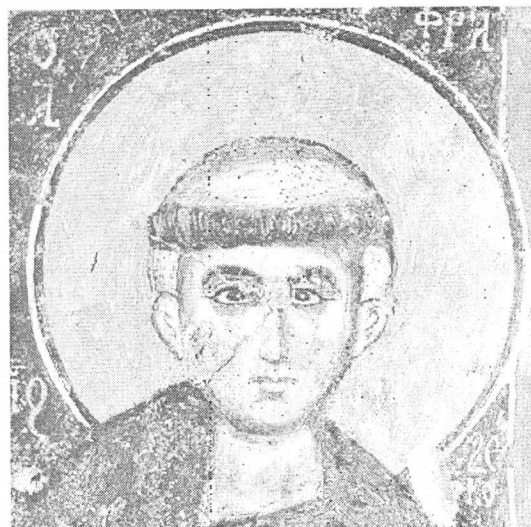


Go,
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**Comprehensive
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Franciscan
Mission
Charism**

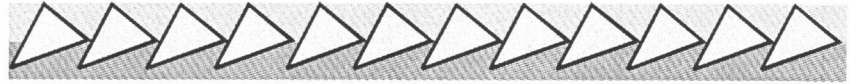


Loyalty
and Betrayal:
a History of
Franciscan
Mission

Lesson Unit 8

The documents of Vatican II, Pope Paul VI's *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, and Pope John Paul II's *Redemptoris Missio* have deeply affected the understanding of mission. Constant efforts are being made to clarify its purpose and objectives, and to determine the most appropriate methods to carry it out. *Go, Rebuild My Church: A Comprehensive Course on the Franciscan Mission Charism*, provides a particular context to stimulate dialogue about the many dimensions of mission and the inevitable recognition of the equality, dignity and humanity of all persons. The course is unique, since it is genuinely inter-Franciscan and inter-cultural. An ongoing process for exchange among all members of the Franciscan Family from six continents provides for a creative meshing of the best in current theology, Franciscan research and pastoral practice. The vast and profound changes of present-day society make all the more urgent our search for a fuller understanding of humanity in the light of the Gospel and the Person of Jesus Christ.

As Franciscans, with the world as our "cloister," we welcome this refreshing moment of intercultural dialogue. Francis was the first among founders to situate the missionary dimension of the Gospel call clearly within his rule. This study reawakens us to the challenge and genuineness of Francis' message for our own times.



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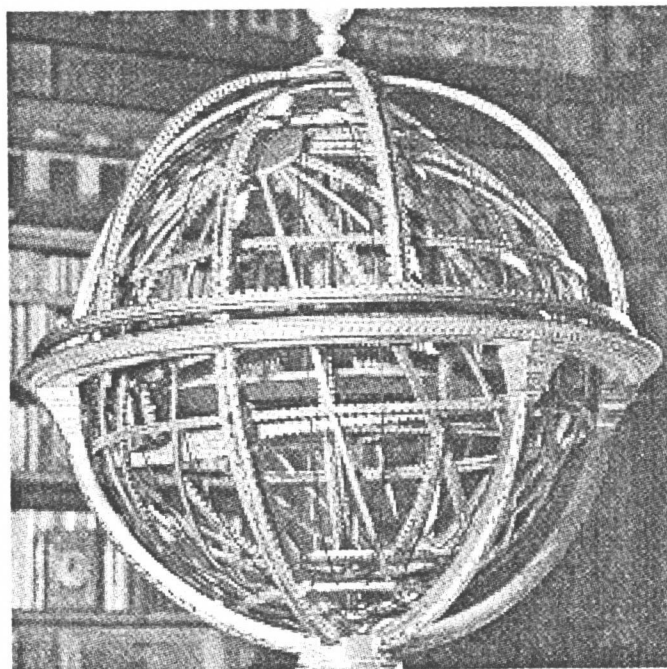
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Go, Rebuild My Church!

*A Comprehensive
Course on the
Franciscan Mission
Charism*



Loyalty and Betrayal: A History of the Franciscan Mission



Lesson Unit 8



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Aegidius in Tunis

At the time when Francis was in Egypt and met the Sultan, Brother Aegidius – the fourth brother who had followed Francis – was in Tunis, where many Christians lived peacefully together with Muslims.

A monk preaches to Christians and Muslims.



That changed, however, with the arrival of Brother Aegidius, who apparently led a whole group of brothers. He attacked the belief of the Muslims and violated the honour of the prophet Mohammed. Then a man who was venerated as holy among the Muslims called out: "Unbelievers have just come to us. They want to condemn our prophet and the law that we have received from him. I therefore call upon you to put to the sword those men who arrived." A great riot broke out. The Christians who lived there realised the danger and feared for their lives. So they forced Aegidius and his companions to go back to the ship in which they had come. The brothers had no choice. They had to return to Italy without having achieved anything (According to the Life of Brother Aegidius).



Introduction

A



Today one regards history with a certain scepticism

Is it really worthwhile to take so much trouble to engage in historical research, in the study of the history of the Church, of the mission and of the Franciscan movement? The present seems more important, as it is in our hands and we have the responsibility to shape it in a meaningful way. But history belongs to us as a Church and as a Franciscan family, just as roots belong to a tree. Looking at one's own history can inspire and change the present and the future. It is worthwhile to examine in detail how far our early Brothers and Sisters understood and carried out the missionary idea of St. Francis.

Until recently, history was experienced, seen and

written from the viewpoint of the dominant powers, with the tendency to serve their own justification and glory. This can be proved in some cases, for the writing of history in general and also for the missionary history.

It is only since the fifties that history-books have been written in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and these show us the less laudable side of Franciscan missionary work and also reflect the way of thinking and the reactions of the oppressed. This kind of history writing, too, has a tendency to be one-sided. The time has now come to present both views in a comprehensive, objective and critical form when writing history.



An African says: "I was naked, wounded and hungry. I was blind. Yet I lived secure in a social order which you destroyed. Men of Europe, you came as soldiers and Missionaries. You have changed my world. Preachers, you have pointed with lifted finger the way towards enlightenment and at the same time took away with your hand the wives from my side".





Franciscan personalities of the past seen from today's point of view

With these preliminary remarks in mind we wish to present here some Franciscan personalities of the past, seen from a critical modern point of view, emphasising one typical aspect for each figure. This treatment will be used to heighten our sense of awareness towards the problems we face today.

In this way history can inspire and bring life. Thus the whole exercise can well be a form of *"history of mission expressed in personalities."*

These figures whom we wish to describe more closely, and the motives that were guiding them, are the following:

1. **St. Daniel and his Companions :**
Yearning for martyrdom
2. **Blessed Raymond Llull :**
Dialogue with Jews and Muslims
3. **John of Piano di Carpine :**
Understanding among Peoples
4. **Colette of Corbie**
Vocation to reform the Order
5. **Francisco José de Jaca and Epifanio de Moirans :**
Commitment to Justice
6. **St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen**
Conflict-filled relations with the Protestants
7. **Antonio Caballero:**
Dispute over Inculturation
8. **Placide Tempels :**
Dialogue with Religions
9. **Marie de la Passion :**
Option for the Poor
10. **Wilhelm Cardinal Massaia :**
Courage to act according to his own pastoral responsibility
11. **St. John of Capistrano :**
Concern for the Christian West
12. **Mary Hancock:**
The Woman in Politics
13. **Augusto Ramirez Monasterio :**
Martyr for Justice and Peace

Information

C



In the following part

we shall introduce women and men who have influenced the history of our mission in a remarkable way.





St. Daniel and his Companions: yearning for martyrdom

During Francis' lifetime, St. Berard and his companions were martyred on 16th January, 1220 in Marrakesh, Morocco. They were canonised in 1481.

Daniel and his seven companions moved into the same city in autumn 1227. They preached belief in Jesus Christ. At the same time, they claimed that the Muslims were excluded from salvation and they accused Mohammed of being a false prophet; true salvation could only be found in the Name of Christ. This enraged the people. On Sunday, the 10th of October, the brothers were brought before the ruler. There they showed no remorse but affirmed everything that they had preached. This was in no way excusable for the Muslims. Daniel and his friends were condemned to death and executed. They were canonised almost 300 years later (in 1516). This

canonisation had a political character. It happened in a time when Europe was threatened by the Turks.

According to the missionary ideal of St. Francis (cf. Lesson 7) as well as from the point of view of the Second Vatican Council (NA), the behaviour of the first Franciscan martyrs towards the Muslims is indeed unacceptable. The yearning for martyrdom, however, is part of a Franciscan tradition, perhaps at times also a Franciscan temptation. Yearning for martyrdom as a sign of unconditional following of Christ even unto the death on the cross is one thing, but provoking people of another faith is something else. We should not seek martyrdom, but be prepared to risk our lives for our faith and in promoting justice for the oppressed.



Muslims execute St. Daniel and his companions.

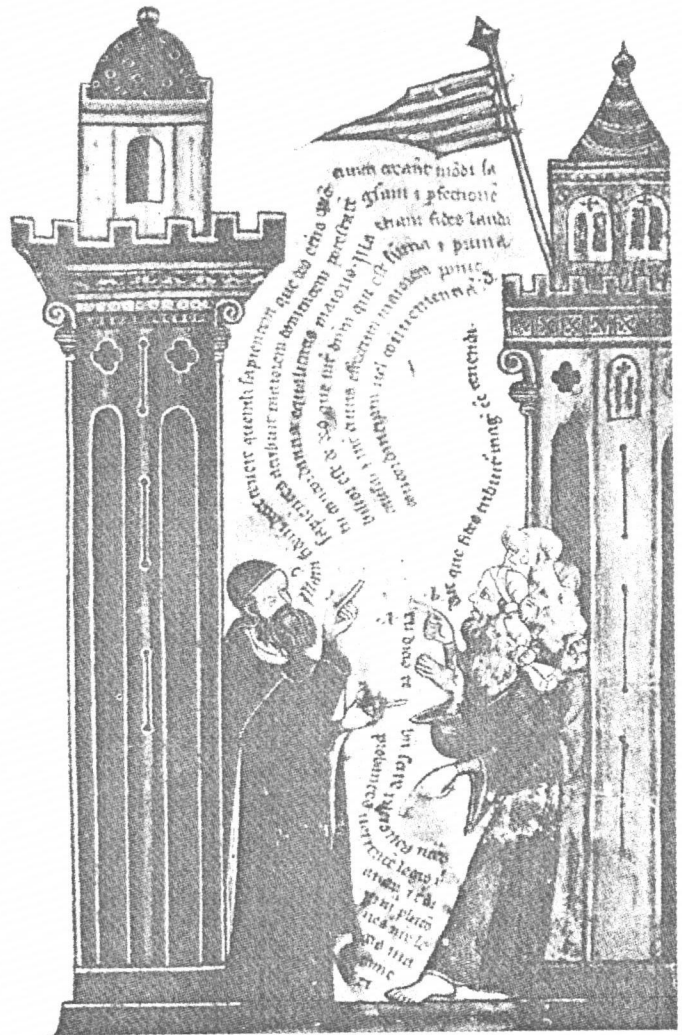




Blessed Raymond Lull: Dialogue with Jews and Muslims

Just like Francis, Raymond Lull (1232 -1315), a Spaniard close to Francis' way of thinking (his membership in the Secular Franciscan Order is not sure), was dreaming of converting and not subjecting the Saracens. The philosopher Raymond Lull was convinced that the truth of the Christian belief could be proved by logic. He therefore made this appeal: "We must put an end to the material war between Christians and Saracens, because so long as it lasts, neither side can be in those peaceful dialogues which certainly result in the triumph of the Cross" (L. Siekeniac). Way ahead of his time, in his book on "The Pagan and the Three Wise Men", he brought together the representatives of the three great religions so that they should arrive at a common conviction of faith. For this purpose the missionaries were expected to learn Arabic in order to carry on a dialogue with the philosophers and mystics of the Muslims. He himself used this method with great success in discussions with his Jewish neighbours on the Spanish island Mallorca.

Encouraged by his success, Raymond Lull then crissed-crossed the Europe of his day to put forth his ideas, begging bread and speaking to anyone who would listen. He visited kings and universities where he most often met with ridicule. In his biography it says: "Travel-stained, ragged, despised, and lonely, the famous courier held on his way, made a fool gladly for the sake of his Beloved" (L. Siekeniac). On his return to Mallorca, he spent most of his spare time learning Arabic from a Moorish slave. In 1313 he went to Morocco where, at first, he was cordially received. He was still carrying out his philosophical discussions with the Moroccan populace in 1316 when the political situation worsened there. Oblivious to the growing hostility, Raymond Lull, who believed until the end that dialogue was the means to peace, was stoned to death.



Raymond Lull discussing with Islamic scholars in Tunisia, 1292.





John of Piano di Carpine: Understanding among Peoples

In 1246 the Italian John of Piano di Carpine was sent by Pope Innocent IV to Karakorum (Inner Mongolia) where he was to parley with the Great Khan Guyuk and help ward off the danger of a Mongol invasion of Europe. Like his friar successors, the other Franciscans, William of Rubruk and Odoric of Pordenone – and long before Marco Polo – he wrote an exhaustive account of his journey with many interesting geographical, historical and ethnological details. He has thus built a link for the first time between the Far East and Europe and has contributed much to the knowledge about other peoples and their culture.

Brother Benedict of Breslau, Poland, was one of John's companions. He describes the scene of meeting the newly elected Great Khan, successor of Guyuk: "There were abound 3000 ambassador envoys from different parts of the world present, bringing letters, answers, and every kind of tribute and gifts to the court. And among them were the aforesaid friars, who wore brocade over their habit as needs must, for no envoy is allowed to see the face of the elect and crowned king, unless he is correctly dressed." (Benedict of Breslau: Christopher Dawson, Hg., Mission to Asia)

John of Piano di Carpine himself wrote in his memoirs: "The present Emperor may be forty or

forty-five years old or more; he is of medium height, very intelligent and extremely shrewd, most serious and grave in his manner. He is never seen to laugh for a slight cause, nor to indulge in any frivolity, so we were told by the Christians who are constantly with him. The Christians of his household also told us that they firmly believed he was about to become a



Franciscans greeting the Emperor on his journey.

Christian, and they have clear evidence of this, for he maintains Christian clerics and provides them with supplies of Christian things; in addition, he always has a chapel before his chief tent and they sing openly and in public and beat the board for service according to the Greek fashion like other Christians, however big a crowd of Tartars or other men be there. The other chiefs do not behave like this" (cf. Christopher Dawson).

It is part of Franciscan universality to go beyond the mere proclamation of the Gospel in cultivating and promoting understanding among peoples.



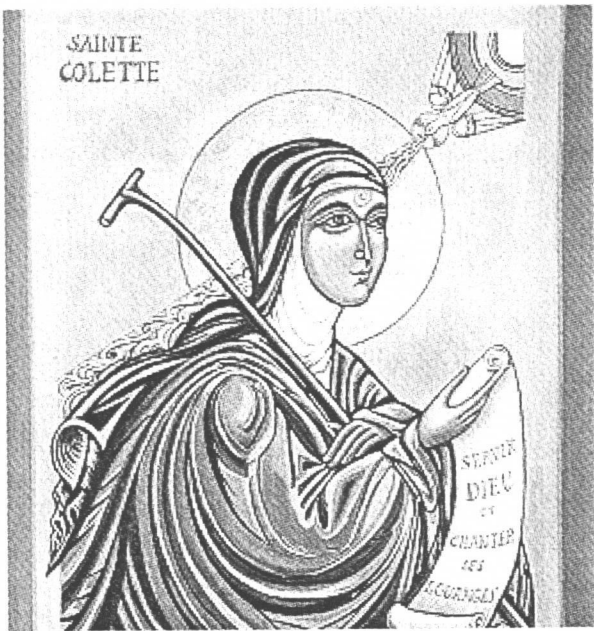


Colette of Corbie :

Vocation to reform the Order

The French woman Colette of Corbie lived during the 15th Century, a time of division in the Church: the Great Western Schism, when believers were divided in their loyalties between two rival popes. Colette supported Pedro de Luna from Catalonia, who called himself Benedict XIII. He opposed the legitimate Pope, Boniface IX. It was this anti-pope who encouraged her to undertake her great work of reform.

“devotion for devotion; love for love”, she lived a quiet life in solitude. But then many people began to visit her to ask for advice. Three years passed by before she discovered her true vocation. She met the Franciscan Henri de la Baume and began to sense she was to reform the weakened Franciscan movement in France. For this purpose, she laid before Benedict XIII a two-fold request:



St. Colette lived a quiet life in solitude.

At the beginning she was not affiliated with the Franciscan way of life. Colette lived as a devout laywoman, as a *beguine*¹, as this state was then known. Then she became a Benedictine. One day, while she was wiping the dust off a statue of St. Francis, it seemed to her that the saint, with his outstretched arm, was unmistakably pointing outside, as if ordering her to leave. She asked to join a convent of the Poor Clares, *Urbanites*². These nuns would only accept her as a servant, whereupon she left their convent and became an *anchorite*³ of the Third Order. Under the motto

- To be allowed to live an apostolic and evangelical life according to the original rule of St. Francis by entering the Second Order;
- to be entrusted with full authority to reform and restore the Order in a way that corresponded to the Spirit of St. Francis.

Here was a woman, an outsider, who joined the Order in order to reform it; and for this purpose she demanded papal authorisation! In this Colette showed both confidence in her mission and great personal commitment to it. She was a genuine reformer; she had a mobile ‘convent’ built, a coach in which she traversed France. While remaining faithful to a contemplative life of prayer and meditation, she visited convent after convent, friary after friary. There she was received as a prophetic voice: sometimes welcomed and sometimes rejected. She succeeded in starting a strong movement of reform. She was one of the few women in the Church who have reformed not only women religious, but also men. She died on March 6, 1447, when her reform movement had already reached Heidelberg in Germany and Vevey in Switzerland.

In the Franciscan movement there are women who can stand as models for a free, self-assured, feminine personality: such examples are Clare of Assisi, Angela of Foligno, Margaret of Cortona, Colette of Corbie, right up to Mary Francis Kwon and Mary Hancock. They all have something important to say.

¹ Pious young women and widows who did not take their vows in a cloister, but lived a cloister-like communal life.

² Poor Clares who follow the Rule of Pope Urban IV (cf. Lesson 2).

³ A female hermit in seclusion (cf. Lesson 2).



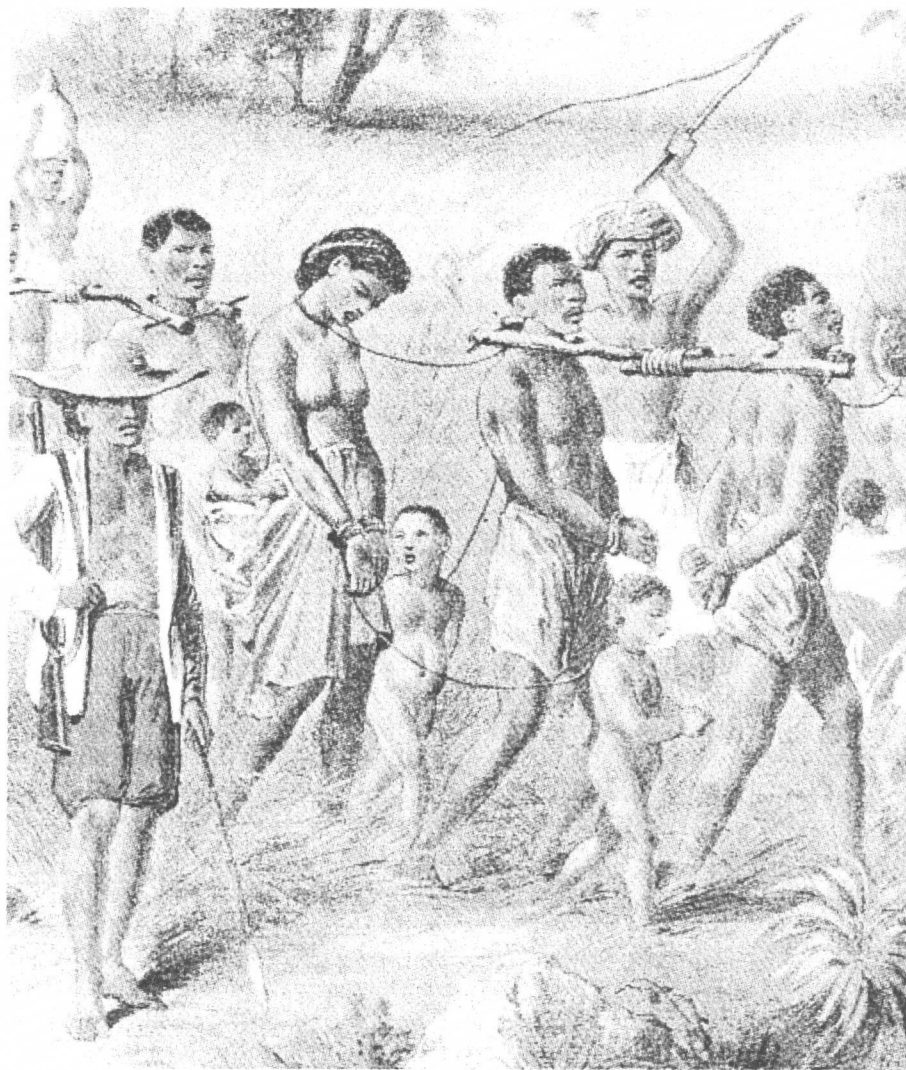
Francisco José de Jaca and Epifanio de Moirans:

Commitment to Justice

The Spaniard Francisco José joined the Capuchins in 1665 and worked among the Indians of Venezuela and Colombia. When he was transferred to Cuba, he began to preach against the practice of slavery. He declared that slaves are free by divine right, and slavery was against God's Law. He was put into prison for his preaching. There he wrote a book, *"On the Freedom of Blacks - Both as Pagans and Christians."*

Friar Epifanio, a French Capuchin, also worked in Venezuela. He, too, condemned the slave trade and was consequently sent to prison in Cuba where he joined his confrere, Francisco José. He also wrote a book entitled, *"On the Natural Freedom of Slaves."* The local bishop suspended and excommunicated both Capuchins in 1681 and they were sent back to Spain for trial. They appealed to the King of Spain and to the "Holy

Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith" where they described the inhuman treatment of African slaves, hunted in their own countries and then shipped to market like cattle. They were finally declared innocent and were released.



A scene of African slavery.

In 1686, their views were accepted by Church authorities in Rome and made part of official Church teaching. This included defending human rights of all, whether Christians or not, and condemned the practice of capturing or selling any human person. Francisco José and Epifanio de Moirans have given us an example of acting courageously in order to defend the rights of the oppressed.





t. Fidelis of Sigmaringen: Conflict-filled relations with the Protestants

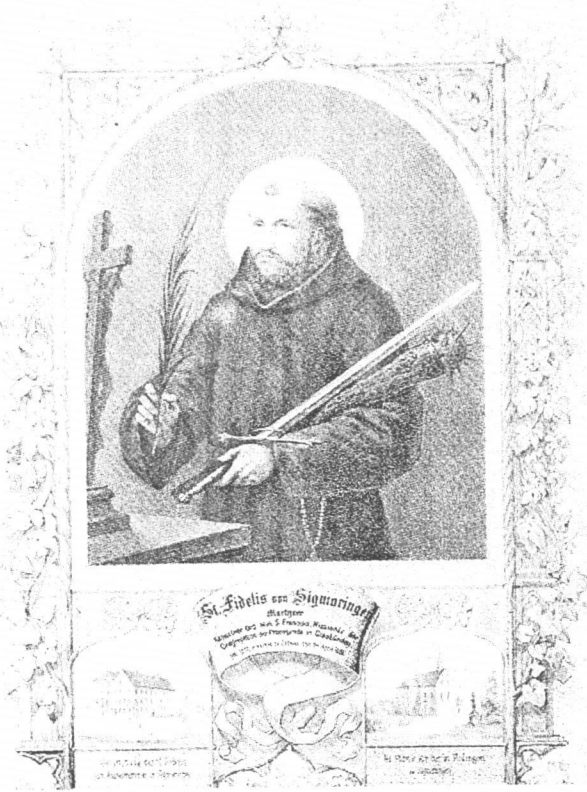
The German Capuchin Fidelis of Sigmaringen had been a respected Doctor of Philosophy and Law before he joined the Order. Even before he got the name *Fidelis* (Faithful) in the Order, he lived up to the motto he had chosen for his life: *"Be faithful unto death and you will win the crown of Eternal Life"*.

Fidelis became a passionate preacher who showed little consideration for persons of a different opinion. He was sent by the Order to win back to the Catholic faith those regions of Rhaetia, which had become Protestant. Today these regions form the province Graubünden in Switzerland. But in the 17th Century they were under Austrian rule. Austria was considered to be the protecting power of the Catholic faith. The Rhaetians did not only want to decide for themselves on their political future, but also on their faith and that is why they opted for armed rebellion. So, political and religious conflicts were overlapping.

Fidelis of Sigmaringen was placed in this delicate situation: he was a chaplain to the Austrian forces and at the same time a missionary expected to win the Protestants back to the Catholic faith. In this dual capacity he resorted to means which we consider today as irreconcilable with the Christian faith. For instance, he brought Anna Zoller, a Catholic who dared to criticise one of his sermons, before the Inquisition and worked for her deportation from her homeland Feldkirch. He also wanted to bring back the Catholic faith in the Rhaetian regions by force: preachers of different faiths should be expelled, Protestant worship and Bible groups were forbidden, Catholic religious instruction classes were to be forced on the people and many other measures like that were to be taken. With this *"Religious Penal Mandate"* (= a politi-

cal-judicial measure for the re-introduction of the Catholic faith), Fidelis understandably unleashed the righteous anger of the Protestants who, just like him, considered themselves as *"defenders of the true faith"*. His assassination was a direct consequence of his *"missionary method."*

A few days after the publication of this decree, Fidelis was invited to give a sermon in Seewis, a



St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen.

village of this region. He felt that this might be a trap, but would not let himself be kept back. While he was preaching on March 24, 1622, a rowdy tumult broke out and the Protestants brought him down from the pulpit by force of arms, drove him out of the church and clubbed and piked him to death.

The following lines from his last sermon shall document the spirit in which he understood his mission. Pope Benedict XIV quoted them in his eulogy on Fidelis on the occasion of his canonisation:

O Catholic Faith, how steadfast You are, how firm, how deeply rooted, how well established You are upon a firm foundation! Heaven and earth will pass away but You can never fail. The whole world stood in opposition to You in the beginning, but you have mightily triumphed over all. This is the victory that overcomes the world, our Faith. It made the most powerful kings subject to the rule of Christ; it brought the nation to serve Christ. What was it that gave the holy Apostles and martyrs the strength to endure severe trials and bitter sufferings? It was the Faith, especially Faith in the Resurrection ... What brings true followers of Christ today to put aside comfort, to abandon pleasures, to undertake what is hard and endure what demands sacrifice? It is

the living Faith that expresses itself through love (Franciscan Proprium of the Divine Office).

At the time of Fidelis' death, the "Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith" had just been founded in Rome, to proclaim the Faith in non-Christian territories as well as in non-Catholic countries. Fidelis of Sigmaringen was declared the protomartyr of that Congregation.

Today it is difficult to understand the violent controversies among the Christians of that age. Both sides did not stop at killing and murder. But not only at that time, even today religion is often the reason or the excuse for armed conflict. The urgent question is: whether Jesus of Nazareth did not show us a different understanding of God. Is He not the non-violent witness of God? The "Missionary of God" who accepts suffering and death rather than to cause them? Francis of Assisi walked the same path.



Antonio Caballero: Dispute over Inculturation

The Spanish Antonio Caballero (+ 1664) was a professor of Theology in Manila. From there he went to China and became the second founder of the new mission of the Franciscans in that gigantic land after the mission founded by John of Monte Corvino had been destroyed. From his death in 1664 nothing would have been heard of him again, had he not, together with the Dominican Juan de Morales, become the leader of the opposition to the missionary methods of Fr. Matteo Ricci SJ.

Matteo Ricci, who had arrived in China in 1583, was trying to adapt the Chinese culture and re-

ligion and integrate its values into Christianity. That started a long and violent dispute, called "the Chinese Rites Controversy," in which the Franciscans unfortunately supported the wrong side. This was not only a theological dispute but also a quarrel between the Orders (Franciscans and Dominicans against Jesuits) and between the national groups (Spaniards against Italians). After a good deal of indecisiveness, Pope Clement XI condemned Ricci's method, "so that God may be glorified in the most perfect unity possible". One could also say: "in the most Western manner possible". As a result, Christianity remained a for-



eign body in Asia right up to the present time and it has been considered as the religion of the Europeans and of the few *renegades* who had joined them. Antonio de Caballero had foreseen this. As early as 1644 he had warned Pope Urban VIII that condemnation of the Rites would lead to the extinction of Christianity in China.

During the Second Vatican Council and in the important Apostolic Letter "*Evangelii Nuntiandi*" (1975), which is the result of the Bishops' Synod of 1974, the principle of legitimate variety in theology, liturgy and discipline was recognised definitely. But putting it into practice still meets with difficulties and causes many tensions in the Church.



Placide Tempels: Dialogue with Religions

The Belgian Franciscan Placide Tempels worked in Katanga in Zaire. For twenty years he taught the usual catechism to children. But as time went on he doubted this method, because he noticed that everything he said went into the heads and not into the hearts of the children. He finally changed his method, sat down among the elders and began to listen and learn. He gradually discovered those elements which he later expanded in his famous book on "*Bantu Philosophy*".

The main idea of this philosophy is that of the life force that emanates from God and which descends through the family tree of ancestors right down to the present generation, binding all into one living community. This life-force would be enhanced by good and diminished by evil. This view portrayed a perfect unity between creator and creation, between the visible and the invisible, between the living and the dead.

Placide Tempels found in this idea the greatest possible harmony with the Christian teaching about life in the Holy Trinity and in Jesus Christ and His Mystical Body. He founded the movement called *Jamaa*, a kind

of base community formed by people who wished to live as Christians within the framework of their own culture. However, within these groups there arose certain misunderstandings that led to violent controversy. In 1964, Fr. Tempels was cross-questioned in Rome for several weeks by the Holy Office and was finally expelled from Zaire on the instruction of the Church authorities. The Church was not yet able to understand such ideas; Tempels suffered the fate of the prophets.

With the recognition of the new "*Theology of the Religions*" at the Second Vatican Council, the Roman Secretariat for Inter-Religious Dialogue has been quietly working to make restitution for all the injustices perpetrated over the centuries by condemning other religions as paganism, idolatry and as works of the devil, without any effort having been made to understand and interpret them from within. This means a change in the Christian treatment of other religions. At the same time, it has widened our own horizon, because the Church has recognised the magnitude of the *Cosmic Christ* and has acknowl-



African Tree of Life.



edged the work of the Holy Spirit operating in all religions. At all times, in all religions God has been giving grace and favour to all peoples, sending out prophets and mystics to lead and inspire. Today, the manifest Mission of the Church has therefore the task, to acknowledge these truths of salvation history and to contribute to building a sense of the unity of all churches in Christ, of all religions around the one and only

God with the goal of all human beings living together as brothers and sisters. That is the mission which Francis had intuitively recognised and lived by. The Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue tackled this theme especially in the document *"Dialogue and Mission"* (17, 1984) and John Paul II in the Encyclical *"Redemptoris Missio"* (1990).



Marie de la Passion: Option for the Poor

Helene de Chappotine was born at Nantes, France, in 1839. After a brief period with the Poor Clares, she entered the Congregation "Marie Reparatrice" in 1864, receiving the religious name of Marie de la Passion. As early as 1866, she was sent to the mission in India where, two years later, she became Provincial Superior in Madurai. After some years, difficulties that she had initially alleviated reappeared – dissensions between the native and the foreign Sisters. The situation became so strained that Marie de la Passion was removed from office in 1876. Rivalries, calumnies and disputes had won the day. A conflict of conscience gave her nineteen other Sisters no choice but to leave the congregation. These Sisters turned to Marie de la Passion for leadership. In India she founded the Institute of the "Missionaries of Mary" under the authority of Bishop Bardon of Coimbatore and Ootcamund.

At the end of 1876 Sr. Marie de la Passion went to Rome with three Sisters in order to justify before Propaganda Fide the drastic step she had taken and to ask Pope Pius IX for recognition of the new community. On January 6, 1877, the ap-



*Marie de la Passion, Foundress of the
Franciscan Missionaries of Mary
(1839-1904).*

proval from Rome arrived. The young community was allowed to accept postulants and in the same year a novitiate was founded in France. Mother Marie de la Passion was elected as Superior General, but there were still reservations and distrust regarding her plans and her person. She travelled again to Rome in 1882, established contact with the General Curia of the Franciscans (OFM), wrote new constitutions and received permission from Pope Leo XIII on October 4th, 1882 to affiliate her congregation to the Third Order Regular, giving it the name "Franciscan Missionaries of Mary" (FMM).

Throughout her life she had to struggle with many difficulties and misunderstandings and experienced much poverty and misery around her. But Sr. Marie de la Passion and her Sisters persevered. Still during the lifetime of their foundress the Sisters could be found every-



where: in Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas. They dedicated themselves to being with the poor. Care for people with leprosy was one of their early works, as well as teaching skills and trades to the children of the poor in India. The promotion of women has been one of the characteristic works of the congregation.

The life story of this Foundress is unusual. She was a strong woman who did not give in when faced with difficulties but remained undaunted and, when necessary, she was prepared to stand her ground and fight for what she believed in. She was sure of her vocation and of its demands, even if it was leading her by indirect paths to her goal. The sources of her strength were her deep rootedness in Franciscan spirituality and a great love for mission. She saw her place in society on the side of the poor and the peasants,

just like Francis who discovered his own vocation by turning to the poor. She wrote: "*Like our Holy Father Francis and his workers, the Sisters, too, must earn their bread by the work of their hands and so proclaim the Name of God from the North to the South and the South to the North.*" Mother Marie de la Passion became the foundress of the largest missionary congregation within the Franciscan family. There are more than 8000 Sisters, most of them living and working in the Southern Hemisphere where poverty and under-development pose a special challenge to the Sisters and Brothers of the *Poverello*. Often more radical than the men's congregations, the FMM have taken their stand and opted for the poor in order to live the liberating message of the Gospel with the poor and to bear witness to it.



William Cardinal Massaia: Courage to act according to his own pastoral responsibility

The Italian Capuchin William Massaia spent thirty-five difficult years in Ethiopia as Apostolic Vicar of the people of Galla. Not only had he to contend with the opposition of the political authorities and of the Coptic Church, but with opposition from the Church authorities in Rome. He decided, on the basis of the unique local conditions in which he found himself, to take steps which did not exactly correspond to the instructions laid down by Rome. He ordained simple catechists to be priests because he was totally dependent on such assistance. He composed a much simplified version of the catechism in a language suited to the patterns of thought of the nomadic tribes. He was sharply rebuked on these two accounts by Rome. He defended himself, however, saying:

I obey Rome in matters doctrinal, but when it comes

to pastoral matters, it is I who am the bishop. For this, I shall mount a horse and lead the battle from there. If a king in his palace wished to lead the battle from the palace, then it would be lost even before it had started...

This courageous pioneer was made a Cardinal by Pope Leo XIII when he returned to Italy. He died in 1889.

The vision of Pope Leo XIII, who appointed as Cardinal such an independent apostolic vicar, may serve as a model for our time. The same applies to the courage of the later Cardinal Massaia who, as bishop of the Nomads, acted independently of the consent of central Church authorities, when he had discerned that it was the right thing to do.





St. John of Capistrano: Concern for the Christian West

The Italian John of Capistrano earned great merits on the political level in connection with the unification of Europe in warding off the Turkish threat. After the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, he organised the European military resistance, succeeding in throwing the Turks out and rescuing Belgrade from their hands. Together with St. Bernardine of Siena, he was for over forty years one of the greatest itinerant preachers of his time, the counsellor of princes and popes. At the same time he became Grand Inquisitor⁴ and demanded from the kings and from the popes harsh laws against the Jews, in order to expiate these *stains* from the Christian West.

As inquisitor he also went to Hungary, where the regent Jannos Hunyadi supported the Franciscans. His purpose there was to convert the Hussites and the Orthodox Serbs. Out of love for the Catholic faith as he understood it, he took steps and represented convictions which were not in accordance with the Gospel! He died in 1456 and was canonised because of his concern for the Christian West.

Today Europe, or the so-called Christian West, is again in need of special attention and concern. Only the bitter experiences of the two World Wars made Europe aware that all its countries are interdependent and belong together. Social and economic problems can only be solved and peace in Europe can only be ensured by means of more intensive relations among all the peoples, by increased co-operation, by a basic solidarity and finally by a political unity among all European peoples and states. This requires the commitment of charismatic people. Apart from that, it is important to see that the social, economic and political aspects must not be sepa-

rated from the spiritual and cultural values which belong to European history. The Jewish-Christian tradition, the culture of Greece and of the old Roman Empire, contributed to it, as well as the Germanic tribes, the Celts, Slavs and other



*Osmanian and Hungarian Armies
in battle at Amsfeld.*

peoples; this resulted in an obligatory heritage which needs to be fostered and cared for.

However, this must not lead to a mentality which rejects everything that is foreign. Even centuries ago the Arabian or Islamic spirit has already left its imprint and a lasting cultural expression along the borders of Europe.

Today the ever-increasing intermingling of peoples brings about a cultural variety which leads to new tasks: the formation of a "multi-cultural society" in Europe, which must find a common system of values.

⁴ Head of the ecclesiastical court of the Inquisition.



Finally one cannot deny that the once "Christian West" as it grew out of its Jewish-Christian roots, is in danger of losing itself more and more in an increasing superficiality, a levelling of values and growing alienation from its roots. Pope John Paul II therefore said in 1978: "Europe is about to become once again a mission land. This should not be understood as discouragement but as a challenge."

Thus the concern for the so-called Christian West is also a task for our time, which we have to face with as firm a determination as John of Capistrano had, but approach it in a totally different spirit.



Mary Hancock:

The Woman in Politics

On October 27, 1977, *Mama* Mary Hancock died in Dar-es-Salaam, in the East African country of Tanzania at the age of 67. On the following day, there was a solemn requiem in the cathedral of that city. Cardinal L. Rugambwa presided in the presence of the Apostolic Nuncio, the Anglican Archbishop John Sepeku and the other Bishops of Tanzania. Over thirty priests concelebrated. Friends and acquaintances filled the cathedral; among them were President Julius K. Nyerere and various ministers and members of the government.

Who was this woman, to whom all the leaders of the country and her friends had gathered to bid farewell? Mary Hancock was born in England in 1910. Her father was a clergyman of the Anglican Church. In 1941 she went to Tanzania as a teacher, and in many of the Girls' colleges she played an important part as head teacher and educator, striving to make essential improvements in the education and training of young women. In 1954, under the leadership of the former teacher, Julius K. Nyerere, later presi-

dent, the peaceful but difficult struggle for independence of the country began. *Mama* Hancock, as she was known to all, was present in every sense. She believed in the dignity of the human person, in the dignity of the people she had grown to love. In this yearning for independence she never flagged. Thus she grew closer to the people. It was only a natural consequence of such an attitude that, when independence was achieved in 1961, she became a Tanzanian citizen. But even then, there was no peace and quiet for Mary Hancock. The respect and the dignity of the human person was not automatically granted with achieving independence. Women still had a long way to go before reaching equality and so Mary Hancock began to work unceasingly for this cause. Injustice was spreading through corruption of every kind, the sufferings of the weaker classes of society were increasing on account of the egotism and lassitude of people in key positions in the new administration in politics and economy.



With courage, Mary Hancock exposed these evils. This commitment for justice brought her great respect from many quarters. Whenever she spoke at open meetings, in numerous committees and in Parliament, (as a Member of Parliament from 1970 until her death) she always found an attentive audience. They knew that *Mama* Hancock practised what she was preaching, clearly and emphatically, but always with humour. This woman, thin as a rake, with lively watchful eyes, enjoyed the respect of many people, especially that of the President, Julius Nyerere.

Where did this unusual woman get her strength for such a commitment in her struggle for the better education of women, in her efforts to win respect for the dignity of the people? *Mama* Hancock had a deep faith and deep love for St. Francis of Assisi. Even before she became a Catholic in 1956, she had belonged to the Angli-

can Franciscan community. As a Catholic she joined the Third Order. With Francis she learned to love Jesus Christ with all the passion of her heart. In this love she could bear the sufferings of the people and survive the tensions that arose between the ideal and the reality within the political and economic life of the country. She could awaken hope everywhere. In the spirit of St. Francis she saw the Africans in reality as her brothers and sisters.

If we ponder the history of the Franciscan movement, we come to the same conclusion time and again, how women had taken up the Franciscan form of life so wholeheartedly, and that publicly in Church and State. Mary Hancock shows not only how a woman can engage herself in the struggle for the people's freedom, but that there is a need for women in public life in order that politics may remain humane.



Augusto Ramirez Monasterio: Martyr for Justice and Peace

Fr. Augusto Ramirez Monasterio, parish priest and guardian of the Franciscan convent, San Francisco de la Antigua Guatemala, was found dead on the outskirts of Guatemala City on November 7, 1983. He had been shot by security forces. The reason for this murder rests on the following facts.

A peasant farmer had told Fr. Augusto, in confession, that he wanted to leave the guerrilla organisation and return to a normal life. Fr. Augusto advised him to place himself under the protection of the recently enacted Amnesty Law, and personally accompanied him to the police. A few days later, Fr. Augusto was arrested and dragged off to a military camp. There he was forced to witness the torture of the peasant, for whom he had testified. He was also threatened with torture in an effort to extort information



from him. After hours of detention and ill-treatment, he was released, probably because of his social connections. He reported the incident to the bishop. A governmental commission promised to enquire into the matter and to make the responsible persons account for their actions. Three weeks later Fr. Augusto was found dead.

The death of Fr. Augusto is representative of many similar acts of violence against priests, religious and committed lay people in Latin America. It throws new light on the situation there and on the engagement of many Christians. Most of the Latin American countries are riddled with festering social divisions. Wealth, natural resources, and land belong to a few powerful landowners or to multinational firms. The great majority of the people suffer poverty, hunger and unemployment. They live in subhuman conditions. These unjust conditions are often

maintained by the government through force and terror. Massacres, burnt-down villages, numerous refugees, exile, tortures and murder: these are the tragic consequences.

In this situation the bishops, priests, religious, and the basic Christian communities have placed themselves on the side of the poor and the oppressed. In clear statements they expose the injustice of existing conditions and take up the struggle against the oppressors. Inspired by the Gospel, they join themselves to the oppressed people and resist oppression. Frequently, they have had to pay for their commitment with their lives. The words of Bishop Prospero Penedas which he spoke on the occasion of Fr. Augusto's death can be applied to them all: *"I am certain that his blood will be of great worth for the future of the Church in our country."*

Exercises

D



Exercise

In the Rule of 1221 Francis gives basic guidelines for missionary work among "Saracens and other nonbelievers" (ER 14 and 16) in which we can recognise his original missionary concept. Depending on the situation, there are two different approaches:

- Evangelization through simple presence and silent witnessing: *"not to engage in arguments or disputes, but 'to be subject to every human creature for God's sake' (1 Pet 2:13) and to acknowledge that they are Christians."*

- Evangelization through the Word: *"when they see that it pleases the Lord, to proclaim the word of God."*

Questions

1. What kind of attitudes and qualities are essential and indispensable for this concept of mission?
2. State which of these qualities and attitudes you find reflected in the Franciscan missionaries presented in this Lesson. Also identify where there are differences.





Exercise

Placide Tempels OFM passed through different stages in his missionary work in Africa, as he describes in his diary:

For ten years I tried out all sorts of methods while keeping my eyes fixed on my textbooks, in order to bring people to an understanding of what the Christian religion is, to accept it and to practise it. Scrupulously I followed all the instructions and yet things were not working out ... Finally I stopped seeking advice from text-books, catechisms and doctrinal treatises in order to direct my attention to the people themselves, whom, in reality, I had not looked at closely before, and I was astonished and fascinated. Up to that moment, I had not been interested in them, in their thoughts, in their longings but only in the religion, whose propagator I was. Now I observed these people and finally turned towards them and asked: 'What qualities do you possess? What do you not possess? What sort of people are you? What do you yearn for? Why do you use magic? What significance has it for you? How do your spells work?'

'What we think,' they replied, 'what we wish and what we look for is life, full and total life. What we yearn

for is fertility, fatherhood, motherhood, a great fruitfulness, not only physical, but totally human: to be a father, to be a mother, to transmit life, to share our thoughts. Accordingly, next to our desire for total life, comes our demand for fertility; what we want is unity in life, unity with other animate beings, with other creatures, both visible and invisible. We cannot live isolated. Isolation would kill us. We want a community of life, a community of life with everything that exists. If we were left alone to ourselves, we would die, it would be as if we had never existed.'

Questions

1. To what extent does this view correspond to the Franciscan idea of mission?
2. To what extent are the thoughts of Tempels also relevant for those who work in so-called Christian regions?
3. Which of your own experiences correspond to those of Tempels?





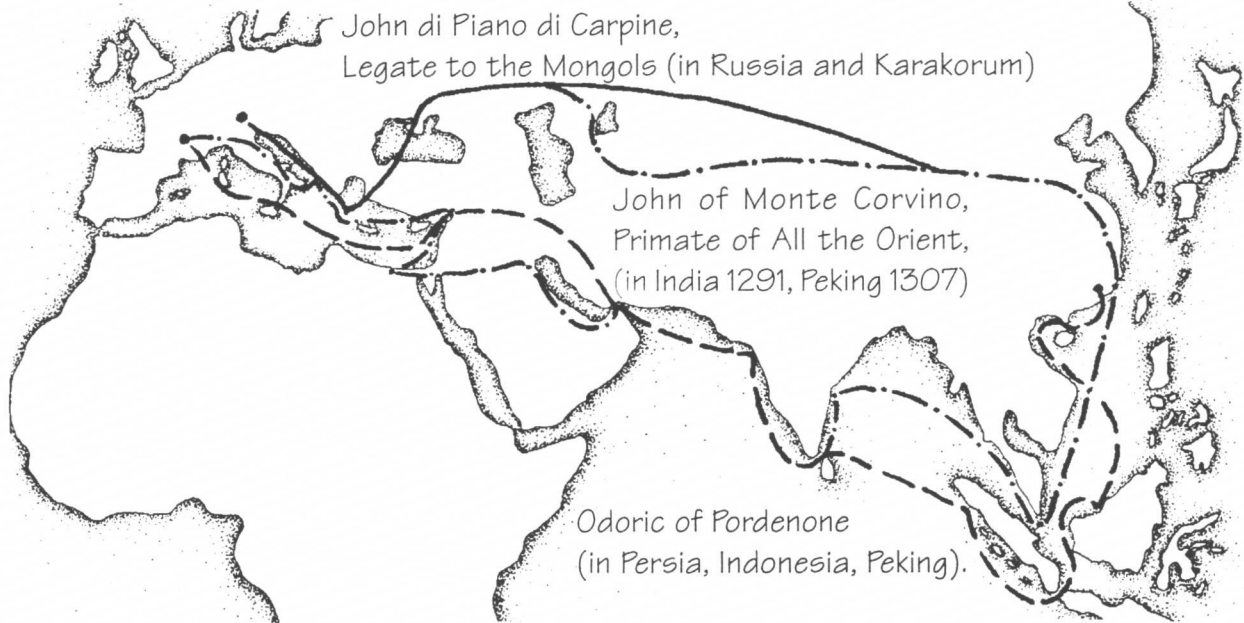
Exercise

Following here you see maps of territories where Franciscans (OFM) were working from the 13th to the 16th Century.

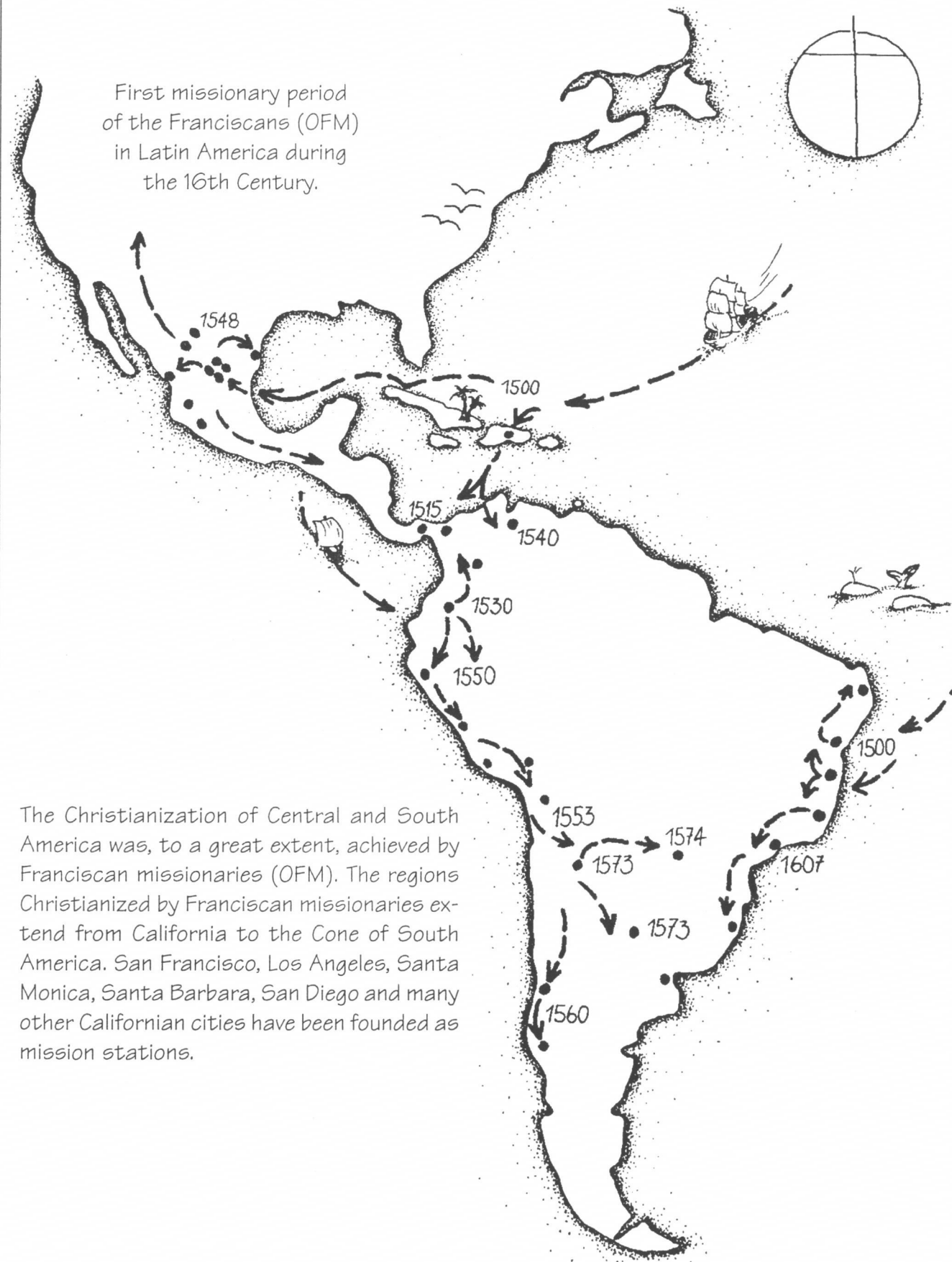
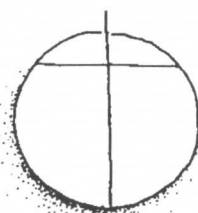
Questions

1. In which regions, that were explored by the missionaries, has the Christian faith become an integral part of the people's religion?
2. Which countries have remained mission territories?
3. Where has the Christian influence been extinguished for all practical purposes?

Journeys of itinerant missionaries during the 13th and 14th Century.



First missionary period
of the Franciscans (OFM)
in Latin America during
the 16th Century.



The Christianization of Central and South America was, to a great extent, achieved by Franciscan missionaries (OFM). The regions Christianized by Franciscan missionaries extend from California to the Cone of South America. San Francisco, Los Angeles, Santa Monica, Santa Barbara, San Diego and many other Californian cities have been founded as mission stations.





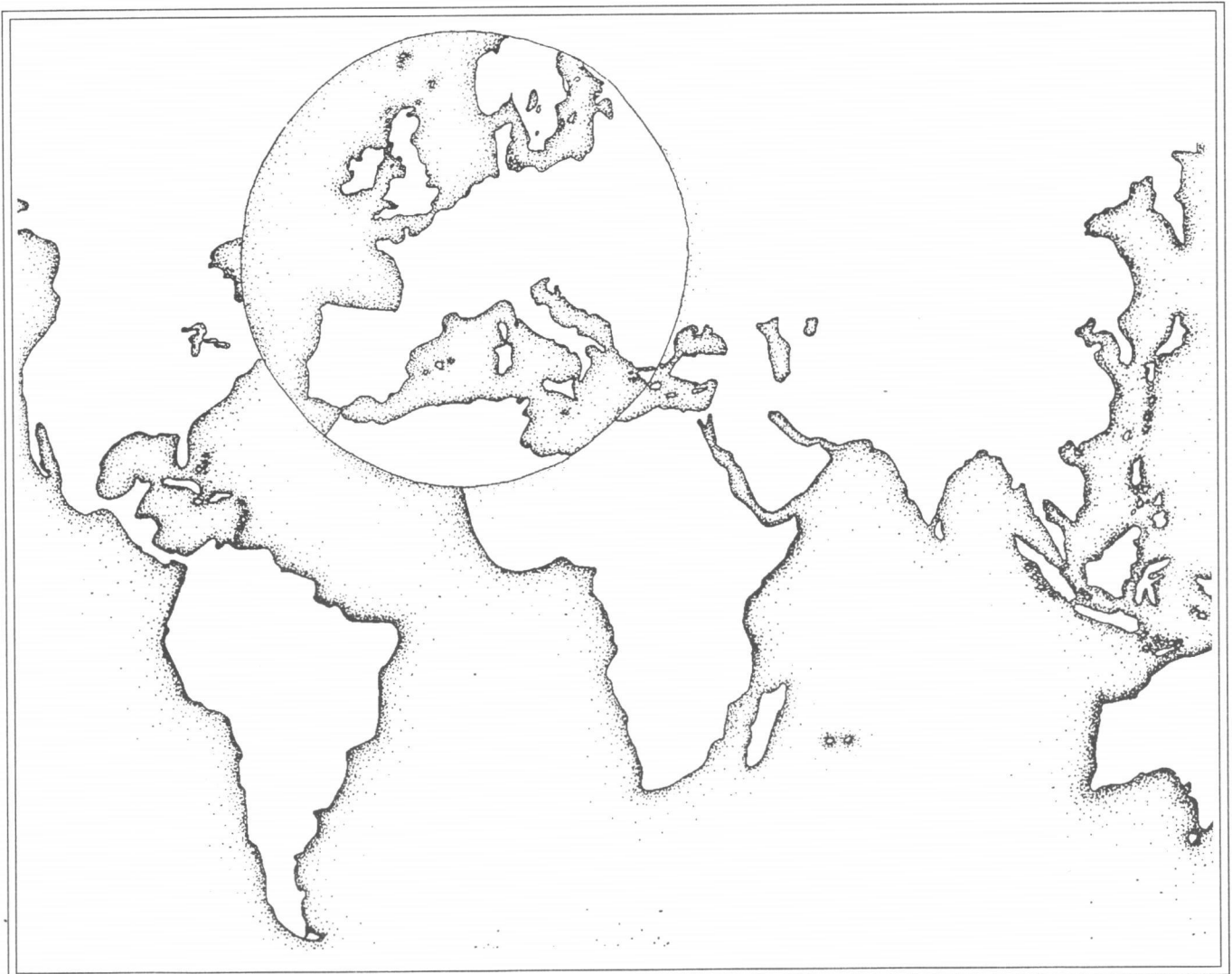
Exercise

Task:

Sketch in the countries of origin of the missionaries that have been mentioned in this lesson unit and the countries where they exercised their apostolate. Link the two with a line.

Questions

1. How would a mission map look today?
2. Where do the missionaries come from today and where do they go?





Application

Tasks

1. Prepare a liturgical celebration in which a missionary personality is presented and his or her work is honoured.
2. Compose or look for texts, hymns, litanies, prayers and intercessions that express the cares, joys and concerns of the missionaries.



Application

In this lesson unit the “controversy on rites” is mentioned in the passage on Antonio Caballero (Section C 7). To what extent has the Church overcome it?

Read the following texts:

1. From “Redemptoris Missio”, Encyclical of Pope John Paul II about the continual relevance of mission, 1990:

No. 37: Cultural sectors: the modern equivalents of the Areopagus.

After preaching in a number of places, Saint Paul arrived in Athens, where he went to the Areopagus and proclaimed the Gospel in language appropriate to and understandable in those surroundings (cf. Acts 17:22-31). At that time the Areopagus represented the cultural centre of the learned people of Athens, and to-

day it can be taken as a symbol of the new sectors in which the Gospel must be proclaimed.

The first Areopagus of the modern age is the world of communications, which is unifying humanity and turning it into what is known as a “global village”. The means of social communications have become so important as to be for many the chief means of information and education, of guidance and inspiration in their behaviour as individuals, families and within society at large. In particular, the younger generation is growing up in a world conditioned by mass-media. To some degree perhaps this Areopagus has been neglected. Generally, preference has been given to other means of preaching the Gospel and of Christian education, while the mass-media are left to the initiative of individuals or small groups and enter into pastoral planning only in a secondary way. Involvement in the mass-media, however, is not meant merely to



strengthen the preaching of the Gospel. There is a deeper reality involved here: since the very evangelisation of, modern culture depends to a great extent on the influence of the media, it is not enough to use the media simply to spread the Christian message and the Church's authentic teaching. It is also necessary to integrate the message into the "new culture" created by modern communications. This is a complex issue, since the "new culture" originates not just from whatever content is eventually expressed, but from the very fact that there exist new ways of communicating, with new languages, new techniques and a new psychology. Pope Paul VI said that "the split between the Gospel and culture is undoubtedly the tragedy of our time", and the field of communications fully confirms this judgement.

There are many other forms of the 'Areopagus' in the modern world towards which the Church's missionary activity ought to be directed; for example, commitment to peace, development and the liberation of peoples; the rights of individuals and peoples, especially those of minorities; the advancements of women and children; safeguarding the created world. These too are areas which need to be illuminated with the light of the Gospel.

No. 55: In the light of the economy of salvation, the Church sees no conflict between proclaiming Christ and engaging in inter-religious dialogue. Instead, she feels the need to link the two in the context of her mission "ad gentes". These two elements must maintain both their intimate connection and their distinctiveness; therefore they should not be confused, manipulated or regarded as identical, as though they were interchangeable.

I recently wrote to the Bishops of Asia: "Although the Church gladly acknowledges whatever is true and holy in the religious traditions of Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam as a reflection of that truth which enlightens all men, this does not lessen her duty and resolve to proclaim without fail Jesus Christ who is 'the way, and the truth and the life' ... The fact that the followers of other religions can receive God's grace and be saved by Christ apart from ordinary means which he has established does not thereby cancel the call to faith

and baptism which God wills for all people". Indeed Christ himself "while expressly insisting on the need for faith and baptism, at the same time confirmed the need for the Church, into which people enter through Baptism as through a door". Dialogue should be conducted and implemented with the conviction that the Church is the ordinary means of salvation and that she alone possesses the fullness of the means of salvation.

2. From "Ecclesia in Africa", Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of Pope John Paul II on the Church in Africa and its Evangelisation Mission towards the year 2000, 1995:

No. 78: By reason of its deep conviction that "the synthesis between culture and faith is not only a demand of culture but also of faith", because "a faith that does not become culture is not fully accepted, not entirely thought out, not faithfully lived", the Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops considered inculturation a priority and an urgent task in the life of Africa's particular Churches. Only in this way can the Gospel be firmly implanted in the Continent's Christian communities. Following in the footsteps of the Second Vatican Council, the Synod Fathers interpreted inculturation as a process that includes the whole of Christian existence—theology, liturgy, customs, structures—without, of course, compromising what is of divine right and the great discipline of the Church, confirmed in the course of centuries by remarkable fruits of virtue and heroism.

The challenge of inculturation in Africa consists in ensuring that the followers of Christ will ever more fully assimilate the Gospel message, while remaining faithful to all authentic African values. Inculturation of the faith in every area of Christian and human life is an arduous task which can only be carried out with the help of the Spirit of the Lord who leads the Church to the whole truth (cf. Jn 16:13).

Task

Express your opinion on these texts! What speaks for the overcoming of the problem on the "controversy of rites" and what speaks against it?



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F



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Picture Credits

G

Cover St. Francis.

- p. 3** Armillary sphere used to mark the degree of longitude. Library of the Escorial, Madrid. Photo: Josse.
- p. 5** Barcelona, about 1500.
- p. 6** The ladder. Linocut by Azaria Mbatha, 1968.
- p. 8** Engraving by Adriaen Collaert based on sketchings by Adam van Oort (van Noort 1562-1641).

- p. 10** From: A. Jochum: Beim Großkhan der Mongolen.
- p. 11** Icon of St. Colette.
- p. 12** From: Franziskaner Mission 1/96.
- p. 13** Print by C. Tappen, Sigmaringen, about 1860.
- p. 15** Woodcarving from Tanzania.
- p. 18** Miniature of the National Library, Paris.
- p. 19** From: Alle Welt 9-10/96.
- p. 20** Drawing by Peter Brookes.



For Reflection



Make me an Instrument of Your Peace

(Prayer written in the spirit of St. Francis)

Lord,
make me an instrument
of Your Peace.
Where there is hatred –
let me sow love.
Where there is injury –
pardon.
Where there is discord –
unity.
Where there is doubt –
faith.
Where there is error – truth.
Where there is despair –
hope.
Where there is sadness –
joy.
Where there is darkness –
light.

For:
It is in giving –
that we receive.
It is in pardoning –
that we are pardoned.
It is in dying –
that we are born to
Eternal Life.
Amen.



O Divine Master,
grant that I may
not so much seek
To be consoled –
as to console.
To be understood –
as to understand.
To be loved –
as to love.



Abbreviations



Writings of Saint Francis

English	Latin	English	Latin
Adm	Adm	Admonitions	
BLL	BenLeo	Blessing for Brother Leo	
CtC	CantSol	Canticle of Brother Sun	
LtAnt	EpAnt	Letter to St. Anthony	
LtCl	EpCler	Letter to the Clergy	
1LtCus	1EpCust	First Letter to the Custodians	
2LtCus	2EpCust	Second Letter to the Custodians	
1LtF	1EpFid	First Letter to the Faithful	
2LtF	2EpFid	Second Letter to the Faithful	
LtL	EpLeo	Letter to Brother Leo	
LtMin	EpMin	Letter to a Minister	
LtOrd	EpOrd	Letter to the Entire Order	
LtR	EpRect	Letter to the Rulers of the Peoples	
ExhP	ExhLD	Exhortation to the Praises of God	
CtExh	ExhPD	Exhortation to the Poor Ladies	
		PrOF	ExpPat Prayer Inspired by the Our Father
		Formlife	FormViv Form of Life for St. Clare
		PrsG	LaudDei Praises of God
		PrH	LaudHor Praises to be said at all the Hours
		OffP	OffPass Office of the Passion
		PrCr	OrCruc Prayer before the Crucifix
		LR	RegB Later Rule
		ER	RegNB Earlier Rule
		RH	RegEr Rule for Hermitages
		SalBVM	SalBVM Salutation of the Bl. Virgin Mary
		SalV	SalVirt Salutation of the Virtues
		Test	Test Testament
		TestS	TestS Testament written in Siena
		Last Will	UltVol Last Will written for St. Clare
		TPJ	VPLaet Dictate on True and Perfect Joy

Writings of Saint Clare

1LAg	1 st Letter to St. Agnes of Prague	LER	Letter to Ermentrude of Bruges
2LAg	2 nd Letter to St. Agnes of Prague	RC1	Rule of St. Clare
3LAg	3 rd Letter to St. Agnes of Prague	TestCl	Testament of St. Clare
4LAg	4 th Letter to St. Agnes of Prague	BC1	Blessing of St. Clare



English

Latin

Early Franciscan Sources

1C	ICel	1st Life of St. Francis by Thomas of Celano
2C	2Cel	2nd Life of St. Francis by Thomas of Celano
3C	3Cel	Treatise on the Miracles by Thomas of Celano
AP	AP	Anonymous of Perugia
LegCl	CL	Legend of Clare
LFl	Fior	Fioretti. The little Flowers of St. Francis
JoLV	JdV	Witness of Jacque de Vitry
ChrJG	Jord	Jordan of Giano's Chronicle 4
LMj	LM	Major Life of St. Francis by Bonaventure
LMn	LMin	Minor Life of St. Francis by Bonaventure
LP	LP	Legend of Perugia
L3C	L3S	Legend of the Three Companions
Proc	Proc	Process of St. Clare's Canonization
ScEx	SC	Sacrum commercium The Sacred Exchange
MP	SP	Mirror of Perfection

