be done. They should then retain whatever methods have proved successful modify those which are inadequate and abandon those no longer useful.

#### Art. 5 – Co-operation in the Church

18 – Because of the particular nature of their pastoral charity, members of the Congregation and communities shall do all in their power to harmonize their own work with the programs of the universal and local Church.

The task the Congregation has assumed in the Church is in the service of Christ, and as a consequence, must necessarily be in the service of his Church.

Because their ministry is directed towards the good of the universal Church, the members are primarily subject to the Supreme Pontiff, even by the vow of obedience.

Nevertheless, according to the principles of exemption, they are also subject to the Ordinary of the place in what relates to their particular ministry in the local Church. Therefore, to support and foster the practice of apostolic fraternity, redemptorists, bearing in mind the organic pastoral of the area and the Congregation's charisma shall join, with a sincere spirit of service, and a generous availability, the missionary works and structures which the diocese or the region has established to meet the more urgent needs of the Church and the times.

#### Art. 6: Dialogue with the World

19 – In order to efficiently develop the missionary work, co-operation within the Church as well as adequate knowledge and world experience are essential. For this reason the members of the Congregation confidently start a missionary dialogue with the world.

Understanding with brotherly solidarity people's anxious questionings, they should try to discover in these how God is truly revealing himself and making his plan known.

The members know that the mystery of humanity and the full reality of its calling can only be clarified in the light of the mystery of the incarnate Word. In this way they reveal the all-embracing nature of redemption, and bear witness to the truth that whoever follows Christ, the perfect human being, becomes more human.

### **General Statutes**

The General Statutes give "name" to the principles inspiring our Constitutions. We are only going to list the statements of the Statutes regarding evangelization.

- Art. 1– The People to be Evangelized (On CC. 3-5)
  - 09 – Criterion
  - 010 – Groups of the Faithful for whom the Church has not yet been able to provide Sufficient Means of Salvation
  - 011.– Those who have never heard the Church's Message
  - 012 – Those who do not receive the Church's Message as the 'Good News'
  - 013 – Those who suffer harm because of division in the Church
  - 014 – The Faithful in Need of Constant Conversion
  - 015 – Pastoral Service for Priests
- Art. 2– Certain Forms of Missionary Work (On CC. 13-16)
  - 016 – General Principle
  - 017 – Popular Missions
  - 018 – The Parochial Ministry
  - 019 – Catechesis
  - 020 – Spiritual Exercises
  - 021 – Promoting Justice and Human Progress
  - 022 – The Apostolate through Communication Media
  - 023 – The Study of Moral and Pastoral Theology
  - 024 – Spiritual Consultation
- Art. 3– Adaptation of Apostolic Methods (On CC. 17-19)

## **2. XXIII General Chapter**

The theme of the XXIII General Chapter is "Giving our lives for plentiful redemption". This theme urges us to turn evangelization into the driving force for the inner renewal of the Congregation and for the transformation of the hearts of men and women of our times and of the very structures of our world.

Some of the most important paragraphs are included:

"Just as the Apostles, we have been called to 'be with Christ and preach'. Giving our lives for plentiful redemption expresses our joy of being with Jesus as a community, and of being sent, as a community, to preach the Word of God to the most abandoned. Therefore, we feel called in this new sexennium to pay special attention to the quality of our apostolic to the Redeemer (Message 4).

"We trust that our Congregation will continue 'the example of Christ in the apostolic life, which comprises at the same time a life especially dedicated to God and the missionary work' (Const. 1). By the power of the Holy Spirit we will face the challenge of giving our lives for plentiful redemption, renew our commitment and our missionary zeal, and respond to the demands of our world. We will share our charisma with the laity, and we will be open to all that is helpful in our mission to the poor" (Message, 12).

"Situations of personal poverty and structural injustice in many of the countries where we carry out our missionary work, the emergence of new ways of poverty and of the new poor (displaced immigrants, linguistic, ethnic and cultural minorities, etc.), as well as those who do not receive appropriate pastoral attention, must be for us, redemptorists, a constant encouragement for our mission in the Church, as 'the Redemptorist cannot disregard the outcry of the poor and the oppressed...'" (Orientations, 6).

"The pastoral priorities should be reviewed periodically in the light of Constitution 5, putting special emphasis on situations of social and ecclesial isolation that demand our attention incessantly. These needs should lead us, with creative fidelity, to search for new ways of pastoral activity that respond better to the needs of men and women in our world" (Orientations, 7:1).

### **III. AREAS OF EVANGELIZATION**

#### **1. Parish Mission and Sanctuaries**

##### **1.1 Parish Mission**

###### **1.1.1. Towards a Missionary Parish**

John Paul II said: The Parish is not principally a structure, a territory, or a building, but rather, "the family of God, a fellowship afire with a unifying spirit, a familial and welcoming home, the community of the faithful." The ecclesial community, while always having a universal dimension, finds its most immediate and visible expression in the Parish. It is there that the Church is seen locally. "In a certain sense it is the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters." (Christifideles Laici, 26)

The Bishop entrusts the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (Redemptorist Missionaries) with the task of animating evangelization-wise a plot of land of the Diocese with the title "Parish of...". Therefore, our Parish becomes an expression of the diocese goals, projects and programs. Besides, as a Redemptorist family, as a missionary group, we stand by the missionary dynamism of Evangelization, especially when the missionary dimension of the Gospel is the biggest gap and an urgent challenge the Church faces in the cultural realm of modern and post modern times.

In the words of Statute 018 of the Constitutions of Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer: "Members assigned to this ministry should perform their parochial duties with wholehearted dedication. They should bear well in mind that the more they are driven by the missionary spirit, the more their work will be a continual mission."

For the Parish to be a fraternity fostered by the spirit of unity it does not have to be merely an agency for the "provision of religious services" whether in the mentality of the missionary team fostering it or in the mentality of the faithful. We should try to turn the parish into a place where ministers and laypersons, united by the feeling of having Jesus Christ as the center of our lives, build a community based on love and on the search of Christ.

###### **1.1.2. Our proposal: the Parish as a Mission Center**

###### **The basic points for this new Parish would be:**

- Urgency of the missionary proclamation.
- To support the faith of the members.
- To approach the marginalized.
- Promote justice and charity.

### **1.1.3. General Objective and Specific Objectives**

#### **General objective**

The Parish takes a clear missionary and evangelizing option that leads us to create a living Christian community, with the support of an organized and responsible laity, truly committed to accepting and offering service to the people, in constant communication with culture, and in true collaboration with those trying to change reality.

#### **Specific goals**

- The Parish promotes fraternity at the service of the mission.
- The missionary nature of the Redemptorist Parish strives to achieve an initial conversion to God, and the global adherence to Jesus Christ through the first proclamation of the Gospel and the missionary processes for those alienated from the faith and the non-Christian.
- The Parish fosters catechist processes of catechumenal inspiration.
- The Parish projects Life and Pastoral Action through its "missionary dynamism."
- The Parish projects the knowledge, reflection, sharing, contemplation and praying of the Word of God.
- The Parish will highlight liturgical actions, especially the Eucharist, source and height of the Parish communion and with all the local and universal Church.
- The Parish will encourage the creation of little communities at the service of the communion of faith, solidarity and missionary commitment.
- The Parish places direct responsibility on laypersons for the evangelizing task of the Church, from the sacramental basis of Baptism and Confirmation. Parish wants laypersons to realize what their role in the Church is, and see the need to take responsibility in the mission and duties of the Parish community and Diocesan Church.
- The Parish will strive to welcome and provide service to the community, especially the weak and needy, and will help those that work for peace, justice, and the integrity of creation.
- The Parish interacts with the new cultural scene.
- The Redemptorist Parish fosters particular prayers of the CSSR and parochial movements.

#### **1.1.4. Criteria:**

- The parish as spirituality center, in communion with the Universal Church, integrated into the Diocesan Church, and as a Redemptorist parish it projects its missionary dynamism and itinerant nature by being close to the weak and the humble.
- The parish as place of fraternity and communion, which strives to create living communities based on fraternity that are open to the acceptance of those who approach it.
- The parish as evangelization center: It is always worried about the proclamation of the Gospel to everyone, and it is characterized by its evangelizing dynamism and pervasive pastoral kindness.

- The parish as place of the celebration of the faith: "The role of evangelization is precisely to educate people in the faith in such a way as to lead each individual Christian to live the sacraments as true sacraments of faith - and not to receive them passively or reluctantly." (EN, 47).

- The parish encourages justice and charity: The believers of a parochial community should give testimony to the Church's charity, derived from the charity of Christ, and this implies promoting justice, solidarity, communion, and peace.

## **1.2 Sanctuaries**

### **1.2.1. Participation in the life and mission of the Church**

The purpose of the mission in the Sanctuaries is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, His person, His life, His death, and His resurrection to enable a personal encounter with Christ, in the community, and to help each person to adhere to Him, and in so doing, carry out the missionary task entrusted by Him to the Church.

Its mission is to motivate the People of God, who have become pilgrims, to embrace the life of the Church through basic options and in light of the message of each sanctuary.

### **1.2.2. Sanctuary directives**

Sanctuaries must be incorporated in the Organic Pastoral of the National Conference of Bishops, the Regional and the Particular Church.

- For many people, the sanctuary is the only place where they listen to the Word of God and receive sacraments. Therefore, special attention must be paid to the sanctuaries' pastoral, so that they become places of true evangelization and part of the Communion in Mission.
- Pastoral Agents are responsible for the liturgical pastoral activities in the sanctuary, promoting team spirit through study, planning, vision and availability. Laypersons must collaborate, providing special services and ministries, according to the praxis of the Church..
- In the Sanctuary, the work of the Vocational Pastoral Ministry shall be well-organized and dynamic, helping pilgrims understand their specific Christian vocation.
- The Sanctuary's Pastoral Agents shall consider that pilgrims are just representatives, coming on behalf of their community. They go back renewed to share the message of the sanctuary with their brethren.
- The religiousness of pilgrims must be highly appreciated and favored esteemed, respecting their religious practices and offering them a new direction.

### **1.2.3. Fraternity between pilgrims**

Pilgrims should find in the Sanctuary a place to express communion, solidarity, and union between them, just as the first Christian community did. In order to do so:

- It is essential that the Sanctuary provides a joyful and welcoming atmosphere.

- The Sanctuary should offer adequate personal attention.
- The Sanctuary should encourage pilgrims' artistic spirit, offering the opportunity for their festive demonstrations.
- Ostentation and abuse should be avoided in the commercial activities in the Sanctuary.

#### **1.2.4. Listening and meditating the Word of God**

The Sanctuary must help pilgrims to listen and meditate the Word of God that makes the fundamental conversion possible. The proclamation language shall be simple, but rich in examples, opening doors of hope.

The Word of God, celebrated in liturgy, shall also be illustrated through the communication media.

#### **1.2.5. Personal and community prayer**

The Sanctuary shall help pilgrims in their personal and community prayer.

In order to do so:

- The Sanctuary shall foster personal and community prayers that stem from the Word of God and the pilgrims' experience.
- Pilgrims shall be duly prepared to take an active role in the liturgy of the Sanctuary.

#### **1.2.6. Reconciliation and Healing**

The Sanctuary should help the pilgrims celebrate their reconciliation with God, leading them to an authentic conversion to a Christian way of life. Therefore, penance celebrations shall be favored fostering reconciliation.

Many pilgrims approach the Sanctuary seeking physical healing. They should also be welcomed and accompanied with special gentleness.

#### **1.2.7. Celebration of the Eucharist**

The great assembly, gathered in the Sanctuary, shall be invited to the celebration of the Eucharist, as the height of Christian life and the pilgrimage.

The Eucharist shall be marked by hope, celebrating life to encourage them and provide them with joy along the way.

The celebration of the Eucharist shall be carried out in such a way that pilgrims feel encouraged to participate more actively in the Sanctuary and in their local communities, and also to show solidarity with the weak and the poor.

#### **1.2.8. Conclusion**

Our responsibility is to make every effort to welcome newcomers to the Sanctuary. They should be welcome with their joys, hopes, questions, doubts, fears and pains. They should find an attentive ear, an open heart: these are the signs of our God, who offers mercy and forgiveness.

## **2. Popular Mission**

The popular mission has been a characteristic evangelization method for redemptorists since the days of Saint Alphonsus which has remained until today, displaying great efficiency in the renewal of Christian communities and people.

The Second Vatican Council and the pastoral orientations in the post-council, the profound political, social and cultural changes demanded a different kind of mission for people. The phenomenon of the alienated, the increasing lack of belief, a vast majority of people walking away from the faith, the drop in Sunday mass attendance, the increase in the number of non-churchgoers, the loss of ethical values have made it clear that we are in a world that needs, now more than ever, a new Gospel proclamation.

### **2.1 Assumptions**

From that moment on, the Popular Mission has undergone a process of revision and updating in approaches, strategies, and methods, which starts from the following assumptions:

- a- The Popular Mission is an extraordinary pastoral action, which helps the ordinary pastoral.
- b- It is the Parochial Community that turns into a mission state. It plays a leading role in all the actions. We missionaries are specialized collaborators of the community.
- c- The Popular Mission is not just a precise, isolated, and extraordinary act of the evangelizing pastoral, but a project conceived as a process composed of three well-defined stages: pre-mission, mission, and post-mission, which will take several years of missionary work

### **2.2. Objectives**

The Popular Mission is a strong period of extraordinary evangelization during which the community, helped by the missionaries, evangelizes itself, strengthening its Christian experience, promoting the creation of catechism groups for adults, helping to establish new paths to bring the alienated closer, and thus promoting the pastoral project of the community.

Therefore, the general objectives of this missionary action are:

- To encourage churchgoers. To arouse parish community members to have a stronger connection with other Christians and with the Word of God which will strengthen and renew their lives in faith.
- To discover new collaborators. To help each one of the members discover their position of responsibility and service in the community and in the neighborhood.
- To bring the alienated closer. The parochial community meets those who have walked away from the faith or from religious practice, in order to start a conversation according to the Gospel.

- To begin faith formation groups. It is the great gap for most Christians, which we try to fill by starting up family meetings, and subsequently through catechism for adults.

Each parish church should add particular objectives established in its pastoral project to these general objectives.

### **2.3. Stages**

The mission process comprises three stages named:

- Pre-mission: It has the explicit sense of preparing the mission, but it can also be understood as a mission to those who are close, with the aim of turning them into evangelization agents. The formation of agents plays an important role for this purpose.

- Mission: It is the "strong period of evangelization". In the cities, it usually lasts two or three weeks, with three days of preparation, and one week or ten days in rural parishes of less than 600 inhabitants. Neighbors meetings in small groups, and Kerygmatic preaching take up the center of these two weeks

- Post-mission: The main sense of the post-mission is to strengthen the result obtained in the mission, and especially to consolidate the missionary dimension that was first promoted in the pre-mission: worry about the alienated, the indifferent, the non-churchgoers, etc.

### **2.4. Mission agents**

At the moment, the Parish plays the leading role in the mission. The parish's priests and laypeople are the first missionaries; this kind of mission cannot be carried out without them.

The missionaries, as the people responsible for the mission, cooperate with the parish. Nuns and laypeople sharing our charisma usually take an active part in the redemptorist missionary teams.

### **2.5. Preaching contents and method**

The mission proclaims the basis of our faith, the kerygma.

The methodology is dynamic and joyful, thus encouraging active participation through symbolic celebration and dialogue. This methodology is tailored to the language men and women of our time understand, and to the situation they are living in.

## **3. Mission Ad Gentes**

### **3.1 An active, complex, and religious framework**

It is true that we are facing a very changeable and diversified religious situation; the peoples are in motion; social and religious situations, which were once clear and defined, are now turning into complex situations. One only needs to think about some phenomena such as urbanism, massive migrations, movement of fugitives, dechristianization in countries which were predominantly Christian, strong influence of the Gospel and its values in countries with a vast majority of non-Christians, swarms of

messianisms and religious sects. The disruption of social and religious situations is such that it is hard to apply certain usual ecclesiastical categories and distinctions.

Precautions must be taken, however, against the risk of leveling very different situations, and reducing, if not eradicating, the mission and missionaries ad gentes. To declare that the entire Church is missionary does not exclude the existence of a specific mission ad gentes.

John Paul II pointed out: "In a world where the lessening of distance makes the world increasingly smaller, the Church's communities ought to be connected with each other, exchange vital energies and resources, and commit themselves as a group to the one and common mission of proclaiming and living the Gospel [...] So-called younger churches need the strength of the older churches and the older ones need the witness and impulse of the younger, so that each other church can draw on the riches of the other churches (Christifideles Laici, 35).

Our Constitutions also remind us that in the core of our charisma we find the mission "ad gentes": "The most abandoned, to whom the Congregation is sent in a special way, are those for whom the Church has not yet been able to provide sufficient means of salvation, those who have never heard the message of the Church, or at least do not accept it as the "Good News", and finally those who are deeply affected by the division in the Church." (Const. 3)

### **3.2 Mission Ad Gentes**

Although the mission is the task of all those who have been baptized, some people devote their lives to the mission "ad gentes", whose specific goal is to proclaim the Gospel and introduce the Church among those who don't know Christ.

It is a primary, essential and never-ended activity of the Church. Therefore, the Church cannot neglect the perennial mission of proclaiming the Gospel to those - millions of men and women - who do not yet know Christ, the Redeemer of man. This is the most specifically missionary responsibility Jesus Christ has entrusted and daily entrusts to the His Church.

We, as Redemptorists, feel the urgent need to spread Jesus Christ's redemption to all men and women. This is why we are always willing to be present anywhere in the world where we are needed to introduce the Gospel into people's hearts.

### **3.3 Some evangelization signs**

At this moment in the life of our Congregation, the International Communities may be an answer to the need for new people in places where the Congregation has not yet been introduced, and there is an urgent need of taking the Good News of the Gospel.

They should be an example of respectful dialogue between those carrying the news of Jesus Christ and those who have never heard of Him or belong to other religions.

In addition to this, the proclamation of the Gospel in mission lands should be accompanied by signs showing the liberating power of Jesus Christ and His message. Hence the need for an evangelization committed to the struggle for peace and justice, and human promotion.

### **3.4 Missionary stations**

In the context of the Southern Countries, particularly in the interior, there is a traditional evangelization field still in existence, the missionary stations. They are large evangelization areas with a see comprising diverse structures and services, functioning as a base for itinerant and periodic activities of many small villages that make up the pastoral area.

This structure started to take shape in some traditionally Christian countries due to the lack of vocations, and with particular characteristics of each situation.

This evangelization field demands great teamwork capacity, availability for traveling and facing up to the typical difficulties of the area. Besides, the evangelization service should be mainly based on the local lay leaders' work; therefore, its formation should represent one of the main priorities in this mission field.

## **4. Immigration and interreligious dialogue**

### **4.1 Human mobility and interreligious dialogue**

Modern migrations have turned into a structural reality of contemporary society. It constitutes a complex phenomenon from an economical, social, political, cultural, and religious point of view.

These migrations constitute a kind vector of the salvation message to all men. They bear witness to the fact that, even in the chaotic and contradictory situation of human events, God continues to act in accordance with His salvation plans until all things are summed up in Christ (Eph 1, 10; Col 1, 6-20).

In the globalization context, modern migrations cause a cultural and religious mix in all the continents. The Congregation should pay attention to this irreversible phenomenon considering two aspects: the emigrants' pastoral and the interreligious dialogue.

The co-brothers are in permanent contact in their Provinces with foreigners, emigrants, refugees, and believers of diverse religions: Muslims, Buddhists, etc.

It would be good to identify in the Congregation, the most significant intercultural and inter-religious initiatives. And the importance for co-brothers to complete their basic formation for a specific pastoral preparation taking into account the human, social and religious reality of immigration. International communities might be useful in this outlook.

a. Our Congregation is sent to the most forsaken populations and it must be sensitive to the migratory phenomenon and it must support the co-brothers who struggle in their work with emigrants living under conditions of exclusion, discrimination, poverty or injustice. This work is particularly assigned to the Secretariat for Evangelization created in each Province.

b. The Congregation will not overlook interreligious dialogue. The Catholic Church has made an effort since the II Vatican Council (Cf. *Ecclesiam suam*, Paul VI; and the Council Declaration *Nostra Aetate*). There are co-brothers with vast experience in this field. It is about living and thinking the Christian presence in the context of secularization and cultural and religious pluralism, avoiding relativism and isolation in our own identity. There should be no mission without dialogue.

The official texts of the Catholic Church distinguish four kinds of dialogue:

- the dialogue of life, in which people who live in the same neighborhood or in the same city learn to know each other better through their customs or religions in order to "live together": sharing their respective celebrations: Christmas, Ramadan, the fight against racism...

- the dialogue of cooperation, through which believers of different religious traditions work together on joint objectives: the development of a region in Africa in which Christians and Muslims can work together, social entertainment in marginalized neighborhoods in large Western cities, etc...

- the theological dialogue, through which experts in each religion read again their respective cultural and religious heritage to better discern the points of divergence and the points of convergence. The Islamic – Catholic search group (GRIC) is a good example. Some historical conflicts can thus be overcome.

- the spiritual, or spiritual experiences dialogue, are shared, on the meaning of God, the Absolute, of life. The monastic inter-religious dialogue reminds us of Western monks and Buddhist monks in Asia.

It is not about converting each other to one's religion, but letting God convert us to the contact with one another through our respective deeper and more truthful faith.

#### **4.2. The current situation demands a triple attempt:**

- In order to follow the orientations of the Second Vatican Council, which have defined the Church as sign and service of the unity of the human family, and of the union of man and God, demanding relationships of cordiality and co-operation with the faithful of all religions should be developed, taking into account respect for religious freedom.

- Accompanying theologically and pastorally the experiences of the interreligious encounter. It is important to look for what God's revelation in Jesus Christ tells us about God, man, and the world in the context of cultural and religious plurality.

- Encouraging university search, especially theological work, confronting the science of religion, philosophy, and Ethics.

#### **4.3 Concrete Ideas we propose:**

- To foster and favor changes, and to share experiences (emigrants' pastoral and interreligious dialogue) between religious co-brothers: publications and training sessions.

- To create in the Alphonsian Academy or in the ISCE of Madrid, a course on interreligious dialogue.

### **5. Ecology, Justice and Peace**

Action that favors justice is a key element in preaching the Gospel (Synod 1971, Canada).

Our Secretariat for Secretariat for Evangelization understands that biblical justice is a key element in our mission and in our evangelization. Evangelization that does not take seriously biblical justice as something fundamental is simply not evangelization.

The lifestyle of Redemptorists, as that of many other communities, has become a lifestyle of the middle class. For some, this is a blessing; for others it is a problem. Let's just think about the passage in the Gospel of St. Mark when Peter is "getting warmer in the fires of the Empire". When he is signaled as one of the disciples, Peter denies knowing the Lord. Many times we have "warmed up in the fires of the Empire" and we have adopted the ways and behavior of the world around us. Many Redemptorists have gotten used to this lifestyle and that is the reason why we find it harder to live among the poor and relate to their problems.

We have traditionally been good at the charity work, but we have not done the same with justice. The Gospel is so contrary to the ways of the world that we do not just have to talk about it, but we must live according to it. Pope Paul VI said: "What the world needs today are not teachers, nor preachers, but witnesses." Pope John Paul II said: "The new totalitarianism is economic" and unfair economic structures are the ones that cause people around the world to continue being hungry and poor.

Charity and justice are not the same thing. Both are necessary, but those who fight for justice are not always understood and they have to face opposition within society and, sometimes, in the Church and in the Congregation. Our Secretariat is asking us to reach a prophetic evangelization in these "new times".

### **Guide**

The Secretariat for Evangelization understands that in order for our evangelization to be genuine we must first show through our own lives what we are preaching. In order to do so, we offer the following reflection items as a guide in our preparation for the mission and evangelization:

- The evangelization task must rest in the world of today. We have to acknowledge the effects of globalization in all peoples.
- A truly Redemptorist evangelization must struggle to reach the whole person, since interest in the problems of our people must be the most important thing for us.
- Our job must aim at eradicating extreme poverty and hunger in the world.
- We must be interested in obtaining primary education for everybody.
- We must promote gender equality and the liberation of women.
- We must be concerned about the fight against infant mortality and poverty among children. We must also struggle to eradicate child exploitation and sexual trafficking.
- Our efforts in evangelization must aim at achieving access to housing for everybody.
- We must worry about fighting AIDS, malaria and other diseases.
- We must develop an interest in sustainable environmental issues.

- In the richest countries in the world we must preach a message that will awaken the development of solidarity.
- We must preach against the sale of weapons that is causing so much misery in our world.
- We must be greatly concerned about the effect of the drug culture in our youth.
- We must be aware that we are living in a "global village" and that the task of evangelization in one part of the world affects the other part.
- In conclusion, we must renew our conscience to evangelize the new realities of the world we live in.

The General Secretariat for Evangelization has seriously reflected on the call for justice within the Congregation. We are a global family in justice and not just in charity. That is the reason why we must care about the needs of all the members of the Congregation around the world. We must support one another, share our goods with each other and listen to the call for an austere life so that everyone can live a dignified life.

## **6. Moral Theology**

We, Redemptorists have, since the days of Saint Alphonsus, a long tradition in the study of moral and a study of moral as an aid to evangelization of concrete men and women that we find everyday in our evangelizing activity.

### **Which Moral Theology can we offer as Redemptorists?**

Our study and our investigation must be the answer to concrete questions asked by the people who make up our church, who want to be close to Jesus Christ. Questions that come up loud in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century: How can we follow Jesus Christ when we live in a time with no options, but with impositions of all kinds: economic, social, political, cultural? How can we commit to the construction of the Kingdom of God in a Church with unequal relations and ambiguity in its pastoral outlines? How can we announce the Gospel in a context of secularization, of lost values and of religious pluralism? How can we transmit the message of salvation in the age of communications? How can we offer our words in the light of the phenomenon of human life manipulation or before the situation of extreme poverty in which millions of people live? How can we bring hope to men and women around our world?

As moralist theologians, we must answer concrete groups, people who suffer and demand a better world, offering inner freedom to people and a happy, meaningful lifestyle.

As theologians, we speak of God, and our task is to show, without exaggerating, our evangelical proposal. As moralists we talk about life, everyday life, about the signs of the times and the clamor of the Spirit.

Moral Theology, throughout history, has not presented complete systems that can ensure "good actions", but it has established significant milestones in the path of Christian faith. Moral Theology is a mature offer for a Church that is looking for the

fulfillment of the Kingdom of God and a maturity that implies yielding completely to the values of the Gospel and to communication with all kinds of realities of life in the experience of God's love.

### **The current situation of our moral reflections**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we want to belong to this Church that is going to announce the Good News of the Kingdom of God to everybody. We are on a quest, as is our Church. We are going through a crisis of maturity and growth, as is current thought and culture. We are on a path to communion in pluralism, just like our peoples and the whole international community.

That is why, as Redemptorists, we want to help with our contribution of Moral Theology to build:

- A Church with different ways of seeing faith and expressing it: we need a moral that will tell a parable of communion and plurality.
- A Theology that will deal with concrete human life, and offer real and available answers to today's men and women.
- A Moral that refers to the Man, because God Himself has revealed what Man is, and what is more important, what we, in His love, can become.

## **IV. GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR EVANGELIZATION**

### **Secretariatus pro Evangelizatione**

#### **1. General Objective**

The General Secretariat for Evangelization, with a view to the future, wishes to encourage the various Units of the Congregation, stimulating the missionary vocation of each member. We would like to look for initiatives for evangelization in the Congregation, the Church and in the world. The proclamation of the Gospel must be the Good News that awakens in those who hear it, a sense and wish for solidarity, and be open to the challenges of our time, to the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### **2. Specific Objectives**

- 2.1 Helping reactivate a missionary awareness among members of the Congregation.
- 2.2 Promoting a missionary formation.
- 2.3 Sharing missionary and formation experiences among the various Units more widely.
- 2.4 Promoting and facilitating the interchange of personnel and resources to meet the most urgent pastoral needs (International Communities.)

#### **3. Priorities**

- 3.1 An Institute for evangelization

- 3.2 International Communities (for the most urgent pastoral needs)
- 3.3 New evangelization initiatives.
- 3.4 Ordinary / Extraordinary Pastoral / Mission *Ad Gentes*
- 3.5 The phenomenon of Immigration
- 3.6 Inter-religious Dialogue
- 3.7 Justice, Peace and the integrity of Creation.

#### **4. Strategies**

4.1 Our general strategy is putting into practice all our objectives to promote, as we expected, participation at all levels within the Congregation. The General Secretariat for Evangelization will work directly with the "coordinators" in each Region.

4.2 These coordinators will act as links between the General Secretariat and each Unit. We want every unit to establish a General Secretariat, if it still does not exist. (N.B. This would depend upon the decision of the General Council and the Commission for Restructuring.)

#### **5. Calendar and topics for the sexennium.**

The Secretariat will meet once a year.

**2005** – Institute for Evangelization/ International Communities / New initiatives

**2006** – Ordinary / Extraordinary Pastoral / Mission *Ad Gentes*

**2007** – Justice, Peace and the integrity of Creation /Immigrants / Inter-religious Dialogue

#### **6. Relations with other Secretariats and with the Center for Redemptorist Spirituality**

The Secretariat wishes to collaborate with all the General Secretariats in the Congregation.

#### **7. Relations with the General Government**

The acts of the Secretariat for Evangelization will be examined and approved by the General Government. The Secretariat must await the approval of the General Council before making any decisions.

#### **8. Contacts with the (Vice)-Provincial Superior and the Provincial Secretariats**

A budget will be submitted to our General Government to help our publications and meetings with hosts and missionaries.