

THE CONTRIBUTION OF PASTORAL INSTITUTES FOR AN INCULTURATED AND CONTEXTUALIZED MINISTRY

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the contribution of pastoral institutes for an inculturated and contextualized ministry in the non-Western local churches. The treated pastoral institutes in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Oceania have played an outstanding role in implementing the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II in their respective local churches by moving towards an inculturated Christian faith and church and a contextualized Christian and ecclesial praxis. By following the Vatican II appeal to read and scrutinize the signs of the times, they played a catalytic function in the local non-Western churches to evangelize and to develop a meaningful ministry and participatory community approach, not only for ordained ministers but also for the major part of God's people, the laity.

With regard to inculturation, every Local Church or Particular Church should take the initiative, enjoy the freedom, and be equipped and committed to indigenize all the aspects of its life and all the activities of its mission with reference to its context and culture: Contextualization and inculturation. –D. S. Amalorpavadass¹

Towards an Inculturated Christian Faith and Church and a Contextualized Christian and Ecclesial Praxis

The last century saw a gradual process of recognizing the various cultural and religious traditions worldwide. Christians and their churches and the theological reflections they produced were challenged to draw the consequences of this development. From a Eurocentric attitude and thinking, Christians, their churches, and theologians were challenged to find a new understanding of the human cultures and religions. Vatican II was the watershed event for Catholic Christianity; a way back to previous one-sided concepts was, with the promulgation of the decrees of Vatican II, no longer possible.

“Many Christians, especially from the majority world, have come to realize that the theologies they have received from Euro-American churches and missionaries or from Euro-American theological textbooks hardly connect with their experiences and situations.”² Therefore, “Contextualization proceeds from this realization and asserts that theology must not only be rooted in the biblical story, but it must also engage the concrete (local) realities in which Christians find themselves. On the other hand, contextualization recognizes the plurality of local churches and the diversity of theologies in the worldwide body of Christ.”³

Catholic missiologists have promoted the term “inculturation,” but the Theological Education Fund Ministry Program (TEF) of the World Council of Churches favored the term “contextualization.” Of course, both terms stress different aspects but both terms should not be confused with each other. The

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1. D. S. Amalorpavadass, *Gospel and Culture: Evangelization and Inculturation*, FABC Papers No. 15, 23; D. S. Amalorpavadass, *Gospel and Culture: Evangelization and Inculturation* (Bangalore: NBCLC, 1978).
 2. T. D. Gener, “Contextualization,” in W. A. Dyrness and V.-M. Kärkkäinen (eds.), *Global Dictionary of Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 192–96, at 192.
 3. Ibid.

American Catholic theologian Robert Schreiter prefers instead of these terms, the term *local theology*.

The term *contextualization* “goes beyond indigenization and stresses the prophetic or critical function of doing theology as it engages in changing society.”⁴

The term *inculturation* “is concerned with the progress of proclaiming and explaining the gospel in a language a particular people understands (de Mesa 1979). It expresses the process by which the church becomes inserted in a given culture in a transformative way (Crollius).”⁵

For the mission of the pastoral institutes, all three terms have their relevance; the concrete task will show what term is more suitable, but even in such cases, the other two terms remain relevant for each project of a pastoral institute because the vision and mission statements of pastoral institutes contain elements of all three terms. The pastoral institute takes a position between academic scholastic research and concrete ministry at the service of humanity. Therefore, they often use the *See – Judge – Act* methodology as an interdisciplinary method to move theory into practice. This methodology was developed by Joseph Cardijn (1862–1967) for the Young Christian Workers movement he had founded in the 1920s in Belgium. Most of the Plenary Assemblies of the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM) applied this methodology to the most recent one of Aparecida in 2007. The methodologies used by pastoral institutes like the Pastoral Theological Institute for Latin (ITEPAL), Bogota; East Asian Pastoral Institute (EAPI), Manila; the Lumko Institute, South Africa; the AMECEA Pastoral Institute (API) at Eldoret, Kenya; and the Melanesian Institute for Pastoral and Socio-cultural Service (MI), Goroka, Papua New Guinea, have to a certain extent used this

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4. Ibid. For more literature on contextualization, see: D. Flemming, *Contextualization in the New Testament: Patterns for Theology and Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005).
 5. Ibid. For more literature on inculturation, see: M. Dhavamony, *Christian Theology of Inculturation*, Documenta Missionalia – 24 (Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1977); A. R. Crollius, “What Is So New About Inculturation?” in *Inculturation: Working Papers 1*, ed. A. R. Crollius and T. Nkerahimigo (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1984); K. Krämer and K. Vellguth, eds., *Inculturation: God’s Presence in Cultures*, One World Theology – 12 (Quezon City, PH: Claretian Publications, 2019); H. Waldenfels, “Contextuality and Inculturation,” in Krämer and Vellguth, *Inculturation*, 195–204; C.C. Udeani and M. Udeani, “Boldly Trusting in the Transforming Power of Contextuality,” in Krämer and Vellguth, *Inculturation*, 221–28; J. M. Prior, “Interculturality: Appreciating the Process Promoted by the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences,” in Krämer and Vellguth, *Inculturation*, 257–65.

methodology. Lumko, EAPI, API, and others were also inspired by the educational approach of Paolo Freire (1921–1997).⁶

Being “inserted in a given culture in a transformative way” was for sure the aim of all the work the pastoral institutes did. With their work, they promoted the need of doing theology at all levels of the church, not just for the academicians, but for all the people of God. The teaching, research, and publications of pastoral institutes have laid a foundation for doing and writing local theologies.

The Church’s Task to Evangelize

“The appeal to recognize the Signs of the times belongs,” according to Hans Waldenfels, “to the most important impulses of Vatican II.”⁷ *Gaudium et Spes* (*GS*) even starts with the programmatic sentence:

To carry out such a task, the Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. Thus, in language intelligible to each generation, she can respond to the perennial questions which men ask about this present life and the life to come, and about the relationship of the one to the other (*GS*, 4).

Pope John Paul II was convinced of the need for a new evangelization. In his mission encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* (*RM*) of January 1991, after explaining the need and purpose of first evangelization and pastoral care, he writes:

Thirdly, there is an intermediate situation, particularly in countries with ancient Christian roots, and occasionally in the younger Churches as well, where entire groups of the baptized have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel. In this case what is needed is a “new evangelization” or a “re-evangelization” (*RM*, 33).

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6. His most important writings are *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1970); *Education: The Practice of Freedom* (London: Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative, 1976); *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1994).
 7. H. Waldenfels, “Zeichen der Zeit,” in M. Delgado and M. Sievernich (eds.), *Die großen Metaphern des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils: Ihre Bedeutung für heute* (Freiburg: Herder, 2013), 119.

The *Instrumentum Laboris* of the Synod of Bishops in 2012 on *The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith* says in the introduction:

The goal of evangelization today is, as always, the transmission of the Christian faith. This task primarily concerns communities of Jesus's disciples which are organized into particular Churches... Evangelization in general is the everyday work of the Church. With the assistance of the Holy Spirit, this so-called ordinary evangelizing activity can be endowed with renewed vigor. New methods and new forms of expression are needed to convey to the people of today the perennial truth of Jesus Christ, forever new and the source of all newness.⁸

What does mean? Let us look at what John Gorski, a North American missiologist, who worked most of his missionary life in Bolivia, Latin America, and who founded a department of mission studies at the Catholic University of La Paz, has to say about *new evangelization*:

In order to understand the term “new evangelization,” we have to understand first how the concept of “mission” has evolved, for it was in the context of clarifying the meaning of mission that Pope John Paul II officially introduced the concept of “new evangelization” into the Catholic Church’s vocabulary. We can trace the development of the term, starting with the Second Vatican Council. When the Council centered mission on the evangelization of peoples rather than the geographical expansion of the Church, it brought about a transition from territorial to a situational idea of mission.⁹

The renewed missionary activity of the church should also include baptized Christians who drifted away or never experienced an introduction into the Christian faith. Therefore, the document just mentioned says:

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8. Synod of Bishops, *Instrumentum Laboris*, available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20120619_instrumentum-xiii_en.html (accessed March 17, 2020).
 9. J. F. Gorski, MM, “From ‘Mission’ to ‘New Evangelization’: The Origins of a Challenging Concept,” available as PDF at <http://www.maryknollvocations.org/mission> and <http://www.sedosmission.org/web/en/latest-articles> (accessed March 17, 2020).

The new evangelization is primarily directed to these people so that they can rediscover the beauty of their Christian faith and the joy of a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus in the Church and the community of the faithful.¹⁰

Towards an Inculturated Christian Faith and Contextualized Ministry and Practical Theology

The pastoral institutes in Asia, Africa, Oceania, and Latin America have played an outstanding role to translate the vision and spirit of the Second Vatican Council to their non-Western churches. The claim of a Western Theology to be a universal theology as the only leading theology collapsed with the spirit of Vatican II and the new contextual theologies that came up or arose or flourished in the post-council creative period. Latin American Liberation theology can justly claim to be the first of such a contextual theology; soon followed by Asian, African, and South Pacific theologies. “Self-confident local Churches have emerged and – starting from their pastoral visions – have developed their own pastoral approaches and methods. In many countries the pastoral institutions play a key role in this regard.”¹¹ Rahner was right when he claimed that with Vatican II, a new period of the Church as being truly universal had begun.

The National Catechetical, Biblical, Liturgical Center (NBCLC) of the Indian Bishops Conference located in Bangalore was graced with having Father D. S. Amalorpavadass as its founding director.¹² He is one of the most outstanding indigenous theologians and was able to create awareness and animate with his great imagination and creative thinking the process of inculturation into the churches in India, which inspired churches all over Asia and worldwide.

Even the EAPI of the Jesuits in Manila also played such a role, but in a different way, for the region of Asia and the Pacific. Even if its founder and first directors were not of Asian stock, the EAPI animated thousands of its renewal

10. Ibid.

11. From http://en.pastoral-global.org/index.php/Pastoral_Global (accessed March 15, 2020). This webpage has listed 14 pastoral centers in Latin America, 17 in Africa, and 40 in churches of the Asia-Pacific region.

12. P. B. Steffen, “An Indian Christian Prophet: Duraiswami Simon Amalorpavadass (1932–1990),” *Nurt SVD* 52:1 (2018), 209–25.

course participants to be sensitive to the process of inculturation and to construct contextualized ministries beyond the clergy-laity divide.

The Lumko Institute of the South African Bishops' Conference played such a role in promoting awareness of inculturation in a very unique and special way. Lumko's down-to-earth approach aimed to show ordained and non-ordained church ministers how they could promote concretely an inculturated church by constructing relevant and practical teaching material like the series, "Training for Community Ministries." The Lumko posters and material were ordered by parishes in all continents and had therefore a worldwide input.

The Pallottine Animation Center in Nagpur (PAC), India, adopted the Lumko approach to promote Small Christian Communities (SCCs) and the bible-sharing methods as its powerful center to make the church more rooted and inculturated in Indian soil.

The MI was perceived and always supported in its now 50 years of existence by Divine Word Missionaries. But they were prudent in making it an Institute created by the Higher Religious Superiors, since the Bishops were at that time not willing to take the responsibility for this Institute. The MI finally even developed into an Ecumenical Institute where all the mainline churches became members. The research projects of the MI were always marked, besides its theological and pastoral orientation, by a strong sociological and even more so a cultural-anthropological dimension and outlook. Therefore, their research projects on the local church, on Melanesian culture and religion, family life, and witchcraft and sorcery touched, on a deeper level, the itching questions all ministers of the different churches were facing in their respective Christian communities. This research contribution to animate a process of inculturation and contextualization of ministerial approaches was unique worldwide and is seldom to be found in other countries and continents.

The Mission of the *Missionary People of God*

Leo Karrer, a Swiss lay theologian, professor emeritus of Pastoral Theology of the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, makes remarkable comments on the vocation and significance of the laity for the Church's mission:

...on the level of Christian action and pastoral work there are no spheres which are in principle, closed to laity. The whole people of God, rather, is the subject of ecclesiastical life. From this flows all

Christians' basic participation in and co-responsibility for the church and its salvific mission in the world... The laity participates in all essential functions of the church and of life in the parishes and communities: evangelization with its aspects of awakening and deepening the faith... Vatican II places the particular charism of each Christian in the center of its teaching about the church as people of God. In this context the “fundamental-pneumatic” level of Christian life is to be distinguished from the “charismatic-functional” level of ecclesiastical activity. The variety of charisms is an expression and consequence of Christian vitality; and the ministries of the church are at the service of this vitality... In the future it might be necessary to look for and organize the structural relationship between laity and clergy on the basis of a pneumatic-fundamental equality and a charismatic-functional differentiation... The question of the laity as the question of the church shows clearly that Christian praxis must not be confined to the church itself but must understand itself as a missionary openness to the world and “consume” itself serving humanity.¹³

Pope Francis makes his opinion clear to everyone in his Apostolic Exhortation *The Joy of the Gospel* (2013):

In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt 28:19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients. The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized. Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization; indeed, anyone, who has truly experienced God's saving love does not need much time or lengthy training to go out and proclaim that love. (*Evangelii Gaudium* [EG] 120)

13. L. Karrer, “Laity,” in K. Müller, T. Sundermeier, S. B. Bevans, and R. H. Blies (eds.), *Dictionary of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), 251–54, at 252, 253, and 254.

Network Pastoral Asia (NPA)

Missio-Aachen, as the Pontifical Mission Society is called in Germany, is not only financially assisting the former mission churches, which it has supported since it was founded in 1832 by the medical doctor, Ferdinand Hahn, a lay man. Hahn followed the French lay woman Pauline Marie Jaricot. In 1819, Jaricot founded a missionary association in Lyon which, on May 2, 1922, was to become the Society of the Propagation of the Faith. Initially it was the work of Catholic laity, and a hundred years later it was under clerical control and was made pontifical to be put under the control of Propaganda Fide. From the beginning Missio-Aachen has supported initiatives to put the vision of Vatican II into practice.

These means were all ways to develop a contextualized theology and practice of an evangelizing ministry in the churches of Africa, Asia, and Oceania. Without this support the movement to establish pastoral institutes in those continents would not have been possible.

In recent years, the desire has arisen to intensify the relationship and friendship with the pastoral institutes in Africa, Asia, and Oceania and to enter into regular contacts beyond financial support. For this reason, the project Network Pastoral was started in 2010, initially as a research project. As part of this project, Missio contacted pastoral institutes all over the world and sent them a questionnaire especially tailored to different pastoral institutes in Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Latin America. The aim of the questionnaire was to acquire more precise information about the work of the pastoral institutes and to make the information available to all institutes so that they could inspire, be inspired by, and get into contact with one another.¹⁴

“The project ‘Netzwerk Pastoral,’ initiated by Missio in cooperation with Adveniat [the German funding organization supporting pastoral work in Latin American churches], invited pastoral institutes from all over the world to exchange their experiences, ideas and practices.”¹⁵ The questionnaire wanted to elaborate:

the hopes, dreams, and visions of these pastoral institutes in their local context. The pastoral aims the institutes pursue, the pastoral options the pastoral institutes feel obliged to take, the pastoral areas

14. K. Vellguth, “Missio, The Network Pastoral, and the Pastoral Institutes in Asia,” *East Asian Pastoral Review (EAPR)* 50.4 (2013): 313.

15. See http://en.pastoral-global.org/index.php/Pastoral_Global (accessed March 15, 2020).

the institutes focus on the pastoral processes the institutes have initiated and accompanied, and the pastoral programs the institutes have developed.¹⁶

The so-called mission churches of the 1950s and 1960s, in their stages of becoming mature local churches, felt the need to have centers for a profound study of the local cultures and societies to prepare new ways for mission and ministry which would enable them to evangelize their people and cultures in a contextualized and inculturated way.¹⁷

The need for pastoral and cultural centers must be set in relation to the lack of an in-depth dialogue between local and Christian religiosity. Their mission is to overcome the rift between culture and religion. The mission of Pastoral and Cultural Centers of the Church is always, with the help of their respective methods and aims, to evangelize.¹⁸

The contextual theologian Hermann Janssen¹⁹ provides us with a key which indicates the different levels of doing theology that explains the need and role of pastoral institutes.

There is a theology of the seminar, the University, the pastoral institutes, the Conferences, and a basic narrative theology. All these levels make a proper contribution to theological developments that cannot – or possibly only partially – be taken into account by the other levels.²⁰

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16. Ibid., 314. Missio created a webpage in four languages listing all the pastoral institutes in the non-Western world: www.pastoral-global.org (accessed March 15, 2020).
 17. Cf. P. B. Steffen, “Places and Models of Formation for Mission and Ministry: Pastoral Institutes in Africa and Asia,” *Verbum SVD* 51.4 (2010): 423.
 18. P. B. Steffen, *Centers of Formation and Evangelizing Ministry: Pastoral Institutes in Oceania and Africa* (Sieburg: Franz Schmitt, 2014), 5; cf. K. Vellguth, *Kirche neu gestalten: Pastoralinstitute in Afrika, Asien und Ozeanien* (Paderborn: Bonifatius, 2017).
 19. P. B. Steffen, “Janssen, Hermann (1933–1998),” in *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon (BBKL)* XXXVI (2015): 643–50.
 20. H. Janssen, “Theologische Durchblicke – Entwicklungen und Ebenen der Theologie,” *Theologie der Gegenwart* 24 (1981): 121.

Under the concrete inspiration of Vatican II, centers and institutes emerged in the 1960s and 1970s in Africa, Asia, and Oceania, which can be divided into three basic categories:

- a) Biblical pastoral, catechetical, and liturgical institutes;
- b) Cultural institutes of the science of religions or anthropological-pastoral study;
- c) Centers of inter-religious dialogue.

Despite the diversity of staff, activities and objectives, these centers can be united by their main common functions. According to Hermann Janssen:

At a crucial time in church history, institutes and centers did fundamental preliminary work for a substantial theological process, namely the transition of the mission churches to independent local churches. The theology done by the institutes has therefore taken theological functions that are not perceived or only reluctantly by the seminary and university theology.²¹

Fifty years later, the pastoral institutes have developed a new role, in the local churches they are serving, in building up a participatory church of the people of God in the process of being evangelized, and becoming, as a Christian community, a witness of the Good News to all members of human society. In this context, they are called to contribute to the Church's mission of new evangelization.²²

The Pastoral Theological Institute for Latin America (ITEPAL)

In 2014, ITEPAL, founded in 1974 by CELAM, celebrated 40 years of service to the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean in the field of training, that is, the formation of pastoral workers. It also contributed to a contextualized theological reflection and building up of a new practical Latin American theology at the service of the challenging work of new evangelization.

The challenging task of *new evangelization* in Latin America and the Caribbean countries demands the proper training of pastoral agents with adequate critical sense, a profound evangelical experience, and a great apostolic commitment.

21. Ibid.

22. P. B. Steffen, "Die Vernetzung der Pastoralinstitute in Asien: Als Lerngemeinschaft sich den neuen Aufgaben stellen," *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft* 102 (2018): 104–13.

ITEPAL is at the service of the many pastoral centers in the countries under the care of CELAM. ITEPAL also offers a licentiate study in pastoral theology and diploma courses in various pastoral fields, since its affiliation with the Pontifical Bolivian University (UPB) in Medellin and the Jesuit and Franciscan University in Bogota.²³

From ITEPAL to CEBITEPAL: “In 1987, the Center for Publications was born for the publication and diffusion of ecclesial documents, especially those of Latin America; in 2004, the Pastoral Observatory (OBSEPAL) was created and, in the same year, the Biblical Pastoral Center (CEBIPAL). They have had a relatively independent but complementary life since their headquarters are located on the same premises as ITEPAL. Since the XXXIII Assembly of CELAM held in Montevideo in May 2011, the study of the unification of these centers, including ITEPAL, began. By mandate of this Assembly in Montevideo, the Executive Secretaries of the departments and the directors of these centers, under the coordination of the General Secretariat, deepened the proposal during 2012. At the Assembly in Panama (2013), the unification of the centers was approved, and thus a new creature was born, called CEBITEPAL. As its name implies, it is an organism of CELAM at the service of biblical, theological and pastoral reflection in Latin America and the Caribbean, which has as its center the Word of God and as its reference point the social and ecclesial reality of our peoples, structured in three schools: Escuela Bíblico-Pastoral, Escuela Teológico-Pastoral, and Escuela Socio-Pastoral.”²⁴

The Melanesian Institute for Pastoral and Socio-cultural Service (MI)

The MI, founded in 1969, is an ecumenical institute where not only the Catholic Church, but also the Anglican, United, and Lutheran churches are involved.²⁵

23. Cf. Guillermo Melguizo Yepes, “Las Bodas de Rubí del Itepal: Los primeros cuarenta años del Instituto Teológico Pastoral del Celam (ITEPAL),” *Medellin* XL, 157.1 (2014) 9–42; P. B. Steffen, “Gli Istituti pastorali dell’Asia e dell’America Latina,” *Nurt SVD* 46.1 (2012): 55–77; see also <http://www.celam.org/cebitepal/> (accessed July 3, 2020).

24. Melguizo Yepes, “Las Bodas de Rubí del Itepal,” 40–41.

25. I occupied myself the first time with pastoral institutes and especially with the MI in my licentiate thesis researched and written in 1988–1989: “Die Bedeutung von Pastoral Instituten in jungen Ortskirchen am Beispiel des Melanesischen Instituts,” licentiate thesis under Prof. P. Jesús López-Gay, SJ, Pontificia Università Gregoriana, May 1989, 115 pp.

According to the first director of the MI, Dr. Hermann Janssen, such institutes in a specific country enter into a more intense dialogue with non-Christian religions and cultural traditions. He sees them as a needed third place of doing theology and being better contextualized for that service to the Christian communities in a concrete country. “The theology done by the institutes has therefore taken theological functions that are not pursued or only reluctantly by the seminary and university theology.”²⁶ The MI has always played a catalyzing function, because the MI has always been a stimulator for change and for renewal in the Churches of Papua New Guinea and all of Melanesia. In the long and complex transition period from mission Churches to local Churches, the MI understood that its mission was in assisting all the expatriate and local Church personnel to find a better understanding of all the Melanesian religious traditions and to help build bridges between the Christian message the Churches stand for in their various traditions and the Melanesian people, who want to recognize and understand both traditions they have received and inherited.²⁷ The latest MI mission statement indicates the broad spectrum MI has made its own:

The [MI] is an ecumenical research, teaching, and publishing body in Papua New Guinea that: is mandated to focus on pastoral and socio-cultural issues; engages in ongoing dialogue between Christian values and Melanesian cultures; promotes peace and reconciliation, dignity and respect, and social, economic, and ecological justice.²⁸

The East Asian Pastoral Institute (EAPI)

“The EAPI is a typical international, inter-regional pastoral institute. It trains primarily multipliers in the ecclesial-pastoral ministry for the Asia-Pacific region.”²⁹ The real pioneer for such centers was the Austrian Jesuit Johannes Hofinger (1905–1984)³⁰ who in 1952 opened the Institute of Missionary

26. Ibid., 86.

27. Cf. P. B. Steffen, “From Church to Mission: Assessment and Perspectives of the Catholic Church in Mainland New Guinea after Its First Hundred Years,” *Verbum SVD* 37.1–2 (1996): 231–58.

28. Quoted in Steffen, *Centers of Formation and Evangelizing Ministry*, 93.

29. P. B. Steffen, “The Mission and Ministry of the East Asian Pastoral Institute for the Local Churches in Asia and Oceania,” *Word and Worship* 51.1 (Bangalore: NBCLC, 2018): 60–83, here 60.

30. P. B. Steffen, “HOFINGER, Johannes SJ (1905–1984),” in *BBKL XXXIV* (2013): 584–96.

Apologetics in Manila, which in 1961 developed into the EAPI, which is associated with the adjacent Jesuit University, Ateneo.³¹ Hofinger became the most influential pioneer in the field of preparing the ground for a renewed and adequate formation of all pastoral workers via the liturgical, biblical, and catechetical-pastoral renewal before, during, and after Vatican II.³² Fr. Johannes Hofinger developed an astonishing activity. He lectured all over Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas; he organized the International Catechetical-liturgical Study Weeks of Nijmegen, Holland (1959); Eichstätt, Germany (1960); Bangkok, Thailand (1962); Katigondo, Uganda (1964); Manila, Philippines (1967); and Medellin, Colombia (1968).³³

The center offers “courses, workshops and seminars with experts on a variety of pertinent post-Vatican II questions: Scripture, Liturgy, Religions in Asia, cultural anthropology, pastoral sociology, pastoral psychology, linguistics, catechetics, theology of mission, spirituality, visual aids, film, social development, modern philosophy, group dynamics, etc.”³⁴

So far, the EAPI had up to now the following eight directors, all have been Jesuit priests: Johannes Hofinger (1955–1965), China missionary from Austria; Alphonse Nebreda (1965–1978), Japan missionary from Spain; Adolfo Nicolás (1978–1984),³⁵ Japan missionary from Spain; Tom O’Gorman (1984–1989); Geoffrey King (1989–2004); Jeyaraj Rasiah (2004–2010); and Arthur Leger (June 2010–December 2017) and Peter Pojol (2018–2020). “All these Directors had a specific impact on the way the EAPI was conducted and how it functioned according to the different theological formation and orientation, characters and leadership capacities and the goal of its leaders. The founding director differed quite a lot in his theological background and in his personality from his immediate successor for instance.”³⁶

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31. Steffen, “The Mission and Ministry of the East Asian Pastoral Institute,” 60–83.
 32. Steffen, “Places and Models of Formation for Mission and Ministry,” 426–38.
 33. Ibid., 427; Cf. M. Warren, “Introductory Overview,” in: M. Warren (ed.), *Source Book for Modern Catechetics* (Winona, MN: Saint Mary’s Press – Christian Brothers Publications, 1983), 27. See also <http://www.eapi.org.ph/resources/eapr/east-asian-pastoral-review-2006/volume-43-2006-number-2/challenges-to-the-churches-in-asia-today/> (accessed April 03, 2015).
 34. J. M. Calle, “In Memoriam Alfonso Nebreda, S.J., Founder of the East Asian Pastoral Institute,” *EAPR* (2005), 1–2.
 35. P. B. Steffen, “NEBREDÁ, Alfonso M., SJ (1926–2004),” *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon* 38 (2017): 1007–18.
 36. Steffen, “The Mission and Ministry of the East Asian Pastoral Institute,” 60–83, here 77.

In the last 50 years, the EAPI offered to lay, religious, and ordained pastoral leaders, primarily from the churches of Asia and the Pacific, an integrated program for growth in ministry and spirituality. It provides theological and spiritual renewal, training in liturgy and in the proclamation of the Word. Because it remains an inter-cultural, co-educational community, the program sharpens sensitivities and widens the understanding of social, cultural, and political situations as experienced today in Asia and the Pacific. It remains responsive to the ever renewed invitations and challenges of mission.³⁷ “The EAPI was since its inception focused on renewal of the pastoral and missionary ministry of the Church. To achieve such a renewal it aimed at a theological, pastoral and spiritual updating of the ordained and non-ordained ministers of the Church including priests, religious and laity alike.”³⁸ The EAPI is today a center for the ecclesial-pastoral renewal of the Asian-Pacific local churches and it also contributes to the exchange of pastoral experiences with other local churches.³⁹

To this day, the EAPI is a center of the awakenings of the Second Vatican Council and inter-culturality rooted in the Asian context. The EAPI sees itself as an institute at the service of a missionary transformation of Christians, non-Christians, local churches, and the various societies in Asia and Oceania. Pastoral continuing education courses as well as units are offered psycho-spiritual renewal, for example during a sabbatical year. Especially recently developed innovative courses show that the questions of leadership and pastoral missionary practice are of great significance at this Pastoral Institute aiming at being always responding to the present needs of Asian-Pacific church communities and societies.⁴⁰

The National Biblical Catechetical Liturgical Center (NBCLC)

The Church in India developed with the NBCLC, founded in 1967 in Bangalore by the Indian Bishops Conference, another Asian Center which, with the charism of its founder Fr. D. S. Amalorpavadas (1932–1990), contributed in

37. Calle, “In Memoriam Alfonso Nebreda,” 1–2.

38. Steffen, “The Mission and Ministry of the East Asian Pastoral Institute,” 60–83, here 61.

39. Cf. Steffen, “Die Bedeutung von Pastoral Instituten,” 16.

40. Cf. Vellguth, *Kirche neu gestalten*, 17; Steffen, “The Mission and Ministry of the East Asian Pastoral Institute,” 82–83.

an outstanding way to the inculturation of the Christian message into the Indian context.⁴¹ The founder was convinced that a local church should not copy foreign church models and theologies but develop creatively their own model, theology, liturgy, catechetics, ministries, and community life.⁴²

If the Local Church is considered as only a part of the universal Church and as a lower administrative unit, the attitude of the Local Church will be one of importing and copying, of implementing orders and conforming to what comes from the top, in a passive mentality of receiving. There will be uniformity and sameness everywhere; but it will be irrelevant and cease to be a Church. On the other hand, if every Local Church contains the full mystery of Christ and expresses it in its socio-cultural milieu, then there will be creativity and originality.⁴³

The Center spread with its courses a new vision of the Mission of the Church in India and it can be therefore considered as one of the main places giving a relevant and up-dated missiological education to lay, religious, and priests alike. This center embodies three vital aspects of the ministry of the Word. NBCLC promoted an integral pastoral renewal in all pastoral ministry fields (Biblical, Catechetical, and Liturgical). “To make the church in India relevant for its times, the center engages in the ministry of the Word that is proclaimed for the transformation of Church and society, thus promoting new evangelization.”⁴⁴

Fifty years after Vatican II, a further development of the NBCLC is necessary so that it can have an influence on the life of the Church in India in the future. A new *modus operandi* has to be developed for this. One of the main reasons for this further development is that the three *sui juris* Catholic churches in India (Latin rite, Syro-Malabar, and Syro-Malankara) create their own structures to strengthen Bible work, liturgy, and catechesis.⁴⁵

41. Steffen, “An Indian Christian Prophet,” 209–25.

42. P. B. Steffen, “Incarnating the Spirit of Vatican II in Indian Soil: The Contributions of Fr. D. S. Amalorpavadass (1932–1990) to Indian Theology and Church Renewal,” *Isbnani Documentation and Mission Digest* 36.1 (2018): 43–56.

43. D. S. Amalados, *Gospel and Culture. Evangelization and Inculturation* (Bangalore: NBCLC, 1978), 64.

44. F. L. Macalinao, “In this issue...,” in *EAPR* 50.4 (2013): 308.

45. Vellguth, “Missio,” 317; cf. Fernandes, “The NBCLC: A Renewal Mission and Role,” *EAPR* 50.4 (2013): 337–54.

This development started in 1992 and forced NBCLC to redefine its new role. This is expressed by a newly created vision statement.

The NBCLC is a national Pastoral Center under the auspices of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) that promotes an integral pastoral renewal in all fields so as to make the church in India relevant for its times. It achieves this objective by the ministry of the word that is proclaimed for the transformation of the church and society, thus promoting the new evangelization. It achieves this objective by the ministry of the Word that is proclaimed for the transformation of society⁴⁶

“The Indian bishops could not have found after Vatican II a better ‘launching pad’ for a renewed Church than this.”⁴⁷ The center always aimed at establishing a vital relationship between the Word of God and the Indian cultures. Therefore, “inculturation has been always a constant dimension of all research and pastoral activities initiated by the center.”⁴⁸ The last NBCLC director makes a balanced evaluation of the mission of the center:

The NBCLC has been evolving over the years. It can no longer function the way it started in 1967 as a pioneering and the sole institution in the country for the renewal of the Church in India in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. The national center, with the support of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, occupies a pivotal role of being an institution that spearheads reflection and renewal of the pastoral life of the Church.⁴⁹

The AMECEA Pastoral Institute (API)

The emerging reality of the Church in Africa can be described and understood by explaining two paradigm shifts that took place after

46. Fernandes, “The NBCLC,” 340.

47. P. Puthanangady, “Foreword,” in: G. van Leeuwen, *Fully Indian – Authentically Christian: A Study of the First Fifteen Years of the NBCLC (1967–1982)*, Bangalore – India in the Light of the Theology of Its Founder D.S. Amalorpavadas (Bangalore: NBCLC, 1990), ix.

48. Ibid.

49. Fernandes, “The NBCLC,” 353–54.

the Second Vatican Council: a) from *plantatio ecclesiae* to the local Church; b) from *salus animarum* to incarnation of the faith.⁵⁰

The API, founded in 1967 in Gaba, Uganda, and transferred in 1975 to Eldoret in Kenya, became such a place to assist the AMACEA (African Member Episcopal Churches in Eastern Africa) in becoming an authentically African local church with its own contextualized Practical Theology and Theology of Ministry.

API has since then contributed with its courses, research, and publications to the development of an authentic African Practical and Contextual Theology.

From the very beginning the Institute has three main tasks: **First:** create the ministry for education and formation of priests, religious, and laity. **Second:** conduct research in the field of contextualization and inculturation of the Christian faith in the local churches of Eastern Africa. **Third:** promote theological and pastoral reflections, which are made available to a larger audience through the work of “Gaba Publications,” especially with the “African Ecclesial Review” (AFER) and the “Spearhead Monograph Series.”⁵¹

The vision statement of AMECEA says: “A Holy Spirit filled family of God, committed to Holistic Evangelization and Integral Development.”⁵²

The main theme of the 14th Plenary Assembly of AMECEA held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, from 14th to 27th July 2002, was: “Deeper Evangelization in the New Millennium.” In their resolution called “The Way forward,” it says:

43. We recommend that a program on the theological and pastoral value of Small Christian Communities be included in the normal curriculum of the Major Seminaries and houses of formation for men and women. This recommendation applies in a special way to our own AMECEA Institutions (CUEA, API and Bakanja).

44. All agents of evangelization, especially priests, should be exposed to pastoral programs on Small Christian Communities.

50. K. Chieslikiewisz, “Small Christian Communities: Pastoral Priority and a Vital Force for Evangelization in the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania),” dissertation at the Pontifical Lateran University, Rome 2004, 15.

51. Steffen, “Places and Models of Formation for Mission and Ministry,” 433; see also Steffen, *Centers of Formation and Evangelizing Ministry*.

52. Quoted in Steffen, *Centers of Formation and Evangelizing Ministry*, 107–8.

They could draw very good inspiration from the pastoral material and method proposed by the Lumko Pastoral Institute of South Africa or other similar methods.⁵³

API was able to implement the vision of AMECEA and of Vatican II as a communion church, and developed an adequate and contextualized training approach for priests, religious, and laity. Therefore, API always gave special emphasis to training all pastoral workers to be efficient promoters of SCCs as places of authentic African Christian life.

The Lumko Pastoral Institute

The Institute of Missiology Lumko, as it was named in the beginning, or Pastoral Institute Lumko, had always a strong focus on missiological education. In its first decade of existence since 1962, this missiological education was focused mainly on the training in African languages, music, and culture(s) of expatriate missionaries coming to South Africa. After Fritz Lobinger took over the institute in 1972, Lumko made a paradigmatic change to the community model of church as being missionary by its very nature. Together with Oswald Hirmer, another *Fidei Donum* priest from Regensburg diocese, Germany, both developed a set of practical training manuals called *Training for Community Ministries*. With its promotion of a participatory church model, Lumko made a widespread impact not only in South Africa, but also all over Africa, Asia, and the Pacific.⁵⁴

What specific contribution has Lumko Institute made to the Church? Oswald Hirmer summarizes the Lumko contribution in seven points which he called “impulses.” He considered that Lumko gave a new impetus to the renewal of the pastoral mission and ministry of the Local Church, principally at the level where the Christians live and come together to be built up into a Christ-centered community by the Word of God, which is called to promote God’s Reign in the world.

The first impulse: We are Church – Lumko awareness programs. The aim of these awareness programs was to make all members of the Church aware that the co-responsibility and cooperation of all Christians is not only needed but is both just and right by the very vocation a Christian receives at Baptism and Confirmation. The goal of all the programmes was to raise awareness among all

53. See <http://peresblancs.org/amecea1.htm> (accessed July 4, 2020).

54. P. B. Steffen, “Lumko Institute: Towards Building a Participatory Church,” *EAPR* 51.2 (2014): 109–39.

Christians, i.e., that they participate in the common responsibility of all Christians to continue Christ's mission in today's world.

The second impulse: To become a Christ-centered community through Gospel-sharing. There is no doubt that Lumko made an outstanding contribution to the renewal of the Church worldwide with various Bible-sharing methods. Bible-sharing became the heart of uncountable Small Christian or Neighbourhood communities. In Bible-sharing groups, the members experience that the Risen Lord is among them. In the atmosphere of having Jesus in their midst, the group members can open themselves to God and each other; they grow together as a community with Jesus Christ in their midst. The various Bible-sharing methods Lumko has developed are complementary to each other. Whereas some are geared more to individual awareness, others stress social awareness and the responsibility of the whole community in society.

The third impulse Lumko gave is the promotion of Small Christian Communities. The SCCs were not discovered by Lumko but they received through Lumko's programs – courses and training materials – a lot of support and promotion. The Lumko programs especially deepened the understanding of SCCs as the Church among the people where they live and where people can experience and practise their Christian faith.

The fourth impulse Lumko gave concerns the passing-on of faith. The 47 catechetical sessions for the Christian initiation of adults (RCIA) in Hirmer's book: "Our Journey Together," enable SCCs to deepen their Christian faith and empower them to accompany catechumens on their way to become full and mature members of the Church. The "Our Journey Together" sessions always start from life situations and the Word of God helps them to experience the presence of Jesus among the catechumens. The whole catechumenate is experienced not so much as lessons but as common steps forward on the way of faith.

The fifth impulse concerns the training of lay people in the parish. The Training for Ministries Series, like all the Lumko material, focuses on the training of lay people for pastoral service in the parish community. Here the Lumko approach aims especially to convey skills for the various services needed in a parish, e.g., funeral ministers, readers, communion ministers, prayer leaders, leading the liturgy without a priest, taking care of the sick, serving the neighbourhood. Instead of giving long theoretical explanations, the Lumko programs help to train through practical exercises connecting them to theological insights. The candidates are trained to live their service in the parish with inner conviction, joy, perseverance, and the conviction of being co-responsible for the evangelizing mission of the Church.

The *sixth impulse* of Lumko is the non-dominating leadership methodology. All the Lumko programs have to be seen and understood in their intended entirety, because they represent an underlying common intention to renew the leadership style in the parish community. Lumko proposes the service-leader and a so-called non-dominant leadership style, which allows the community members to be more than passive receivers. They learn to become active participants in their own faith journey which is accompanied and animated by the community leader. The non-dominant service-leader always aims to discover and promote the charisms to be found in the community. His pastoral ministry consists especially in the task of promoting together, with the whole Christian community, the unique vocation each community member has received from God. The Lumko understanding of a leader seeks to overcome the provider model and favors especially the leader as animator of the Christian community. The parish priest has a special role to play as pastoral overseer of the parish and presider at the Eucharist Celebration each Sunday, which binds all SCCs together in a communion of love, openness to each other and the wider Church on the diocesan and worldwide level. Christian solidarity is not only lived inside the Christian community, but reaches out to people who are in need of such solidarity. The parish priest has not only a liturgical and sacramental function, but he is particularly in demand as a formator of services or apostolates that lay people can perform in and outside the Christian community. Likewise, the parish priest's role as reconciler and mediator for reconciliation between competing and fighting groups and individuals in the parish should not be underestimated. With his special ministry to lead people closer to Jesus, he is himself a guarantor of unity in the parish.

The community members' individual gifts are not discouraged but enhanced because they are given the chance to grow in, with, and for the Christian community. At each stage, the training of community ministers needs the fraternal support and correction of the community as a whole and its leaders.⁵⁵

The Pallottine Animation Center (PAC)

The FABC has proved to be the most important fruit of Vatican II for the churches in Asia.⁵⁶ The FABC adopted the Lumko approach for their member churches all over Asia under the name AsIPA, the Asian Integral Pastoral

55. Cf. Ibid., 130–32.

56. Cf. G. Evers, "Challenges to the Churches in Asia Today," *EAPR* 43.2 (2006).

Approach, and in most of the dioceses in India under the name DIIPA, the Development Indian Integral Pastoral Approach.⁵⁷ Inspired by Fr. Oswald Hirmer, Fr. Thomas Vijay, SAC, founded the PAC in Nagpur in 1996. Since then, this Center is committed to the Lumko approach, training lay, religious, and priests in Gospel-sharing and the building up of SCCs.

The center envisions that the Church in India set up a new pastoral structure which starts from SCCs emphasizing the active participation of the people of God at all levels. It has been instrumental in popularizing this concept of grassroots home-based Church communities for the last 25 years and continues to focus on developing this vision and sustaining these communities all over the country.⁵⁸

PAC trains people from all over India in various Gospel-sharing methods and it trains lay leaders for SCCs. According to the founding director of PAC,

Promoting social justice and human development through SCCs is a long-term ministry and facilitating that transformation is a painfully slow and challenging task. The traditional mind-set of Church leaders and rigid structures hinder the process of establishing this “New Way of Being Church.”⁵⁹

The task of PAC is not going to become smaller since there are nowadays 68,000 SCCs spread out in more than 140 dioceses in India.

Asian Integral Pastoral Approach (AsIPA) and the Development Indian Integral Pastoral Approach (DIIPA)

Father Thomas Vijay was nominated by the Indian Bishops Conference as national coordinator of DIIPA. In 2013, the first National convention of the DIIPA movement was held in Goa with over 7,000 participants representing 68,000 SCCs all over India. I am convinced that via the AsIPA and DIIPA movements in the local churches of Asia, a new way of Church is lived which gives credible witness to the Christian faith to all Asians.

57. P. B. Steffen, “The Asian Pastoral Integral Approach: A Contextualized Model for the Evangelizing Mission of the Church,” *EAPR* 51.3 (2014): 213–30.

58. T. Vijay, “The Pallottine Animation Center of Nagpur,” *EAPR* 50.4 (2013): 355.

59. *Ibid.*, 362.

I am convinced that via the AsIPA and DIIPA movements, the local churches of Asia's **new way of Church** live and witness their live-enhancing faith as authentically being Asians and Christians.

AsIPA is *Asian* because it seeks to implement the vision articulated by the Asian Bishops and to face the realities of the Asian peoples that challenge the Church in Asia: our pluralism, the existence of the great Asian religions, the vast numbers of young people and their vitality, massive poverty, the women's movement, the ecological movement, etc.

Let me explain the meaning of AsIPA:

It is *Integral* in that it seeks to achieve a balance between the "spiritual" and the "social," between the individual and the community, between the hierarchical leadership and the co-responsibility of the laity. It is therefore integral in both its approach and its content.

It is *Pastoral* in that its goal is to implement the vision of the new way of being Church, and particularly to train lay people to carry out their mission in the Church and in the world. It thereby constitutes a demand that priests be trained to encourage the co-responsibility of the laity and to work in teams. This requires a new style of leadership.

It is an *Approach*. AsIPA is a process of realizing the vision of a participatory Church. It addresses the entire people of God. It is a pastoral approach, which is "Christ- and community-centered," allowing the participants of training courses to search for themselves and to experience a "New Way of Being Church."⁶⁰

This is possible because the theologians of this movement are developing a contextualized practical theology. The SCCs have become places where all members of the church are involved in giving joyful witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ and they are places of contextualized theological reflection.⁶¹ This theological reflection always has to do with the practical and spiritual dimension of the mission of the Church and how the Christian communities and the local church can participate creatively as a part of the "pilgrim Church" which "is missionary by her very nature" in "the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit" (*Ad Gentes* [AG] 2) and being "fully present to all persons and peoples" (AG 6).

60. See <http://www.fabc.org/offices/olaity/asipa.html> (accessed March 03, 2020).

61. K. Krämer and K. Vellguth (eds.), *Small Christian Communities: Fresh Stimulus for a Forward-looking Church* (Quezon City, PH: Claretian, 2013).

Concluding remarks

This reflection tries to show the tremendous role the pastoral institutes played after Vatican II in the promotion of the process of inculturation, contextualization, and interculturality in their task of formation of priests, religious, and laity in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania. Without their contribution, the local churches would not have made such progress towards an inculturated Christian faith and a contextualized ministry and even a contextualized practical theology. Their specific expertise makes these institutes also the best places for preparing all people involved in pastoral ministry for new approaches to witness and proclaim the Good News of Jesus to non-evangelized baptized Christians. This was always done in the non-Western world, i.e., pastoral institutes as intercultural communities built by mutual understanding and exchange beyond the culture background of the staff members and students alike.

Pastoral institutes have contributed significantly to developing a contextualized practical theology. A “practical theology entails experiences and aspirations of those who suffer and experience suffering in their day to day existence. It should be grounded in the past, relies on the present and moves ahead believing in the redemptive power of the future.”⁶²

Nowadays practical or pastoral theologians, church leaders and the members of the Christian communities themselves are aware of their task to respond in the light of the Gospel to the new challenges they are confronted with and to get involved in the Church’s threefold mission of first evangelization, pastoral care and new evangelization.

Therefore, praxis-oriented theology and reflection process start from a commitment to create a just, sustainable, egalitarian and inclusive society and we must strive to make it more meaningful, humane and universal... Thus, a praxis-based theology becomes a liberating and prophetic force which tends to contribute to the holistic understanding of the Kingdom of God taking place “here and now”

62. J. Mohan Razu, “Practical Theology for the Marginalized: Pastoral Care as a Point of Reference,” *Indian Journal of Christian Studies* 3.1 (2013): 54.

in our actions. This paradigm will free theology from all forms of idealism or utopia. This is what Jesus did in His life and witness.⁶³

What do all regional and national pastoral institutes and diocesan pastoral centers have in common? In my opinion, they all are places of formation and evangelizing ministry of God's people.

Evangelizing ministry happens where the Evangelizing Mission of the Church as Universal Sign of Salvation, that means universal sign of God's unconditional love for humankind, which is Convocation – Communion – Mission, is lived out in the world, for the world and at the service of the Reign of God. This Reign of God has to be made known to all his people, they want to experience and touch its reality in their lives.⁶⁴ Therefore, this Reign of God, in its ecclesial visibility,

- is realized in the dimension of DIAKONIA, that is love, charity, education, solidarity etc.
- is lived in the dimension of KOINONIA: fraternity [sisterhood and brotherhood, in German a common inclusive term for this is "Geschwisterlichkeit"] etc.
- is witnessed/proclaimed/communicated/shared in the dimension of MARTYRIA: prophesy and witness etc.
- is celebrated in the dimension of LEITURGIA: eucharist, prayer, mediations, etc.⁶⁵

Emilio Alberich writes in his book, *Transforming Faith on New Pastoral Options*:

Today the ecclesial conscience responds to the new challenges with some well-known options...

- "Evangelization" (or "new evangelization") as a high pastoral priority option;
- Missionary activity as passage from a ministry of conservation to one of evangelization;

63. Ibid., 57.

64. Cf. E. Alberich and J. Vallabaraj, *Communicating a Faith that Transforms: A Handbook of Fundamental Catechetics* (Bangalore: Kristu Jyoti Publications, 2004), 38–55.

65. Ibid., 39–40.

- Dialogue and inculturation to overcome the separation between faith and culture;
- The personalization of faith as an answer to sociological and conventional Christianity;
- Christian Communities and Small Christian Communities as the ecclesial subject and point of reference... It calls for a profound change of mentality and a true «pastoral conversion».⁶⁶

If we want to overcome our traditional pastoral of conservation, we have to make the paradigm shift to a pastoral of evangelization with the whole Christian community as active agent of evangelizing ministry and the church's mission to evangelize. This can only be achieved by respecting the variety of cultures and building bridges of understanding among them as the pastoral institutes of the non-western world have done since their inception.

Louis Luzbetak, the great American “missiological” anthropologist rightfully writes:

All Christian communities, after all, live by a culture distinctly their own; all have culturological needs; all have a right to their culture. All must incarnate the Gospel; all must tailor their social action to their particular social context; all must train their church workers for the specific cultural context in which they carry out their ministry.⁶⁷

Pope Francis encourages and enlightens us by telling us: “The word of God constantly shows us how God challenges those who believe in him ‘to go forth’” (EG 20).

66. Ibid., 24–25.

67. L. J. Luzbetak, “What can Anthropology offer to the Missions?,” in J. Piepke (ed.), *Anthropology and Mission: SVD International Consultation on Anthropology for Mission* (Nettetal: Steyler Verlag, 1988), 49–58, at 49.

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