

*Legacy*

### **The Communiqué from the Seminar**

*"A Christian lives in a society where he carries out the mandate given to him by the Lord of the Church...We believe that God has placed us where we are to do His will as Ethiopian Christians and fulfil His purpose...A Christian is a person who is transformed by what God of the universe has done in the person of His son Jesus Christ"*

(The memorandum of July 1975 by Gudina Tumsa, accepted by the 9<sup>th</sup> General Assembly which was held in Nejo in April 1976)

The 9<sup>th</sup> Missiological Seminar with the title "the Missional Church and the Mission of God" was planned and carried out from February 15-16, 2008 by the Gudina Tumsa Foundation (GTF) in collaboration with Awassa Mekane Yesus Church. Rev. Gudina Tumsa (1929-1979) was one of the most self-assured and confrontational church leaders in Africa, and one of the most insightful evangelical, ecumenical and theological scholars of his time.

Lecturers on this seminar were from Mekane Yesus Theological Seminary (MYTS) and Ethiopian Graduate School of Theology (EGST), from Pact International Organization (government advisor on good governance and democracy), from Gudina Tumsa Foundation and from Germany. The Lectures and discussions were intended to help the participants to see and evaluate the mission of the church based on the mission of God from Gudina Tumsa's perspective. There were more than two hundred (200) participants from various evangelical churches and theological institutions in Awassa and the surrounding.

Gudina Tumsa's approach to the mission of the church was taken as helpful for today's church in a way that it encompasses multidimensional perspective that would help to encourage and inspire evangelical churches to carry out the mission of God. Reminding themselves the fact that there were many victims in various evangelical churches during the time of the military dictatorship, the participants forwarded their request to Evangelical Churches Fellowship leaders to study and prepare such seminars on the life and ministry of those martyrs in order that lessons may be learnt by today's generation, as in the case of the life and ministry of Gudina Tumsa.

The seminar participants uttered their profound admiration to Gudina Tumsa Foundation for taking the initiative in organizing such a seminar on the life and ministry of Gudina Tumsa, Ethiopian evangelical martyr, with a special focus on his approach to the mission of the Church and forwarded their request to GTF that more Seminars and Symposiums may be carried out in the future.

Awassa, February 16/2008

Great is the Lord & most  
Worthy of praise;  
His greatness no one can fathom.  
Ps. 145: 3

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I'd like to express my gratitude to the staff of the Mekane Yesus Theological Seminary for their cooperative spirit and for hosting this seminar.

To the Reverend Paul Hoffman who has dedicated his time and resources for this work. Paul has been instrumental in the planning and launching of all missiological seminars GTF has been conducting since 2001. As a close friend and colleague of Gudina, Paul's writings and lectures have played an important role in unraveling the true character and thinking of Gudina Tumsa, which in the past had been misunderstood and misrepresented. His contributions has tremendously helped "remove the barriers which had prevented the voice and witness of Gudina from being heard".

A special thank goes to the three instructors of the MYTS, namely Mr. Istifanos Tesema, Dr. Belay Guta and Mr. Bruk Ayele for their contributions and time consuming hard work that went into preparing their respective papers.

To the students of MYTS, for taking a special interest in Gudina Tumsa seminar and active participation. I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage you to be involved even more not only by listening to lectures of others but by reading and doing your own research.

A deep gratitude goes to the Rev. Gerd Decke and Dr. Kess of Berlin Mission not only for their continued financial support but also for the leading role they have played in organizing the seminars and publication of the proceedings.

Last but not least to all staff members of GTF whose commitment and hard work has been a source of inspiration. I would like to make a particular mention of a young man by the name of Samuel Yonas who, within a very short time, has added a special dimension to the Gudina Tumsa and his Legacy project by removing obstacles hindering GTF from becoming multi-ethnic as Gudina himself had envisioned it. His other contributions are yet to be seen in future seminars and publications of the GTF

I would like to use this opportunity to make a special appeal to the Mekane Yesus Theological Seminary to maintain this spirit of collaboration that we may together conduct more studies and seminars. On the consecutive seminars held here in Ethiopia and abroad the same proposal was made by participants to the leaders of the EECMY and MYTS that "a special Gudina Tumsa professorship be established at MYTS to carry on research, study and seminars on the continuing significance of the issues raised by Gudina's life, ministry and thought". It is my hope and prayer that the current leadership of the MYTS will work to make this dream come true.