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The Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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# INTERSECTIONS

faith + life + learning

NUMBER EIGHTEEN

FALL 2003

*Education Outside the Comfort Zone*  
Vocation of a Lutheran College Conference, Summer 2003



*Capital University Student, Near Capetown, South Africa*

# INTERSECTIONS

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## Contributors

- "The Earth is the Lord's And the Fullness Thereof": Six Theses Regarding Global Education at the Colleges of the Church.....4*  
Christopher M. Thomforde
- Service Beyond the Comfort Zone.....9*  
Kathryn Wolford
- Educating for Peace: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Models for Thinking Globally and Acting Locally.....14*  
Janet Rasmussen
- The Search for a Just Peace in a Globalized World.....20*  
Munib A. Younan

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**Cover:** Photo by Brian Wallace

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## PURPOSE STATEMENT

This publication is by and largely for the academic communities of the twenty-eight colleges and universities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is published by the Division for Higher Education and Schools of the ELCA. The publication presently has its home at Capital University, Columbus, Ohio which has generously offered leadership, physical and financial support as an institutional sponsor for the inauguration of the publication.

The ELCA has frequently sponsored conferences for faculty and administrators which have addressed the church - college/university partnership. Recently the ELCA has sponsored an annual Vocation of the Lutheran College conference. The primary purpose of *INTERSECTIONS* is to enhance and continue such dialogue. It will do so by:

- \* Lifting up the vocation of Lutheran colleges and universities
- \* Encouraging thoughtful dialogue about the partnership of colleges and universities with the church
- \* Offering a forum for concerns and interests of faculty at the intersection of faith, learning and teaching
- \* Raising for debate issues about institutional missions, goals, objectives and learning priorities
- \* Encouraging critical and productive discussion on our campuses of issues focal to the life of the church
- \* Serving as a bulletin board for communications among institutions and faculties
- \* Publishing papers presented at conferences sponsored by the ELCA and its institutions
- \* Raising the level of awareness among faculty about the Lutheran heritage and connectedness of their institutions, realizing a sense of being part of a larger family with common interests and concerns.

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## FROM THE PUBLISHER

The churchwide organization of the ELCA is currently in the middle of a strategic planning effort. The ELCA Church Council has approved new statements of mission and vision for the ELCA, and new strategic directions for the churchwide organization. For the colleges and universities that are related to the ELCA, the good news is that among those strategic directions is that the churchwide organization will "Assist this church to bring forth and support faithful, wise, and courageous leaders whose vocations serve God's mission in a pluralistic world." The churchwide organization will clearly look to the colleges for help in moving in that direction, and will also look to the colleges and universities for help in reaching some of the other strategic directions. The whole document can be found at [www.elca.org/planning/](http://www.elca.org/planning/).

In setting the strategic directions, the church at large also included the following statement: "In the course of implementing these strategic directions, the churchwide organization must and will recognize and encourage the vital contributions and deepening relationship with institutions and agencies of this church." Some of us wish they had stated "with colleges, universities, and other institutions and agencies," but we are clearly included even though we are not named.

While these are nice goals and conditions for planning, we need to know "What does this mean?" What exactly are we supposed to do, how will the goals be reached, and how will we know that they have been reached? Right now, a series of roundtables and task forces are developing specific goals and time tables. When the results of their work is known, we will sit down and see how our activities can be focused to achieve the goals.

We feel pretty confident that the church will have to rely on the colleges and universities to accomplish many tasks in order for the more general goals to be reached. At this time we do not know what those tasks will be. But I want to assure the readers of *INTERSECTIONS* that nobody has proposed to do away with this journal, with the conferences on which it is based, or any of the other programs that help illuminate the difference it should make at a college or university when it operates in relationship with the Lutheran church. We suspect that *INTERSECTIONS* will be one of the tools the larger church will use to reach its strategic goals.

**Arne Selbyg**

Director, ELCA Colleges and Universities

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## **FROM THE EDITOR**

Two years ago I oversaw the creation and mailing out of a questionnaire for ten-year alumni / alumnae of the university where I teach. We asked them a number of questions including asking them to rank the importance of our stated learning goals, asking them to assess the kind of job the university had done in teaching these goals, and where, if at all, they had learned the skills, attitudes and knowledge the goals talked about. Many of the outcomes of the questionnaire were surprising. One of the surprising patterns of response was the large numbers of students who said that they learned these essential skills, attitudes and knowledge in programs and experiences they had outside the classroom and outside the domain (physically speaking) of the university. These things had been learned best, or most thoroughly, or most memorably, in practica, internships, travel-study occasions, service-learning projects, or in unprogrammed intersections between their lives, their part-time jobs, and their classroom studies.

The responses to this questionnaire taught us at least two things: 1) to take off-campus experiences more seriously as part of the learning agenda of students; 2) to see that learning matters most that coincides with the personal development of students.

Last summer's Vocation of a Lutheran College Conference focused on education and global outreach, as all the papers in this issue of *INTERSECTIONS* testify. Global study programs, particularly those that are service-connected or where students get to live with the native populations, are life-changing. I only wish every one of our students could have such experiences.

**Tom Christenson**

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October, 2003



**“THE EARTH IS THE LORD’S AND THE FULLNESS THEREOF”:  
SIX THESES REGARDING GLOBAL EDUCATION AT THE COLLEGES OF THE CHURCH**

**Christopher M. Thomforde**

**Prologue**

Global education is a significant aspect of the academic programs of the colleges of the ELCA. This has been true for most of our colleges for some time. We all send great numbers of students and faculty overseas for a variety of educational programs. Many of our colleges have specific ties to universities, governmental agencies, and national churches in the countries from which the founding members of our colleges and universities came. These international connections celebrate our immigrant heritage. Many of our colleges and universities work through the vast network of the ELCA and worldwide Lutheranism to develop educational opportunities for our students, faculty, and our alumni/ae. Many of our colleges and universities take part in elaborate consortia that support global education on our campuses through collaboration with other colleges and universities throughout the nation, thereby multiplying the options our students and faculty have to study abroad. Many of our colleges have numerous educational travel seminars run by our faculty for our alumni/ae. I have been a part of three of the colleges of the ELCA, Susquehanna, Bethany, and St. Olaf College. Each of these colleges encourages students, faculty, alumni/ae to study abroad and each invests a good bit of its resources of time, personnel, and capital to support these activities. At St. Olaf, for example, about two-thirds of each graduating class has studied overseas. We spend about four million dollars annually to support these programs.

I have talked thus far about global education in terms of sending students and faculty off campus and overseas. Global education can and does happen in other ways. Many of our colleges actively recruit international students so that a vital international community is nurtured on the campus, in the classroom, on the playing fields, and in the residence halls. I believe that Luther College is a leader in this area. The language villages of Concordia are of national distinction. Many of our colleges have highly developed academic programs that make direct and informed use of cross-cultural learning in many, if not all, classes and majors. Some disciplines, like Political Science, History, and Anthropology have been doing this for years, of course. Other disciplines are reshaping their departmental offerings to be more global in nature. The St. Olaf English Department, for example, has re-formed its curriculum to include not simply the

English language and literature of the British Isles and the United States but to require work in English literatures from Canada, East and West Africa, and Asia. The Math Department has developed an extensive program with Hungarian mathematicians and their innovations in problem solving. Also, as new immigrant populations come into our communities, we have opportunities to do global education across the street and not only across the ocean.

Our Lutheran colleges do all of this because we want to nurture a sophisticated appreciation for the great host of men and women whose languages and cultures live in dynamic interaction with the languages and cultures of the United States. We have a demonstrated successful record in these endeavors. We have programs that are recognized nationally as being of the first order. The graduates of our schools make up a considerable proportion of the membership of the Peace Corps, the Lutheran Volunteer Corps, the State Department, and national and international non-governmental organizations involved in works of peace and justice world-wide. Given the radical disproportions of rich and poor, healthy and diseased, well fed and ill nourished, highly educated and illiterate throughout the world, the involvement of our colleges in global education is to be affirmed and strengthened so that our institutions and our students, faculty, staff, and alumni/ae and friends can be intelligent, equipped, active instruments of justice. Our campuses and our academic programs are like antidotes to a great body sick with injustice.

This is a brief description of our circumstance, a circumstance for which we can be grateful and of which we can be proud. It is also a circumstance that puts considerable pressure on the resources of our colleges, resources that already seem so greatly overburdened. In this essay, I would like to explore this pressing question with you: how shall we proceed? Given our rich heritage, the myriad demands for resources, the great shifts in the politics and economics of the nations, the ever-evolving information and communication technology, and new pedagogies, what might the future of global education be on and among our campuses as we collaborate with one another as sister academies? In order to find answers for this question that are appropriate to our individual campuses and helpful to us all, let me raise several theses about global education with you for your

consideration. The understandings that arise as a result of our discussion of these theses will shape and inform our ways of proceeding into the future.

## Thesis

**1. Global education is a theological enterprise.** By theology, I do not necessarily mean the study of a certain body of literature written by men and women who are themselves theologians, or becoming conversant with the methodologies and insights which these men and women have passed on to us. Such study is, of course, most helpful in preparing men and women for global education. When I say that global education is a theological enterprise, I mean that global education is about educating our students and faculty in such a way so that they are able to do theology, to be theologians, to think clearly and to speak cogently about God, to reflect analytically upon the human drama in light of the Gospel, and to live in relationship with the earth informed by the notion of creation.

For example, global education has fundamentally to do with learning the meaning of the First Commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Luther, in the *Large Catechism*, explains this commandment, in part, to mean, "Whatever your heart clings to and confides in, that is really your God." To encounter other cultures, other languages, and other physical circumstances than the ones with which one is most familiar will be a test of what one's heart clings to. Global education can be a central element in the movement from clinging to "our god", through the clinging to many "gods," to daring to confide in the one God.

This movement can be shaped by dialog with men and women of other cultures and other religious commitments, or with people who have no particular religious commitment at all. Such a dialog involves a conversation based in commitment, engagement with the other, basic skills in the language of the other, and sufficient time. The dynamics entailed in the first commandment can also be facilitated by wonder and awe, being overwhelmed by and drawn into the fascination of that which is beautiful and sacred. Often this happens outside of the confines of one's own culture. Finally, the doing away with our gods so that we might dare to cling to God must be done through the hard and painful work of disillusionment. Leaving home, in all the rich meanings of that phrase, will be a sure test of one's god and one will no doubt, if one has honesty and courage enough, become disillusioned with the narrow or petty

scope of one's god or the incapacity of one's god to save, to inspire, to bring justice, to sustain, or to heal.

Global education can, therefore, equip our students to be able to say "credo" with intelligence and faithfulness. As a result of encountering men and women of other cultures theologically, students can have a more profound sense and greater confidence in that which they understand to be the wellspring of their lives. They can also have a clearer and more compelling sense of that to which they are called to be faithful, that to which they will give their hearts and minds, their strength, and their soul.

If global education in the colleges of the Church is a theological enterprise, as I believe it is, what does this say about the shape of the programs we devise? How do we train men and women in our colleges to be theologians, to do theology? What are the requirements of programs that allow men and women to make the perilous but freeing journey of the first commandment through dialog, through wonder and awe, and through the shattering moments of disillusionment that must precede a more vital faithfulness? Luther's *Large Catechism* and the works of H. Richard Niebuhr can inform our thinking about global education as a theological enterprise.

**2. Global education necessitates coming to terms with "the stranger" and "hospitality."** A mature understanding of these two terms is central to being able to live in a healthy fashion in the world, at home and abroad. By "stranger," I mean both the encountering of the other one who is different from me and my kind, and alien to me and my ways. I also mean discovering that I am that one to others. At times, you are the stranger to me and I am the stranger to you. By "hospitality," I mean the capacity to welcome the stranger into one's own life, to appreciate his/her gifts, to consider seriously his/her needs, and to consider life's opportunities and dangers together, in community rather than apart from the one another. Stories about the stranger and hospitality abound in Scripture and can inform this dynamic of global education in the colleges of the church. For example, in the Old Testament, Abraham and Sarah are themselves strangers among alien peoples, and they react to this circumstance in a rich variety of ways. Sarah and Abraham offer hospitality to strangers and are blessed. Other stories in Scripture tell the awful tales of violence toward strangers and the violation of hospitality. When one leaves home, one encounters others who may indeed seem strange or alien, but in this new context, one is always oneself a stranger and alien to those among whom one is now living and working. When one leaves home, one is in need of the hospitality offered by others. When

an encounter with another person comes, so too comes the possibility for hospitality.

Coming to terms with what it means to be “the stranger” and what it means to offer “hospitality” helps us to think more clearly about the plethora of words and phrases that are bandied about these days to elucidate attitudes toward difference. Diversity describes the fact that many different kinds of men and women live together and apart in the world. Fear sees the other as a threat to be met with violence. Toleration moves from violence toward the other to allowing the other to be, but to be without respect or appreciation. Respect and appreciation of the other demand more from us than simply the recognition of diversity or toleration. We have to take the other seriously as a full human being if we are to respect and/or appreciate the other. Diana L. Eck, in *Encountering God: A Spiritual Journey from Bozeman to Banaras*, has thought through some of these dynamics, and her work can be instructive for us. Exclusion, she argues, seeks to protect the truth of one’s own community from others because the other is thought to be dangerous or their ideas and ways to be false. Inclusion allows for one community to live among other communities but it always imagines that one’s own community is superior to and encompasses the other, different community. The pluralist celebrates his/her own community but understands that it is not in sole possession of the truth. Other communities and individuals are therefore not threats or inferiors, but are understood to be men and women who also understand valuable truths about life’s meaning and purpose. They are, therefore, men and women to be engaged in conversation and dialogue so that the whole truth about life might be more fully known and lived.

We struggle on our campus with issues of diversity, fear, violence, toleration, respect, and appreciation. We struggle with issues of exclusion, inclusion, and pluralism. Global education forces us to come to terms with “the stranger” and “hospitality” and therefore can have a salutary influence on our campus debates and our students’ abilities to live out their lives in the increasingly diverse communities of which they will become a part after graduation.

### **3. Global education is in, for, and against the world.**

Global education takes the world as its object of study. What do I mean by “world?” World can refer to the globe or the earth, the great blue planet moving through space, the place we inhabit, creation. When we talk about the world in this sense, we are for the world because it is the object of God’s creation and care. Created by God, the earth/world is well worth wondering

about and well worth studying. We are called to be for this world as well because we are called to be stewards, caretakers of the world.

“World” can also refer to the world of peoples and nations, languages and cultures, the ebb and flow of history. Certainly this, too, is the object of study for global education. But in this understanding of the “world,” Lutherans can find themselves both for and against the world. Our programs in global education are for the world in the sense that the peoples of the world are the objects of God’s grace and love. God has gifted these men and women with many wonderful and different ways to enliven human existence and to make life in community more secure. The colleges of the Church share in the mission of the church to promote reconciliation, peace, and justice among the peoples of the world. In these ways, and others, global education is for the world.

Yet our programs of study can also be against this world of people and history as well. For it is in this world that evil becomes real. By evil, I mean those forces and realities that crush the capacity for hope in individuals and in communities. Evil is not the devil in red tights, horns, and a pitchfork, prodding us “to bad things.” Nor is evil, necessarily, those acts of anger or violence we see in others and in ourselves. Rather, evil is those individual and collective forces which now make life so excruciatingly painful and confusing that a positive future is unimaginable. From this pool of despair, it seems to me, bad, angry, and violent actions can emerge. Evil is the force that crushes hope, and is not necessarily the inhumane acts themselves. Global education can help students identify, name, and encounter such forces and equip students to resist such forces with faithful intelligence and sagacious direct action. Global education can also help students understand that while evil is real, it is penultimate, and finally subject to God and the power of the Gospel. Hence, hope is possible. In this way, global education is against the world.

This discussion presumes that global education is in the world. The world is the place where one can come to know God and where one encounters evil. The world is the place where one comes to know oneself and one’s neighbor, the stranger and the friend. Global education, and education in general, does not take place, somehow, “out of the world.” The world is the context for learning and acting upon that which one knows to be true and which one believes to be sacred. Global education, in this sense of being in and for the world, is not finally apocalyptic but redemptive. The vision of global education, theologically understood, is not an all-



consuming cosmic fire. The vision of global education in and for the world is Isaiah's great banquet for all the nations (Isaiah 25) or the everlasting city John saw, through which a river passes on whose banks is the Tree of Life whose leaves bring healing to the nations. (Revelations 22)

**4. Global education nurtures a sense of vocation in students.** The kind of participation in the life of the world that global education can provide, enabling students to do theology, to come to terms with the stranger and with hospitality, to be in, for, and against the world, can also provide the context within which a student hears God's call and says yes to that call with faithfulness, courage, and true humility. To oversimplify a profound and complex theological insight, the concept of vocation develops in this way. God creates the world in love. All of life is, therefore, a gift to be received with gratitude. God needs men and women to care for creation and calls men and women to use their particular gifts within a particular setting to sustain creation. This gracious intersection of the gifts and circumstances of one's life provides the best opportunity for one to serve one's neighbor and to give glory to God. Abraham Heschel wrote extensively about God's expectation of "man" which is another way of talking about vocation. God, who is love, needs men and women and actively seeks them, pursues them, calls them. Our lives are the response to this loving, this seeking, and this pursuing. The point of the good life, therefore, is not the right job or the right succession of jobs that string together to make a noteworthy career, nor the aggregation of power or possessions or prestige to oneself. A life of worth is a life lived in response to God's call, in a particular context, making good use of one's gifts for the sake of others, the good of the earth, and the glory of God.

Another way of thinking about vocation is to think about the end or outcome or benefit of global education for the student. L. DeAne Lagerquist, Associate Professor of Religion at St. Olaf College, has spoken about our students becoming "cosmopolitan citizens." This is an apt phrase that can describe well the vocational outcome for students of global education. The cosmopolitan citizen, as I understand DeAne, is one who knows how to act with reason and love for the sake of the world, a world that is ordered by One who is trustworthy, and a world with a hopeful future. The formation of such cosmopolitan citizens takes place within the context of the liberal arts, the Gospel, and global education. It requires all three components if a student is to develop a sense of vocation, a life lived worthily, informed by reason, love, the world, and sacred expectations.

**5. Global education at the colleges of the church requires the sympathetic engagement of faculty, staff, and administration.** I am using "sympathetic" here to mean something like "with the same passion." The programs of global education at our colleges and many other liberal arts colleges and universities were often started by men and women who themselves had studied and lived overseas and whose lives had been changed in important ways by that experience. Ansgar Sövik, Professor Emeritus of Religion, one of the pioneers of global education at St. Olaf, was born and raised in China. Many of the colleges and universities of the Northeast have global education programs that date back to student missionary activities of the nineteenth century. I myself am the product of just such a program. The originating idea of these programs was to send liberally educated students abroad for extended periods of time, usually two years, to learn the language and culture of the people, and to be of some kind of immediate service to the people with whom one was living. The sojourners would then return to the U.S. with a sense of the world, with an appreciation for the life and culture of one other people, and in league with others who had traveled, studied, and served for the sake of the good of the world. Global education has developed in many new and important ways over the past century but the passion of our programs today, I believe, needs to be in harmony with the passion of the men and women of earlier centuries. The passion was not so much for adventure or having interesting experiences, or having a more interesting résumé to help one open life's doors. The central passion had to do with encountering other men and women on their terms and in their language so that one's life might be better shaped for the purposes of service, most broadly understood, in any number of jobs and careers. Such a sympathetic understanding on the part of today's faculty, staff, and administrators can be a counter balance to some trends in global education that trivialize its potency in favor of "having experiences" or "travel abroad" or "recruiting strategies."

**6. ELCA colleges need to exercise the gift of administration to bring greater clarity to the programs being offered by our campuses.** Global education is frequently a major component of our academic programs. Many faculty, students, and administrators are involved in the administration of the programs. Considerable amounts of tuition revenue are invested in the programs. This is good and as it should be. We do, however, need to be clearer about the purposes and intentions of our programs. Just what is it that we intend to accomplish? What are the assumptions undergirding our pedagogy? What benefit do we hope students will receive from this kind of education? How

are students prepared before leaving and how is their re-entry process designed and monitored? What value do students who have studied abroad or off campus contribute to the life of the campus upon returning? How does global education contribute toward faculty and staff development? What, if any, is the difference between a musical group or an athletic team traveling off campus and an overseas study group of students led by a faculty member? It is important for these questions and others like them to be asked in a systematic way on our campuses so that our programs can be more vital.

I also believe that it could be most helpful for us to consider all of the global education programs collectively being offered by the colleges of the ELCA as a whole. My sense is that, together, we have a portfolio of offerings that, like a portfolio of stock and bonds and real estate, needs to be evaluated and repositioned from time to time for maximum effect. Do we have duplication of effort? Which are the exemplary programs and how can we learn from one another to strengthen the whole? Should/could some agency serve as a kind of broker of programs throughout the ELCA so that all programs are adequately filled and staffed? I believe that our programs

are too important and too expensive for each of us to try to offer an exhaustive variety of opportunities for our students and faculty single-handedly. Together, however, we can and do offer a remarkable range of course offerings.

### **Conclusion**

The Psalmist sings out, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein." (Psalm 24) A central dynamic of the vocation of the colleges of the ELCA is to inform our various programs of global education with the power and mystery of this verse. Seldom before have we in the colleges of the church needed to embrace the world, its fullness and its peoples, with grace and intelligence and understanding as we need to do so today. Seldom before has it been so absolutely crucial to remember that the earth is the Lord's, and that it is the Lord who calls us to be agents of justice to the farthest coastlands and to be merciful to those who live next door. Let us pray for wisdom, courage, and freedom so that we might be faithful in the moment.

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*Christopher M. Thomforde is President of St. Olaf College.*

## SERVICE BEYOND THE COMFORT ZONE

Kathryn Wolford

There are two key issues shaping the global context in which Lutheran World Relief (LWR) works. The first is economic globalization; the second relates to civil society and human rights. I would like to offer some thoughts on challenges I believe we share as Lutheran institutions in this society. And I will close with some thoughts on service-learning as it relates to the global vocation of Lutheran colleges and opportunities for collaboration.

### The Global Context

Is globalization good or bad? The definitive answer is...yes!

Globalization is a broad term; in fact, it has become something of a catchall for a wide variety of trends that encompass the cross-border flow and exchange of culture, ideas, people, technology, services, and capital and other resources. And infectious disease as well, as we were mostly recently reminded by SARS, which crossed borders with a human and economic impact from Taiwan to Toronto.

In the economic sphere, the flow of trade, investment, and services now far exceeds the impact of international aid flows in all but the very poorest and isolated nations. As we look at how the context for LWR's mission has changed in recent years, a key factor is the extent to which global economic policies and institutions (both public and private) shape the constraints and opportunities available to impoverished communities, and perhaps, most especially to rural farm populations. People like the Guatemalan storekeeper in a remote village who finds it is cheaper to sell imported "gringo" chickens rather than the "criollo" chickens he used to buy from neighboring farmers to sell in his store. He hears about "free trade" but doesn't think it is either free or fair when the imported chickens are government-subsidized; meanwhile, his neighboring farmers don't even qualify for credit from the local banks because they don't own land to use as collateral.

As LWR carries out our mission, we are in constant dialogue with our local church and non-governmental partner organizations about: 1) how to harness positive contributions, and 2) how to minimize negative consequences of these global economic forces for people living in chronic poverty. For us, this is first and

foremost an ethical question, and secondly, one of strategies and tactics; or to put it another way, it is first about how to be faithful in responding to God's concern for the poor and oppressed—it is about mission; and secondly, about our theory of social change and strategic choices on how to carry out our mission in the most effective way possible with the available (and always limited) resources.

I wish I could say that we have been tremendously successful in helping poor rural farm communities in Asia, Africa and Latin America "compete" in the global market or to find sustainable "opt out" alternatives. We support a number of programs that have successfully placed organic or non-traditional crops with good returns; one example of this is an association of farm cooperatives in Bolivia that sells lima beans in the Brazilian market. However, far too many others are finding their products (for example, traditional crops like corn in Central America or rice in India or cotton in Mali) undercut by subsidized imports or unfavorable tariff barriers.

There are some innovative strategies like fair trade that provide a positive alternative by cutting out the middlemen and guaranteeing a minimum price to producers hard hit by the collapse of global prices for their products. LWR has led the U.S. faith community in mobilizing our Lutheran constituency and recruiting other faith communities to buy fair trade coffee and chocolate as one way to promote greater economic justice for a small, but growing number of producers. Advocacy to influence the major coffee corporations seeks to 'mainstream' fair trade principles and practices on a larger scale.

Overall, the playing field is far from level under the international trade regime. To quote the ELCA Social Statement on Economic Life, "Developing countries that have opened their economies to global markets have generally reduced poverty over time more than those that have not, but the terms of trade often work to the disadvantage of developing countries." More worrying and significant for our work for justice and sustainable development are the increasing gaps in the distribution of income and assets within countries. Whether we are talking about a basic human survival need such as food or a higher-level resource like technology, equitable access and control are at least as important as aggregate quantity and availability of these resources.

Another key factor shaping our work over the past decade is the growth and increasing dynamism of civil society around the world. The most single positive force in our work over the last decade is probably the growing involvement of institutions like churches and non-governmental organizations, as well as the women's and environmental movements, working for a stronger policy framework, practice, and culture of civic participation. This includes a growing push for more responsive and responsible governance, and for greater transparency and accountability of national and international public institutions, as well as private sector corporations. This is strengthened by a growing awareness among civil society as well as an evolving legal framework for the protection of human rights, including social and economic rights as well as civil and political rights.

There are many exciting cases of citizens using global communication technologies to gain access to information that their own governments have censored or withheld from them. Likewise, global civil society has electronically rallied around causes like the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, a highly successful effort to e-mobilize citizens in far-flung corners of the globe to influence their respective national governments and the UN system toward an international treaty (which, by the way, the U.S. has still not signed so we still have work to do here on the homefront).

For Americans, pre-September 11, 2001, terrorist acts happened in Ireland or Chechnya or some place we couldn't pronounce. September 11 was yet another expression of globalization—one that graphically brought home the porous nature of national borders. Soon after these attacks, Jessica Matthews, President of the Carnegie Foundation for International Peace wrote, "The most important point is the most obvious: 9/11 changed the United States far more than it did the rest of the world. 'Homeland security' is more than a new word in our vocabulary; it is a concern that makes us more like the rest of the world than we have ever been before." More like the rest of the world, perhaps, yet quite distinct in terms of the predominance of U.S. military, political, and economic power. In response to the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the U.S. and other governments have set in motion a series of policy decisions and actions, whose long-term impact on the global context is still unfolding.

However, in a recent op-ed in the New York Times, African journalist Charles Onyango-Obbo voiced the concerns of many about the impact of the war on terrorism on the yet fragile, emerging culture of human

rights, citizen participation and governance in much of the world. He wrote, "In the United States, antiterrorism laws that strip away some civil rights in the name of national security will not roll back human rights significantly—but in Africa they will. Only in the last 10 years have pro-democracy campaigns resulted in constitutions and laws that allow press freedom, fair trials, honest elections and other basic rights. The roots of these laws are so shallow that a single antiterrorism law simply wipes them out." It will be both ironic and tragic if measures meant to provide security ultimately undermine constructive trends toward more open, participatory and democratic societies.

I have tried in a short—and for that reason oversimplified—manner to highlight two of the major issues and trends impacting the people LWR serves and the context in which we carry forth our mission and ministry. What implications does such a context have for the mission and global vocation of Lutheran colleges?

### **The Global Vocation of Lutheran Colleges**

Business literature points time and again to the increasing value and 'marketability' of individuals who develop attitudes, skills and knowledge that enable them to thrive in multicultural and multinational contexts. This is one of many compelling and legitimate arguments that can be made for 'globalizing' higher education in general. But, for Lutheran colleges, I think an institutional global vocation goes beyond this type of strategic positioning statement.

It seems to me that an essential aspect of the institutional vocation of Lutheran colleges is to create an academic, social and spiritual environment that encourages students to explore their beliefs, values and personal vocation, one that invites students to live with purpose in all dimensions of our human existence.

Part of a global vocation for Lutheran colleges is shaped by the very global nature of the Christian Church and by our understanding that God's creative and redemptive work is carried out in every corner of the world—and that no nation has cornered the market on God's mercy and love.

A significant contribution of the Lutheran theological perspective is to boldly affirm the relational and public nature of faith. Faith is not relegated to the private sphere, nor only to our most closely held relationships of family and kinship.

An anecdote from Lutheran World Relief's earliest days illustrates this understanding. In 1945, one in seven Lutherans worldwide was a refugee. It would have been easy to say that U.S. Lutheran aid should be directed to our extended family members in Europe; instead, the founders of LWR insisted that aid should be distributed based on need, regardless of religion, national origin or political affiliation. (By the way, today this is a widely accepted core principle of humanitarianism.)

To proclaim the good news of God's love for the world—for every person and for the whole of creation is by its nature relational and public. Professor Darrell Jodock, professor of religion here at Gustavus Adolphus College, writes, "Luther's Christianity was anything but privatized. The freedom of the Christian is not just a freedom from self-help plans, but a freedom for service to the neighbor and the larger community."<sup>i</sup>

And who is my neighbor? The story of the Good Samaritan ends with a definition of "neighbor" as the person who is in need of our compassion and care. It also ends with the call to be a neighbor—to be the one who reaches out to another in need—even when it takes us beyond our comfort zone. Or the text may be read to assert more boldly, especially when it takes us beyond our own comfort zones.

In speaking of LWR, one of our board members paraphrases our mission as: "to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable."

Comforting the afflicted: the grind of poverty and oppression are the challenges facing the people LWR serves. The people we seek to serve, accompany, and empower are challenged by situations of poverty or oppression that most of us have never experienced and sometimes can't even imagine. Daily bread is a challenge, let alone life in fullness.

And while it is a generalization that may have some significant exceptions on U.S. Lutheran college campuses, our dominant societal context poses a different set of challenges. Challenges like:

1. Apathy: it's not my problem, it doesn't impact me, so let someone else deal with it—not unlike the Levite or the priest on the road to Jericho in the Good Samaritan story
2. Cynicism: The often widespread distrust of government (influence of PACs and special interests), corporations (Enron), non-profits

(United Way) and the church (child abuse scandals, internal conflicts)

3. Feeling overwhelmed and numbed: When you hear statistics like 1 billion people live on less than \$ 1.00/day or 24 million people in Africa are HIV positive, it is easy to think: I am just one person, what difference can I possibly make? It is easy to become paralyzed by the magnitude of the problems . . . and retreat to one's comfort zone.

A relatively high level of material and economic comfort can make us more susceptible to these afflictions; likewise when we take for granted the rights that most (certainly not all) in our society enjoy. Art Simon, a Lutheran and founder of the Christian advocacy network Bread for the World, said, "The problem is not that we've tried faith and found it wanting, but that we've tried mammon and found it addictive, and as a result find following Christ inconvenient."<sup>ii</sup>

I would like to suggest that the global vocation of Lutheran colleges is to engage and equip students to move beyond preferred comfort zones—comfort zones of race, class, ethnicity, nationality, ideas, and more. Lutheran colleges in this time and society are called to help students delve into an exploration of their beliefs and values, and how these relate to the choices they make now and into the future.

- Choices as a neighbor in a global community that each day grows more interdependent, impacting not only people today, but also the environment for future generations
- Choices as a citizen of this nation with incredible freedom to speak, to vote, to participate—here in the most powerful nation on the face of the earth
- Choices as a consumer in a global marketplace of goods and services, produced under widely varying labor and environmental conditions

It is less to afflict than to invite, encourage, nurture, and yes, nudge students to take a leap of faith outside their preferred comfort zones. For a good number of students, college is the first opportunity to take such a leap or even a modest step beyond the boundaries of that is most familiar.

There is an African proverb that says, "You cannot know the bugs of the bed you haven't slept in, nor where the

roof leaks in a house where you have never lived.” In particular, service-learning can provide extraordinary opportunities to check out bugs and roof leaks that we would not otherwise encounter—intimately through contact with people whose lives embody the key issues of our day. Direct assistance through volunteerism and service is important and can enhance dignity and well-being; it can build and sustain relationships.

But, direct service alone is not sufficient for understanding and addressing the underlying causes of poverty and its consequences. It does not necessarily lead to a commitment to justice-oriented change, change that sees the secure shelter of a non-leaky roof as a right. For that, the relationships must be built on a mutual sharing, including our willingness to be transformed by those we too often see only as the beneficiaries of our service and compassion. We need to be open to having our often deeply held assumptions and understandings challenged. In a global context of radical differences in power and resources, this is neither easy nor necessarily comfortable.

Might the global vocation of Lutheran colleges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century include a conscious effort to link mercy and justice, particularly in the area of service-learning?

To quote Prof. Jodock again, “. . . mercy is not easily embodied in institutional structures. In order to protect people, institutions and governments need policies that promote justice.”<sup>iii</sup> He notes that U.S. Lutherans have tended to give far more attention to social service than to political activism, i.e. to addressing policies and structures.

In suggesting that service-learning might be focused on taking students beyond their preferred comfort zones, I know that some Lutheran colleges are already doing innovative programming that exemplifies this approach—bringing to bear experiential, academic, and spiritual dimensions, and making the connection with values and vocation.

In this vein, I would like to close with an invitation to collaboration with LWR.

One of the strategic directions for LWR in our organizational plan for 2003-2007 is “to engage and equip young adults to be catalysts for social and economic justice in the world—helping to create the next generation of leaders for global justice within the church and society.” And, college-age youth were identified as the priority age group for this outreach.

Of all the pieces of our plan, this is one that generates the most excitement from our board. However, it is also the biggest stretch for LWR in determining our specific niche and competencies.

LWR would like to collaborate with institutions that share an understanding of service-learning that includes: experiential learning coupled with critical analysis through reading and through listening to the perspectives of people/communities living in situations of impoverishment or oppression; reflection on values and vocation, and opportunities for sustained follow-up such as advocacy, consumer choices and community-based actions. At LWR, our bias is that the listening, learning and then leading is more important than the direct service rendered in service-learning programs. We are interested in partnerships with institutional backing whereby not only students but also some faculty, administration, and the chaplain’s office could share commitment and ownership.

LWR can bring to the table:

1. Locally managed, community empowerment programs in numerous countries in Latin America, Africa, and Asia that could be powerful site visits for college-sponsored service learning trips and study-abroad programs.
2. Policy papers and program materials that could be useful as case studies for curriculum development.
3. A small number of internships each year. Over 90% of our interns have been women and people of color. Some have joined our professional staff, several have gone on to seminary, and others are working overseas in various capacities. They have been deeply shaped—both ethically and professionally—by their time with us and our organization has gained tremendous passion, expertise and insight from their time with us.
4. Social responsibility projects, such as fair trade coffee and chocolate, and education and advocacy campaigns on campus; these could provide useful follow-up engagement for students returning from overseas service-learning programs that introduce them to global economic and policy issues. In this area, I would like to mention a couple of specific opportunities:
  - a) LWR is organizing an immersion trip to Central America for college students and



faculty, January 2–10, 2004, focusing on fair trade coffee and its economic and social impact.

- b) The LWR campaign “A Place for Peace in Colombia” focused on education and advocacy about U.S. policy and aid to the war torn nation of Colombia. Quite a few Lutheran campuses are already involved in this pilot program to link programs and advocacy within Colombia to policy advocacy among U.S. Lutherans. You can check the LWR web site for more information, [www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org).
- c) Fair trade coffee on your campus; in the cafeteria, and/or coffee shop; you can do this through the LWR Coffee Project; or if you are already hooked on Starbucks

or a similar brand, use your purchasing leverage to insist that Starbucks provides your college with fair trade coffee.

- d) Fair trade chocolate: another winner for campus events. Both chocolate and coffee can provide case studies for classroom research, and links to other areas of student activism, such as child labor issues, and debt.

I will leave you with a quote from the writer E.B White:

"If the world were merely seductive, that would be easy. If it were merely challenging, that would be no problem. But I arise in the morning, torn between a desire to *save* the world and a desire to *savor* the world. That makes it hard to plan the day!"

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*Kathryn Wolford is President of Lutheran World Relief.*

#### Notes

<sup>i</sup> “A Lutheran Vision of Ministry.” Remarks by Professor Darrell Jodock, Lutheran Services in America Conference, March 2003.

<sup>ii</sup> *How Much is Enough? Hungering for God in an Affluent Culture*, Arthur Simon (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2003).

<sup>iii</sup> Jodock, op. cit.

## EDUCATING FOR PEACE: 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY MODELS FOR THINKING GLOBALLY AND ACTING LOCALLY

Janet E. Rasmussen

Let's begin with a story. A rabbi gathers his students around him and challenges them with a question: "What is the distance between East and West?" One eager student immediately responds, "Well, it's a long way for sure—maybe a thousand miles." "Think it through some more," the rabbi requests. After a silence, a second student looks at the rabbi and says, "I think the circumference of the earth is about 25,000 miles, so that means the distance between East and West must be 12,500 miles." "Ah," said the rabbi, "that is good reasoning, but let me illustrate another answer for you. Watch. I face the East. I take one step back and pivot and now I face the West. The distance between East and West is only one step."<sup>1</sup>

What lessons are available to us in this story? What do we learn about the how and where of encountering difference, our opposite, "the other"? One strategy is to travel halfway round the globe. Another strategy is to turn and face our neighbor. The posture of the seeker or sojourner is critical. The seeker takes initiative, must move, must step out or back as the case may be. Interestingly, the step may well be a step back—a non-aggressive sign, a modest and reflective movement that opens up possibilities, makes it easy to turn, to change direction, to change perspective literally and figuratively. The story challenges us to notice, honor, and respect both the closeness of our human connections and the vast differences laced through those connections. It makes a memorable starting point for a discussion of the global/local dimensions of educating for peace.

The environmental slogan *think globally, act locally* captures not only the natural world's inter-relatedness and interdependence, but also signals that anytime we connect with people across boundaries of cultural difference we engage the global community. Thus intercultural work encompasses what in many spheres are viewed as separate projects of international education and multicultural education. At Pacific Lutheran University (PLU), we are employing the term "global education" to denote the seamless nature of the educational project.

PLU is located in Tacoma, Washington. The 3,400 students benefit from a comprehensive academic environment that includes a college of arts and sciences, five professional schools, and selected master's programs. The local Tacoma/Pierce County community

with some 750,000 residents boasts the greatest population diversity in the state and is growing with and into the Puget Sound megalopolis (Seattle, Tacoma, and environs). For three decades now, PLU has been evolving its profile as a globally-focused university, cognizant of its roots in Scandinavia and its strategic Pacific Rim location.

Forty percent of 2003 bachelor recipients engaged in international study. Such participation places PLU among the top ten master's level universities in the United States. A new strategic plan challenges us further to increase participation in on- and off-campus global education opportunities and to continue to build distinctive academic programs and global PLU presence. The motivating vision of the strategic plan—*educating for a just, healthy, sustainable and peaceful world*, finds grounding in our Lutheran identity and university mission. We believe that the intellect is cultivated as "a tool of conscience and an instrument of service." We see service as hopeful and directed at seeking solutions and building bridges among peoples. Hence, the articulation of the ideal toward which we are striving, as individuals and as a community. The context of an unsettled and rapidly changing world of increasing economic, cultural, political, and ecological interdependence requires this kind of faithful commitment among those being prepared "for lives of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership, and care—for people, for their communities and for the earth."

Distinction in global education means more at Pacific Lutheran University than the existence of specific academic opportunities and high participation in these. It means that we are intentional about structuring learning so that students grow in intercultural knowledge and abilities as they progress in their studies. With support from the Teagle Foundation, a faculty planning team is adapting key approaches to intellectual and personal development (see Perry, Bennett, Musil) to create and elaborate a "Global Education Continuum." The Continuum is a flexible four-phase model intended to nurture the ability to participate actively in global learning and working environments:

- The Introductory phase focuses on exposure to PLU's commitment to and understanding of global education.

- The Exploratory phase concentrates on deepening of content and intellectual skill development, with emphasis on intercultural skills.
- The Participatory phase represents sustained, cross-cultural experiential learning that provides practice and refinement of intercultural abilities and understandings (e.g. service learning, internship).
- In the Integrative phase, students focus on experiencing global/local connections and life skills development as it relates to vocation and career in an increasingly interdependent world.

The Continuum is conceptualized to serve all participants in global education; but whereas all students should make progress along the Continuum, only students with exceptional commitments to global citizenship are presumed to engage the integrative phase. The Global Education Continuum provides the framework within which the overlapping experiences of a student's academic program and personal transformation take place. In this way, global education at PLU is seen as a focused and intentional journey of intellectual and personal development. Appropriately, we can name these intercultural pilgrims "sojourners." Likewise, their faculty, staff, and community mentors continue to sojourn, as they deepen and update their global perspectives.

Universities are inherently global organizations, dedicated to the widespread circulation of ideas and often people. In many cases, a happy serendipity governs the array of off-campus programs and partnerships that a college or university offers. Without denying the fortuitous connections that can accompany a new faculty hire or a new set of professional networks, the goal of deepening intercultural expertise requires that PLU and like-motivated campuses assume an intentional and disciplined posture with respect to our global partners. Why are we building and sustaining programs in certain places and with certain partners and not others?

PLU proposes to identify a limited number of focal locations for sustained off-campus presence. These sites will function as the primary gateways for global education development and will be integrated with the vision of *educating for a just, healthy, sustainable, and peaceful world*. Each site or gateway will provide a mix of programs across the Global Education Continuum—

programs that connect with the on-campus curriculum and that feature well-designed experiential components like service learning, internships, and faculty-student research. A proven host-country partnership, strong leadership from both on-campus faculty and in-country staff and faculty, and a two-way flow of persons and activity will be key elements of the infrastructure.

The gateways will come on-line gradually over the next seven years. The Puget Sound region will serve as one of the sites. A couple of the other suggested locations are quite tentative, but the core cluster of sites is unlikely to change, since it represents commitments linked to our area studies programs and already-existing PLU semester programs. Here are three examples of current program development, as illustrations of how intentional new partnerships open the door to new global/local explorations of vocation and service: Trinidad in Tacoma, Community Partners in China, and Norway in Namibia. In all three cases, impulses and connections flow among a web of university and community partners, thereby honoring multidisciplinary approaches and experiential learning.

#### **Trinidad in Tacoma**

Ten years ago, in 1993, English Department faculty member Barbara Temple-Thurston led a January-term student group to Trinidad and Tobago. Three years later, our semester-long program at the University of the West Indies began. One of the learning objectives for the program is the transformation of racial and class consciousness through residence, study, and service in a highly-diverse community.

As Dr. Temple-Thurston describes the experience, "In Trinidad our students share classrooms with bright and talented Trinidadians who excel in a rigorous academic setting; they participate in cultural events and festivals with Trinidadians from all walks of life; and they commit to four hours a week of service learning work. Their volunteer experience means they serve at the pleasure of a variety of organizations and communities in whatever way they are needed, and they are guided and supervised by Trinidadian supervisors of various ethnic, racial, or religious backgrounds."

While abroad, the sojourners move between the academic sector and the local community, encountering the legacies of colonization and observing the prejudices of class culture at work. We house the students in a modest guest house in a working-class neighborhood on the edge of the university, rather than in the university residence halls, and to ensure their interaction with folk culture we

immerse them in traditional festivals and ceremonies like Carnival, Phagwa, and Hosay.

A return to campus after five months in Trinidad can produce considerable frustration, as there are few opportunities to process the sojourn with peers and to integrate intercultural skills into daily life. As one strategy for enabling the sojourners to continue their journeys, program faculty, with the help of Ione Crandall director of PLU's Center for Public Service, envisioned a new residential opportunity in the local Tacoma neighborhood known as Salishan.

Salishan is a multicultural, subsidized housing community for a variety of groups, including Native Americans, African Americans and recent immigrants from Cambodia, Korea, Laos, Mexico, and Eastern Europe. Serving the community as Lutheran mission pastor is Ron Vignec, a former PLU campus pastor who assists with bridge building. Ron's wife Nancy plays a leading role with the Tacoma Housing Authority and together, they helped broker an arrangement whereby several returnees from the Trinidad program will live in, and serve, the Salishan community. In return for a commitment to service, the housing authority is waiving the rent for one of the modest housing units. Even with the goodwill of all parties, it took almost a full academic year for the various agreements to be signed off on by the university and the local authorities. The first PLU students moved into the residence in summer 2003.

The Trinidad/Salishan initiative nurtures two intentional relationships: one local and one international. In Barbara Temple-Thurston's words, "We are articulating the intersection of these two seemingly different worlds of Salishan and Trinidad and Tobago. By placing our students and ourselves at this dynamic intersection, we are learning to forge lasting and meaningful relationships with our surrounding communities and our friends in the Caribbean . . . Our students experience being resident members of a global and local community with expectations of service to both communities, an experience that deftly displays the connecting strands of diversity, culture, and otherness across the global/local divide."

Support from the Association of American Colleges and Universities FIPSE-funded initiative "Liberal Education and Global Citizenship: The Arts of Democracy" has advanced curricular development for this program.

### **Community Partners in China**

Chinese Studies is an interdisciplinary major that began

as an area focus within the Global Studies program. Over the last twenty years, the China expertise of the PLU faculty has grown remarkably, as has the economic development importance of China to our state and region. Government and business leaders see facility in the Chinese language and advanced cultural understanding as precious assets and PLU is committed to providing access to these tools and to functioning as a bridge builder with China.

Founded in 2002, China Partners Network is a collaborative network of primarily Lutheran institutions in the State of Washington, including Good Samaritan Hospital, PLU, and a number of congregations, "who are committed to working in partnership with each other and with the Amity Foundation for the purpose of providing much needed health care, education, and basic needs for children and families in China." Three campus entities are participating directly in the evolution of the network: Church Relations, Chinese Studies, and the Wang Center for International Programs.

By collaborating locally on fundraising, public education, and the development and administration of service learning opportunities, the network is able to respond to the needs and priorities identified and articulated by the in-country partner. Importantly, this Chinese partner, the Amity Foundation, is a well-regarded, Christian-based social service organization. We are excited about the student placements that will evolve through the partners network and the lives that are already being improved through the teaching of new therapy techniques for working with children with disabilities and the delivery of wheelchairs.

Having sent students to China for semester-long programs of study for more than twenty years, we have reached a decision point concerning the specific location(s) and affiliation(s) that will define our China gateway going forward. Both Zhongshan University and Sichuan University have functioned as valuable exchange partners in years past, but a university connection alone is no longer sufficient. The China Partners Network provides an additional dimension for organizing and focusing our China presence. The link to our university mission and identity is obvious. The opportunities for students in professional programs like Nursing and Education are attractive. The posture of working according to the priorities established in-country by the Amity Foundation is ethically important. Even though Shanghai and Beijing are magnets for current business interests, we find ourselves affirming the importance of a PLU presence in a less developed region. Thus, academic decision-making and community

partnerships become aligned to advance both student learning and the quality of life in rural China.

Another community dimension to PLU's Chinese Studies program deserves mention in this connection, namely the identification of local partner school districts to augment Chinese instruction in the K-12 curriculum and encourage joint co-curricular programming and events. These efforts are being made possible by a major grant from the Freeman Foundation. Dr. Gregory Youtz, Professor of Music and Chair of Chinese Studies, provides the coordinating faculty leadership for these community partner initiatives.

### **Norway in Namibia**

PLU was founded in 1890 as an academy for Norwegian immigrants. Appropriately, Scandinavian Area Studies became the university's first area studies major (1977). Outreach to the Pacific Northwest Scandinavian-American community featured prominently in the initial program design and research priorities and found concrete expression in a campus Scandinavian Cultural Center, dedicated in 1989. A robust stream of students from Scandinavia has continued to energize the university's cultural identity, but the intellectual and political weight of the international education curriculum shifted as a faculty generation with teaching interests in Kierkegaard, Rølvaag, and Ingmar Bergman films began to be replaced by faculty focused on Asia, Central and Latin America, and Africa.

Three years ago, a senior professor in political science and well-recognized expert in international education, Dr. Ann Kelleher, formulated a new program emphasis around the theme of "The Nordic Approach to Peace, Democracy, and Development." In short order, the university acquired the necessary building blocks for a multi-faceted academic initiative, energized by on- and off-campus constituents and enabled by private and governmental funding.

The initiative is built on a formal three-institution partnership among Hedmark University College in Norway, the University of Namibia, and PLU. As Ann Kelleher explained when program activities began in 2001, "Envisioned as necessary to achieve authenticity, the three-way partnership has elicited enthusiastic and useful cooperation among its member institutions. Each one makes essential contributions . . . Hedmark's connections to Namibia are solid, based on continuous, long-lived personal relationships at the highest levels in the government and education. Having an active, enthusiastic partner in a developing country gives

programmatic reality to one of the most distinctive guidelines in the Norwegian approach to development, that projects must be 'recipient led.' Analyzing examples of democracy and development without the equal participation of an institution in a developing country [University of Namibia] would belie the very essence of [the initiative]. For its contribution, PLU will provide the partnership's institutional base, a focus for outside funding, and active as well as knowledgeable faculty and student participants."

Alongside the university partners stands a significant NGO partner, the Namibia Association of Norway (NAMAS), whose work with the peoples of Namibia predates independence and whose reputation and contacts open many doors to university representatives. Additionally, the Lutheran church plays an influential and supportive role. In the late 1980s, Southwestern Washington ELCA congregations sponsored a first generation of Namibian students at PLU, all of them now exemplary contributors to the young democracy and important role models and facilitators for the current student generation.

Accomplishments to date include a PLU January short-term course in human rights and democracy at the University of Namibia, student-faculty research projects in Norway and Namibia, and faculty and curriculum development. Fall 2003 finds ten PLU students, a PLU professor of journalism, and several Namibian students gathered at Hedmark University College to launch "Democracy, Development, and Peace: A Semester of Active Learning in Norway." Through case studies and site visits the sojourners will study Norwegian public policy and its implications for sustainable growth and peace building throughout the world. Internship placements and extended research projects follow the foundational coursework, ensuring that participants immerse themselves in local community contexts.

A specific project emanating from the Norway/Namibia/PLU partnership further illustrates new modes of conceptualizing global/local connections. Professor Kelleher wrote a successful USAID grant for capacity building for the Ondao primary school in rural, northwestern Namibia. Actually thirty individual school sites, under a single administrative unit, the Ondao school serves the proudly traditional, semi-nomadic Himba people. The Namibia Association of Norway provided the seed funding and professional expertise to develop the Ondao mobile schools, including the army tents used as classrooms. Now the three partner universities are collaborating to deliver training workshops for the native teachers seeking formal certification as teachers.

As members of PLU's education faculty have undertaken this training assignment, PLU students, members of University Congregation, local secondary-school students, school administrators, and other community members have stepped forward to volunteer school supplies, to host the Ondao school principals on a professional development visit to Washington State, and to dream together about other ways to serve the Ondao learners and teachers, including creating libraries in a tub to circulate among the tent sites.

This three-way partnership offers creative new approaches to conceptualizing education for peace. Many next-step investigations are under exploration, including a focus on indigenous peoples in the three partner locations.

### **Common Threads and Commitments**

Taken together, these three initiatives reinforce PLU's capacity to serve the Puget Sound region with culture-specific resources, expertise in multiculturalism and development, and engagement with peacebuilding, conflict transformation, and related themes. The case studies illustrate that for experiential learning to flourish and intercultural skills and problem solving capacities to deepen, U.S. universities must seek out capable and committed partners abroad—both academic and community based, and strive for long-term, mutually beneficial relationships. In these examples, partners beyond the university sphere include foundations, NGO's, hospitals and clinics, schools, a variety of service and internship sites, and in each case a link with the Lutheran church.

Furthermore, the deliberate cultivation of local partnerships can ensure that students have access to relevant pre-departure and re-entry experiences. Few universities focus systematically on helping students reflect upon their sojourner experiences. Yet these reflections and follow-up community engagements are critical aspects of a successful journey along the global education continuum. They also have powerful implications for the discernment of vocation. A major grant from the Lilly Endowment has provision for the development of sojourner reflection groups, which PLU will pilot in spring semester 2004. Developing domestic internships...specifically for returning study abroad students is a priority project for our new international internship coordinator.

In the 1990s, four educational researchers examined the

life stories of individuals whom they described as committed to the common good. Writing in *Common Fire: Leading Lives of Commitment in a Complex World* (1996), Daloz, Keen, Keen, and Parks observed: "The single most important pattern we have found in the lives of people committed to the common good is what we have come to call *a constructive, enlarging engagement with the other* . . . . We believe that those who best practice a commitment to an inclusive common good are paradoxically those who can simultaneously reach across tribes and remain firmly rooted in the particularities of their own." Larry Daloz' essay "Transformative Learning for the Common Good" (2000) translates the *Common Fire* discovery into an educational context. Here Daloz elaborates what he calls four conditions of transformation: presence of the other, reflective discourse on assumptions, mentoring community, and opportunities for committed action.

In that Pacific Lutheran University and her sister Lutheran colleges and universities care deeply about the commonweal, we ought to take these research findings seriously in the design of our global education programs. Our work will then move out from our campuses in the impulse to educate for a more peaceful world. It will also move in and through our campuses as we aspire to be, and model, what Lee Knefelkamp calls, "communities of peace."

### **Questions for reflection and discussion**

On your campus, how far is it between East and West?

How vigorously have you considered the design of intercultural education for personal transformation? For global citizenship? For responding to God's call?

Who are your partners in intercultural education? How are concepts of neighbor and partner understood and practiced?

What language works best for you—global, intercultural, international, multicultural—and why?

In what ways does your campus community facilitate the return and ongoing development of student, faculty, and staff sojourners?

How might we come together as a community of Lutheran colleges to explore the paths, and practice the postures, that show the way toward a just and peaceful world?

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*Janet E. Rasmussen is Director of Wang Center for International Programs at Pacific Lutheran University.*



## Notes

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<sup>i</sup> Lee Knefelkamp (Teachers College, Columbia University) told this story at the Institute for Intercultural Communication in July 2003 and I am grateful for her permission to retell it in the tradition of oral wisdom.

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## THE SEARCH FOR A JUST PEACE IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

Munib A. Younan

### Palestinian Christian Identity

Let me introduce myself. I am an Arab Palestinian Christian Lutheran. Most people in the world would not understand such a combination of identities because it is usually believed that all Arabs are Muslims, and that Arab Palestinians certainly are Muslims. But that, as you know, is not true. I would like to share with you how I regard and experience my Christianity and my Lutheran faith in the light of my Arab Palestinian identity. There are two premises which I find to be important:

1) The first premise is Incarnation Theology, which is essential to us as Palestinian Christians. Our identity is the one we have developed since the early church. This identity has not been hidden or disguised. Rather it has been incarnational, in the flesh, very open. My Palestinianity and my Christianity kiss each other.

My Palestinianity is something deeply rooted in biblical culture, both Old and New Testaments. If you study present day Palestinian culture, you will find many of our traditions are rooted in the Bible. Sometimes I think we are the living remnant of the biblical traditions. My Palestinianity extends to my Christianity because Palestine was, after all, the place in the world that our God chose to become incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth. This is the place of Jesus' birth, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension. Plus, Jerusalem is the birthplace of the Christian Church. It was here that the Holy Spirit came in great power upon the followers of Jesus and enabled them to preach the gospel. The early Church was multi-cultural. The gospel was preached in Arabic (Acts 2:11) and the apostles and believers were called to witness to Christ in Jerusalem, Palestine and the uttermost parts of the world.

Turning it around, my Christianity extends to my Palestinianity through the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. In this place, Jesus taught us to be peacemakers, to be light, to share ourselves with others, no matter who they are, to feed the hungry, bring water to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to welcome the stranger, to care for the sick, to visit the prisoner.

Sometimes people tell me my nationality is Christian, but there is no Christian nationalism. Rather, the Incarnation has to do with relationships: the divine to the human, the

human to the divine. God became incarnate on earth; God did not remain in heaven. Christ taught us that the Incarnation gave a meaning for Palestinian identity—never exclusive, but inclusive—molded by love, forgiveness and reconciliation. Our relationships on this earth are shaped by the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus.

2) The second premise has to do with Lutheran history in the Middle East. It is certain that Lutherans cannot claim a historic tradition in Palestine. We cannot claim that Martin Luther came here to visit—Thank God! Rather than a staid tradition of Christianity in the Holy Land, the Lutheran doctrine brings us the freshness of the gospel. This means that no nation or land can claim the monopoly of preaching the gospel and administering the sacraments. Always it is going in a circle—out of Jerusalem to the whole world, but when Jerusalem neglected the freshness of the gospel, it returned to it through mission.

a) The Evangelical Lutheran tradition has rooted us in the theology of grace. This grace we receive freely from the cross of Christ. We Christians in the Middle East live in an ocean of Islam and Judaism, which means we are steeped in the theology of merit. In both the Old Testament and the Koran, there is a strong theology of retribution, of a punishing God who must be pleased through works of merit. But as Christians living in the theology of grace we know the love of God in Christ, a love which extends to all people—sinners, the marginalized, the oppressed and the oppressor. It is the grace of Christ that embraces me and others, drawing me nearer and nearer to my Savior. Through *kerygma*, *diaconia* and *missio* the love of Christ is given to everyone and we become the church of martyrria, the church of witness. This is the freshness of the gospel.

b) The Evangelical Lutheran tradition has rooted us in the theology of the cross, which is the center of Lutheranism. This humbles me so that I am not a master in my country, but a servant—a servant not only for my own community but for everyone. The theology of the cross molds my whole identity and equips me for witness, enabling me, in addition, to take a strong role in

mediation and dialogue with other Christian confessions or other religions, or with conflicting parties.

These two premises—the theology of grace and the theology of the cross—are part and parcel of the theology and tradition of the early Christian church. They continue today in the Lutheran and other Evangelical churches in the Middle East.

The Evangelical movement in the Middle East began in the 19th century. It is true that Evangelicals, including Lutherans, sometimes came with a triumphalistic missionary mentality aimed at converting Jews and Muslims to Christianity. But they soon ran into a rock wall; they could not convert the Muslims and Jews. They then turned to the Christians in the land, not to proselytize them but to bring the fresh gospel message. The Evangelicals have made an impact on the Middle East:

A. The Bible was translated into Arabic in 1864 by Evangelicals.

B. Schools and colleges were started by the Evangelicals which changed the whole mentality of the Middle East to be more cosmic, more global. The education program helped Arab Christianity to find its identity. To this day in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and Palestine (ELCJ), the education program of our church in six schools is our direct mission in proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed. Our schools continue to be an oasis to mold the Palestinian Christian identity; to teach peaceful co-existence with other religions, especially Islam and Judaism; to emphasize peace education; to promote the role of women; to give high quality education; and to prepare the future generation to be active citizens for building the Palestinian modern, civil, and democratic society.

C. The role of women was promoted. The Evangelicals believed in educating both boys and girls. All women's movements were and are given encouragement and support. The ELCJ is currently the only Church in the Middle East ready to ordain a woman.

D. Evangelicals brought ecumenism. For example, it was the Evangelicals who helped to form the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC). We invited all the Christian Church bodies to participate and named the four Middle East church families: Catholic; Orthodox; Oriental Orthodox; and Evangelicals. Included in the

Evangelical family today are the Lutherans, the Anglicans and the Reformed.

I mention my own experience in order to elaborate on how we can equip students in our Lutheran colleges and universities to become leaders in the globalized world. We do this by helping the students mold their identity as Christians, not in a legalistic way but through the influence and molding of the love of Christ in human life and values. Sometimes when dealing with church workers or missionaries I discover they are very individualistic and become focused on petty things. People say this is probably due to age or insecurity. But for me, it is due to the lack of corporate identity with the Christian community. Christianity and nationality extend to each other. When their identity is clearly established, the students will be able to focus on their vocations. They will come to realize that God calls them to a vocation which may or may not be in the Church but will be a place where they are missionaries in their own field.

### **Understanding the Other Civilizations in a Globalized World**

In a globalized world, we cannot be like ostriches, hiding our heads, saying "Everything is fine for me," and not caring for the rest of the world. If we do this, we become selective and insensitive. If we do this, we are creating a new Tower of Babel, in which everyone is pushing him/herself to be the best, the highest, the most important.

Instead, we must learn in a globalized society to be aware and sensitive—for example, the global North must be aware and sensitive to the culture and needs of the global South, and the South must be aware and sensitive to the North; the same is true of the East and the West.

The education we provide our students must give them sensitivity to the other—the people who are different in culture, race, religion, and concerns.

Although we live in a globalized world, we notice a clash of civilizations. It is true—there is polarization in this modern world. Islam and the West are clashing—Africa and Europe are clashing. We see much xenophobia in the world, including Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and Americanophobia, to mention just three of the fears. Like His Holiness Pope John Paul II, we must be willing to confess our fears and the actions that result from them. John Paul made a public confession of the fact that the Church had persecuted the Jewish people in past

centuries and asked forgiveness for this sin. We must be courageous as Christian leaders in educating our children to recognize and confess our fears because contrition helps civilizations to co-exist and be in constructive dialogue.

Edward Said, a renowned Palestinian American educator, recently wrote about the modern clash of civilizations:

(Some people) have seen in the atrocities of 9/11 a sign that the Arab and Islamic worlds are somehow more diseased and more dysfunctional than any other, and that terrorism is a sign of a wider distortion (than) has occurred in any other culture.

We can leave to one side that, between them, Europe and the US account for by far the largest number of violent deaths during the 20<sup>th</sup> century; the Islamic world hardly a fraction of it. And behind all of that specious unscientific nonsense about wrong and right civilizations, there is the grotesque shadow of the great false prophet Samuel Huntington who has led a lot of people to believe that the world can be divided into distinct civilizations battling against each other forever. On the contrary, Huntington is dead wrong on every point he makes. No culture or civilization exists by itself; none is made up of things like individuality and enlightenment that are completely exclusive to it; and none exists without the basic human attributes of community, love, value for life and all the others. To suggest otherwise as he does is the purest invidious racism of the same stripe as people who argue that Africans have naturally inferior brains, or that Asians are really born for servitude, or that Europeans are a naturally superior race . . . . It is the purest drivel. On the other hand, there is the much more credible and serious stipulation that like every other instance of humanity, Arab and Muslim life has an inherent value and dignity, which are expressed, by Arabs and Muslims in their unique cultural style, and those expressions needn't resemble or be a copy of one approved model suitable for everyone to follow.

I, too, disagree with Huntington's teaching about civilizations always battling against each other. It is wrong to stigmatize people and drive them apart. Unfortunately, our usual pattern is to demonize the other

and turn aside in xenophobic fear, teaching others, including our children, also to hate and fear the people who are different from us. It is obvious to me that the Church should be the agent or instrument that works for dialogue. This is a dialogue that seeks the humanity of each other in our civilizations and cultures and that accepts the otherness of the other, building a culture of mutual trust and acceptance and seeing the richness of the various traditions and civilizations that God created.

Remember that St. Paul said, "Though I am free and belong to no one, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings." (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

St. Paul accepted the other civilizations in their own context, recognizing their humanity, ready to dialogue with the people. He did not allow fences or barriers to keep him from knowing and caring about the people who were different from him. Instead, he made every effort to understand people in different civilizations and cultures.

In Ephesians 2, St. Paul also wrote, "For Christ himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations . . . . He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household . . ." (Ephesians.2:14-15a, 17-19)

The challenge of Lutheran churches and colleges in the world is how to teach our future generations the art of dialogue with other civilizations and respect the diversity of God's creation, thereby developing understanding and trust, building a culture of just peace.

### **The Search for Justice**

Together we must search for justice in our modern world. The politicians have proved that no nation can be

independent without caring about justice for the other. It is a huge mistake to believe that justice belongs only to us. We may think that we deserve justice, peace and freedom because we have fought for it and have the right to it. It may not occur to us that others need to enjoy the same justice. I am noticing that the American people are speaking about liberation and justice in the whole world, and that is commendable. However, justice can never be understood only from an American point of view, or an African or Arab or Asian or European point of view. Justice must be seen from a justice point of view. I know there is no absolute justice in our modern world, only relative justice. But justice at this time can be secured by the international legitimacy, which is proclaimed in our globalized world.

Great American leaders like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr. were instrumental, with many others, to gain justice and freedom for American people. However, when God gave justice and freedom to the American people, I do not believe God intended them to keep it all to themselves in a narrow way. These gifts were intended to be implemented for all nations living under oppression and searching for truth and liberation. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament speak of justice, mercy, and peace living together. In Psalm 85:10, the psalmist proclaims, "Justice and mercy kiss each other." And in James 2:18, we read, "The harvest of justice is sown in peace to those who make peace."

How can there be justice and peace in the world if there is no peace or justice in the Middle East? The State of Israel has militarily occupied Palestinian land and people for over thirty-six years. Occupation is a sin against God and humanity. It deprives the ones being occupied of their human rights and their dignity. It demoralizes the ones who are occupying the land and the lives of other people. In fact, occupation demoralizes first the occupier, then the occupied. This is the reason the Palestinian Christian churches, living under occupation themselves, are calling for an end to the occupation and calling for justice for both Israelis and Palestinians. When we call for an end to the occupation, we mean to liberate the occupier from the mentality of occupation and from insecurity and fear. We also mean that ending the occupation will liberate the occupied Palestinian people from pain and suffering, from the violation of their human rights. Justice in this conflict will bring security for the Israelis and liberation for the Palestinians. It is true, as many have said—there will be no security for

Israel without justice for the Palestinians, and there will be no justice for Palestinians without security for Israel.

From the Palestinian Christian Church point of view, the resolution of this conflict will include a two-state solution; a shared Jerusalem; a just solution to the right of return problem for Palestinian refugees; a just solution to the presence of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza; and a fair distribution of water. This, we believe, is justice for both groups of people. Some say it is not enough justice, and that is true. But the international legitimacy helps us to provide the necessary justice for the two peoples, Israelis and Palestinians, and for the three religions—Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.

When the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be solved, the result will be peace in the Middle East. That is because the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the core problem in the Middle East. The long-term, ultimate result of solving this crisis will be peace in the rest of the world.

I often hear people in the U.S. ask, "Why should Americans care about what happens in the Middle East? It doesn't have anything to do with us." On the contrary, the problems and their resolution in the Middle East are not far from you. When justice and liberation came to South Africa, everyone in the world was influenced and affected, not just South Africa. It is the same for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. The nations in our world are interdependent. No nation can selfishly enjoy justice without seeing the fruit of justice implemented in other countries.

At the moment, the people in Europe or the Southern Hemisphere look with great expectation to the kind of justice the U.S. is trying to implement in the whole world. It is very essential, as naive as I am, that the U.S. will liberate itself from "narrow, self-interest justice" and work as an honest broker for justice, truth, liberation, and peace in this world. The test of the U.S. is not how powerful it is in this world or how mighty its military may be. The test is this: can the U.S. implement justice with one standard for all the nations of the world, including itself?

The test for justice for the world and within one's nation is right in front of us. If justice can be accomplished in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and in other conflicts in the world, then the whole notion of justice is not only a theory but will be a practice everywhere. Justice within a nation is being demonstrated among Palestinians as we are developing our constitution and our laws. The

Palestinian Christian Church is working hard to base the laws on equality for the adherents of the existing religions, with human rights, responsibilities and justice for all. Our long experience with injustice has taught us that justice starts at home. When we stand with others in their struggles against injustice, we come to know each other's humanity. When I really care for you and you care for me, we are seeing the image of God in each other and justice is at hand. Let us together as churches raise our voices, becoming a symphony of justice in a world of injustice.

### **The Search for Unity**

We are in an age of many ecumenical approaches. In particular, we are experiencing mutual recognition among church bodies and detailed discussions of the apostolicity of the Church. I believe we have to break the halo we may have become accustomed to wearing—a halo we have put on ourselves, feeling a kind of self-glorification. Fanatic Christianity, and there are also fanatic Lutherans, believes that somehow they own the Christ they hold so dear. At the end, however, they will discover they have only been holding each other's hands, and Christ is not there.

It is the duty of Lutheran colleges and universities to educate our students in how we can see Christ in other churches and traditions, not only Lutheran. Maybe we have to learn from American and Palestinian ecumenical experience in learning to see Christ present with our Orthodox and our Catholic brothers and sisters, for example, and with other Christian groups. We need to live and experience unity in diversity.

Ecumenism can be most difficult, especially in Jerusalem. How can we understand other Christian confessions? It has been said that if Martin Luther had known the Patristic Eastern Church Fathers, he might have joined the Orthodox Church.

I see two very important movements in our modern ecumenical efforts:

A. We need international dialogue among the various Christian confessions in order to prepare the way for mutual recognition agreements. The Holy Spirit is working in the Church. For example, after five hundred years the Holy See and the Lutheran World Federation could sign an agreement on the doctrine of Justification by Faith. The document speaks about "differentiated consensus." Though some Lutheran and Catholic

scholars opposed the agreement, we are now on the track of discussing the Apostolicity of the Church with the Catholics. (Apostolicity for Lutherans: Gospel preached, sacraments administered purely—this assures the continuity of the apostolic traditions and the freshness of the Gospel.) There is no doubt—the Holy Spirit one day will guide our steps toward a common understanding on this and other theological issues. Mutual recognition agreements between denominations are a signpost to show us the way to unity. In John 10, Jesus spoke about "one flock and one shepherd."

B. We also need local mutual recognitions among the various Christian confessions. Again, what is done in one area of the world affects all of us. The Episcopal-Lutheran agreements in Germany, France, the Nordic countries, England, Canada and the United States affect us in Asia and Africa. There is a direct mutual effect for whatever agreement of mutual recognition is written in the world. We see what others are doing; we listen to their theology and reasoning, and see possibilities for ourselves because the Church of God does not have national or ethnic boundaries. For example, my church, the ELCJ, has now decided to challenge the Evangelical movement in the Middle East because it has failed in the last decade to sign a multilateral agreement. The Evangelical churches include the Reformed Church (Congregational, Presbyterian), the Anglican Church and the Lutheran Church (ELCJ). And so, influenced by other agreements around the world, the ELCJ is working on two specific agreements:

- We will pursue the Jerusalem Lutheran-Anglican Mutual Full Recognition Agreement which is already in process.
- We will begin work on a Lutheran-Reformed Agreement in the Middle East.

If the ELCJ succeeds on these two tracks, we would be building bridges between the Anglican and Reformed churches in the Middle East. We would be preparing fertile ground for a multilateral agreement in the future, such as the Anglican-Lutheran-Reformed agreement in France, the DeReuilly Agreement.

What is the benefit of such agreements? Either we Christians learn to live together or we will die together. If the Christian Church takes seriously the call to deny itself, to carry the cross and follow Jesus, then the Church needs to be a living witness. We cannot be that living witness with our divisions unless we are united



with our sisters and brothers in other Christian confessions. We gain strength to continue to be a Church of martyria, giving ourselves to Christ and being his living witnesses, serving where he calls the Church to be.

One day a Muslim shopkeeper in the Old City of Jerusalem stopped me as I was walking to my office at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. "Look at that woman over there," he said. "I can tell she is a Christian." I asked the man, "How do you know that?" And he replied, "Because she is carrying that handicapped child, and she takes care of handicapped children that are not her own. You Christians are better than we are." I told him that we Christians are not better than Muslims, but we practice sacrificial love because our Lord Jesus gave himself for us on the cross to save us equally in order that we would serve others equally. Our mere existence is a living martyria, a living witness in itself. Our call from Christ is to be a living witness united in our diaconia, mission and service. Then we will hear what the early Christians heard from the community around them: "See how they love one another." Can our communities say that about us now? Mutual recognition helps us be a stronger witness in the world and it is an ultimate necessity that these mutual recognition agreements do not remain with church officials and leaders. There must be active reception of the agreements among the grassroots and especially among college students.

### **The Necessity of Interfaith Dialogue in a Broken World**

Narrow religion can be a source and a tool to create religious extremism. This extremism, in turn, adopts intolerant positions or biased attitudes with exclusive claims on the truth. These groups easily succeed where poverty and injustice prevail. We are challenged and obstructed by religious fanaticism and extremism because these groups think they are the sole defenders of God and God's true religion. They forget that God does not need defenders of religion. These groups can easily be a threat to world justice and peace, creating intolerance and turmoil instead. Cardinal Arinze is right when he says that extremism is often characterized by an intransigent attitude toward co-religionists and others who hold different views, or who live in a different concept of society. This frequently leads to violence. Some extremists even go further and deny the right of religious freedom to those whose religious convictions differ from their own.

For me as a man of dialogue for the healing of the world, there is no religion which monopolizes the existence of tolerant and intolerant groups in its midst. We find both tolerance and intolerance existing in Christianity, Judaism, Islam and other religions. But we can never allow intolerant groups to hijack God or religion. We need to ask, in our 21st century: "How can religion through interfaith dialogue contribute to tolerance among religions; justice, peace and reconciliation; and the healing of our world?"

Interfaith dialogue must be prophetic. It must not create more bitterness and injustice but must be able to heal.

Our present global situation demands that religions work together for justice and peace. I speak of this from first-hand experience because our Lutheran schools in Palestine have both Christian and Muslim students. We work together to develop a peaceful coexistence, teaching our children about non-violence and peacemaking in addition to a strong educational curriculum. I am also a part of significant dialogue groups in Jerusalem and in various parts of the world which connect Jews, Christians, and Muslims. I find this to be one of the most rewarding parts of my work as the Lutheran Bishop in Jerusalem.

First: Interfaith dialogue ought to regard the theology of creation in a serious way. Why did God create us differently? Why do we differ in our various religious beliefs? It can be that there is no immediate answer except that all people of all religions are created in God's image. Yes, there are serious differences, doctrines, traditions and norms. Interfaith dialogue does not change these things nor does it erase them. Rather, interfaith dialogue helps us to see God's presence in the other person. When we see that, then we can admit that the Creator granted every one of us equal human rights and equal values. We Christians are called in our interfaith dialogue to challenge our world with a strong theology of creation and redemption. God created all human beings and nations equally. Through God's Son, Jesus Christ, on the cross, God saved all the world equally. This is the basic theology that drives us to heal the world and combat any kind of racism, extremism, superiority, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and xenophobia in our modern world.

Second: Interfaith dialogue must be courageous to seek common values from the respective religions. It sometimes seems that the globalized consumerism, materialism, and secularism leave our world stripped of

values and instead impose the principles of self-interest. Thus, relationships are dependent only on the self-interests of both parties. For this reason I call on all religions to seek for the common values that promote family, equality, justice, peace, tolerance, and reconciliation. A world without values is a world of chaos. A world with values is a world that promotes pluralism, equality, democracy, and respect for other religions and traditions, even those that are strange to us.

Third: Together with people of other religions, we must work together to bring justice and healing to the world. We are not to please politicians who seek war. Rather, religious people can be prophetic if they offer the longstanding, peaceful means of religion to solve world problems. Interfaith dialogue can challenge the world with authority. Stop war! Stop the militarization in our world that is threatening to kill humanity! Stop the proliferation of conventional and non-conventional weapons that can burn our world hundreds of times. How much money is spent on armaments, weapons, military operations and occupation, on killing people? It is the prophetic role of world religions to call for the disarmament of the whole world, not only one country or some countries we don't like. The world religions can assume their prophetic role if they stand against militarism and call for non-violent means to solve world problems. We are to tell the world: "The money you spend on power and militarization should be spent on eradicating poverty in the world, in providing education, in bringing justice and equality, in conquering the HIV and AIDS virus, cancer and other diseases."

Fourth: Interfaith dialogue must promote peace education. We truly need to learn about the other religions as they want to be perceived and not as we want them to be. Peace education must be high on the agenda. Peace education helps the adherents of one religion to have a positive picture of the adherents of different religions and avoid any kind of stigmatization, demonization or dehumanization. Such understanding helps everyone to co-exist with tolerance, love, and hope. I believe all religious people must repent for the ways in which we have distorted God's image in the other.

Our world will be safer, richer, and stronger if dialogue with other religions will guide us to build a just, new world order of security, freedom, and tolerance, a modern civil society and culture of peace.

And so it is vitally important to teach our students to be interested in dialogue with others different from

ourselves. We want to raise a generation that works to promote a culture of peace and justice in a world that has no justice, no peace. However, if we think that Lutherans can do justice alone, we are very mistaken. It is when we find common values in others that we can together build a new generation of peace.

### **Facing a Dangerous Trend**

It is very important to be sure that students in Lutheran colleges and universities are aware of the difference between being an Evangelical and being part of an evangelistic group. This is a struggle we are currently having in the Middle East.

No religion can claim it is free of fanaticism or extremism. Extremists in the three religions—Christianity, Judaism, and Islam—are more vocal than moderates. It is not my responsibility to speak of the other two religions. Instead, charity starts at home and to be successful, self-criticism also starts at home. We need to teach our students, the future generation, about the nature of Christian right-wing groups, also called the Evangelical Right. These groups are biblicistic in their approach to world problems. They believe in Dispensationalism, the Rapture, Armageddon, the conversion of Jews to Christ and the end of the world.

I think their main focus is not on Christ as the fulfillment of prophecy, but on the political Kingdom of God on this earth as prophecy fulfilled. Some may say these groups exist in the United States and Europe and it is there they make trouble. But they are also troublesome to us in the Middle East. Why?

A. First of all, they carry the name Evangelical. It is very difficult to explain to Muslims the difference between Evangelical and evangelistic. Our name as Lutheran Palestinians is the ELCJ. We have much at stake in helping people in the Middle East to understand who we are and what we believe, especially because the evangelistic groups are co-opting our name. At a recent meeting of the Heads of Evangelical Churches in the Middle East, we even discussed the possibility of changing our name because of the confusion and distrust that exist and are growing. We do not want to be linked or equated with these right wing groups. No one should be able to kidnap the word "evangelical" from us with its privilege of proclaiming the fresh good news to my people and to others.

B. Secondly, these right wing groups carry scenarios that are alien to our modern world and to our faith. This scenario includes the return of the Jews to the land through the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and the occupation of the balance of historic Palestine in the 1967 War. The take-over of Jerusalem, to these groups, is the beginning of the Final Dispensation. For this reason, they promote the destruction of the Muslim Dome of the Rock and the building of the Third Temple; although, according to Jewish teaching, the Third Temple should not be built by human hands but will come from heaven with the Messiah. This activity is intended to hasten the Second Coming of Christ. In their scenario, Jesus will come to Armageddon and the rapture will take place. Up to this point some Jews would have been converted to Christ, but the majority of Jews would not have become believers. They will be killed right along with other nations who do not believe in Christ. Those who do believe will rule the world with Christ.

For me, a Palestinian living under occupation, I am horrified about the killing of a Jew because of non-belief in the Messiah. These right wing groups portray themselves now as being philo-Semitic, but in the long run they are actually anti-Semitic. I denounce their anti-Semitic scenarios. In June of this year, I was very pleased to hear that the Catholic bishops in Illinois denounced these right wing groups as "false prophets."

It is for all these reasons that last January I declared this right wing ideology to be not only sick—but to be an actual heresy, similar to those in the Third and Fourth centuries. The present day heretical groups do not seek the Crucified Christ but the Christ of the Sword. They do not seek the heavenly Jerusalem but the earthly one.

C. Thirdly, these evangelistic right wing groups insinuate themselves into politics. They support the government of Israel in all its policies, including the violation of human rights and the building of illegal settlements on confiscated Arab land. Near my own home in Beit Safafa, just to the north of Bethlehem, there is an Israeli settlement named Givot Mattous, which has been funded by evangelistic right wing groups. The right wing groups also become involved in U.S. policies as well as other places where there are crises.

D. Finally, the evangelistic groups are calling for the transfer of all Palestinians to Arab countries, violating all kinds of human rights. They want the land for Israel without any Palestinians in it. These groups are the enemies of peace, the enemies of justice, and the enemies

of reconciliation—all in the name of Christ and of their sick, heretical ideologies.

I believe it is the duty of Lutheran colleges and universities to help the future generation develop the spirit of discernment in order to understand the difference between sound theology and fanatic theology. It is our duty to educate open-minded, moderate human beings who are sensitive and open to other cultures and other people. By doing this, we can keep humanity from failing into hopeless xenophobia and be responsible stewards in this world, where we are only visitors.

### **Conclusion**

You might ask, "What can we do for you?"

I remember when I was in Finland studying theology, I learned that Lutheran colleges in the U.S. gave one scholarship each year to prepare a student to build a civil society and democracy in his or her own country. I believe, with all modesty—being an oppressed person myself and looking at the wonderful opportunities your children have in the U.S.—that it would be so good if our Palestinian children could have similar opportunities.

Therefore I propose the following:

1. I propose that each year, each U.S. Lutheran college and university educate one Palestinian young person to come back and serve the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Lutheran churches and schools;
2. I propose that the U.S. Lutheran colleges and universities be places where our Palestinian Lutheran pastors and consecrated deacons can come to upgrade their knowledge and skills in theology, in practical ministry and in focusing our Lutheran identity;
3. I propose that the U.S. Lutheran colleges and universities also be places where our Lutheran school teachers and administrative staffs can come to upgrade their educational and administrative skills;
4. I propose that we exchange visits on the college and university levels, so that our Palestinian Lutheran pastors and administrators come to share their knowledge, experience and skills with you. We invite you to come to Palestine and Israel for sabbaticals and study, to learn about us and our churches and schools, to stay with us. In this regard, I want to mention Dar al-Kalima Lutheran Academy in Bethlehem for theology, music and the arts,

and also Abraham's House in Beit Jala, which is a study and reconciliation center for all three religions. It also is a lovely guest house. In addition, there are ELCJ study and participation opportunities in Jerusalem, Beit Sahour, Ramallah and Amman, Jordan.

"The fields are white unto harvest," Jesus said, "but the laborers are few." (Matt. 9:37) It is the responsibility and

the privilege of Lutheran colleges and universities to prepare the people of God, not only in the U.S. but also people of God in other civilizations, cultures and traditions, to be equipped and qualified to work in God's Kingdom of love, justice, hope, peace, reconciliation, and salvation on this earth.

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CALIFORNIA LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY  
FAITH AND LIFE CONFERENCE 2004

## **Reaping As We Sow? Youth Crime and Juvenile Justice**

Our society and our young people, in particular, are increasingly threatened by the alarming rise in youth crime. How do we develop more effective means of preventing youth crime? Can we manage our juvenile justice system more effectively and humanely than we do? How can our schools, churches, and families work together to offer young people genuine alternatives to criminal activity? Join with experts to learn about and discuss these issues.

**Saturday, March 27, 2004, 9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.**  
**Samuelson Chapel, CLU Campus**  
***[www.clunet.edu/faithlife2004](http://www.clunet.edu/faithlife2004)***

A program of the Segerhammar Center for Faith  
and Culture at California Lutheran University,  
co-sponsored by the CLU department of  
Criminal Justice and Sociology.

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