

FROM THE EDITOR

During this period of theological renewal following upon Vatican II, the subject of Mission has been receiving a lot of attention. And justly so. The pastoral nature of the Council encourages a continual re-evaluation of the theological concept of mission as it is directly related to the Church's evangelical task. With this in mind, we offer our readers a special issue of Tripod focusing on various aspects of the church's theology of mission for contemporary times.

Our reflections begin with Mission, Indigenization, Dialogue by Tripod's Editor John Tong who traces his own gradual growth in understanding of the meaning of mission through the various stages of his personal life. He then applies this to his own present situation as a Chinese Christian in Hong Kong.

Lucien Legrand is a French theologian in mission in India. In Images of Mission in the New Testament, he offers a rich selection of images and models for evangelization as found in the New Testament texts. Of particular interest is his emphasis on the vital internal role of Christ's evangelical mandate to teach all nations as that which nourishes faith and forms the Christian community.

When Patrick D'Souza, Bishop of Varanasi, India was invited to address a group of foreign missionaries at a workshop on mission held at Lyon, France in 1983, he chose as his subject an examination of the Christian Understanding of Other Religions. Giving us a brief review of how indigenous Christian theologians have been approaching the problem raised by Hindu theologies and philosophies, Bishop D'Souza singles out the Indian Advaitic experience as offering theologians a rich area for dialogue. The Bishop sees salvation and religious faith as universal, and as part of the common human experience, with Jesus as the unique moderator of all religious experience. Part two of Bishop D'Souza's study will appear in our next issue.

For a description of mission in action and the almost super-human

lengths missionaries will go to realize Christ's evangelical command, we refer you to Jean Guennou's historical sketch of the events and people leading up to the arrival of the first three Parish Foreign Mission Society members in mainland China in 1684. What better way for Tripod to pay tribute to this remarkable missionary society on the occasion of their Tercentenary Celebration of that historical occasion.

Readers may remember our review of Professor Gu Changsheng's comprehensive study of Missionaries and Modern China when it was published in these pages three years ago. Professor Gu is resident historian at Huadong University. For this second printing of his ambitious work, the original plates have been corrected and amended in part. (The Professor is presently hard at work on a new revised edition.) Peter Barry has made a comparative study of the two texts and finds in the corrected version encouraging signs of a more balanced and objective approach to his controversial subject. We trust that you, too, will agree with Peter's observations.

The Catholic Church in Taiwan is made up of seven dioceses and Catholics number nearly 300,000. In Taiwan Catholics Celebrate Anniversary, Peter Barry describes in a general way the history of the Catholic Church in Taiwan, especially the contributions made by the early Spanish Dominican Fathers.

Our peripatetic Associate, Elmer Wurth, has returned from Fu Shun, North China with news of a new beginning for the Christian community there. And he has pictures to prove it. Elmer's illustrated essay wraps up this issue of Tripod but not without our final wish that you all have a pleasant summer holiday.

* *PUBLICATION NOTICE* *

The first Chinese history of the Catholic Church in Hong Kong (香港天主教掌故) has just been published by the Holy Spirit Study Centre in conjunction with the Extramural Studies Office. Documenting the history of the Catholic Church in Hong Kong from its beginning in the 1840's to the present day, this 320-page paperback should prove to be a useful tool for researchers as well as providing interesting reading for the non-specialist. Priced at HK\$30.00 per copy with a 10% discount for the purchase of ten or more, the history can be ordered from the Holy Spirit Study Centre or the Extramural Studies Office, 6, Welfare Road, Aberdeen, Hong Kong (Tel. 5-530141). For overseas orders: sea mail - US\$4.50; air mail - US\$6.50. Cheques or postal money orders are to be made out to "Holy Spirit Study Centre".