



FORUM FOCUS

FOR GLOBAL MINISTRIES
POUR LES MINISTÈRES MONDIAUX

A WINDOW ON THE GLOBAL CHURCH

Annual Issue 2009 – Number 32

Mission and Power

In 2009 The Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries International Visitor was in fact three visitors, a Filipino theologian Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Tapia, Bishop Mark MacDonald, the Anglican Church of Canada's first Indigenous Bishop and a United Church of Canada former overseas personnel in Fiji, Rev. Dr. Russell Daye.

These three "Visitors" were gifted as keynote speakers to the 2009 Canadian Theological Students Conference, "Mission and Power: Memory, Journey, Vision" The main study theme from Edinburgh 2010 World Mission Conference, "Mission and Power", is being explored throughout many Canadian churches in preparation for the upcoming event.

Instead of traditional "keynotes" the three speakers provided three days of short lectures and a 'trialogue' between the three of them that also engaged the audience in conversation. The result was a significant challenging prophetic description of the Global and Canadian communities of faith and an inspiring vision of mission.

We have committed most of this issue of the Forum Focus to excerpts from their three short lectures. The lectures, trialogues, and conversations can be found in their entirety at the Canadian Churches Forum for Global Ministries website: www.ccforum.ca

The artwork in this issue are contributions from three global theologians who provide their reflections through visual art which was referred to in Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Tapia's presentation. The artists include Emmanuel R. Garibay and Elizabeth Padillo Oleson from the Philippines, and Hanna Cheriyan Varghese of Malaysia.

The Living Word of God

Bishop Mark MacDonald

I want to begin by giving honour, first of all, to God, God who made me and God who saved me. And one of the first things a person says to you when they say God saves me, they usually mean literally. They don't mean just save me from a wrong way of thinking or save me from hypothetical sins hidden somewhere in my heart. It usually means that we would be dead if God hadn't saved us. And so there's a very immediate sense of the presence of God, in indigenous life and in the world that I live in.

(holding up a book) This is one of the most precious things in my life. It's an Ojibway prayer book and I've been using them since I was a child. It also has the Ojibway hymnal which actually has been more a part of my life since I was a boy. And it's so precious to me, but it is a reminder of the preciousness of the Church. In this prayer

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"Join Hands for Peace" by Hanna Cheriyan Varghese, Malaysia. From "Reflections on God's Redeeming Love," 2009, Overseas Ministries Study Centre, www.omsc.org

The Reign of Heaven

Rev. Dr. Russell Daye

I'm going to begin my presentation this morning by reading a parable:

'Then the kingdom of heaven shall be compared to ten maidens who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them;

continued on page 4 and 5

Ubuntu!

Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Tapia

I've come here, not to give a straight forward lecture. I am not an expert in mission, nor am I the voice for the global majority south. What I will do is to share with you my understanding of mission as it's related to power and in the beautiful theme of the theological student's

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The Living Word of God *continued*

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book there is all the services of the normal prayer book except for ordination. That was omitted.

Now, I know and believe that this is because it was never thought that there would be a time that someone would be ordained without being absolutely fluent in English and without having a full recognition and awareness of the Western classical tradition, enough so that they would be assimilated into what was thought to be a Christian culture. And so this prayer book is part of a mission strategy. It was given to people never thinking that by the year 2009 somebody would still be using it.

The mission strategy of our ancestors in the Church was to make Aboriginal people disappear; have them melt into a larger conglomerate. They never imagined a day like today where you have literally millions, many of whom still speak their language, still practice their subsistence way of life, hundreds of years after first contact.

We now know that around the world that those indigenous societies that have been able to take Western forms and then innovate with them according to their cultural way, according to their clan systems, according to their way of doing things, they do the best. They do the best. And we're now beginning to enter into a realm of life where people in the Church are about to do the same thing.

You may be familiar with the statement by Martin Luther King Junior that the long arc of history tends towards justice. I think that's close to it: The long arc of history tends towards justice. I believe that in our theological heritage there is something that describes that sort of thing.

Mary-Anne O'Donovan recently wrote a book called, "One Like Reading." It's been, I think, in the last 10 years, in which she dealt with one of the first systematians, you might say, of the Church, Irenaeus. And she said that it was amazing after all these centuries that the Church still had not grasped the radicality of the theology of the incarnation that Irenaeus laid out. And those of you who are familiar with the synthesis that Maximus the Confessor gives a few hundred years later will know that a major part of this was that Theology of the Word.

And the Theology of the Word traced the trajectory of the Word's progress in the world, in the cosmos, and it says that every people, every person, and again this is an insight that goes back to the Gospel of John, the first chapter of John. That every people has a kind of trajectory of the Word of God going through their history. Maximus, I think, said this in the most bold way. The word of God who at all times and in all places desires to become flesh.

And the plot of this idea is that the Word constantly, relentlessly, throughout history has tried to become living and real in the life of the people and that you can see traces of that Word. And the reason I began with Martin Luther King is that in a sense he also understood that reality; it's called ponjon or peace or beauty in the

Navajo way of life. It's called other things in other cultures and in other ways but the idea is that something of God is seeking embodiment in our life and in our culture always.

Now, I say that believing and knowing that among the First Nations people, there has been a vibrant presence of the Word, from long before any Europeans came here certainly. But also that Word received and echoed the Word that was given from the missionaries in ways that surprised. Louis Riel, for instance, the way the Word affected him was not exactly what people had in mind, right?

Alfred Tritt, the great prophet, the great Anglican prophet of the Wichin people who have led a war of resistance against the oil companies for decades. He said, "The way of the White man lead to death but the way of Jesus Christ leads to life." He knew very, very well that there was a big difference between the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the way of life that they were being called to mimic. And it is that hope that is still inspiring First Nations people across the land.

What we would like to say is that the Gospel and its' preaching, is a prophetic unveiling of the presence of the Word of God in creation and history over time. That that is the central task, not only of the Church, but of people, of pointing to that Gospel that we have received, is the heartbeat of God in the universe.

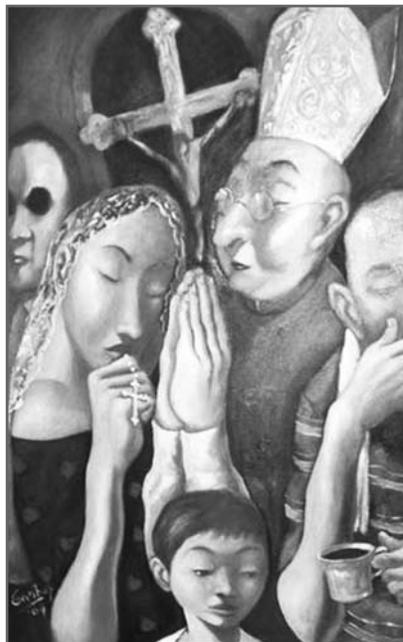
Now, Thomas Burton wrote a book before he died called, "Wisdom from the Desert," and in that introduction, he made a very important observation. He described the people of the desert as people who realized that systemic evil had so overcome the life of the Church, that credible witness to the Word of Jesus Christ was not possible within it, within the structure of the society as it was living out and within the structure of the relationship that the Church had developed with society.

This is really what the people in the desert...now they weren't condemning the Church, although their lifestyle was an extreme challenge to it of course. But what they were trying to do is a very important, I think, idea for us to try to deal with as people.

He said, "Now what some of you will ask: Where do we find this in our society today?" And he said maybe if you go to the Navajo Nation or the Hopi Nation you will find it somewhere there where the resistance to the way of life is credible, communal and long lived.

What an amazing insight, what an amazing insight. Many people look at the Navajo and say they're just dumb, they just can't do it. They just can't mimic our way of life and what miserable creatures they must be. Many of you would say that when you look at First Nations people on the streets here. Many of you say that when you look at the state of the reserves and their difficulties.

The reality is this is one of the most sustained forms of resistance that the world has known to an overwhelming way of life, the shape-shifting of the modern economic cultural mix that we call the West. The shape-shifting of it has meant that it's been difficult for



"Dalangin" by Emmanuel R. Garibay, Philippines.
www.emmanuelgaribay.com

First Nations people but they've managed to mount a credible resistance for a long time.

Today across Canada there are consultations for First Nations people to develop what we might call the first indigenous expression of Christianity in North America. I wrote a paper called, "The Gospel is Coming to North America." At the time I was assured that everyone was thinking "Well that's a historical document long ago," but in fact I believe we are now witnessing it happening because most of what Christianity has been in North America is a Christianity of a Diaspora, a Diaspora that indigenized in certain respects but for the most part wanted to mimic life in Europe in ways that sometimes don't fit.

This is a spiritual movement that's sweeping across Canada. We are, I think, beginning to witness the power of God through the Word of God. And I think that that Word is really what makes the mission of God powerful. That Word uttered in the power of the spirit is really what mission is all about.

Phil Fontaine said something important in response to the apology. He said, "Canadians do now know that we have always been a part of Canadian identity and always will be."

For the Church... If the Church gets this right, it will be a part of the Church's identity.

And if we get this right, that we were once the colonial church but now we're not, it will be our greatest glory. Because the glory and power of God is greater than any human nation or the power of any human nation.

It can save to the uttermost as the scripture says. And that's what we are witnessing today. If we get it, a part of our identity will be a redeemed identity from what we were to what we will be, from what we were, both as Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, to what we will be in the living the Word of God.

Full text of this and the rest of the Mission and Power 'dialogues' is available at www.ccforum.ca



1910

In June 1910 the city of Edinburgh hosted a defining gathering in the history of Christianity. The 1910 World Missionary Conference was a climatic event of the 19th century missionary movement, and facilitated greater unity among the various strands of Christian witness. During this era the churches of Europe and North America were 'rubbing shoulders' in the mission field which led to dialogue and cooperation. This mission conference has been identified as the 'birthplace of the ecumenical movement'.

This conference was also significant in its importance toward recognizing the churches of Asia, Africa, and Latin America not simply as daughter churches of the European and American churches, but as churches in their own right with unique contributions to Christianity.

The lack of representation of these global churches at Edinburgh 1910 is notable. Typically they were represented by the very white males from the north working in the 'mission field'. However there were a small number of global representatives. An important moment in the conference was when a young man from India, V.S. Azariah stood up and challenged the northern missionaries with a passionate plea for friendship on equal terms and the sharing of responsibility with complete equality, including the words, "You have

given your goods to feed the poor. You have given your bodies to be burned. We ask for love. Give us friends". Mission continues to be shaped by this challenge.

2010

To mark the centenary of this conference another conference is planned in Edinburgh in 2010. A significant global conference is also planned for 2010 by the Lausanne movement, a missionary movement which grew out of the Evangelical community in the 1970s. Edinburgh 2010 is more than a single conference in that the majority of the work of this conference is in a variety of conferences, studies, and gatherings around the world, including Canada, leading up to and following the Edinburgh gathering.

Mission and Power

The Canadian Churches will be contributing to this global dialogue. Canada is unique in its history and current context in its experience as both a colonized and colonizing nation. The church involvement in the ongoing process of reconciliation with Canada's indigenous peoples can also be a gift to global Christianity. Canadian denominations have taken the lead in coordinating one of the themes of Edinburgh 2010, "Mission and Power". A series of discussion papers on Mission and Power are almost completed for submission to the conference and within our various "houses" this theme has been engaged in many ways.

The Canadian Churches Forum for Global Ministries has taken a role in this process by helping to facilitate regular gatherings of an ecumenical community for discussions and information sharing around Edinburgh 2010. The 2009 CCFGM International Visitors were chosen for their ability to engage this theme. Transcripts of their conversations, including the parts in this newsletter, are being produced.

The Edinburgh 2010 website is: www.edinburgh2010.org

The Reign of Heaven *continued*



Elizabeth Tapia, Russell Daye, Mark MacDonald with trialogue audience

but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, "Behold the bridegroom! Come out to meet him." Then all those maidens rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out." But the wise replied, "Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you; go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves." And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him to the marriage feast; and the door was shut. Afterward the other maidens came also, saying, "Lord, lord, open to us." But he replied, "Truly I say to you, I do not know you." [Matthew 25:1-13]

I think that one of the things we miss when we read this parable is the setting - a wedding feast. Another thing that we miss often is that parables were meant to break open normal perceptions so another realm could be experienced. That realm has, in our culture, been referred to as 'The Kingdom of Heaven' - which many of us have replaced with 'The Reign of Heaven'. Recently, some biblical scholars (e.g. Bernard Brandon Scott) have asserted that the Greek word '*basileah*' which has been translated as 'Kingdom' or 'Reign' can be better translated as 'Empire'. Scott ended up, "By using the phrase 'The Empire of Heaven', Jesus was setting up a contrast between the Empire of Heaven, and the Empire that was grinding his people into the dust . . . the Empire of Rome". One kind of empire declares 'might is right'; the other declares 'the meek shall inherit the earth'. One kind of generates a few climbing to the pinnacle, the masses suffering below; the other kind of empire generates deep community.

In 2002, my family and I moved to the Pacific Theological College in Fiji's capital, Suva, about 75 metres from the sea. Soon after our arrival, the community was called to an emergency meeting. Among the Fijians, the Papua New Guineans, the Tuvaluans, the Tahitians, Solomon Islanders and Micronesians were a few Palagis. Palagi is the word commonly used in the South Pacific, with respect, to refer to people of European descent.

The principal informed us that a huge storm was developing and

that the storm surge could send waves between seven and eight meters high in our direction.

At the community meeting, it was decided to evacuate the women and children to higher ground. The men would stay behind to keep a vigil. To the small cluster of Palagi men - it was not entirely clear what we were supposed to do if we were confronted with a two-story wall of water; but it was explained that in the South Pacific, men watched over their communities in times of danger. Most of the night was spent in the community circle, singing songs, telling stories, and ingesting cup after cup of kava, the mild barbiturate that is ever present in the South Pacific. On the second evening great tubs of kava were being swilled again. Unable to keep the pace, the Palagi men decided that we would take shifts so that we could get some sleep. At 2 a.m., I rose from my bed to find every single man fast asleep.

Now, at this moment, despite my sensitivity training for overseas service, despite knowing the ugliness and stupidity of attitudes of cultural superiority, just such an attitude took over completely. It was better to take shifts and set alarms; it was better to be organized, even if we had to miss out on the fun of the kava circle. I thought of Jesus' parable of the wise and the foolish bridesmaids and felt certain that we Palagis were the wise ones, and the sleeping Pacific Islanders . . . well, their place was obvious.

I'll come back to this smugness, but first I want to tell you of some other things I learned in Fiji. I discovered that people in that part of the world party! Any excuse to welcome guests, to give guests gifts, any excuse to sing and dance will do - even the onset of a two-story wave! Another thing I learned is that people share. I mean, people **share**. People share food. When fish are caught, when a pig is killed, when a garden is harvested, the fruits are shared at a feast and carried door to door. Cloth and skills and even money is shared. Another thing I learned is that people worshipped. People go to church with great regularity. Families pray and read scripture in their homes. Youth go to church and church rallies en masse. It is not uncommon for the church to be more than half full of people under the age of twenty-five.

Eventually, I came to see that these things added up to a quality of community that is rarely, if ever, experienced in the land of the Palagis. This deep community, with its economics of sharing, its joy in feasting, shone with powerful marks of the Empire of Heaven. Let me say that again because I want you to hear this: the deep community that I was invited into and witnessed and slowly came to understand somewhat in the South Pacific shone with the marks of the Empire of Heaven.

But I saw things more troublesome. I saw a great tide of lowest-common-denominator television programs coming from our continent that pulled young people away from the feast. I saw western capitalism **destroying** the very economics of sharing that made that society so powerful. I saw foreign fishing and forestry and agriculture companies wiping out traditional sources of

"This deep community, with its economics of sharing, its joy in feasting, shone with powerful marks of the Empire of Heaven."

wealth. And when you don't have traditional sources of wealth, you can't have traditional economics, and by default, you have to surrender to the economics of global capitalism. Eventually I came to understand that I was sitting in Fiji, watching the onslaught of the Palagi Empire.

I now know how the Palagi Empire advances. It uses good people like me and my German and Australian and Irish counterparts – well-meaning westerners. It was apt that the parable of the wise and the foolish bridesmaids came to mind at the water's edge. I had completely failed to understand that the Pacific men had read the waters and realized, "We're not gonna get hit by a destructive wave". And they had two options: to say "business as usual" or "Let's use this interruption as a moment where we can celebrate, where we can enter into deep community." And the men entered into deep community around the kava circle for about two days. And the women were out on the hill, also knowing that the danger had passed, and they didn't have to worry, and they were feasting and singing and celebrating.

My Pacific Island hosts were seeking a glimpse of the Empire of Heaven. Jesus' parable is better called 'The parable of the Wedding Feast'. In it, Jesus is asserting that the Empire of Heaven is like a wedding feast. The Reign of Heaven is like the time when **everyone** gets to eat enough food. The Reign of Heaven is like the day when the community sets aside its troubles. They come

together in joy and hope.

Think about what that day means, when there's nothing to worry about, only celebration; when there is no end of food, and everybody eats the same. My hosts had found a way to live like this. And we Palagi men had chosen isolation instead of community; we had chosen to take our own chances instead of sharing the common fate. I came to understand how I carry the Palagi Empire in me. I don't know how you can live your life, no matter what your cultural background, in this place and not have **some** of the Palagi empire in you. The spread of empire, in my experience, is largely achieved through the actions of **good** people – people like you and me. And we have to be careful about our actions and our words.

Let me finish by saying "Don't feel guilty, and don't despair about this stuff". Yeah, we are agents of empire. But, we are also agents of the empire that in our worship, in our service, in our building of community, in our struggle for justice, we are agents of the Reign of Heaven. In every choice we make we get to choose whether we orient ourselves to the empire of the Palagis, the capitalist empire – whatever the heck we call it – or the reign of heaven.

Full text of this and the rest of the Mission and Power 'dialogues' is available at www.ccforum.ca

FORUM 'FORUM'

Beyond providing program, The Canadian Churches Forum for Global Ministries organizes or participates in a wide number of settings as a resource to conversations on Mission. Some of those this year were:

- Canadian Theological Students Conference
- Canadian Edinburgh 2010
- Anglican Church of Canada Partners in Mission and Ecojustice Committee
- Canadian Ecumenical Anti-Racism Network
- Canadian Lutheran World Relief Board
- Conference of the Anglican Churches in the Americas on Mutual Responsibility and Mission (Costa Rica)
- Emmanuel College Task Group on Contextual, Intercultural and Global Theological Education
- Canadian Inter-Cultural Ministry conversations & workshops
- Churches' Council on Theological Education "Think Tank on Mission and Power"
- Forum on International Personnel (Canadian & USA denominations)

Katharine Hockin Award

The Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries joyfully honours the legacy of Katharine Hockin by recognizing a Canadian who has taken significant initiative related to global, cross-cultural mission or ministry. The recipient, through his or her work, has strengthened the relationship of members of the global church or has challenged our understanding of global mission or ministry in Canada.

After a short break due to a shortage of volunteers to organize, the next Award will be presented by the Board of the Forum at its Annual General Meeting in May 2010. Visit our website in the months ahead for announcement of the 2010 recipient and details about the award presentation.

Dr. Katharine Hockin (a former Director of The Forum) was a Canadian, born in China of missionary parents, who worked throughout her life to deepen and promote an ecumenical understanding of God's mission in the world and of how it can be shared by Christians today. The Forum has chosen to honour her memory by offering an award annually to someone who is living the grace of mission in a particularly significant way

Past recipients of this award have been Marjorie and Cyril Powles, Jim Kirkwood, Tim Ryan, Clarabeth McIntosh, Brian Rude, Marion Pope, Our Lady's Missionaries, and Muriel Carder.

conference on “Memory, Journey and Vision”. In my language, it is Pag-aalala, Paglalakbay, at Pangitain.

It is said that theology should start with questions, not with answers. So, I offer to you this question: What is mission? What is power? How might our understanding of mission and power influence the healing of memories and ecumenical journeys and ecclesial vision? How do we participate in God’s mission in an era of heightened globalization? What does mission mean in a majority world context?

Edinburgh 2010 invites us to discern how mission is practised in today’s world. A world shaped by values formed by power; spiritual, political, military, financial and international. Raising issues of culture change, human rights, ecological sustainability and inequalities in the production, distribution and consumption of resources.

The Edinburgh Conference on Mission 1910 – from my readings I understand is regarded as the birth place of the ecumenical movement, primarily because of two factors: worldwide evangelism and a call for unity. But at the same time, I beg to differ from the notion that this was really and truly ecumenical. It was not, in my opinion. It’s all Protestant. Not gender inclusive. The theme was, as you know, ‘evangelization of the world in this generation’.

The global context and local context have changed so much in a hundred years. In 1900, about 80% of Christians lived in Europe and North America; now, in 2000+, Christians – only about 30% – live in Europe and the north. Was it Phillip Jensen who wrote, “Today, a typical Christian might be an African woman living in the village or a Brazilian woman living in a Favela.”

How does the church exercise power in the context of multiple dimensions of globalization – unified global market, global violence and peace, Diasporas of peoples, increasing diversity and tension, ecological challenge, global health, and religious pluralism?

I do not have the answers, but I share with you my conviction that, in an era of globalization, of neo-imperial powers and of worldwide recession, we need a radical alignment of moral values, political will, prophetic stance and spiritual reawakening in local, national and global levels.

In 1910, I believe, the very focus of mission was how to communicate the Christian Gospel to all the world. In the 21st century, I think the challenge is how to see mission in different dimensions.

Look at the multiple dimensions of mission. It is grounded in Missio Dei, God’s mission. What does ‘mission’ mean? According to Elizabeth Joy of Council for World Mission, “Mission is God’s self

revelation and God’s involvement in the world.”

At the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism that happened in Athens in 2005, we took notice of the multiple dimensions of mission: Mission is witness. It has an evangelism dimension which is very important. Mission is Liturgy, prayer, and contemplation. This is the gift to you of the Orthodox who have enriched my spirituality. Mission is also about Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation; Interreligious Dialogue; Inculturation; Reconciliation; and Health and Healing.

In my days with you here what became prominent to me is mission as reconciliation. The letter from Athens Mission Conference said that ‘Mission as reconciliation means there is a need for reconciliation

of people speaking of love and of power between the north and the south, between east and west, between the government system and other people, especially the Indigenous people’.

In the 1910 conference in front of the 1200 participants, a very young delegate from India named V.S. Azariah made a challenge to the conference because he noted the unequal and master-servant relationship between the missionaries and Indian nationals. “You have given your goods to feed the poor. You have given your bodies to be burned. We also ask for love. Give us friends.”

Mutuality in mission is present when it is authentic, with feeling and vision. Authentic mission includes mutual respect and responsibility.

All week, we talked about mission (‘sending’) and how it is related to promoting the reign of God here and now, as exemplified by Jesus in Luke 4: 18-21.

As followers of Jesus, our mission is to opt for the poor, the lost, the least and the marginalized.

Liberation theologians pointed to “God’s preferential option for the poor.” I see God’s preferential option for the First Nation. God’s preferential option for the indigenous people. God’s preferential option for the members of L’Arche communities. And so on and so forth.

This is a quote from the Athens conference: “We are in Mission, all of us, because we participate in the Mission of God who has sent us into a fragmented and broken world. We are united in the belief that we are ‘called together in Christ’ to be reconciling and healing communities.”

K.C. Abraham in his article about Perspectives on Mission: “Mission is participation in the transforming and liberative work of God in God’s creation.” If we accept that perspective, then the fundamental question is ‘How can theological education help the church’s participation in God’s mission?’ Do you really feel theological education has a role in Mission?



“Christian Responsibility in Globalized World” by Elizabeth Padillo Olesen, Philippines, www.123hjemmeside.dk/Kunst-liv-tro

“...we need a radical alignment of moral values, political will, prophetic stance and spiritual reawakening in local, national and global levels...”

“We recognize that an important part of our mission is to discern the spirit, to discern the Spirit in the world and to participate in the life of the Spirit as witnesses to God’s justice and love.” [Ecumenical Mission Roundtable in Hong Kong, Asia “The People of God Among All God’s Peoples” Nov. 1999]

And, you remember when Bishop Mark MacDonald in the first Dialogue reminded us, “Our power in mission must be anchored in the power of the Spirit of God.” And this Spirit of God is embodied in many, many ways and in the lives of many and different peoples.

Christoph Stückelberger, author of *Global Trade Ethics*, wrote that there are “twelve types of power and responsibility”. These types of powers are positive, but they can also be negative when they are misused or abused: competence, capital, communication, innovation, experience, power, credibility, conviction, decision-making, monopoly, cooperation and time.

How much power do you have as an individual, as a church, as a nation, as a theological students conference? You know, the World Council of Churches sees power as representing humanity’s ability to participate in God’s creation. But then, we are also reminded of how Max Weber defines power: “It is the capacity to enforce one’s own will”.

Sr. Mary John Mananzan wrote, “The institutional church is not only patriarchal, hierarchical and clerical but also colonialist, capitalistic, feudal and fundamentalist at its core. It produces a ministry that is dualistic, power-oriented, ritual-centred and discriminatory to women”. Sr. Mananzan says, “There is a need for a new ekklesia, an oikos of God, an inclusive community which encompasses all human beings”.

We need a spirituality of solidarity. This is how I understand solidarity. It is the action of being united with a cause, a political project of a person or a group. To be in solidarity means to share publicly the other person’s struggle for justice, peace and harmony. It must be built on mutual respect and trust, sustained by accountability and strengthened by one’s spirituality. I believe solidarity is also necessary to a process of reconciliation.

“The church mission in the power of the spirit is to work for reconciliation and healing in the context of brokenness.” [Mission and Evangelism Today, WCC Document]

At the world conference in Athens, what helped me is over and over people sang:

“Come Holy Spirit, here reconcile. Come Holy Spirit, here

reconcile. Come Holy Spirit. Come Holy Spirit, here reconcile.”

We can learn from our African brothers and sisters the concept of Ubuntu which means, in my understanding, “I am because you are.” I am a person, a human being because you are a human being. I am a person of love and compassion because you are a person of love and compassion and dignity.

What commitment you and I are ready to make? What is your vision for mission in the 21st Century of Canada, as a young Canada? What actions are called for? If you are working in a local church in a rural area, what commitments can you make? What actions are called for?

Everyone, Ubuntu!

Full text of this and the rest of the *Mission and Power* ‘dialogues’ is available at www.ccforum.ca

Recommended Reading



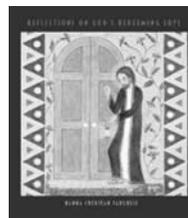
Letters from India, 1932–1945

*by Mary Puxley edited
by Molly Titus*

Mary Robertson Sedgewick married Jimmy (H.L.) Puxley in Toronto in 1932, a week after her 20th birthday, and headed

to India, where she lived and wrote letters for the next 13 years. In 1963 Canon Puxley would become director of the Canadian School of Missions, now known as the Canadian Churches Forum for Global Ministries.

Copies of this book may be obtained from:
Molly Titus, email: mollytitus@eastlink.ca



Reflections on God's Redeeming Love

*by Hanna Cheriyan Varghese,
Malaysia*

2009, Overseas Ministries
Study Center Publications,

www.omsc.org

The art of Cheriyan Varghese is featured on the front cover of this issue of Forum Focus and was used by Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Tapia in her “Mission and Power” lecture. This 96 page book is a collection of Cheriyan Varghese’s profoundly theological work. In Hanna’s words, “This is my way of witnessing for Christ for the gift I have been blessed with.”

Global Voices

Perspectives on the Economic Crisis from the Global South

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Thousands of families impacted by the pesticide 'Nemagon' and other lethal chemicals used on Banana plantations camped out in Managua, Nicaragua (photo by Dan Spencer)

It's not news that the world is facing the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression—a crisis which has the potential to disproportionately affect people in the Global South [the Majority World]. We asked our resource people in Mexico, Namibia, and Nicaragua for perspectives to try to understand the economic crisis from another angle. We found differing perspectives on the crisis and innovative solutions to combat poverty.

From Mexico, feminist and labour activist Irene Ortiz, and Fred Rosen, economist, jointly commented: "The world economic system was working for those who put it in place—the dominant institutions and countries of the global economy. Spokespeople for the poor have been re-examining the world economic system for decades. In Mexico, the serious re-examination began with the debt crisis of 1982 and has continued through the negotiations of NAFTA and the financial crises of the 1990s. Mexican migration to the United States has been so enormous because the world system has not benefited working people or even much of the middle class, nor was it designed to." Though they say the crisis has made the condition of working people worse, no changes will be made on that basis. "It will be re-examined because it is threatening the wellbeing of the dominant powers of the North."

A similar sentiment was heard from Nicaragua. Néstor Avendaño, who holds a doctorate in economics from Yale University and has 25 years of experience in public administration, said, "The current crisis...has harmed heavily Latin American countries. The current crisis is not the end of capitalism...The current crisis has demonstrated that the markets do not self regulate and do not solve everything without the help of the state. The 'laissez faire, laissez passer' economic paradigm has crashed, or better stated, it is an obsolete theory."

Adolfo Acevedo, economist, commented on conventional economic wisdom. "...we have to stop thinking that there is only one option in terms of economic policy, in other words, that there are no other options to the current scheme. We need to examine in a serious way and with an open mind all of the available options. We need to evaluate the use of all possible economic policy instruments, including those that have been demonized by the conventional economic wisdom..."

The economic crisis will probably most affect the poorest in the world. In Nicaragua (and probably many other countries), Néstor Avendaño comments, "The second external shock, without a doubt, is the decrease or drop in the amount of family remittances, which will have an impact on family consumption. It is worth mentioning that 4 out of every 10 Nicaraguan families receive remittances, 60% of them come from the United States, and 93% of the remittances are financing the consumption of the families receiving them."

While some in Namibia may not feel the pinch of a financial recession, far too many who are already living a life defined by poverty will only experience further suffering and deprivation. In a time of uncertainty in the world's financial system, Namibia has developed a project that seems a bright light at the end of the tunnel—the Basic Income Grant (BIG) program.

In Namibia, a country with one of the highest levels of income inequality in the world, a coalition of civil society and religious leaders are piloting a social program aimed to lift people out of poverty and restore a sense of hope and dignity among the destitute. In January 2008, they began the program in one community where every Namibian who is not receiving a pension receives \$100 Namibian dollars [~\$15 Canadian dollars] each month.

Bishop Zephania Kameeta, head of the Basic Income Grant Coalition, explained how the BIG goes far beyond providing money, restoring human dignity to its recipients. "The BIG has helped people develop ownership over their lives. Before, people didn't own themselves. They were owned by poverty, tragic suffering, hopelessness, and despair. They couldn't think. They had no vision. But now, they own themselves and they can start to appreciate life and respect themselves. People are not just receiving N\$100, but gaining and receive their human dignity."

While many critics of the BIG, as well as other welfare programs, assume dependency will be rife, the BIG coalition has seen the opposite. Researchers found that the grant did not make people reluctant to work, but rather kick-started local activities. While there are few opportunities for employment in the pilot community of Omitara, a 300% increase of self-employment was seen in addition to a strengthening and development of the local economy. Not only do people now have money to start small businesses, their neighbors have money to purchase their products. Parents have money to pay their children's school fees, children are coming to school with breakfast in their stomachs, and people go to the clinic at the first sign of illness rather than waiting until they are nearly untreatable. The ripple effect of this small amount of money has been immense.

With the economic crisis expected to persist for the foreseeable future, perhaps we need to be looking more to the Global South for wisdom in how to create a new economic paradigm.

This article appeared in the Summer 2009 'Global News and Notes'. For more than 25 years The Center for Global Education has provided cross-cultural educational opportunities that foster critical analysis of local and global conditions so that personal and systemic change takes place leading to a more just and sustainable world. Programs are offered at permanent sites in Central America, Southern Africa, and Mexico. They also work with partner organizations to create programs in other areas of the world.

2009 MISSION PERSONNEL PROGRAMS



January Orientation for Global Ministry Participants

January Mission Orientation Conference

This 12-day program held at Scarboro Mission Centre prepares individuals to live in cross-cultural settings and to participate in God's mission in a global context.

Anglican Church of Canada

Michelle Taylor and Jeffery Hooper

Uganda

Nicolas Alexandre

Philippines

Presbyterian Church In Canada

Jim and Ann Young

Grenada

Presbyterian Church - USA

Jed Koball

Peru

Alexandra Buck

Peru

Nathaniel Veltman

Ethiopia

John and Gwenda Fletcher

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Sara Armstrong and Rusty Edmondson

Peru

Nancy Ellen McGaughey

Sudan

David Van Diercksen

Mexico

Stacey Steck

Costa Rica

Bridgette Hector

South Africa/Lesotho

Brenda S. Harcourt

Kenya

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

Ron and Heda Christ

Botswana

Reformed Church of America

Joe and Sara Blevins

Ethiopia

Mission Trip Leaders' Seminars



Using *Sojourning: A Leader's Guide to Short Term Mission Travel*, this ecumenical seminar involves individuals contemplating trip leadership, those who already have groups preparing to go, and seasoned trip leaders.

It allows participants to

reflect upon the practical and theological issues involved and to build their programs from beginning stages, to plan for all of the details of the actual mission exposure trip, and to focus on the essential aspects of post-trip.

March 7-8, 2009

Calgary, Alberta

14 participants from Barrhead United Church – Barrhead, AB; St. Andrews United – Spruce Grove, AB; United Church of Canada; Carlisle/Kilbride pastoral charge, Ontario; Sunset United Church, Regina, SK; and the Anglican Church of Canada. Participants included leaders preparing groups to travel to Palestine/Israel, Uganda, Nicaragua and Brazil and some in early discernment about mission travel for their church.

September 26-27, 2009

Toronto, Ontario

14 participants from St. Pauls United Church – Dundas, ON; St. John's United, Toronto, ON; United Church of Canada; Emmanuel United, Ottawa, ON; Presbyterian Church in Canada; Adventist Development & Relief Agency; St. Paul's United, Walkerton, ON; The Bishop Strachan School, Toronto, ON. Participants included leaders preparing groups to travel to Colombia, El Salvador, Cuba, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and the Yukon.

2009 MISSION PERSONNEL PROGRAMS



July Re-Entry Participants

July Re-Entry

This 7-day program is for global ministry personnel who have served outside of North America for longer than one year. It provides a supportive, ecumenical, community environment in which they can reflect on their experiences and consider some of the opportunities and challenges of transition back.

Anglican Church of Canada

Bruce and Gerry Melville

Tanzania

Carolyn Langford

Uganda

United Church of Canada

Lynne Brennan and Douglas Varey

Zambia

Cathyann and Peter Hoyle

Nicaragua

David Kim-Cragg

Korea

Daughters of Charity (Roman Catholic)

Frances Morgan

Democratic Republic of the Congo



June Orientation for Global Ministry Participants

June Orientation for Global Ministry

In June the Forum welcomed for the first time staff and participants from The Episcopal Church Young Adult Service Corps for our 12-day summer program under its new name "Orientation for Global Ministry".

United Church of Canada

Vanessa Hammond

Colombia

Deborah Elliott and Don Gibson

Nicaragua

Linda and Ron Locke

Angola

The Episcopal Church

Richard Hogue, Jr.

South Africa

Robert C Hooper

South Africa

Mallory Holding

Haiti

Maegan Collier

Hong Kong

**Johanna Jacob Kuruvilla
and Ranjit Koshy Mathews**

Tanzania

Emily Beal

South Africa

Roger Speer

U.S. Virgin Islands

Brittany Roper

Columbia

2009 MISSION PERSONNEL PROGRAMS

Melanie Jianakoplos
Philippines

Jude Harmon
Haiti

Curtis Farr
Ecuador

Chris Hamby
Japan

Kate Schaeffler
Colombia

Canadian Lutheran World Relief

Heather Pryse
Switzerland

Gilbert and Fran Schultz
Israel/Palestine

Evangelical Lutheran Church In Canada

Robert Wheelan
Manitoba, Canada

Presbyterian Church Of Canada

Margaret Evans
Placement Pending

Anglican Church Of Canada

Aubrey Hemmingers
Placement Pending

Emilie Smith
Guatemala

Mission Discernment Event

February 12-14, 2009; September 9 – 11, 2009.

Seven participants from the United Church of Canada participated in each of these 3-day programs facilitated by the Forum and held at Scarboro Mission Centre focused on discernment of their interest in and suitability for global ministry.

Theological Student Debriefing

Anglican Church Of Canada

Jeffery Hooper and Michelle Taylor
Angola

Nicolas Alexandra
Philippines

Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries

	Revenue	
	Actual	Estimated
	2008	2009
Partner Churches	71,700	72,000
Donation/Bequests	5,500	4,000
Program fees	67,898	95,570
Mortgage	23,829	22,632
Investment	5,708	3,382
Publication Sales	6,040	5,000
Total Revenue	180,675	202,584

	Expenses	
	Actual	Estimated
	2008	2009
Staff	97,936	103,797
Programs	44,040	50,120
Publications	4,510	4,500
Rent & Insurance	17,208	18,130
Administrative & Office	14,476	14,000
Total Expenses	178,170	190,547

Why Support The Canadian Churches' Forum for Global Ministries?

We provide a unique space in Canada for grounding Mission and Global Ministry in Theology, History and the current Global Context.

The context within which and the ways Canadians are doing mission is changing. Many Canadians have access to the world either through travel abroad or through the people living in their communities and worshipping in their congregations.

For 88 years the Canadian Churches Forum for Global Ministries has focused its energies on preparing people for mission and in accompanying them in their return to Canada. The Forum is a strong ecumenical presence among its partner denominations and in the wider community engaged in theological reflection on global and cultural issues faith issues. It is a resource to hundreds of individuals and congregations engaged in the important task of living with and relating to God's church in the world.

In addition to maintaining our core programs, we need your help to reach out in other ways to be a resource. Please see the enclosed annual appeal letter and support our work with your contribution. A return card and envelope are provided.

Who We Are

We are a Christian agency through which Canadian churches reflect and work together on global mission and ministry and are challenged to prophetic witness through programs of education and dialogue. Our members are the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, the Scarborough Missions, and the United Church of Canada.

What We Do

We offer programs for people involved in cross-cultural global mission and ministry, provide forums for dialogue, publish a number of resources, celebrate significant work of individuals in mission, and encourage cross cultural and international dialogue.

Discernment

Orientation for Overseas Personnel

Re-entry for Overseas Personnel

Theological Student Debriefing

Orientation to Canada

Mission Trip Leaders Seminar

Workshop facilitation and Intercultural Ministry Development

Publications

Sojourning:

A Leaders Guide for Short Term Mission Travel

On Your Way:

A Guide to Your Overseas Intercultural Experience

Coming Home:

A Re-entry Workbook for Returned

Missionaries and Volunteers

Here Among Us:

A Guide to Intercultural Experience for Visitors to Canada

Forum Focus Annual Newsletter



FORUM FOCUS

FOR GLOBAL MINISTRIES
POUR LES MINISTERES MONDIAUX

A WINDOW ON THE GLOBAL CHURCH

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