

History of Mission

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Meaning of the concept “mission” before Vatican II

- Until the 16th c., the term “mission” was used exclusively with reference to the doctrine of the Trinity: the sending of the Son by the Father and the sending of the Holy Spirit by the Father and the Son.
- The Jesuits were the first ones to use it in terms of spreading the Christian faith among the people who were not members of the Catholic Church.

- In this new sense it was intimately associated with the colonial expansion of the Western world into what has more recently become known as the Third World.
- The term “mission” presupposes a **sender**, a **person or persons** sent by the sender, **the message with which the sender moves** and **those to whom one is sent**. Sender – Agent of the sending – The content of the preaching which is the Gospel and the Recipients of the Gospel message.

Holy Spirit is the principal Agent of Mission

- The sender is always God who is the origin of the mission – the sending subject. Mission is therefore a *mission Dei* as opposed to *mission ecclesia*.
- The subject of the sending is a missionary, not only from overseas or only a white man (medieval understanding of mission) but **any one who is baptized. The sacrament of baptism is the criteria.**
- Missionaries, religious men and women and lay people are missionaries. There are however religious congregations and mission institutes whose main vocation is evangelization in the strict sense of the word.
- The **Holy Spirit is the principal Agent of Mission.** He works **on both the subject and on the receiver** of the Gospel.

- The content is the Gospel – the person of Jesus Christ, the incarnate logos and the saviour of the world.
- The recipient is all who **are far from Christ**. Far not only geographically but in fact.
- Missionary is no longer to be seen in geographical terms but situational.
- All are recipients of mission. There are 3 types of missionary activity of the Church: First Evangelization, Re-evangelization and pastoral activity of the Church.

- The terminology of mission presumes that the one who sends has the authority vested in the Church or in a mission society or even in a Christian potentate.
- In the Catholic missions and juridical authority was the constitutive element for the legitimacy of the missionary enterprise.

- Mission was viewed in terms of expansion, occupation of fields, and the conquest of other religions.
- This traditional interpretation of mission was gradually modified in the course of the 20th c. There are factors that led to the modification of the mission concept.

Mission in Crisis

- The advance of science and technology and with them a worldwide process of secularization seem to have made God redundant.
- De-Christianization of the Western World: great number of people are leaving Christianity.
- The world is not only divided into Christians and non-Christians but pluralistic world in which there are Christians, Muslims, Buddhists and adherents of many traditional religions who rub shoulders daily.
- Moreover, the devotee of other faith often prove to be more actively and aggressively missionary than the members.

- Because of its complicity in the subjugation and exploitation of people color, West- and also Western Christian- tends to suffer from an acute sense of guilt. This circumstances often leads to an inability or unwillingness among the Western Christians to “ give an account of the hope they have to the people of other persuasions.
- More than ever before we are today aware of that the world is divided- apparently irreversibly- between the rich and the poor and that- by large, the rich are those who consider themselves (or considered by the poor) to be Christians. In addition the rich are still getting richer and the poor poorer. The circumstances creates, on the one hand anger and frustration among the poor an the other a reluctance among affluent Christians to share their faith.
- For centuries, Western theology and Western Ecclesial ways and practices were normative and undisputed, also in the mission fields. Today the situation is fundamentally different. Young churches refuse to be dictated to and are putting a higher premium in their autonomy. Western theology is also a suspect in many parts of the world. Third world theologies are gaining recognition.

Before Vatican II, “mission” had a fairly Circumscribed set of meanings

- The sending of missionaries to a designated mission territory
- The activities undertaken by the missionaries
- The geographical areas where the missionaries were sent to work
- The missionary congregations or agencies sending missionaries
- The non-Christian world or “mission fields”

The traditional theological concept of mission was expanded as

- Propagation of the faith
- Expansion of the reign of God
- Conversion of the heathen
- Implanting of the Church or new churches

- Mission is then the communication of the Good News of Salvation to all human beings and it is the principle task of the Church.
- Essential and fundamental to the Church's origin and being, indeed at the heart of the Church's existence is the missionary mandate which the Church received from her master and Lord to go out and make disciples of all nations.
- The task of preaching the Good News to people in all strata of human life is called Mission.

- Since mission is basically communication of God's grace of salvation to all.
- It is anchored in fidelity to the past and challenged to fidelity in the present.
- It must preserve, defend and proclaim the constants of the church's traditions; at the same time it must respond creatively and boldly to the contexts in which it finds itself. Christian history is a story of the church in mission.

Mission in the Bible: NT

- New testament is a missionary document.
- History of evangelization has its roots in the message of Jesus Christ.
- The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of the sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of Lord (Lk4:18-19).

- The Mission of Jesus was understood in different ways in the Jewish Milieu:
- Messiah who restore its splendor to Israel.
- The messiah who would convert the heart;
- Messiah for Israel alone or messiah for the world.

Pre-condition of mission of Jesus

- John the Baptist appeared as a *prophetic preacher* sent by God to call Israel to *repentance and conversion*.
- Only a *remnant* would be saved if they repented and produced fruit. In this climate Jesus was born.
- It was a time of sectarianism and fanaticism; of religious traffic between east and west; of merchants and soldiers carrying home new ideas, of experimenting with new faiths.

- Socio-politically: Palestine was under Roman occupation; the poor peasants were transformed into a labor pool for the state owners and managers: the “day laborers” the Gospel parables speak about several times.
- Jesus *stands in the tradition of the prophets*; his concern is the repentance and the salvation of Israel.

Jesus Mission: All Inclusive

- As a Jew he understands himself as being sent to his own people. His call for repentance concerns this people. His life's work is limited to them Mathew 1, 21 and Luke 1, 54.
- *A difference between Jesus and the religious Jewish groups of his time, including the Baptist. They were concerned with the salvation of only a remnant of Israel.*
- Jesus' mission is to *all Israel*.

- Jesus consistently challenged attitudes, practices and structures that tended arbitrarily to restrict or exclude potential members of the Israelite community: the poor, the blind, the lepers, the hungry, those who weep, the sinners, the tax collectors, those possessed by demons, the persecuted, the captives, those who are weary and heavily laden, the crowd who know nothing of the law, the little ones, the least, the lost sheep of the house of Israel, even the prostitutes, all those victims of repression, discrimination, violence and exploitation.

- *In the ministry of Jesus, God is inaugurating his eschatological reign and is doing it among the poor and marginalized.*
- The situation of the poor and little ones is contrary to God's purposes, and Jesus has come to put an end to their misery.

- The ministry of Jesus is breaking the boundaries through many of his sayings, parables and actions. The phenomenon of the Gentile mission is not just a thing of the post Easter or of Paul.
- Jesus and the mission of the early post Easter Church the early Church cannot can not be separated.

Traits of Jesus' person and mission

- Anointed, consecrated and possessed by the Spirit from Baptism (Luke 4, 18).
- Jesus carries his mission in habitual prayer and *deep experience of God as His Father*. - Lk 3, 21-22: Lk 5, 16:
- *The reign of God (expounded in parables etc)*
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Two features in Jesus' preaching of God's reign

- The first is that *God's reign is not understood as exclusively future but as both future and already present*. Ministry of proclaiming the nearness of God's reign, "already, but not yet". (Mk 1, 15; Mt 4, 17).
- Jesus ministry reveals also the missionary nature of Jesus ministry: *Jesus launches an all-out attack on evil in all its manifestations*. God's reign arrives wherever Jesus overcomes the power of evil. (Lk 11,20; t 12,28: By the finger of God

Jesus and his disciples/ Rabbi

- Proclamation and calling of disciples: *“the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the Gospel”* (Mk 1,14-20; Mt 4,17-22).
- *The disciples are called to be missionaries: fishers of men.*
- It is a call to follow Jesus and a being set aside.
- In Judaism, being a disciple, a student of the Law, was a transitional stage in order to become a rabbi, able to master the Torah. For the disciple of Jesus, the stage of discipleship is in itself the fulfillment of his destiny; it is a life-long business.

- The disciples in Judaism were students learning the knowledge of the rabbis; the disciples of Jesus imitated the Master, who being Master came not to be served but to serve and give up his life; service and giving up one's life are essential parts of Christian discipleship.

- “To be with him” (Luke 3,14); and second, “to be sent out to preach and have authority to cast out demons”(Mark 3,14ss); following Jesus and sharing in his mission go together.
- Sharing his mission is not just to teach what he taught, but being his witnesses, empowered with the same power of Jesus.

- The discipleship of Jesus has special traits: Jesus takes the *initiative*.
- Demands an *immediate and positive response*:
- Jesus' disciples leave everything not for the Law, *but for Jesus' sake* (Mathew 10,38): *Jesus takes the place of the Torah*

- To be disciple of Jesus is *to follow the suffering Jesus and look forward to his coming in glory*; the expectation of the *parousia* provides the motivation for discipleship and this discipleship expresses itself in mission.
- The expectation of the future is an integral element in Mark's understanding of discipleship-in-mission.

The Apostolic Church/Eastern Church Paradigm

- Mission from the perspective of Easter and Pentecost (Jesus Messiah is Proclaimed to the Jews of Jerusalem).
- The resurrection was ultimately viewed as the vindication of Jesus, a seal of approval on the practice of Jesus.
- *Gospels were written from the perspective of Easter; and the early Christian community was kept alive by the experience of Easter.*

- Easter event, is *the gift of the Spirit*, which is *integrally linked to mission*; mission will be an *overflow of Pentecost*.
- Easter Jesus' community, the resurrection of Christ and the coming of the Spirit are tangible proofs of the "*already-ness*" of *God's reign*, of *God's salvation*; the new age has already come, though the old has yet to end; and *the **new** is inserted in human history in a sort of eschatological struggle against the forces of evil*.

- In the years immediately following Easter, *the mission of the Church remained confined to Israel, as Jesus' own ministry had been.*
- The situation only changed after the Jewish War and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.
- The Gentiles were accepted into Christian circles without need for circumcision. After the Council of Jerusalem in 48 AD.

Paul Apostle to the Gentiles

- Paul provided the theological basis for the mission to the Gentile world.
- The ministry of Paul and Barnabas the community of Antioch became a missionary community to the world: Cyprus and Asia Minor. (Acts 15; Gal 2,12 ff).
- Two facts brought about a change: the admission of non -Jews to baptism and the Jewish rejection, as a collective body, of Jesus Christ.
- The Holy Spirit is the transcendent agent of mission, but the “catalyst” is always something historical.

- Persecution forced the first missionaries out of Jerusalem (Acts 8).
- Phillip the Deacon preached in Samaria and afterwards in Caesarea, a gentile city (Acts 8:5, 40).
- Others travelled to Cyprus, Phoenicia and Antioch (Acts 11:19-20) and preached to Greeks.

- The first non-Jewish centre of Mission was Antioch. Following the trade routes, the Gospel reached the Mediterranean and the Black sea. Further the missionaries preached in Europe.
- After his conversion, he sowed the seeds of the Gospel in the major cities of the Roman Empire during three missionary campaigns, founding local churches which continued the mission in their societies.

Paul's missionary strategy

- 1) Priority of the Kerygma (Cf Rom 15:15; Gal 1:15; Phil 1:18) 2)
- Witness of life (Cf. Acts 18:21), 3)
- Adaptation and
- Establishing ordained ministries to continue the mission (Cf. Acts 14:23; 20:28).

- The work was accomplished mostly by: anonymous evangelizers, such as housewives, soldiers and traders.
- The great Mother Churches – Antioch, Alexandria and Rome – were founded by unknown Christian

The Paleo-Christian Period of Christianity

- The history of Christianity since the beginning period of Christianity.
- Starts with the time after Christ – the apostolic beginning of Christianity extending to the time of Emperor Constantine.

Christianity in Greco-Roman Culture

- From the 3rd -6th centuries, as Christianity entered into the Greco- Roman world and culture, Christian faith underwent such a significant transformation.
- The transition was not abrupt neither did it lead to any homogeneous theology.
- This transformation affected the liturgical and sacramental life, its structures, organization, legislation and its *doctrine*.

- Theologians such as Ireneus, Clement, Origen, Athanasius and the three Cappadocians.
- They all shared a similar view of God, humanity and the world and they all differed fundamentally from the apocalyptic-eschatological patterns of primitive Christianity.
- Christianity was still in its infancy, still minority faith in the pluralistic world despised if not always persecuted by the Roman authorities.

- The Church experienced and viewed the empire as the primary sphere of its activities and expansion; the “world”, the “*ecumene*” was the Roman Empire.
- The Church’s “world mission” would be completed once it had reached the empire’s borders; the boundaries of the *empire* and of *orthodoxy* were the same.

- It is to the Greek that we owe the *intellectual discipline of theology as well as the classical formulations of the faith*. Origen (185-254) could be called the first "systematic theologian and the first person in whom the Eastern theological paradigm manifested itself clearly".
- The Greek theology of the early centuries, and its heir the Eastern Orthodoxy, represent a paradigm different from that of primitive Christianity. Origen was principally responsible for the renewal of theology, paving the way for an *innovative interaction* between contemporary culture and Christian self-understanding.

Fast Growth of Christianity

Social-cultural Context was basically Christianity in the Roman Empire.

Establishment of Peace by Emperor Augustus.

Declaration by Emperor Theodosius in 380 that Christianity becomes a State Religion

A negative development: With the declaration to make Christianity official state religion thus making Christianity become an affair for the whole society, missionary enthusiasm went down.

- Hindered the growth of faith, was that the emperor became an absolute rule leading to people building churches for him as well as worshipping him.
- This affected the expansion of Christianity somehow.

Authenticity and Commitment of the First Christians

- They did not spread the Good News by work alone but they put it into actions as well.
- They were missionaries.

The Situation of Christians as minority

- Christians were a minority, this did not however mean valueless. Though few in numbers, they were strong and convinced Christians.
- By the end of the 1st Century, there were 100,000 Christians, 1200,000 by the end of the 2nd century. By the end of the 3rd century they were 6.000,000 and 30,000,000 at the end of the 4th century.
- These first Christians faced a lot of challenges and they had to stand strong in their conviction of faith.
- The best strategy for survival was therefore strong faith and conviction.

Organized Persecutions of Christians

- Persecutions against Christians (Nero (in the year 64), Decius (248-250) and Diocletian (303)).
- The persecutions helped in the expansion Christianity.
- Many martyrs for the sake of their conviction and faith. *The blood of the martyrs is the seed of Christianity.*
- Experiences: when Christians are persecuted, faith grows very fast and strong.

Edict of Milan

- The Roman empire became a Christian empire fully in 330 when Christianity was declared a state religion.
- Freedom, the number of Christians multiplied.
- Setting of Christianity free, Christians will support his empire and make him a strong Roman king.
- Christianity lost much of its early favour and distinctiveness; it was increasingly resembling the world it wished to win for the faith.
- Lost its Apocalyptic- eschatological character.

- Clement of Alexandria, Origen Christian scholars that matched pagan philosophers, made use of the same type of argument as the Greek teachers.
- Odor of decay and disintegration of the Roman Empire.
- Fatalism, magic, astrology. Christianity responded to a vacuum.

- Major philosophical schools: Platonic (eternity and time, true and apparent; reality and the shadow), Stoic, Cynics and Epicureanism.
- The Holy Spirit became the spirit of truth/ wisdom, where ones primary interest was in the Spirit of truth or the Spirits of original being rather than activity of history/ *hypostasis* *ousia*, *physis*, *meritum*, *transubstantiatio*, *gnosis*, *logos*
- Apologists worked to ensure that Christianity remained relevant during the time.
- *Heresies: Gnosticism>>> depending on human rationality>> esoteric knowledge of the secretes of the universe, exceptional passing world >> ontological dualism>> demiurge. The Church had to battle with the Heresy.*

Emergency of Active Missionaries

- The office of itinerant preacher disappeared with apostles replaced by the monks.
- There emerged missionaries who went out in the name of Christian Community
- A missionary is the one who looks at himself as a representative of the whole Christian faith community.
- It was this time that **religious orders** and **monasteries** emerged. This was the beginning of life of monks.

The Church and its context

- After 85 AD Christians had to battle two fronts: against the synagogue and against the Hellenistic religion.
- Concepts originally typical of the emperor, the military, the Greek mystery religions, the theater and platonic philosophy gradually became common in Christian worship and doctrine.
- People radical followers of Christ by witness to the Gospel in word and deed.
- Some went into the desert live life of radical poverty and isolation for the sake of the Gospel.

- **St. Patrick (390-461):** He went to the marginalized people of the Roman Empire.
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- Those at the periphery and for whom no body cared – the slaves and poor of Ireland.

- **Pope Gregory the Great (590-604):**
- Patron of Europe great role in the social, cultural, political and religious life of the Europeans.
- Gifted – intelligent and great organizer.
- He held good relation with the empire in the east.
- He eventually became a monk and later pope, positions that he did not want to have.

- composed Gregorian chants for the celebration of the liturgy.
- Encouraged proclamation of the Good News to the people of all nations and cultures.

Columba and Columbanus

- Missionaries who evangelized eastern France and present-day Switzerland.
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- They are important in the missionary history of Europe at large.

Sts. Cyril (Constantine) and Methodius (Michael):

- Brothers talented mastered Slavonic phonetics.
- Cyril was a civil servant and Methodius an intellectual, indeed a philosopher.
- Conversion of Slavs.
- They learned the local language and had translated the sacred books in an invented new set of alphabets, the “Glagolitic”.

Monastic Life as Agent of Mission

- Monks started to go out as missionaries – their principle of life was *Ora et Labora*.
- Some monks proclaimed the Gospel without any specific domicile.
- Others remained cloistered (became farmers and indeed specialized farmers so that people from outside could go there and gather knowledge and expertise on how to farm).

- People were attracted to these monasteries
>>>there settlements around the monasteries.
- Contributed to a great interest in Agriculture/
education, industrial revolution.
- Monasteries was a loud instrument of
evangelization.

Summary of Missionary Activity of the early Church:

- *The early Christian mission revolved around the person of Jesus himself.*
- *The early Christian mission was political, indeed revolutionary .*
- *The revolutionary nature of the early Christian mission manifested itself also in the new relationships than came into being in the community*

- Development of theology
- Integration with the Hellenistic world

- Referring to period between 600-1500 AD.
- The epoch commenced with the papacy of Gregory the Great and the emergence of early successes of Islam.
- It ended with the Muslim seizure of Constantinople 1453 and the Portuguese and Spanish voyage of discoveries.
- The dominant language was Latin and Greek
- Great schism in 1054 division of East and West Church.
- East redemption was a pedagogical process while the West was on the ravages of sins.
- Thoughts of Saint Augustine guided the Church through out the medieval age.

Mission during the Medieval Period

(AD 600 - 1500)

- ***Augustine of Hippo*** (354-430) may be regarded as the inaugurator of the medieval paradigm and the one who placed an indelible stamp on the entire subsequent western theological history, both Catholic and Protestant.
- This was the result of his genius, of his personal history and of the political circumstances in which he found himself.

Two Major Crisis

- Donatism
- Palagiansm
- **Donatism:** Originated in North Africa with a lot of followers in the 4th and 5th centuries.
- They were theologically orthodox, keen in the ancient tradition of strict moral discipline and insisted on absolute separation of Church and state.

- Stood in the tradition of Tertullian who taught that the *seven deadly sins* (idolatry, blasphemy, murder, adultery, fornication, false-witness and fraud) *were unforgivable*.
- Church leader guilty of any of these should not be allowed to stay in office, nor participate in the consecration of a bishop.
- This would be invalid. The true Church must keep itself unblemished and perfect. True believers should never allow themselves to be contaminated with the world.

- Augustine reacted in his *Instructing the Unlearned*, that the Church was not a refuge from the world, but existed for the sake of the world.
- All, even good Church people, were sinners; the self-righteousness of the Donatists was more vicious than the sins of others.

- This understanding of mission and the Church has its roots in Cyprian's famous dictum: *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*.
- The contingent character of the phrase of Cyprian was forgotten and it was applied universally to the Roman Catholic Church).
- Saint Augustine, in his controversy with the Donatists, already argued that the Donatists had to be *forced* to return to the Catholic fold.

- Unity with the apostolic Church and salvation go together. According to Augustine, those who severed their links with the Catholic Church also severed their relationship with God. This understanding of mission and the Church has its roots in Cyprian's famous dictum: *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*.
- Saint Augustine, in his controversy with the Donatists, already argued that the Donatists had to be *forced* to return to the Catholic fold. In the middle Ages the Catholic mentality of *forced conversion of pagans and Jews* was quite common. Augustine believed that state action against schismatics was not persecution but a just discipline in order to re- Catholicize the Donatists. Augustine refused to use the same methods in respect for the pagans.

The axiom *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*

- The axiom *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* dominated the Church for so long. Indeed it is a mentality dominated the missionary thinking up to the late 16th century.
- The gentle and non-coercive missionary approach of this man was challenged, requesting him to interpret Lk 14, 23: *compellere intrare* (“compel them to come in”).
- This mentality persisted well into the 20th century. It could not be otherwise, as long as there was the understanding *that there was no salvation outside the formal membership of the Roman Catholic Church*.

- From the 15th century onwards, the Church underwent a series of profound changes. From being a small persecuted minority to being a large and influential organization; from a harassed sect to oppressor of sects; links between Christianity and Judaism were severed; an intimate relationship between altar and throne evolved; the dogma was fixed and finalized; the eschatological-apocalyptic missionary movement of the primitive Church gave way to the expansion of Christianity.

- Thomas Aquinas in his theology assigned everybody and everything in heaven and on earth a place in the universe, in such a way that the whole constituted a perfect synthesis with no loose ends. The key to it all was a double order of knowledge and being, *the one natural*, and *the other supernatural*: reason, nature, state, philosophy refer to the natural foundation, while faith, grace, Church, theology to the supernatural level.
- This harmonious framework of thinking put the seal on the development of the missionary idea, remaining essentially intact until the 20th century. It was strongly manifested especially since the 16th century, within the context of the European colonization of the non-western world.

- those of the ***Protestant Reformation*** and the ***Enlightenment***; however, these two paradigm marginally affected the Catholic paradigm; it was only in the Vatican II that the Catholic Church opened herself to new currents and was able to formulate a fundamentally different missionary paradigm. During the last 40 years the understanding of mission in the Church has undergone profound changes. Vatican Council II brought about this change. No other Church or international confession body has undergone such an intensive examination of consciousness and conscience about mission as the Roman Catholic Church during the Second Vatican Council.

Pelagianism

- The English Monk Pelagius, active in Rome at the end of the 4th c. and beginning of the 5th, took a very optimistic view of human nature and of the human capacity to attain perfection.
- While God gets the ultimate credit for having made us so capable of doing what we should, *we have the power of accomplishing every good thing by action, speech and thought.*

- Humanity did not need redemption, only inspiration. Christ was not our Saviour who died for our sins, but he is just the master and model whom we are called to emulate.
- Augustine responded with the doctrines of *original sin and predestination*. By original sin human nature was so deprived that without the grace of God in Christ it could not stand up.
- Only God can change our sinful condition, without any contribution from us. This gave way to the individualization of salvation.
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Protestant Paradigm

- Medieval paradigm experienced a crisis. In time the forces of change would usher a new era.
- Martin Luther became the catalyst of protestant paradigm.
- His personal history together with climate in which he grew up and the places where he studied prepared him for his fateful break from the Church and the launch of the new epoch (Nominalism, thunderstorm in the year 1505, Augustinian formation, theological and scripture studies).

- The break with Aristotle signified a break with Thomas Aquinas's theological edifice.
- His theological studies in the Augustinian monastery has instilled in him the conviction that he had to placate an angry God by means of self mortification and the unceasing performance of good works.
- Realization that God's righteousness meant his gift of grace and mercy.

- Further interpretation of Romans 1:16
- We are only beggars; that is true.
- Protestant reformation continued with some aspects of medieval Christianity (correct formulation of doctrine, Church and state)
- The differences Papacy believe that exercise of absolute power by the papal church was wrong.
- Other reformers Calvin, Zwingli

Contours of Protestant Theology

- Justification by faith alone is the starting point of theology
- People are seen from the perspective of the fall, as lost, unable to do anything about their condition. The world is evil and individuals had to be snatched from it like a brand from the fire.
- Subjective dimension of salvation
- The affirmation of the personal role and responsibility of the individual led to rediscovery of the priesthood of all believers.

- Centrality of scriptures in the life of the Church (sacraments were reduced and made subordinate to preaching).

Reformers and Mission

- It has been pointed out that the Reformer were indifferent, if not hostile to mission (Heretics are never said to have converted either pagans or Jew to the faith only to have perverted Christians).
- The starting point of reformers theology was not that people should do in mission but what God has already done in Christ

- He visits the people of the world with his light; he furthers his word so that it may “run” and “increase” till the last day dawns.
- Gospel is like a stone thrown into the water- it produces a series of circular waves which move out from the centre until they reach the furthest shore.
- Emphasis is that mission not being dependent on human efforts. No preacher, no missionary. Its God’s work.

- Other reformers were less clear on the missionary nature of theology.
- They broke completely with the idea of using force in Christianizing the people. The emperor sword, had nothing to do with faith and no army may attack others under the banner of Christ.
- The Protestants saw their principle task as that of reforming the Church of their time.
- They consumed all their energy. They had no immediate contact with the nun Christians.

- The churches of reformers were involved in battles of sheer survival.
- The abandoned monasticism the deprived themselves of a great missionary agency
- Internal strife and dissipated their strength in recklessness zeal and endless dissensions and disputes; little energy was left for turning to those outside the Christian fold.

- Anabaptists engaged in mission; priesthood of all believers. They went for mission regardless of boundaries and the office of a Christian. Advocated for absolute separation between the church and state.

Lutheran orthodoxy and mission

- Great commission had been fulfilled by the apostles and was no longer binding on the Church. the Church work was to safe guard the uniqueness of the apostles foundational work and distinguish it from what the Church did later year.
- All initiative unto salvation lay with God alone.
- Pessimism and passivity had yet a deeper cause. They expectation of eschatology in 1670.

- Protestant missionary paradigm tended to fluctuate between various extremes;
- Sovereignty of God sometimes exercised a paralyzing influence on even the idea of missionary involvement. At other times divine sovereignty and human accountability were held in creative tension.
- Sometime people were seen in terms of fall. Obdurate sinners reroute to perdition. People were judged to be redeemable and worthy of redemption.
- Emphasis on the objective nature of faith and leave little room for a personal experience of salvation

- This medieval paradigm has its dark side, but also its great positive contributions as the creation of a Christian civilization, where the laws were in line with Christian faith and where the kings and emperors were placed under the explicit obligation of Christian discipleship; on the other hand, it was logical and inevitable that things would develop the way they did after Constantine's victory. We would not have done better than they did.

Other Characteristics of Mission in Medieval Period

- Monastic Orders: Most of the Evangelization work during the five centuries between 600 and 1050 was carried out by monks. Monasteries had significant contribution to the mission process in Europe.
- Monastic life gave them a deep spirituality, freedom of movement and continued support and direction for Christian mission in Europe.

- **Convert Kings and Emperors:** A significant role in the work of evangelization during this time was played by kings and emperors.
- One advantage was that it was generally accepted principle that the subjects of a sovereign followed the emperor's or king's religion.

- **The Role of the Papacy in mission:** The then popes directed and inspired the missionary work. Missionaries of the time like Boniface, Cyril, Methodius, St. Augustine of Canterbury all went out as missionaries under the instruction of the popes of the time. **Islam as a Challenge:** The rise of Islam and subsequent invasion by the armies of Islam posed a great challenge to the spread of Christianity especially in eastern empire and north Africa.
- Also the doctrinal and political conflicts of the time, feudalization of society, simonization of offices in the Church by princes and the crusades, seriously weakened the missionary spirit of the Church.

Towards the Modern Age of Christianity

- Since the middle of the 20th century, the western world has gradually entered into a cultural crisis of gigantic proportions; *several world history events* have gradually contributed to this situation, which is *shaking western civilization to the core*:
 - 1. - Two devastating world wars and the holocaust
 - 2. - The Russian and Chinese revolutions
 - 3. - The horrors perpetrated by the rulers of countries committed to National Socialism, fascism, communism and capitalism

- The collapse of the great western colonial empires
- 5. - The rapid secularization of the west and large parts of the rest of the world
- 6. - The increasing gap, worldwide, between the rich and the poor
- 7. -The awareness that we are heading for an ecological disaster of cosmic proportions
- 8. - The evidence that the modern gods of the west (science, technology and industrialization) with all their progress were in fact false gods.

- We must recognize that the *mission of the Church today is confronted with challenges never confronted before and which are claiming for new responses.*
- The socio-cultural changes in our world today are forcing us to make a serious revision of our Christian theology and mission and move in *new directions.* A new missionary paradigm is emerging in the second part of our century motivated by the great changes in our world.

Among these changes and challenges

- The old Christianity of the West has lost its dominant position in the world.
- We now live in a pluri-centric, rather than a western-dominated world.
- And the peoples of other continents are claiming for liberation, decentralization and aiming towards a pluri-cultural and pluri-central ecclesiology and mission.
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- - *Unjust structures of oppression and exploitation are fragmenting our world.*
- The people are awakening and struggle for affirmation, participation and equality (racism, feminism...)
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- 3. - There is a profound feeling of *disenchantment about the western idea of progress and development*, as the false god of the Enlightenment
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- - There is a growing awareness about the *interdependence of peoples and their environment* and, then, the emergence of *ecological concern*.
- - Humanity is able not only to kill mother Earth, but also of wiping out humankind. *The threat of a nuclear holocaust challenges us to work for peace and justice.*

- - *New theologies are emerging in the third world, which is taking the place of the supremacy of the traditional theology of the West.*
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- - The recognition of the salvific values in other religions is forcing Christian mission to an approach of respect and dialogue in relation to other faiths, as the most important frontier of mission.
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- *On the other hand, the Church, theology and mission have been seriously affected by these dramatic changes; great developments within the Church, theology and mission have also taken place:*
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- *The Church* has lost its position of privilege. The close relationships between throne and altar have given way to increasing tensions between Church and secular authorities; and a new spirit of dialogue and ecumenism is growing among the Christians.
- *Theological elements* for centuries absent from the Church are being recovered, as the eschatological-apocalyptic dimension of Christian faith; the presence of the Spirit and his charisms in the life and mission of the Church; their gradual recognition in society and the Church...

- The recovery of the historical Christ and his passion for the reign of God; the Christian options for non-violence, justice and peace, as well as the option for the poor, as essential dimensions of Christian witness; the new role of the laity as active subjects of the life and mission of the Church; the feminist movements

- *In the mission fields* many things have greatly changed: many countries are closed to Christian mission, considering Christian faith as something alien, contrary to their culture and traditions and identity;
- the great religions of the world have become more aggressively missionaries, especially Islam, creating a block to the new attitude of the Church of “*dialogue with peoples of other faiths*”;

- The *young Churches* are becoming self-sufficient and missionary Churches themselves, in a way that in many of so called “mission fields”, missionaries are no longer needed for very qualified services;
- many of the great missionary institutions (schools, hospitals, printing houses), at times, more than assets are impediments for the life and growth of the young Churches.

- *On the other hand*, in the west, there have been a serious missionary crisis among the Christians, due also to the fact that many priests and religious have defected, vocations died out, venerable traditions were demolished... in such a way, that mission became a non-issue for the masses and a non sense in intellectual, even clerical circles.
- *Vatican II* reminded that the Church “*is missionary by nature*” (AG 9) and, then, mission is something co-natural to Christian faith; and E.N. stressed this Christian conviction and established guidelines for a new paradigm of mission. Later on, RM has challenged the Church to this Christian adventure, proclaiming that mission is still at the *beginnings*.

- The new missionary paradigm has to begin recognizing the fact that the mission of the Church is facing a world fundamentally different from the one before. This demands a new understanding of mission. This change in a moment of missionary crisis is not easy, but the crisis is also the “*kairos*” of new opportunities.
- The new missionary paradigm does not mean a conservative clinging to the past (restoration), neither a clean break with the past, but *continuity and change*, at the same time.

- The New Age Movement, for example, is offering alternatives to the Christian faith, responding to the challenges we are facing today, with its cocktail of myth and magic and its proclivity toward eastern religions and systems of thought.

MISSION HISTORY IN THE MODERN PERIOD

- This is divided into two: Reformation of the Society and the Discovery of the Continents.
- **Reformation of the Society:** The society of the Middle Ages played a very significant role in the process of evangelization.

The role of Monasteries

- Monasteries contributed a lot in the social and religious dimensions of the society. Many acquired their professions and technical know how from monks.
- During the new period things had to change. They society was transformed into a specialised, civilised and technically developed and progress minded society.

- Life became sophisticated – the social, religious and intellectual life became very advanced. This brought to a development where even social and religious values were questioned. People became critical in all aspects. They became development minded.
- Monks began to own properties. It was not important anymore what properties a monk owned but how he administered his properties

Unique understanding and of living “poverty”:

- A time came when the Gospel value of poverty became very important. The concept of poverty was as Jesus himself sees it in the Gospels (the birds of air have... but the son of man has no where to lay his head.
- People demonised wealth and possession so that rich Christians could not live good Christian life. This led to the emergence of the so-called “Begging Orders”. These are those congregations like Franciscans, Dominicans, and Augustinians who were founded at that time for whom poor and simple life style was an ideal way of living religious life. St. Francis witnessed to the life of simplicity, poverty and abstinence.

- St. Francis witnessed to the life of simplicity, poverty and abstinence. He felt the deep-seated desire to live a poor life for the sake of Christ. Although he was a layperson, he wrote to Rome requested if he could be allowed to make his life style “a way in the Church”.
- He was so much touched by the level of luxurious living, greedy and love of money and possessions, which characterized the society of the time. This was so meaningful given the fact that he himself came from a very rich family.

- Unlike before when monks lived in monasteries, Francis and other missionaries like him started a new form of evangelization, namely, they went out to where people are. These are groups who consciously lived a very simple life, the life of simplicity and denial, something that made them to be successful in convincing people about the values of the Gospel.
- They were determined to go out and encounter people with the Gospel just as Jesus himself did – to those who are far from the Gospel. These forms of active congregations made enormously big contribution to the process of evangelization.

- St. Francis is said to have established a good relation with non-Christian religions. He lived in a time when religious tolerance did not exist.
- There existed brutal confrontation of Christianity and other religions. On his part, St. Francis tried encourage respect, tolerance and antireligious dialogue with non-Christian religions.

Discovery of New Continents

- The expression “discovery of New Continents” here should be understood as an ethnological concept according to the worldview of the west. It is an ethnocentric perspective, which is very normal.
- It connotes *my own standpoint is the best – the centre of the world is where one is standing*. Some names are important when we consider this period.

Raymund Lull (1235-1316)

- He came from Spain, a theologian and philosopher at the same time. He had studied scholastic and Arabic philosophy.
- Among one of his achievements was to introduce schools, which taught intercultural knowledge, culture and languages.
- He devised the first modern missionary method: to persuade the Muslims to the faith, one has to know them, speak their language, study their religion, go to them as a friend.

Henry the Navigator

- Asked people to look beyond and find out what is beyond North Africa.
- What is there in sub-Saharan Africa? By way of sea journeys, the Portuguese took a ride through the African Coast to the interior of Africa.
- Ethiopia was already a Christian island; otherwise the Muslims had occupied the greatest part of North Africa.
- Congo was the first point where a kingdom was established. It was there that the first Christian community was established as well.

- As early as 1521 there was already an African bishop who had studied in Portugal.
- The most unfortunate thing during this time of African Christianity, is as we shall see later, the fact that the enthusiasm about Christian faith and life disappeared and people became more interested in wealth, development and power.
- This led to the introduction of slavery and slave trade.

- There was a believe that there are classes of people and this is what was used to defend slavery.
- The white race was seen superior to other races and especially the black race.
- The white businessmen used Africans to transport fellow Africans' slaves to transport them through the coast.

- It was not the white people who transported the Africans slaves but the black people themselves were used to do transport slaves to America where they were sold and used in doing hard works in great plantations.
- Slaves were necessary in America because the inhabitants were reduced due to war and diseases.
- There was the so-called *Tran Saharan Trade*. Here the principle of 3 M: Missionary, Money and Military or 3 C: Conversion, Commerce and Conquest.

Christopher Columbus

- Discovered Latin America. Later there was a great war between the Spaniards and the Portuguese over the ownership of Latin America.
- The pope intervened in which he divided the continent into two. One part of L. American, a part of N. America and the Philippines was given to the Spaniard and Brazil, Africa and Asia belong to Portugal.

Positive Developments in the Modern Period

- ***The Re-animation of the Old Church:*** At some point the Church, which was once a very strong organization in the west, became weak, tired and dispirited.
- At the time of discovery of the new continents, the church registered a new spirit of vitalism and life. At some point the Church, which was once a very strong organization in the west, became weak, tired and dispirited.
- At the time of discovery of the new continents, the church registered a new spirit of vitalism and life. There was a new missionary enthusiasm and vigour.

- The consciousness that Christianity is a world religion and not west church was evident in the lay movement. Lay people became enthusiastic missionaries who preached the Gospel to others.
- The church changes from not being any more hierarchical – a kind of pyramidal structure whereby everything is dictated from above but rather more people of God oriented Church, whereby all the baptised are involved.

- Another factor, which contributed to the enthusiasm in mission, was the emphasis of missiology as a discipline in theological studies.
- The founding of many missionary congregations whose main charisma was Mission *Ad Gentes*. People like Francis Libermann (Spiritans) Arnold Jansen (SVD), Allamano, La Vengerie etc founded congregations whose task was to go out and evangelize non-christian worlds.
- Different from other congregations like Franciscans and Dominicans, Benedictines who are contemplative in nature, these congregation were characterized by their commitment to mission to non-Christians, mainly primary evangelization.

- Central to their concept of mission is the worldwide dimension of Christ's mission. One of the advantages of this period was the development in *anthropological, ethnographical and missiological studies*.
- There was possibility of studies being contacted in the field of culture and human history so that better knowledge of people's cultures and mentalities was possible.
- This was a great help to the task of evangelization. Missionaries had the opportunity to receive ethnological, anthropological, missiological and theological formation.

A move towards what we call indigenisation

- In the young churches of the south, there was a strong movement towards indigenisation. This means that the leadership of the church is in the hands of the locals. The laity plays a very special role in this process.
- The move is towards independent local churches (self-financing, self-ministering, self sufficient in terms of personnel and missionary oriented). This does not mean separation from the universal church but rather the Church remains independent but in collaboration with the universal church.

CONGREGATION OF PROGAGANDA

FIDE AND THEIR ROLE IN

EVANGELIZATION IN GENERAL

- *The system of Padroado:* The first catholic missions in Africa took place under the Royal patronage system called Portuguese PADROADO by which the Pope placed the direction of missionary activity under the patronage of the kings of Spain and Portugal.

- The spread of colonisation, the *Padroado* arrangement seemed completely normal.
- It was up to the Spanish and Portuguese kings to send missionaries, to propose bishoprics, to build churches and to provide financial means for the entire missionary undertakings.

- According to this ideology, the whole world was first and foremost understood as THE PROPERTY of the pope because of his role as the Vicar of Christ on earth.
- The two world powers at that time were Portugal and Spain. Both kingdoms were on global quest to find the route to the Spices Islands, the legendary sources of spices; the most expensive commodity at that time [more expensive than gold at many point].

- In the process, they discovered “unknown lands” at that time sub Saharan Africa, North and South America, and the pacific islands and archipelagos.
- By virtue of Royal patronage, control over church affairs in these lands was assigned to them by the late medieval popes. Thus began the Iberian global project of *conquista*, i.e. the conquest of world for Portuguese and Spanish commercial interests.

- Spaniards and Portuguese they forced the inhabitants of this lands to embrace Catholicism. For much of the early missionary work, the conquerors read what was called a *requerimento*; God placed this entire people under the care of one called saint peter, so that he would become prince, lord, and master of all peoples of the world.

- A clear distinction between missionary activity on one hand and trade and politics on the other hand did not appear in the *padroado system*. It put the missionaries literally in the service *de deus e do rei* i.e. in the service of God and king, continually confusing the interest of God with those of their king. Scandalously, they believed that *reino* i.e. the kingdom of Portugal was the reign of God itself.

- Religious interest were often given second place or just overlooked. Political conquest was seen as the best guarantee for missionary conquest from the point of view of those being evangelized, it was difficult to distinguish religion from politics. Baptism was not understood as the beginning of a new life but rather as a way of becoming subject to Portugal.

- The worst of all issues involving the Christianization of Africa was the promotion of slave trade. “The greatest hindrance of the mission is the slave trade, operated by the Portuguese Christians of Angola.
- It renders our religious odious to the African who keep in mind their chains instead of seeing the freedom brought to them by Jesus Christ.” (Propaganda Fide).

- Portuguese officials as well as theologians argued that the people of sub Sahara Africa were very under-developed tribe leading a sub-human life similar to that of animals. Enslavement, they argued, would help these Africans to learn a more decent life and thus win citizenship in heaven.
- The first Apostolic Prefect of Angola- a Franciscan capuchin even argued that the worst thing that happens to an already baptized slave was to be sold to heretics. Thus, he forbade- under pain of excommunication- the selling of baptized slaves to Protestants.

- With the diminishment of Portuguese as a world power and the resurgence of Islam in the early 18th century came to decline of catholic missionary work. Ironically, these events led to liberation of the missionary enterprise from royal patronage.
- The first burst of renewed interest in the evangelization of Africa came from European-based protestant missionary societies as early as 1792, notably the Baptist missionary society (BMS)

The Foundation of Propaganda Fide and Its Role

- In the 15th century, Rome decided to establish a body in the Vatican, which took charge of all mission territories in the new continents. This was the congregation for the propagation of Faith (Propaganda Fide).
- It was in 1622 when the attempt to put to an end to many ambiguities in missionary work and promote its liberation from the so called *Padroado system* and political interests. Many religious orders especially Capuchins, responded to its missionary appeal.

- Its main responsibility was to govern the entire work of spreading the Good News. It supported formation of local priests so that they can help in preaching the Gospel among their own people. Seminaries were established in Rome where foreign seminarians could go and study for the purpose of coming back to help in the work of evangelization.
- Apart from this, different mission territories were given to certain countries that were responsible. This was called *jus commissionis*. The King was at the same in charge of the missionary establishments. He was responsible for the work of evangelization as well.

- Rome appointed Apostolic Vicars and Prefects who represented Rome and the Congregation of Propaganda Fide in mission lands.
- This was important because Rome was able to control what was happening in the mission lands and the colonial masters could not do what they wanted. This was a great push to the work of evangelization
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- It is said that the slavery in East Africa, which was carried out by the Arabs, was much worse than slavery in West Africa. The Portuguese moved along the coast to Latin America and Asia. The material aspect and greedy for power triumphed over Faith and religion.

- One of the difficulties the missionaries experienced in the so-called discovery of other continents was the fact that they were limited in perspective.
- They came from a particular monoculture and they were not used to pluralism of worldviews and cultures. Another big drawback to the work of evangelization was the practice of slavery, colonization, counter witness of the missionaries etc. Protestantism came to be a hindrance to the spread of Catholicism as well.

- Many religious orders, especially the Capuchins, responded to its missionary appeal. But its efforts did not succeed entirely to overcome the obstacles mentioned above.
- Some French missionaries, like the Vincentians, began evangelization work in French commercial centers along the African coastline and on the islands in the Indian Ocean (Madagascar, 1648; La Reunion, 1665; Mauritius 1721). The crisis of faith during the Age of the Enlightenment in the 18th c had its effects in the African missions; some missions were abandoned.

- The history of Christianity in Africa south of the Sahara region begins in 15th century with the arrival of the first missionaries carrying the Gospel from Europe.
- Indeed according to J. Bauer, Africa has experienced three phases of Evangelization or generation(s) right since the first Century of Christianity to the present. There is the colonial pre-colonial generation, the colonial generations and the post-colonial generation.

Phase I: First 15 Centuries of Evangelization (The Ancient Church)

- Christianity spread to Africa already in the first century. From the second century already there were flourishing Christian communities in North Africa just as Pope Paul VI in his message *Africae Terrarum* (1967) once pointed out that *these communities were in the vanguard of theological reflection and produced a large corpus of Christian literature of permanent value.* (Paul VI, *Africae Terrarum*, p. 7).

- North Africa produced great heroic Christians, saints, martyrs, confessors, virgins and great doctors like Origen and Tertullian. Among the saints are Athanasius and Cyril, leaders of the Alexandrian school.
- At the other end of the North Africa coastline are great names like St. Cyprian and the greatest of them is St. Augustine of Hippo, one of the brilliant lights of the Christian world. There is also Anthony of Pachomius who were pioneer founders of monastic life in North Africa. From here monasticism spread to Eastern and Western Europe.

- As we can see thus the first phase of evangelizing work in the continent of Africa during the first fifteen centuries was thus limited to North Africa, that is, the modern countries of Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, Egypt, Nubia and Ethiopia. This is what we call the *ancient Church of Africa*.

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Remote Causes responsible for the tragic disappearance of the Church in North Africa are:

- The presence of Donatism in the Church in North Africa reduced the Church's interior strength considerably. In spite of the Catholic victory over the Donatists at the meeting held in Carthage in 411, Donatism never completely disappeared, and was still to be found in North Africa during the 6th century.
- A very important lesson that could be learned from this sad situation of the Church in North Africa concerns the crucial importance of promoting, with vigilant and unflagging solicitude, the intimate bonds of communion among all the faithful in the Body of Christ which is the Church.

- The Vandal persecution of the Church inflicted upon the latter a spiritual and moral damage which weakened the Church considerably, a weakness from which the Church never really recovered.
- The North African Church never translated the Bible and liturgy into native language (Berber and Punic), or incorporated elements of local culture to form a national Church. Latin provincial culture was received by inhabitants along with the Christian faith. It is here that one can see a fundamental difference between North African Church and the Church in Egypt.

The immediate cause of the decline Catholic Church in North Africa

- The Arab-Muslim invasion brought about a serious decline in the Christian population, due to casualties in battle and the flight of many to Italy and Gaul.
- The Arab conquest of North Africa around the year 640 AD is one of the great historical turning points in African history and means also the dramatic end of old North African Christianity. The Islamic invaders thus later almost totally wiped out traces of Christianity in North Africa.

- The pressure exerted upon Christians and pagans to convert to Islam. In North Africa, following the Arab-Muslim invasion, Christians were permitted free exercise of their religion, on payment of a tax and agreement not to proselytize.
- But ca. 720 heavy pressure was exerted by Caliph Omar II on the Christian Berbers to convert to Islam. By a rapid conversion of the Moors, followed by a gradual process of attrition, Islam succeeded in weakening the Church in North Africa which, in turn, lead to its total disappearance.
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Phase II: Pre-colonial Christianity (15th to 18th Centuries [1450-1890])

- It began with the exploration of the Western coast of Africa by Portuguese sailors (1434). The Portuguese Mariners during the 15th C discovered the African Coast, sailed around the Cape of Storms (Cape of Good Hope) to finally land in Calcutta in 1494. The exploration of the African coast by the Portuguese in the 15th century was soon accompanied by evangelisation.

- Missionaries took the sea route, exploring further and further down the coast through the course of the 15th century.
- Christian missionaries, whose work bore good fruit when the kingdom of Congo became a Christian kingdom in the 1490's, accompanied many of these seafaring explorers.
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- The Catholic mission work toiled off through the 16th and 17th centuries to experience a resurgence in the 1840's with the founding of the White Fathers and the Holy Ghost Fathers, just about the time the protestant missionary movement began to crest.

- The earliest protestant missionaries were former slaves, who were later in the 18th century joined by a thousand 'boisterously Christian' former slaves who had settled in Nova Scotia, Canada, after supporting the British side in the American war of independence.
- They settled in Sierra Leone, and established a significant Christian community, which formed the nucleus of West African Christianity.

- Early in the 19th century Europeans and Americans began to arrive in Africa and set up mission villages and mission stations throughout Africa.
- These missionaries tended to be working class Christians with a pioneering spirit that led them to commit themselves to stay for the duration, and to be non-denominational in their view of missionary enterprise, co-operating heartily with any other Christians for the furtherance of the Gospel.

- The second phase of missionary activity coincides with the commercial activity of the Europeans.
- It witnessed also many contradictions, especially the evil of slave-trade by those who called themselves Christians.
- During the first period, missionary activity was initiated by the *padroado* system (Royal patronage: a form of Church-Christian state relationship in which the kings of Portugal played an active role in the administration and support of the Church in their kingdom and in mission areas under their political control).

- Most attempts at evangelization on the eastern and western coasts of Africa, begun under the patronage of the Portuguese, failed to produce lasting results.
- One can mention here the cases of Senegal (1444) Ghana (1482), Nigeria (The kingdom of Benin, 1514-1538, and of Warri), Angola (1520) where the first diocese of “Congo and Angola” (Luanda) was erected (1596).

The Church of the Eastern Coast of Africa:

- Portugal became a commercial power all along the coasts of Mozambique and Mombasa. The Islamic presence there was very hostile to Christian missionary work.
- In 1559 the Jesuit Goncalvo da Silveira and two of his confreres began evangelization work in the kingdoms of present day Mozambique and later in Zambezi and finally in the capital of the kingdoms of Monomotapa whose king was baptized in 1561. Soon Arabs in the court of the king turned the king against the missionaries and had them massacred.
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- The catholic communities of Africa had little time to consolidate themselves. Their practice of faith was mixed with many traditional practices, as the reports of missionaries to Propaganda Fide showed. This led to syncretistic movements like the 'antonianism' in Congo at the end of the 17th c.
- Thus, the first missionary efforts in sub-Saharan Africa were not very successful, due also to their association with European commercial exploitation and the slave-trade. In addition, there was the constant opposition of the Calvinists, interference of the Portuguese interests, and hostility of the Muslims.

- The second phase unlike the first which proved to be unsuccessful, the Portuguese missionaries during the second phase managed to implant the Church in a few areas in the African coast, such as, in the Kingdoms of Congo, Angola, Warri in the Western Niger Delta and ancient Zimbabwe and to win a good number of African believers.
- Unfortunately again however, this faith did not take firm roots in the African cultural context but instead it “remained marginal to mainstream African cultures”.
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- In spite of the heroic evangelizing efforts of the 15th to 16th centuries, Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa had completely disappeared by the beginning of the 19th century.
- Indeed the work of evangelization did not make great progress in Africa during this period.
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EXTINCTION OF CHRISTIANITY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA DURING THE 19TH CENTURY

- *European contacts with Africa from the 15th to the 19th c were sporadic, characterised by prejudices and compromises in the slave-trade.*
- Several factors played an important role in this matter: geographical factors (difficulties of exploration), political factors (dominance of Islam in the North), economic factors and cultural factors (slave-trade and racist mentalities).

- *Lack of proper language of language and culture of the people*
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- The main cause of the apparent failure of this missionary activity under the *Padroado* in Africa was the lack of an accurate knowledge of the African languages, customs and mentality on the part of the missionaries and the consequent superficial instruction and Christianisation

- *The involvement of missionaries and Christians in local wars seriously compromised the very existence of the mission, implying that to be Christian meant to be Portuguese.*
- *Racism became fashionable in Europe particularly with Enlightenment and Protestantism.*

- The missions in Sub-Saharan Africa were entrusted to Portugal which claimed privileges of patronate (*Padroado*) earlier granted to it by popes. Insistence by Portugal on its *padroado* privileges practically nullified the efforts of the Sacred Congregation *de Propaganda Fide* to exercise effective control and to direct evangelization in those territories. Certain religious orders also manage to obtain privileges which enabled them to circumvent or obstruct Propaganda Fide's missionary policies and approaches.

- While insisting on its patronage privileges, which enabled it to exclude missionaries of other nationalities from Sub-Saharan Africa, Portugal became increasingly unable to supply enough missionaries for the region.
- This even led to prolonged vacancies in the bishoprics in Africa, which in turn, resulted in the decline and decay of what had been laboriously built up.

- While insisting on its exclusive right to direct evangelization in Africa, the Portuguese government tended to prefer its commercial interests to the spread of the Faith.
- There was no effort made to penetrate beyond a coastal strip to the interior.

- The Portuguese Catholic missions thrived only in areas which were effectively under Portuguese power, and consequently they acquired the character of ecclesiastical colonies. With the exception of the Italian Capuchins in the Congo and in Angola the early Portuguese missions did not face up to the need for inculturation.
- A deep and accurate knowledge of the African languages and of the customs and mentality of the people was lacking.

- The tropical climate often killed the missionaries within short time after their arrival. This is one reason why the mission in the Kingdoms of Loango and Kakongo (1766-1776) had to be abandoned.
- Another factor in the setback of the Catholic mission in Africa was the growing monopoly of the slave-trade by Dutch Calvinists. By 1600 the Dutch controlled the seas and the slave-trade became very profitable. It proved to be one of the greatest obstacles to Catholic missionary work on the African coastline.

- The Berlin Congress of 1885 and its consequent scramble and partitioning of Africa all drew attention of the West to the entire continent all over again.
- The acquisition of colonies in Africa by European powers, the invasion of Africa by European merchants searching for raw materials to promote the industrial revolution, and the influx in African of Christian missionaries of different denominations, all came upon Africa as it were, like an inundation.

Phase III: Christianity in Colonial Africa (19th to 20th c [1890-1960]):

- Towards the middle of the 19th century the evangelization of Africa was resumed, thanks to the heroic dedication of many missionary Institutes of men and women.
- During the 19th century, Spanish and Portuguese influence had waned and the system of *Padroado* weakened and declined, thus leaving room for the Congregation of Propaganda Fide to get a firm and untrammelled hold of missionary policy and strategy in Africa. Today, the Catholic Church is present everywhere in Africa, the result of barely one century of apostolic activity.

- The third phase can be said to have commenced in the nineteenth century and it was characterized by an extraordinary passion and love for mission among the missionary institutes and missionaries themselves.
- It was a time inspired by a deep Christian experience of the boundless plans of universal salvation offered by the Father to all in his incarnated Son, and, therefore, the obligation to proclaim salvation in Jesus Christ offered to all in his Church.

- It was directed to “the most abandoned people in the world” as the missionaries of the time wrote. Hence it was the experience of salvation in Christ that impelled missionaries to go to Africa even before European exploration.
- Often the path of the missionaries crossed those of European, Turkish and Arab explorers, conquerors and colonial powers, leading frequently to conflicts. One of the successes of this period is that it led to the growth of several local African churches.

- It was however unfortunate that these missionary endeavours in the 19th century coincided with the exploration and colonization of most parts of Africa by the European powers.
- The fact that missionary efforts and colonization and exploration efforts went hand in hand undoubtedly marred to a great extent the reputation of the Church.

- The Missionaries eventually found it very difficult to liberate themselves from ethnocentrism and ethnocentric prejudice. Again because of their manner of training and the kind of the theology of the time, the missionaries were not able to appreciate the African culture and hence take it into consideration in the whole process of evangelization.
- Instead the missionaries thought that the Western culture with which the Gospel was wrapped with was supra cultural and universally valid and since the western culture was implicitly regarded as Christian, it was equally self-evident that this culture had to be exported with the Christian faith.

- It is in this line that the African world-view and “much of the richness of many local cultures ... were ignored or suppressed.” This is what I would call a mere transplantation of the Western Church into Africa since the Africans only received a faith vested in European cultural dress and language that neither corresponded to the African thought-pattern nor did it speak to them since it was simply foreign to them.
- It was this “theological deficiency” that prompted the missionaries to rethink their theology and formulate more relevant theologies by then commonly known as adaptation or accommodation.

- One could speak of a significant paradigm shift in theology and ecclesiology in the wake of 1960s, which saw a remarkable emergence of a movement from a European-centred world to a humankind-centred world —, from Mission being a project of the West (Europe and America) targeting the pagans of the South (Asia, Africa and Latin America) to “Mission in six Continents”.
- The new theology of Adaptation and Accommodation put stress to the need for mutual and healthy dialogue between the Gospel and the Cultures of the people through incorporating cultural values of the people in the process of communicating the Gospel.

Phase VI: Post-Colonial Christianity

- The 2nd great watershed in the history of modern African church came in 1960's, when the African churches, along with the nations that housed them, moved from a colonial world to independence.
- Ecclesial event to affect African Christianity was Roman Catholic Vatican Council II, which began in 1962 and ended in 1965. Thus decolonization and Vatican II (1962-65) reshaped the face of the Church.

- Vatican II greatly accelerated the development of African clergy and led to an African Catholicism dominated by African clerical and lay leadership, while at the same time sending African clergy throughout the world to form part of the great universal church.
- It stressed understanding, encouraging the use of the vernacular, rather than Latin, in worship, and opening the door to cooperation between Catholics, Protestants and Orthodox Christians.

- “It may seem odd, but it is probably true, that the most important single effect in Africa in popular terms of the Council has been the change in singing, in hymns, in music, in the use of musical instruments”.
- Leadership: In 1960 most priests and virtually bishops were European and American. After local clergy grew tremendously.

- In 1994 the First African Synod was held led by Pope John Paul. This unique synod defined the Church as “the family of God” and worked to develop and inculturate that image in the African Context. The participants stressed the need to inculturate Christianity in the areas of liturgy, marriage, and reverence for ancestors.
- The post-colonial AIC's on the other hand have continued to grow and flourish and proliferate, but have become far less concerned with integrating Christianity into traditional African culture. In part this is because the mission founded churches and African leadership are paying more attention to the strengths of traditional culture, and in part it is because African people are becoming less traditional and more urbanized and western.

Two African Synods: Authentic Fruit of true “African Christianity”

- **(a) 1994 First African Synod: Purpose**>>advise on the agenda of the Catholic Church’s evangelizing mission in Africa in the next Millennium.
- Just as we are still seeing the consequences of the Second Vatican Council develop thirty-five years after the event, so the consequences of the African Synod, itself a consequence of the Council, are still unfolding. There was a flurry of publications leading up to the Synod, around the synod and immediately afterwards.

- A direct fruit of the African Synod was the Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa*, which was the major document produced by the Pope in 1995 in response to the Synod and which took on board (or in some instances downplayed) the discussions which fed into the Synod and which occurred at the Synod.
- Development of African Ecclesiology: the Church as a family.

Themes of the synod

- Proclamation of the Good News
- Inculturation
- Dialogue
- Justice and Peace
- The Theology of Small Christian Communities
- The Means of Social Communication.
- These themes formed the framework for all the subsequent work preparing for the Synod, for the Synod itself and for the post-synodal documents.
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Second African Synod: 4th to the 25th October 2009

- “The Church in Africa in service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace”
- Family life, exploitation of resources, trade imbalances, debt, climate change, women in Africa, conflicts, poor governance, migration, corruption, globalization, health concerns, and insufficient media coverage of the real Africa with all its lights and shadows. Pope Benedict XVI published the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Africae Munus*, marking the climax of the Second Synod of Bishops for Africa.

MISSION METHODS AFTER THE 19TH CENTURY

- ***Fight against Slave Trade***: Both protestant and catholic missionaries actively fought against the slave trade.
- ***Expansion of missionary outreach***: Their missionary zeal led them further inside the centre of Africa, instead of being limited to its coastlands and southern hemisphere.
- ***Colonialism***: Colonialism was concomitant to evangelization since Christian missionary enterprise were well on their way when the modern colonial occupation of Africa began. (But colonialism also generated missionary activity in lands of new colonial powers like Belgium and Germany.
- Assimilation: ***However***, many catholic missionaries persisted to believe that the minds of the African converts were a *tabula rasa* (a pure or empty slate) on which faith can be implanted.... thus assimilation was held up instead of adaptation.

- ***The Goal of Mission as salvation of souls:***
Catholic missionaries were still captive to the concept of 'soul saving' and not the building of the local churches. While the protestant already believe that 'African should not be converted by Africans' catholic missionaries still treated Africans as 'children's'.

- ***Cultural Alienation:*** While enthusiastic to welcome Africans to the church, most European congregations were unwilling to accept Africans as full members. The constant justification was that Africans were not culturally disposed to the demands of religious life.
- ***Indigenous Religious Missionary Congregations:*** This brought the rise of autochthonous religious congregation for Africans. Among the women the earliest was the daughter of Mary founded in 1849 in the reunion island. In interior sub-Saharan Africa, however, the earliest to be founded was the daughters of Mary (bannabikira) in 1910 in Uganda.

Education as a Colonial and missionary Strategy:

- Between 1890 and 1914 missionaries became more closely related to the European powers, for good or ill, and whether in alliance or opposition.
- African rulers were no longer the primary political powers, missionaries now, whether wanted or not, became subject to and identified with the colonizing European powers.
- The colonial rulers in turn did not hesitate to use missionaries to help them subdue and control the colonies.

- European education became one of the key elements in the new political reality and the interplay between convert, missionary and colonial government.
- Missionaries both Catholics and Protestants virtually monopolized the African schools systems, and schools became a major conduit for new mission converts.
- These new converts, however, did not usually stay in schools. They went out across Africa in search of work, and in the process converted others, sometimes in astonishing mass movements.

- The new generation of educated Christians was quite different from the first generation of converts who were largely slaves, refugees and social outcasts finding safe haven in mission villages.
- By the turn of the century, Christians tended to be young, educated and powerful, though still often outsiders – traders, clerks or migrant workers.

- The growth of the church and the importance of African catechists and evangelists, however, did not lead to a corresponding stress of the preparation and training of native African clergy.
- The lack of African clergy and the shortage of missionary clergy led to a severe sacramental drought in Christian Africa. Sometimes as many as 50 congregations were served by a single ordained pastor or priest.

- Catechist was the main factor in the spread of Christianity in the 19th century, though the office had fallen into disfavour in the 20th century.
- Actually the first indigenous evangelizers were catechists. They had the advantage of knowing the language and customs of the people.

- They took responsibility when the missionaries were expelled and after the First World War.
- Many African Catholics, the catechist remains their only link to the church, apart from the very occasional visit by the parish priest for the Eucharist, baptism and marriages.

- Because the catechist played such an important role in the African Church, the church became relatively non-sacramental.
- Since catechists cannot administer sacraments, the sacramental ministry of the Church became peripheral, while weekly worship move to the foreground of African Catholic Christian experience.

- Frustration at the failure of the missionaries to permit able and mature Christians to provide clerical leadership and the new generation of western missionaries racist insistence on maintaining control over the Christian community led many of the new generation of educated protestants Christians to break away from missionary control to form AIC's.

Indigenous Clergy

- After the 19th century the situation changed and indigenous and expatriate clergy and religious work hand in hand in the task of evangelizing Africa.
- The establishment of the local churches in Africa was related to individual missionary institutes and conditioned by their spirituality; they were also linked to specific geographical areas.

- The formation of young African local churches was also marked by many trials and problems such as harsh terrain, sickness and the premature death of many missionaries, ambiguous relationships with colonial powers, hostility and persecution by Muslims and slave-traders, unfriendly attitudes and competition from Protestants.

- The presence of outstanding missionaries and founders of Missionary Institutes such as Mother Javouhey, Francis Libermann, Bishop Giustino de Jacobis, Cardinal Massaja, Bishop Comboni and Cardinal Lavigerie influenced the extra ordinary growth of the local African churches.