



THE CHURCH'S APOSTOLIC MISSION. EVANGELISATION AND INCULTURATION

Instrumentum laboris

1. The commission the Church receives from her Risen Lord is forever fresh: “Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you” (Mt 28, 19-20). Her mission is rooted in that of Jesus Christ Himself, sent by the Father to save us and to gather together in the Church all those who had been scattered by sin. The apostolic mission of the Church is based on the one given to the Apostles, that of proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel, so that we might believe that Jesus is the Son of God and receive the gift of *life*: “And eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (Jn 17, 3). In and through the Son, God calls us in the Holy Spirit to become his adopted children and to inherit his blessed life.

The Good News touches everyone in his or her own culture, that “vital space within which the human person comes face to face with the Gospel. Just as a culture is the result of the life and activity of a human group, so the persons belonging to that group are shaped to a large extent by the culture in which they live. As persons and societies change, so too does the culture change with them. As a culture is transformed, so too are persons and societies transformed by it. From this perspective, it becomes clearer why evangelisation and inculturation are naturally and intimately related to each other”. The process of inculturation “*must involve the entire People of God*, since the life of the Church as a whole must show forth the faith which is being proclaimed and appropriated”. To ensure this, certain areas need particular attention: “theological reflection, liturgy, the formation of priests and religious, catechesis and spirituality”[1].

2. *Handing on the faith at the heart of cultures is an integral part of the Church’s apostolic mission.* It is directed to humankind, to every person and to the whole person, to make each one a child of the Father and a witness of the Gospel, in the unity of the body of the Church. It is a complex *process*: it takes place in *time*, and is directed towards *persons* who come from a particular *background*; it implies the *transmission* of content – *what has been revealed* – and an invitation to *life*, where *grace* encounters each person’s *freedom*.

This process began in the earliest apostolic period, as is clear in the *Acts of the Apostles* and the *Letters* of the New Testament. Throughout these 2000 years, the Church has made use of the path of Christian formation in different ways. The Fathers of the Church and mediaeval theologians are examples of this. Were they not all, in their own ways, great exponents of the evangelisation of cultures and the inculturation of the Gospel? Saint Thomas Aquinas was not only the author of the *Summa Theologica*. He was, first and foremost, a preacher who sought to respond to the challenges of his time, as his *Quaestiones Disputatae* and *Summa Contra Gentiles* show. For him, theological reflection was not an end in itself or pure speculation; it was meant to facilitate a better reading of Scripture. Reason enlightened by faith helps in the contemplation of the mystery of God, in discerning right action according to virtue and grace, and in living the sacraments as means of salvation.

The inculturation of the Gospel and the evangelisation of cultures are part of a **living process**, which is carried out in the particular communities through which cultures receive, assimilate and give expression to the Gospel. It is an internal process and, as such, it cannot be rushed or forced. It needs care right from the start, in the same way as an

attentive gardener sows good grain, feeds it with living and life-giving water, and supports its growth with a firm cane. The Church has to look out for the signs of the times and discover new fields for her apostolate in new cultural situations.

3. The Church in our day faces urgent questions and challenges created by the profound and rapid developments various societies are experiencing at the dawn of the third Millennium. This is an invitation to tread new paths of evangelisation. Something typical of our age is the appearance of a new phenomenon, whose breadth and consequences affect a large portion of humanity: **globalisation**, which is propelling the human race towards a global civilisation. At the same time, a lack of respect for **the identities of cultural minorities** arouses strong protests that are quite often extremely violent. Furthermore, **the tragic events of 11 September 2001** have really split human history into *pre-* and *post-*11 September, that dark day.

The theme of the Pontifical Council for Culture's *Plenary Assembly* is *Handing on the Faith at the Heart of Cultures, Novo Millennio Ineunte*. It is meant as a response to the **Apostolic Letter** John Paul II addressed to the clergy and the faithful at the end of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000. It is part of the Church's broader reflection on the phenomenon of globalisation and what it implies for different cultures. It also responds to the **intention expressed** by Pope John Paul II in the letter he wrote on 20 May 1982 to found the Pontifical Council for Culture: "I have decided to found and institute a Council for Culture, capable of giving the whole Church a common impulse in the continuously renewed encounter between the salvific message of the Gospel and the multiplicity of cultures, in the diversity of peoples to which it must bring its fruits of grace"[2].

The **Second Vatican Council** dedicated an entire section of the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* to emphasising "the fundamental importance of culture for the full development of man, the manifold links between the message of salvation and culture, the reciprocal enrichment of the Church and the different cultures as they have shared history with different civilisations, as well as the necessity for believers to understand in depth the way of thinking and feeling of the other men of their time, as these are expressed in their respective cultures"[3].

One after the other, the **continental assemblies of the Synod of Bishops**, whose fruits have been gathered in the Holy Father's post-synodal Apostolic Exhortations, have maturely reflected on the best ways to go in the evangelisation of cultures. They have laid particular stress on the distinction between the content of faith, the ways in which it is handed on and the response of different Christian communities, which are enriched by the contribution of the enormous variety of cultures throughout the world. The Holy Father invited us to enter the New Millennium with quicker steps "as we travel the highways of the world"[4]. He has taken to heart the concerns of the bishops of the five continents and invites the Church to follow up their rich reflections and suggestions: "Was this not the point of the continental Assemblies of the Synod of Bishops which prepared for the Jubilee, and which forged important directives for the present-day proclamation of the Gospel in so many different settings and cultures? This rich legacy of reflection must not be allowed to disappear, but must be implemented in practical ways"[5].

4. "The new evangelisation calls for a clearly conceived, serious and well-organised effort to evangelise culture"[6]. "From the time the Gospel was first preached, the Church has known the process of encounter and engagement with cultures"[7]. Already, for the Incarnation of the Word in flesh like ours, "from the rich panoply of age-old cultures born of human genius, God chose for himself a People whose original culture he penetrated, purified and made fertile"[8]. Sacred Scripture, born of divine inspiration expressed by

human genius, is itself a work of the *inculturation of faith* in the God of Abraham, the God of Jesus Christ.

Faith bears within itself the need for the evangelisation of cultures, since it cannot be confined to the private sphere. Christian faith is a conviction that influences people's ways of behaving, and by this very fact it is by nature something social. For it is handed on and celebrated. It inspires communities that are run according to a proper system of authority and live by an order of values embodied equally well in family life, economic activity, culture and national and international political activity.

Throughout the centuries, faith in Christ and the spiritual life of Christians have made a profound impression on the various expressions of culture. Because Christ spoke to people – to every person and to the whole person – the Church wants to continue to take this way of the human person, a way which passes through the different areas of culture[9].

5. The central role of the human person is the basis of the new evangelisation. There is “a fundamental dimension capable of strengthening or shaking to their foundations the systems into which mankind as a whole is organised, and of liberating human existence, individually and collectively, from the threats which hang over it. This fundamental dimension is man, in his totality”[10]. The Gospel message is not only something addressed to the human person, but also a great messianic message about the human person. It is a revelation to the human person of the whole truth about him- or herself and his or her calling in Christ.

The advent of a new humanism is the condition for establishing a world of justice and peace. The Church always and everywhere proclaims the greatness of each human person, created in the image of God and invited along with all other men and women to develop a civilisation of the human person, and for the human person. This new civilisation of love will be for the human person, seen from every angle, and inspired by a new humanism that respects the freedom of persons and the fragility of peoples and all their component parts. To help people live in harmony, the Church puts forward an ethic based on human nature, *an ethic of the truth about human nature*.

The Church continually looks out for “the joys and hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age”, for “the human person deserves to be preserved; human society deserves to be renewed”[11]. The transformation of living conditions linked to scientific and technological progress invites us to focus on some of the challenges typical of the cultural changes of our time, in order to improve the way we hand on the faith at the heart of cultures, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*.

I. GLOBALISATION

6. John Paul II created the Pontifical Council for Culture convinced that “the Church’s dialogue with the cultures of our time” was “a vital area, one in which the destiny of the world at the end of this twentieth century is at stake”[12]. *Duc in altum!* This dialogue is pursued in the certainty that the Lord of history is guiding the ship of the Church. However, as she watches for the signs of the times, the Church sees a great wave building up in front of her, one which gradually breaks over a great portion of humanity and brings in its wake a certain number of *disvalues* that endanger human persons and communities. It is the tidal wave of globalisation, born of an enormous development of communications media, transportation, telecommunications, a whole technology that tends to wipe out the constraints of time and space and brings people closer to make the world one village, the global village.

While globalisation in itself is not evil, it has some negative effects that are particularly evident in certain poor regions of the world. Scientific development, huge technological progress and the world of telecommunications and cyber-media are a blessing for some and totally beyond the reach of others. They have brought severe disruption to the very foundations of society. It seems that the domain of information technology and the exchange of ideas respect no limits: the constraints of time and space, state frontiers and even, where it exists, censorship.

7. Furthermore, globalisation is the vehicle that has enabled the market economy to conquer most of the planet. It has a strong ally in the “*financiarisation*” so loudly criticised by certain extremist movements. Economies and social systems are increasingly interdependent, and while the growth of some “engines” of the world economy has good effects in poor countries, a stock market crisis in just one country can have disastrous consequences on the weakest economies.

The aim of the “financiarisation” of the economy seems to be to maximise global financial profits for a circle of affluent people that is becoming smaller and yet increasingly powerful. Most of the time it brings with it growing inequalities and contributes to the marginalisation of those discarded by the world economy, either at a global level or within countries. Besides being extremely vulnerable, as increasing financial instability shows – *and is this not the most iniquitous price the poor have to pay?* – it tends to dictate its laws to politicians by the seductive and attractive lure of the power of money. In the end, globalisation that leads to the exclusion of the weakest is a contradiction in terms: exclusion is the very negation of globalisation.

The conditions in which men and women live at the beginning of the Third Millennium have been profoundly transformed and illustrate what the second Vatican Council was keen to define as “a new age in human history”[13]. The huge movement of globalisation brings with it a certain number of *disvalues* that are particularly influential on people’s lives. It contributes to the spread of new philosophical and ethical ideas based on new factors in work, life and community organisation.

However, globalisation promises things that only willing and resolute action on the part of states and international organisations can bring about, by correcting the divisive effects of market mechanisms left to themselves. In many places voices can be heard joining the Church’s call for the development of a “culture of solidarity” and a humanisation of the world of economy and finance. The Church feels the need for a more thorough objective knowledge of these new phenomena, and insists on the priority of ethics and the primacy of persons, for all the countries and populations of the world to be able to benefit from this process of world unification: “Now that commerce and communications are no longer bound by borders, it is the universal common good which demands that control mechanisms should accompany the inherent logic of the market. This is essential in order to avoid reducing all social relations to economic factors, and in order to protect those caught in new forms of exclusion or marginalisation”[14].

8. The effects of globalisation are not restricted to the economic sphere. They are evident in very different domains. “Values” or “*disvalues*” are conveyed by the distribution of films of a more or less moral nature. They are produced in one country according to the dominant criterion of profitability and their success is guaranteed by the low cost of distribution to television screens the world over. These broadcasts have a profound effect on young people, offering them models of behaviour that are often the opposite of Gospel values.

Internet also gives access to information in every branch of knowledge, but also – with no external check – to immoral sites that flaunt degrading behaviour contrary to the dignity of the human person.

Technological progress as a whole has a profound effect on human relationships: today it is possible to be in contact with people anywhere in the world, provided one has the right equipment. The development of videoconferences suggests possibilities for the Church that have not yet been thoroughly investigated. In fact, technological change is such that the culture it is creating still seems like something elusive and constantly shifting. Where does the handing on of faith fit into this?

9. The Church sees the destructive progress of *disvalues* that accompany globalisation as a challenge for handing on the faith. The challenges of globalisation include: “neglect” of the common good; a new culture whose values are borrowed from the logic of the financial market; the destruction of models for living – the family, education, the search for truth, the struggle for holiness, a sense of beauty, generosity and unselfishness etc., all things that were patiently introduced in cultures by long centuries of Christianity enriched by grace; the breakdown in the handing on of norms of social life, something difficult for parents, schools and parishes alike; the loss of a moral consensus in *traditional societies*; a consolidation of personal autonomy through the exaltation of freedom and individualism. What response can the Church give, and what means are at her disposal?

The monstrous development of biological research and its applications in biotechnology are signs of a tragic loss of the sense of natural law and respect for the human person. A real inhuman anti-culture is being flaunted in the guise of technical prowess of a kind that would reduce the human person to the status of a pure object.

The poorest countries are ravaged by the effects of globalisation: human values conveyed by cultural traditions handed on for generations are destroyed, there is a destabilisation of consciences and whole generations are culturally uprooted by being caught in a spiral of poverty and destitution.

In rich countries, traditional cultures are under threat from exaggerated consumerism and widespread hedonism. The “culture” of entertainment – *vanitas* – gets the upper hand of “*veritas*”. The weakness of political power obsessed with consensus at all costs leads to the anarchy of “anything goes”, to the detriment of the common good. An unbridled desire for consumer goods, with no respect for others, turns people in on themselves and creates extremism, the source of lethal violence.

II. Cultural Diversity

10. In listing the challenges of the evangelisation of peoples, the Pontifical Council for Culture’s document *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture* stresses one of the crucial problems of our world: the rights of nations – one of which is their right to exist – and the corresponding obligations towards other nations.

The Church proclaims *the unity of humankind and its unity in the plan of salvation*. She defends the identity of peoples in their legitimate diversity, at the same time inviting them to benefit from the contribution of the cultures of other peoples, insofar as they are open to the universal.

The identity of a people comes from an extraordinary complexity of elements, the fruits of its culture. It is rooted in the human person's creative abilities and adaptability to his or her natural surroundings. It takes shape in specific conditions of historical and geographical development, and the multiplicity and complexity of these conditions are the very things that allow societies to give concrete expression to their human heritage through a whole range of cultural identities.

The human person is the only cultural being, and is at once child and creator of his or her own culture. Child, because culture is the memory of the past and his or her history. Creator, since the culture of a people, far from being something static, involves a process of becoming whose source is the human person: the diversity of cultures comes from the fact that each human person is unique.

A culture is a sign of a people's identity and guarantees its particular character. At the same time, however, it aspires to universality through its best features, by the very fact that it is firmly rooted in human nature. A culture is not human unless it is open to other cultures and to what is universal[15]. The rights of cultural identities are based on the requirements of particularity; the requirements of universality are the basis for the duties they imply regarding other cultures and humankind as a whole.

Just as each human being has a right to the recognition and respect of his identity, so every cultural minority has a right to the recognition of its identity. It is a natural right, which increases the minority's standing in the eyes of society as a whole and facilitates its integration with peoples generally. On the other hand, failure to respect this right is a source of humiliation for a group of people. It gives rise to strong reactions that are very often extremely violent.

11. The events of 11 September 2001 are a tragic illustration of criminal fanaticism and a blasphemous hijacking of religious feeling. Religion in no way excludes other basic characteristics of a people's identity, but it is no less essential than they are, and its contribution is totally peaceful. Human persons act in the world where they live by transforming matter. Through work, they produce things that are beautiful or useful, in accordance with the canons of art or technology. They relate to each other by means of a language, in ways defined by custom and law, and by the moral standards they have. Endowed with intelligence and in love with wisdom, they continually broaden the field of their knowledge. Lastly, they are open to transcendence and can relate to it in a way they express in religious practices and rites of communion and reconciliation.

Religion is an essential element of culture, although it cannot be reduced to it, particularly where revealed religions are concerned. In fact, the vision of the origins and destiny of the human person, and God's plan for his creature and for the whole of humankind, have a profound influence on other areas of a person's life, and mark out his or her identity. Observing the world, history and sacred art will reveal the civilising role religions have, to the extent that those who take inspiration from them respect the dignity of the human person, of every person and of the whole person.

III. The Inhuman Developments of Biological Science

12. The way in which people today live out their human condition is a sign of a particular temptation, which John Paul II describes with conviction as a "meta-temptation": "It surpasses all that has, throughout history, come under the heading of

human temptation, and at the same time it brings to light what one might call the very foundation of all temptation. Contemporary man is subject to the temptation of rejecting God in the name of his own humanity"[16].

This *meta-temptation* has effects in various areas of human life, above all in biological science. It cannot be denied that, as this new Millennium begins, the pragmatism typical of our culture, combined with the development of information technology, demands a high level of knowledge. Men and women pin their hopes more than ever on science and its practical repercussions. This trait in our civilisation is, no doubt, the outcome of a prodigious development of the capacities entrusted to the human person, who has been created by God, in the image of God the creator. But when a human person forgets that he or she is a creature and sets out to become the absolute master of good and evil, there is a great danger of putting the very foundation of our civilisation in jeopardy. Let us acknowledge it without beating about the bush: developments in the sciences and a certain absolutised scientific culture are a real challenge at the beginning of this Millennium. What is at stake is the future of the human person, when he or she is viewed merely as an object, with no thought for the inalienable dignity of every person, from the first moment of conception to the last moment of life, whose natural course is interrupted when death is freely accepted.

IV. Sects[17]

13. The phenomenon of a vague need for spirituality is a sign of the times at the dawn of the new Millennium, one that presents a real challenge for *handing on the faith at the heart of cultures*. This openness to the spiritual side of life does not, in itself, imply openness to Christian spirituality as a personal lived experience of God, the Creator and Redeemer. In their search for spirituality, contemporary men and women feel the need to rebuild a set of affective and social relationships that the individualism of society tends to destroy; the number of divorces is proof of this.

Sects bolster these frustrated aspirations when people looking for meaning, above all those life has hurt, no longer find in Christian communities the transcendent dimension of faith, or the living witness of charity that welcomes others, especially those suffering from loneliness: "These groups succeed quite clearly because they respond to frustrated aspirations. Many of our contemporaries can communicate easily in such groups and experience a feeling of belonging; they find affection, brotherhood, even apparent protection and security. This feeling stems mostly from the simple answers and *apparently clear* but, in reality, *illusory solutions* – like the '*Gospel of success*' – which sects *appear* to offer to the most complex questions, and a pragmatic *theology* which exalts the self society has treated so badly"[18]. And so sects are growing in almost every country in the world, and their success is due to indoctrination made possible by people's ignorance and credulity; and many of these people have been baptised and schooled in the catechism. Healings, the development of affective relationships and more or less illusory promises of financial success are typical elements of the seductive appeal of these religious groups.

In similar fashion, gnostic sects offer salvation through knowledge and recruit many of their members from privileged backgrounds – lawyers and magistrates, politicians, journalists and so on – with the aim of setting up a godless society, where freedom of conscience and religious beliefs is relegated to the strictly personal and private sphere. Here, freedom of religion would be guaranteed by *tolerance*, the key term in our secularised societies.

Sects abound wherever secularism gains ground, and where the social fabric patiently built up by traditional cultures breaks down and leaves people to themselves, helplessly lost without the compass that would allow them to give direction to their lives according to profoundly human values.

V. Internet

14. “The most startling innovation in communications technology is, without doubt, the Internet. Like any other new technology, the Internet involves risks which have become tragically clear in cases where it has been used for evil purposes, and this calls for constant vigilance and reliable information”. *Handing on the faith at the heart of cultures* must not ignore this new *forum* around which a whole new culture is taking shape. The many ways in which this gigantic spider’s web has developed have unknown consequences. The document *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture* recognises the positive benefits of this new window on the world, but takes a negative view of the “loss of the intrinsic value of items of information, an undifferentiated uniformity in messages which are reduced to pure information, a lack of responsible feedback, and a certain discouragement of interpersonal relationships”[19]. Those who evangelise know that relationships established through a technological medium can never replace personal contacts, and that evangelisation depends on the witness of the one who is sent to bring the Good News. Pope John Paul II emphasises this: “In a culture which feeds on the ephemeral there can easily be a risk of believing that it is facts that matter, rather than values. The Internet offers extensive knowledge, but it does not teach values”[20]. The Church, as an expert in humanity, reminds us that a society cannot be built on a network of virtual relationships – the *Internet* – but on the human person and on that person’s transcendent dignity, and that society has the duty of handing on to people a set of values that will help them to flourish according to the highest potential of human nature.

Pastors are called to promote the evangelisation of this new world of “cyberspace” and to reap its fruits. For there is no doubt that the Internet’s immense potential could be enormously helpful in *handing on the faith*. “A great deal is at stake. How can we not be present and use information networks, whose screens are at the heart of people’s homes, to implant the values of the Gospel there?”[21]. Young people, in particular, take the initiative in various ways to bring the Good News of the Gospel even here, to this “new frontier for the mission of the Church”[22].

VI. The Expansion of Islam

15. One of the many challenges the Church faces in *handing on the faith at the heart of cultures, novo millennio ineunte*, which cannot be passed over in silence, is Islam, whose current expansion is experienced as a challenge – one that is at once social, cultural and religious. In fact, “the countries where Islam dominates are in a cultural world of their own, although there are differences between the Arab countries and the other countries of Africa and Asia. Islam is not just a religion in the classic sense of the word: it is also essentially a society with its own legislation and traditions, and the whole forms a vast community, or *umma*, with its own culture and plan for civilisation.... True collaboration with Muslims on the level of culture in real reciprocity may foster fruitful relationships in Islamic countries and with Muslim communities established in traditionally Christian countries”[23].

16. In his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Paul VI was keen to stress that “the split between the Gospel and culture is without a doubt the drama of our time”[24]. In the light of the challenges of contemporary society and the giddy developments of globalisation and all it implies for culture, the Church is invited to find new ways for the men and women of today to receive the message of the Gospel and live by it.

In the wake of the Second Vatican Council, and with the impetus given by the Continental Assemblies of the Synod of Bishops, she is moving resolutely forward along the path of inculturating the Gospel and evangelising cultures, in the strong conviction expressed by John Paul II in his Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in America*: the gift of the Spirit and the love of Christ “are meant for each and every people and culture, in order to bring them all into unity after the example of the perfect unity existing in the Triune God. For this to happen, it is necessary to inculturate preaching in such a way that the Gospel is proclaimed in the language and culture of its hearers”[25].

This is why it is so important to take account of culture in the work of evangelisation.

The Good News is proclaimed to people and its goal is *metanoia*, *baptism* and living by faith. Faith takes shape within a culture, so much so that it is addressed to the human person in the fullness of his or her humanity. The Holy Father said as much in his letter founding the Pontifical Council for Culture: “man lives a fully human life thanks to culture”, and reiterated what he had said so emphatically during his visit to UNESCO: “Yes, the future of man depends on culture”[26].

So it is the Church’s duty to enter into dialogue with all cultures, in order to bring them the leaven of the Gospel in fidelity to tradition and the Magisterium, and to let grace purify them, enrich them and make them fruitful. John Paul II gave a magnificent definition of this process at the beginning of his pontificate: “the *missionary* attitude always begins with a feeling of deep esteem for what is in man, for what man has himself worked out in the depths of his spirit concerning the most profound and important problems. It is a question of respecting everything that has been brought about in him by the Spirit, which blows where it wills. The mission is never destruction, but instead is a taking up and fresh building, even if in practice there has not always been full correspondence with this high ideal. And we know well that the conversion that is begun by the mission is a work of grace, in which man must fully find himself again”[27].

“Authentic inculturation of the Christian faith is grounded in the mystery of the Incarnation.... Just as the Word made flesh entered history and dwelt among us, his Gospel enters deeply into the life and culture of those who hear, listen and believe. Inculturation, the ‘incarnation’ of the Gospel in the various cultures, affects the very way in which the Gospel is preached, understood and lived. The Church teaches the unchanging truth of God, addressed to the history and culture of a particular people. Therefore, in each culture the Christian faith will be lived in a unique way”[28].

How can the Pontifical Council for Culture genuinely take account of all the world’s cultures – within the limits of its means and its competence – and thus avoid the suspicion that it is too “Western”?

17. In his first encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*, Pope John Paul II shed light on the human side of the mystery of redemption when he said: “The Church’s fundamental function in every age and particularly in ours is to direct man’s gaze, to point the awareness and experience of the whole of humanity towards the mystery of God, to help all men to be familiar with the profundity of the Redemption taking place in Christ Jesus. At the same time man’s deepest sphere is involved – we mean the sphere of human hearts, consciences and events”[29].

Evangelisation begins when we meet the living Christ, and it ends in blessed contemplation of the icon of the risen Lord.

How can we help our contemporaries, at the heart of cultures that seem so distant, to be open to meeting Christ?

The Gospel of John offers us the enlightening episode of the meeting with the Samaritan woman: Jesus centres the dialogue on the image of a spring of water “welling up to eternal life”[30]. He refers to cultural traditions precisely in order to move beyond opposition, before touching her sinner’s heart in a way that opens her to an encounter that sets her free and makes her a witness of the Lord’s goodness.

In a world that is “allergic” to what morality teaches, how can bishops be helped to touch people damaged by sin and awaken their desire to be saved?

18. Handing on the faith means proclaiming the living Christ as the only Saviour of all and the Lord of history. It is through the Church that the Son of God made man is present to men and women, whom He invites to meet Him in the faith they receive and live in the heart of the Church. The encounter with Him, who rose from the dead, happens through **the invisible action of the Holy Spirit**. The Spirit of truth guides the hearts of the faithful to contemplate the basic truths of Christian faith: the mysteries of truth, the Incarnation of the Word, the redemption of humankind and the other *wonders* of God. They are helped by the work of theologians who are encouraged by the Church “in their delicate work of developing an inculturated theology, especially in the area of Christology.... The test of true inculturation is whether

whether people become more committed to their Christian faith because they perceive it more clearly with the eyes of their own culture”[31].

What is typical of our era is a culture that gives pride of place to activity and a search for efficiency, accentuated by the phenomenon of the globalisation of the economy and of the communications media. Faced with this challenge, the Church is called upon to find forms of **Christian spirituality** that will help people to “be before doing”. This means developing spaces for contemplation, liturgical life and teaching – real centres of light, love and fellowship. All pastoral programmes should be planned with a view to **holiness**: “The time has come to re-propose wholeheartedly to everyone this *high standard of ordinary Christian living*: the whole life of the Christian community and of Christian families must lead in this direction”[32].

Without a doubt, the first way of handing on the faith is formation for prayer and liturgical life lived in a way that is faithful to the Church’s tradition. So local churches are invited to develop a spirituality that suits the abilities and circumstances of each Christian. That requires perspicacity and discernment of cultures.

What cultural conditions are advantageous for the development of Christian spirituality and a culture of holiness?

How should one establish proper Cenacles of prayer, fellowship and teaching of the faith to help in the development of an inculturated Christian Spirituality?

How can churches best “ensure that the liturgy becomes an ever greater source of nourishment for their peoples through a wise and effective use of elements drawn from the local cultures” without overlooking “the specific needs of the poor, migrants, refugees, youth and women”[33]?

19. Some tragic situations show that humanity is more than ever in danger of being “dehumanised”. Powerful structures of sin, international terrorism, the senseless development of techniques of genetic manipulation, the threat of ecological disaster and

the collapse of values borne by traditional cultures show the urgent need for evangelisation and the call to conversion. The Gospel begins with the preaching of John the Baptist: "Repent!" The call to conversion is an important element in Christian formation. It is not simply about ideas or another way of thinking; it is about revising the way we live in the light of the criteria of the Gospel. Conversion has a social dimension, since it leads to brotherly love and solidarity; it encourages us to bear witness, and in some cases this can take the form of martyrdom.

The loss of a sense of sin, intellectual and moral relativism and the refusal to accept a mediator for reconciliation with God are all obstacles that take different forms in people's cultures. The culture of pleasure and leisure stifles people's sense of penitence and works of reparation. Deep divisions between the faith and life of Christians in our day invite us to reflect on the ways and means of calling people to conversion that are part and parcel of Christian formation.

What elements of culture could help bishops reinterpret the call to conversion to Christ and his Gospel, in a way that Christ's invitation to "repent and believe in the Gospel" might get through to Christians in all parts of the world?

20. The radically new character of the life Christ gives is a gift of God and requires proper knowledge of the truths of the faith. The importance of Christian formation and of a thorough knowledge of the faith is evident in every area of life. The Church herself, in order to be an evangeliser, "needs to listen unceasingly to what she must believe, to her reasons for hoping, to the new commandment of love"[34].

For the vast majority of Christians, "formation for faith has remained at the elementary stage, and sects easily profit from this ignorance"[35]. It would be wrong for catechesis, on the pretext of adaptation to the socio-cultural context of a country or a region, to be reduced to the business of handing on cultural values, or for the force of the truth to be allowed to evaporate behind the smokescreen of tolerance. Pedagogy is a means for handing on content, not a criterion for deciding what ought to be handed on. Using sociological and psychological schemas as criteria of discernment may well be one of the causes for the breakdown in handing on the faith in many countries.

Ill-conceived inculturation creates a split in theological teaching, preventing it from discerning the universality of some of the concepts that are used by reducing them to their alleged "Western-ness". By drawing on the *philosophia perennis* for his theological method, Saint Thomas took "meta-cultural" elements from a culture quite different from that of mediaeval Western Europe. But he discerned them in the light of what had been received and handed on by the Apostles, and in the light of what the Fathers of the Church had to offer. Later on, a decadent form of Scholasticism detached speculative reflection from a real theology of life, which is inculturated according to the historical situation and existential conditions of the faithful.

How is it possible to ensure the teaching of theology and the catechesis of the truths of faith and the values they engender, making the best use of the resources characteristic of local churches?

What suggestions can be made for the Catechism of the Catholic Church to be inculturated for the great regions of the world?

The three encyclicals – Veritatis Splendor, Evangelium Vitae, Fides et Ratio – are a trilogy for the kind of formation that takes account of elements of today's culture: how should they be given the place they deserve in the formation of Gospel missionaries in different cultural contexts, so as to benefit from contacts with philosophical and religious traditions?[36]

21. Strong witnessing goes together with handing on the faith. The one who preaches the Gospel covers the ground of evangelisation in docility to the Spirit: “Techniques of evangelisation are good, but even the most advanced ones could not replace the gentle action of the Spirit. Even the most thorough preparation of the evangeliser has no effect without the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit the most convincing dialectic has no power over the human heart”[37].

Catechists, theologians, deacons, priests and bishops cannot be effective agents of the handing on of faith unless their teaching is backed up by the witness of a life transformed by the powerful breath of the Spirit. This witness becomes convincing when it is given in a community of brothers and sisters united in the communion of sincere mutual love. The post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in Oceania* declared: “The Synod Fathers saw further inculturation of the Christian faith as the way leading to the fullness of ecclesial *communio*”[38].

If the world is to believe, it is urgent to develop a culture of communion between local churches, and to invite Christians on every continent to accept the Holy Father’s requests for forgiveness in order to forget the ill feeling of the past and move forward – *Duc in altum! – novo millennio ineunte*.

Tensions between families, tribes, regions and nations, not to mention those at the level of parishes, dioceses or even bishops, are a counter-sign that seriously damages the handing on of faith at the heart of cultures. How can local churches be helped to develop a true culture of communion?

22. Handing on the faith at the heart of cultures requires evangelisers. In the first place, this means **bishops**, who have the task of promoting and co-ordinating evangelising activities. The bishop is the one who sends: “they will never have a preacher unless one is sent” (*Rom* 10, 15). He knows his people and their needs, and directs the work of priests, religious and lay people, with respect for the gifts and charisms of each of them. Various councils assist him in this task, including a pastoral council, which needs people who are attentive to the challenges of cultural change.

Because it is eager to develop the dialogue between faith and cultures, the Pontifical Council for Culture invites bishops to develop **Catholic cultural centres**, which “offer to the Church the possibility of presence and action in the field of cultural change. They constitute in effect public *forums* which allow the Church to make widely known, in creative dialogue, Christian convictions about man, woman, family, work, economy, society, politics, international life, the environment. Thus they are places of listening, respect and tolerance”[39].

In what way should Catholic cultural centres develop in future?

How should they be networked, and according to what criteria?

What can bishops expect of Catholic cultural centres and from the initiatives of the Pontifical Council for Culture in their regard?

22. Handing on the faith at the heart of cultures requires trained lay people: “since the inculturation of the Gospel involves the whole People of God, the role of the laity is of paramount importance. It is they above all who are called to transform society, in collaboration with the Bishops, clergy and religious, by infusing the ‘mind of Christ’ into the mentality, customs, laws and structures of the secular world in which they live. A wider inculturation of the Gospel... will depend greatly on the appropriate formation which the local Churches succeed in giving to the laity”[40].

The “culture of doing” has involved entire swathes of lay people in activities, and these days there is no lack of admirable examples of dedication in social solidarity projects. But Christian life cannot be limited to solidarity, necessary though that is. The single commandment to love has two sides, which the Church always holds together: love of the Father and love of one’s neighbour.

The formation lay people need applies not only to catechists, but also to the family, the primary cell in evangelisation. It helps women in the extremely important role they have in handing on the faith to their children. It extends to grandparents, whose presence at the heart of the family takes on particular importance in cultures that set great store by the work women do outside their families, to the detriment of their primordial task of educating their children.

The Holy Father pays special attention to young people. They are the future of the Church. Those great occasions – the *World Youth Days* – show that desire for God and for strong teaching in conformity with the Gospel, received in a climate of prayer and brotherhood, is a real opportunity for handing on the faith. However, these great gatherings need to be followed up in the local churches. In that way intense moments that are such a powerful experience for young people could spark off a real change in their lives and a time of growth for the Church.

Consecrated men and women are a marvellous sign in all cultures of a life devoted to and transformed by the Gospel. The Synod of Bishops has accentuated the importance of a formation that is human, but also spiritual and liturgical, apostolic and missionary, biblical and theological. Monastic life offers its own precious witness, and allows those who are in the world to come and draw new energy from the source of prayer and contemplation, so that they can “put out into the deep”.

What is the best way for these “spiritual lungs” to be integrated into diocesan pastoral programmes for handing on the faith?

24. Handing on the faith makes it imperative to pay special attention to the formation of candidates for the priesthood, and to “in-service” training for deacons, priests and bishops. Is it not the case that seminaries offer an excellent opportunity for discerning the cultural elements in Christian formation? “Today more than ever there is need to form future priests in the true cultural values of their country”[41]. In fact, priests are called to discern the deepest aspirations of God’s people in order to respond better to them. For that, formation calls for a thorough understanding of human nature, an ability to observe its context critically and to discern the values and *disvalues* of the dominant culture, in order to establish a constructive dialogue with the world of today[42].

How can we guarantee that seminaries will provide a discernment of cultures done by staff who are faithful to the Gospel, eager to hand on the deposit of faith in its entirety and able to dovetail it with the positive values of the various cultures?

How can pastors be trained to make use of the new technology that is available to them in handing on the faith?

In a culture where the developments of scientific research and the advent of public behaviour contrary to Christian morality call for a clear response from pastors, and not only from specialised groups of intellectuals, how best can we form competent clergy who will have a courteous and respectful answer ready for people who ask them the reason for the hope that we all have (Cf. 1 Pet 3, 15f.)?

25. A traditional and ideal place for handing on the faith is the parish, which offers Christian formation in various forms. It is clearly the natural habitat of Christians, the place where they experience the Church at first hand. Without doubt, social changes and the alarming decrease in vocations to the priesthood in some parts of the world have created severe upheaval in dioceses, and the first places affected are parishes. Parishes are first and foremost Eucharistic communities, the place for Christian initiation, education and celebration of the life of faith. At the heart of the parish is the promotion of sacramental life. Here, through grace, the word that is proclaimed becomes life, a life that is encouraged when it is steeped in true popular piety. Popular piety calls for careful attention, and pastors should keep a watchful eye on it: when it fades away, people's minds are taken over by the barrenness of indifference. In parishes, various movements and associations can make a healthy contribution to handing on the faith at the heart of cultures and in reaching individuals in specific ways that are appropriate to them.

Handing on the faith is also carried out in educational institutions, above all in Catholic schools. The world of education is a sphere that is particularly suited to promoting the inculturation of the Gospel, and to offering guidance to young people in a way that will help them to meet Christ and to be aware of the *disvalues* cultures can bring – and of their incompatibility with an authentically Christian life. Catholic teaching has a distinctive pedagogical programme, whose content keeps coming back to Christ and to the teaching of the Church in the areas of faith and morals. The firmly Catholic orientation of the Church's schools, colleges, universities and institutes of higher learning allows them to train authentically Christian leaders in the various sectors of human life: art and literature, science and philosophical wisdom, economy and politics and the world of business.

The world of education is the forge where a new Christian humanism is fashioned. How is it to be used to the best advantage? What are the most efficient ways of promoting it?

What recommendations should we give to those in charge of such institutions?

In the various institutions in the world of education, how should children, young people and students be prepared for the challenges of drugs, HIV/AIDS, genetic experiments and the spin-offs of scientific research?

Building God's Kingdom

26. Proclaiming the faith at the heart of cultures goes hand in hand with the promotion of justice and peace, especially in countries where social inequalities and injustice are particularly blatant: in some countries, there are "social sins which cry to heaven"[43]. However, situations that are characteristic of some poor regions of the vast world can be found even at the heart of rich countries, especially in cities where opulence and destitution live side by side. The events of 11 September have made people vividly aware of the worldwide repercussions of certain actions and the reality of the interconnectedness of persons. Technological developments make it possible for good or

evil to crystallise around a “cause”; in the case of serious terrorist attacks, they allow people, with a terrifying degree of hatred and fanaticism, to cause an immense amount of damage with immeasurable repercussions all over the world.

The Church’s social teaching provides a convincing response to economic globalisation. It is up to local churches to find the ways and means of training Christians in this ethical approach based on justice and responsibility, which can “create an authentic global culture of solidarity”[44]. Christian humanism is put forward as an effective response to the challenges of globalisation. “Globalisation, *a priori*, is neither good nor bad. It will be what people make of it”[45].

The Church knows how important Christian formation in the spirit of the beatitudes is for the promotion of a world of justice and peace, and that the ultimate basis for human rights is the dignity of the human person. Everywhere she asserts her preferential love for the poor, because she is convinced that injustice is born of violence and that “development” is “the new name for peace”[46].

At the same time, how can one be deaf to the accusation that traditionally Christian countries are among those most involved in the arms race and in birth control programmes, sinful structures absolutely contrary to Christ’s Gospel?

What cultural changes are allowing so many traditionally Christian countries to sink into “silent apostasy”?

How have these countries moved from a situation where faith had a clear role in their culture to one where it seems foreign and something private?

Why does the Church seem to be a cultural minority in traditionally Christian countries, where Christians are still in the majority?

What initiatives need to be taken to move from a negative assessment of the situation to one of positive action?

Handing on the faith at the heart of cultures, the essential mission of the Church, can be made much easier or be seriously hindered by society’s institutions. Hence the importance of training Christians for public administration; the search for rights and corresponding duties; administering the common heritage for the long-term good of humankind, with respect for the environment; the formation of ethical committees concerned with searching for the truth about the human person and his or her dignity rather than working on the sole criterion of consensus; working within international organisations to make sure they recognise natural law and to strive for a fairer distribution of goods, while respecting the cultural identity of peoples.

Handing on the Good News

27. The Church has followed Christ, the ideal communicator of the truth about God and the human person, through the ages in using traditional forms of communication. The first is language. The evangeliser obviously has to use a language that will enable his audience to understand him. Part of the explanation for the profound breakdown in handing on the faith in secularised societies is an “outmoded” language; yesterday’s words are no longer understood by today’s people.

The phenomenon of language is enlightening with regard to the damage done by ill-conceived methods of inculturation. The models of language used in some societies are not necessarily good for handing on the truths of faith.

This was blessed Pope John XXIII's concern as he opened the second Vatican Council: "The substance of the ancient doctrine of the deposit of faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another. And it is the latter that must be taken into great consideration with patience if necessary, everything being measured in the forms and proportions of a magisterium which is predominantly pastoral in character"[47].

In what way can pastors be helped in handing on the faith at the heart of cultures, in other words in finding a place for the leaven of the Gospel in societies and ways of thinking that differ greatly from those that first received Revelation or from the context in which the texts of the Magisterium were written?

What are the ways to penetrate the way each people thinks, so that the Good News revealed by Christ and handed on by the Church can reach deep into its soul, from the nations that for thousands of years have been imbued with Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism or African traditional religions to the new culture of Latin America, the great mega-cities and new generations in traditionally Christian places, for whom the way the Church speaks often sounds like a foreign language?

Song, music, plays, proverbs and storytelling are traditional ways of communicating. Are they not also channels of wisdom and the spirit of a people?

Given that these are particularly fruitful opportunities for inculturation, how can pastors best be helped to make the most of them in handing on the faith, especially where the structures of traditional life are still strong?

28. The special assemblies of the Synod of Bishops have all stressed the paramount importance of the media world. It is a matter of great urgency in every country in the world. The media are not just a means of communication, but a whole world that needs evangelising if it, in turn, is to evangelise or, at the very least, to humanise. This is a world for the human person. Even when it is not authorised to operate explicitly in the area of faith, it does have authority to put across proper values, to help the human person grow in his or her humanity. The Church, an expert in humanity, invites the media to communicate what is **good, true and beautiful**. The overwhelming development of media pornography and violence is the consequence of the loss of a sense of what the human person is. It comes from the pursuit of success at all costs, which is measured in terms of audience levels and money, and a guaranteed source for both of these seems to be "the three forms of concupiscence".

Local churches need to be present in the media world. If they are to do this, they must master media language and use media techniques effectively.

What action should be taken to ensure that culture and spirituality are not marginalised in media culture?

What help do local churches need to make better use of the media in handing on the faith?

How should Christians – especially children – be trained to use the media without being tainted by the disvalues that are all too often present in that world?

What sort of help do priests need, in the context of their solitary lives, to hold on to their inner freedom in the face of temptations that come from the media?

29. The breathtaking development of communications technology increases opportunities for contact between different parts of the world, with obvious effects in very different spheres. “And what should we say about the cultural globalisation produced by the power of the media? Everywhere the media impose new scales of values which are often arbitrary and basically materialistic, in the face of which it is difficult to maintain a lively commitment to the values of the Gospel”[48]. The document *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture* identifies the world of social communications and information technology as “the first Areopagus of the modern age”[49]. A change in language and in the way of understanding events is typical of this new culture, and in this context the Church is convinced of the urgency of responding creatively as she sets out on the road along this new frontier of her mission.

The Church is an educator for all peoples. How should she act in a global culture in which communications media appear to be creating a new culture?

How should these media be used to develop an “ethic of truth about human nature” and to overcome the temptations and the “vanitas” of an “image culture”?

30. As the 20th anniversary of its foundation approaches, the Pontifical Council for Culture appeals to its members who, at the heart of cultures in the various regions of the world, are living proof of “the boldness of a prophet and evangelical prudence; the vision of a master and the sure sense of direction of a guide; the spiritual strength of a witness and the serenity, patience and kindness of a father”[50]. Like them, the Council is striving to respond to the Holy Father’s appeal, *novo millennio ineunte*, while keeping proudly to the intuition behind the foundation of this Dicastery, as it was expressed in the letter of foundation: “it is urgent that our contemporaries, and Catholics in particular, question themselves seriously about the conditions which are at the basis of the development of peoples.... That is why I have decided to found and institute a Council for Culture, capable of giving the whole Church a common impulse in the continuously renewed encounter between the salvific message of the Gospel and the multiplicity of cultures, in the diversity of peoples to which it must bring its fruits of grace”[51].

Handing on the faith at the heart of cultures, *novo millennio ineunte*, with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who “is the prime agent of the inculturation of the Christian faith”[52], means carrying on with the mission given to the apostles: “you will be my witnesses... to the ends of the earth” (*Acts 1, 8*). This is in accordance with Christ’s mandate, which was taken up by the Holy Father in the bold words of his Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*:

“Even in countries evangelised many centuries ago, the reality of a ‘Christian society’ which, amid all the frailties which have always marked human life, measured itself explicitly on Gospel values, is now gone. Today we must courageously face a situation which is becoming increasingly diversified and demanding, in the context of ‘globalisation’ and of the consequent new and uncertain mingling of peoples and cultures. Over the years, I have often repeated the summons to the *new evangelisation*. I do so again now, especially in order to insist that we must rekindle in ourselves the impetus of the beginnings and allow ourselves to be filled with the ardour of the apostolic preaching which followed Pentecost. We must revive in ourselves the burning conviction of Paul, who cried out: ‘Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel’ (*1 Cor 9, 16*)

“This passion will not fail to stir in the Church a new sense of mission, which cannot be left to a group of ‘specialists’ but must involve the responsibility of all the members of the People of God. Those who have come into genuine contact with Christ cannot keep him for themselves, they must proclaim him. A new apostolic outreach is needed, which will be lived as *the everyday commitment of Christian communities and groups*. This should be done however with the respect due to the different paths of different people and with sensitivity to the diversity of cultures in which the Christian message must be planted, in such a way that the particular values of each people will not be rejected but purified and brought to their fullness.

“In the Third Millennium, Christianity will have to respond ever more effectively to this *need for inculturation*. Christianity, while remaining completely true to itself, with unswerving fidelity to the proclamation of the Gospel and the tradition of the Church, will also reflect the different faces of the cultures and peoples in which it is received and takes root. In this Jubilee Year, we have rejoiced in a special way in the beauty of the Church’s varied face. This is perhaps only a beginning, a barely sketched image of the future which the Spir

[1] John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Asia*, 6 November 1999, No. 21.

[2] John Paul II, *Letter founding the Pontifical Council for Culture*, 20 May 1982; AAS 74, 1982, pp. 683-688.

[3] *Ibid.* Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, Nos. 53-62.

[4] John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 6 January 2001, No. 58.

[5] *Ibid.*, No. 29.

[6] John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in America*, 22 January 1999, No. 70.

[7] John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*, 14 September 1998, No. 70.

[8] Pontifical Council for Culture, *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture*, 23 May 1999, No. 3.

[9] Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptor Hominis*, 4 March 1979, No. 14: “This man is the way for the Church – a way that, in a sense, is the basis of all the other ways that the Church must walk – because man – every man without exception – has been redeemed by Christ, and because with man – with each man without any exception whatever – Christ is in a way united, even when man is unaware of it: ‘Christ, who died and was raised up for all, provides man’ – each man and every man – ‘with the light and the strength to measure up to his supreme calling’.

[10] John Paul II, *Letter founding the Pontifical Council for Culture*, *op.cit.*

[11] Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, Nos. 1 and 3.

[12] John Paul II, *Letter founding the Pontifical Council for Culture*, *op. cit.*

[13] *Gaudium et Spes*, No. 54. Quoted in *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture*, No. 7.

[14] John Paul II, *Address at the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences*, 27 April 2001, No. 2.

[15] Cf. *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture*, No. 10: “While the rights of a nation express ‘particular’ requirements, it is no less important to emphasise universal requirements, with the duties they imply for each nation regarding other nations and humankind as a whole. The primary duty is undoubtedly to live in a spirit of peace, respect and solidarity with others.... While nationalism implies contempt or even hatred for other nations or cultures, patriotism is an appropriate particular – but not exclusive – love of and service to one’s country and people, as remote from cosmopolitanism as it is from cultural nationalism. Each culture aspires to the universal through the best it has to offer”.

[16] John Paul II, *Address to the Bishops of France*, No. 3, in *Documentation Catholique*, 15 June 1980, No. 1788, p. 590.

[17] The use of the term “sect” has become problematic and is now generally avoided in discussion with members of new religious or pseudo-religious groups. Here it is used simply as a “shorthand” and is not meant at all polemically.

[18] *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture*, No. 24.

[19] *Ibid.*, No. 9.

[20] John Paul II, *Message for the 36th World Day of Communications*, 24 January 2002, No. 4.

[21] *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture*, No. 9.

[22] John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, 30 December 1988, No. 44.

[23] *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture*, No. 22.

[24] Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 8 December 1975, No. 20.

[25] *Ecclesia in America*, No. 70.

[26] John Paul II, *Letter founding the Pontifical Council for Culture*, *op. cit.*

[27] *Redemptor Hominis*, No. 12.

[28] John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Oceania*, 22 November 2001, No. 16.

[29] *Redemptor Hominis*, No. 10.

[30] *Jn* 4, 14.

[31] *Ecclesia in Asia*, No. 22.

- [32] *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, No. 31.
- [33] *Ecclesia in Asia*, No. 22.
- [34] *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, No. 15.
- [35] John Paul II, *Address to the Bishops of Cameroon*, 13 August 1985, No. 4. *La Documentation Catholique* 82 (1985), p. 917.
- [36] Cf. *Ecclesia in Asia*, No. 22
- [37] John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa*, 14 September 1995, No. 77.
- [38] *Ecclesia in Oceania*, No. 16.
- [39] *Ecclesia in Africa*, No. 103.
- [40] *Ecclesia in Asia*, No. 22.
- [41] *Ecclesia in Africa*, No. 95.
- [42] Cf. *Ecclesia in America*, 40.
- [43] *Ecclesia in America*, No. 56.
- [44] *Ibid.*, No. 55.
- [45] John Paul II, *Address at the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences*, 27 April 2001, No. 2.
- [46] Paul VI, Encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, 26 March 1967, No. 76 (section title).
- [47] Opening Speech to the second Vatican Ecumenical Council, 11 October 1962.
- [48] *Ecclesia in America*, No. 20.
- [49] Pontifical Council for Culture, *Towards a Pastoral Approach to Culture*, No. 9, quoting John Paul II, Encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*, 7 December 1990, No. 37.
- [50] John Paul II, Conclusion of the address at the opening of the 3rd conference of Latin American bishops, in *Documentation Catholique*, 18 February 1979, No. 1758, p. 172.
- [51] John Paul II, *Letter founding the Pontifical Council for Culture*, *op. cit.*
- [52] *Ecclesia in Asia*, No. 21: "The Challenge of Inculturation".