

THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY AMIDST CULTURES AND RELIGIONS

A Call to Collaboration

The Context of Globalization

- The media facilitates globalization
- Globalization of a consumer secularizing monoculture
- A uni-polar world resisted by subaltern groups
- Global and local inequalities lead to fragmentation
- Cultures and religions, used as identity markers, engage in violent conflict
- Thanks to migration, cultural and religious pluralism has also become global
- A melting pot or a salad bowl?

Our Mission

- A Two-fold task for the Catholic family: living in peace with others and being in mission
- God is on mission to share life with every one and to gather all things in the harmony of God's kingdom
- The Catholic family is to be the symbol and servant of this Kingdom – to witness to and to promote Jesus' realization of the kingdom

Our Mission in Asia

- Our mission in Asia is the dialogue of the Gospel with the many poor, the rich cultures and the living religions of Asia
- The focus: enabling the poor to build communities of freedom, fellowship and justice
- Collaboration with all people of good through a transformative dialogue with all cultures and religions
- But this is a challenge! Why?

From Confrontation to Dialogue

- In the past, mission imposed a culture with the Religion – even today
- A negative view of other religions as evil or only partially true.
- Today, the recognition of the presence and action Spirit of God in all cultures and religions
- The real enemies are Satan and Mammon
- Other believers are collaborators

A Call to Collaboration

- John Paul II: “As followers of different religions we should join together in promoting and defending common ideas in the spheres of religious liberty, human brotherhood, education, culture, social welfare and civic order.”
- Recognize, respect and accept the others
- Evolve a consensus around common action plans
- Act together

Dialogue with Cultures

- There is no Christian culture – but we do live apart at the level of worship
- Become incarnate in the local culture so as to transform it from within and not remain alienated
- Belonging to an international organization, live inter-cultural encounters creatively

Dialogue as Conflict Resolution

- The prevailing atmosphere of violence between religious groups
- Prevalence of communalism (the political use of religious identity) and fundamentalism
- Stand for truth and justice
- Not a spirit of revenge, but one of forgiveness and reconciliation – restorative, not retributive justice
- Facilitating reconciliation between other groups – being peace-makers

Secular Dialogue

- Living together in secular society, while recognizing, respecting and accepting religious difference
- Building Basic Human Communities, besides basic Christian Communities, focused on common action in the area of civic and social problems

Inter-religious Dialogue

- Living as good neighbours and sharing life and joy at each other's festivals – appreciating other religions
- Joining together to defend the basic rights and liberties of all
- Occasional intellectual exchange – deeper knowledge of each other's tradition
- Common prayer at the time of natural and human-made calamities – being enriched by other spiritual traditions

Pluralism as Positive

- Religious pluralism seems to be the plan of God for the world
- Our mission to witness to Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God, without anxiety and aggressivity
- Discern God's presence and action everywhere and collaborate with God to lead all things to cosmic harmony