

# HOW DOES THE CATHOLIC CHURCH DEAL WITH THE NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN A CONSTRUCTIVE WAY? (FOCUS ON ASIA)

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The question posed in the title can be answered only after we grasp the phenomenon we are facing. So let us begin with some basic data.

## DIVERGENT PATTERNS

Pentecostalism has set its stoutest roots among Asian ethnic minorities and social classes which lack political or ideological power.<sup>1</sup> Five Asian countries are witnessing the fastest growth of Pentecostalism as a grassroots movement and where, with one exception, there are significant numbers of Catholic charismatics, namely China, South Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia and India. The greatest increase is found in South Korea, Indonesia and the Philippines.<sup>2</sup>

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### PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENTS IN ASIA<sup>3</sup>

Classic Pentecostals <sup>4</sup>	Mainline Churches	Neo-Pentecostals
China	47,686 (0%)	629,491 (1%)
India	1.3 m. (4%)	5 m. (15%)
Philippines	765,813 (4%)	11.7 m. (58%)
Indonesia	1.4 m. (15%)	971,415 (10%)
S. Korea	2.4 m. (32%)	2 m. (27%)
Vietnam	51,101 (7%)	157,802 (20%)
		588,097 (74%) = 798,000

<sup>1</sup> Jungja Ma outlines critical social issues that form the context for Pentecostal mission and contemporary social challenges (Ma and Ma 2003, 185-193). As the religious movement moves into politics so this aspect will change.

<sup>2</sup> A switch of allegiance is not the only option; many permutations are available. For instance, a majority of Catholic and Protestants in Pakistan are happy to be associated with more than one Church at any given time (O'Brien 2005, 93), while in the Philippines Pentecostal worship feeds weekly religious needs while Catholic sacramental celebrations continue to mark rites of passage, in particular birth, marriage and death.

<sup>3</sup> Numbers taken from the 2002 edition of *The New international Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Stanley M. Burgess (ed.). Even if the figures are inflated, the trend is clear. Barrett (2006, 28) gives a world total of Pentecostals/ Charismatics/Neo-Pentecostals of 526,916,000 in mid-2000 growing by another 70 million by mid-2006.

<sup>4</sup> "Pentecostals" are the classic Churches reaching back to the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. "Charismatics" are Pentecostal-like movements within mainline Christianity primarily in the Catholic Church. "Neo-Pentecostals" ("Neo-Charismatics") are the "third wave" of the Pentecostal renewal of more recent indigenous and independent Churches.

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Brazil	24.8 m. (31%)	34 m. (42%)	21 m. (26%)	= 80 m.
USA	5 m. (7%)	19.4 m (26%)	5.7 m. (68%)	= 75 m.

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One impression stands out from this table: we are dealing with Pentecostals rather than Pentecostalism. For instance, new religious movements are largely within the Catholic Church in the Philippines while they form “external competitors” in a comparable nation like Brazil. In the contrasting religious, cultural and political landscapes of Indonesia, India and China the distribution of “classic”, “charismatic” and “neo-Pentecostal” are not dissimilar, while South Korea stands out as the one country with a fairly equitable distribution of the three classic, charismatic and neo-Pentecostal waves. Accordingly, the three Asian countries with the fastest increase – the Philippines, Indonesia and South Korea – are each displaying quite different and distinct patterns.

Other distinctions are also apparent. While some of these groups have little economic clout, such as members of the Protestant house churches in China, others, like the professional class in India and Chinese-descended traders in Southeast Asia, are prosperous. The national networks in Asia consist of largely autonomous local congregations, and all of them are demonstrating their potential for mobilising large numbers of people to create institutional structures capable of performing various educational, community development, social service and political functions.

And so, in quite diverse ways, the past 30 years has witnessed Asian Pentecostals move from marginality into the mainstream, from being a “third force” among Asian Christian communities to fast becoming the “first force” expanding more rapidly both within and without Protestant and Catholic Christianity. Since 1950 Pentecostal growth has outstripped the growth of all other branches of Christianity in Asia. During 1970-1990 alone Pentecostal numbers tripled. Some 43% of Asian Christians are now Pentecostal/ charismatic (Ma 2005, 496)<sup>5</sup>.

## SURVEYS

As patterns vary considerably, we should not be surprised that Church responses also diverge. To complement the detailed Kessler/Rüland survey “Religious Change in the Philippines” (2004) and their application of the concept of populism to Catholic Filipino Charismatic movements (2006), I have jotted down results of surveys in the other Asian nations with significant Pentecostal growth. I must immediately note that the Kessler/Rüland survey is, to my knowledge, the most comprehensive study carried out in Asia to date, with innovative thinking (three spirituality types, populist religion) and meticulous analysis. The studies I refer to are not comparable in either scope nor depth.

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<sup>5</sup> Wonsuk Ma is quoting Barrett’s *World Christian Encyclopedia* (2001). Not everybody accepts Barrett’s figures.

China is a fascinating case, but permit me to pass over China in this paper.<sup>6</sup> Pentecostal/ Charismatic religiosity imbues most of the house-churches in Beijing, indeed, throughout the country. However, detailed accurate information is not available within the country as the media does not report such phenomena. Catholic Pentecostals in China do exist, but their prayer groups are thrive separately from their sacramental life. In an embattled, clerical Church unrecognized by the government the faithful tend to place their trust largely in the leadership of priests or sisters rather than in lay charismatic leaders, and in the recognized section of the Church ecclesial identity is focused on public ritual. In neither sector is there space for a dynamic lay-led network such as the charismatic movement. Understandably 99% of Pentecostals have sprung from Protestant communities and live apart from the official Churches.

### **An Indian Survey: Experience and Fellowship**

Neo-Pentecostals are now the largest renewal group in India and they are indigenous bodies. According to Pentecostal sources, the total Indian membership of Neo-Pentecostal denominations is already over 15 million.

In the mid-1990s a survey was commissioned by the Catholic bishops of India who wanted to understand why so many Catholics were joining the Pentecostals (Arulsamy 1996). This survey revealed four main reasons why Catholics are so attracted. Firstly, they wish to “experience God”; secondly, they are looking for direct contact with the Bible; thirdly, they want to be actively involved in a warm, close fellowship, and fourthly, they are looking for sustained interpersonal pastoral care (Locke 2000,12; also commentaries by Parathazham 1997 and Kavunkal 1998).

The *Indian survey* relates the fundamentalist attitude to a sense of bewilderment and confusion:

The rise of pluralism and the explosion of knowledge in the modern world have severely shaken the plausibility of several traditional religious definitions and practices, leaving many disoriented and insecure. In the Catholic Church the problem has been exacerbated by the profound changes ushered in by the Second Vatican Council. Today many Catholics are intellectually unsettled; they are not as sure as they used to be of the validity of their beliefs and practices. Pentecostal movements may be seen as a product of this uncertainty. The exodus of believers from the mainline churches to the fundamentalist sects is in a sense a flight from uncertainty to certainty... the church urgently needs to address the problem of how to help these Catholics cope with their sense of uncertainty and disorientation without yielding to the fundamentalist temptation of interpreting the scriptures and tradition literally with sectarian certitude. (Parathazham 1997, 319-320)

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<sup>6</sup> For a note by the author on Pentecostalism in China see Prior 2007, 15-17. For other coverage see Ma and Ma 2005, 504-505; for more extensive coverage see Bays 1993, 161-179; Bays 1995, 124-143; Bays and Johnson 2002, 58-64.

## Middle-Class Urbanites

The Indian Catholics who are joining Pentecostal churches are mostly urban, educated and middle-class (1997, 309). This gives a very different portrait from the situation in Latin America where poorer, recent migrants to the cities are joining these churches. Meanwhile ethnically-rooted churches are losing very few members despite proselytising. When Catholic and ethnic identity coincide change in ecclesial allegiance is rare.

## Religious Experience and Pastoral Care

Those Catholics in India who are joining the Pentecostals are among the most devout (1997, 310). Just over a quarter who left the church for Pentecostalism were involved in the charismatic movement beforehand. Evidently, for some Catholics the charismatic movement paves the way for Pentecostalism, for others, perhaps, it has stopped a larger haemorrhage. Nothing less than 58% of former Catholics gave lack of pastoral care as a reason for joining the Pentecostals.

While many charismatic groups tend to be more exclusive than their co-religionists (see Indonesia below), the Divine Retreat Centre in Muringoor near Kochi in Kerala, founded and run by the Vincentian charismatic healer Matthew Naickomparambil (1947-), a priest of the Syro-Malabar Rite, caters for some 15 thousand retreatants each week, of whom many are Hindu. As many as 150 thousand from the whole gamut of religious backgrounds attend five-day conventions. The contrasting inter-faith patterns of small yet vibrant Christian minorities in countries such as India and Indonesia deserve further study.

## Two Indonesian Surveys

### The Subangun 1993 Study

Some twenty years ago a somewhat critical survey on the impact of the Pentecostal/charismatic movement on the Catholic Church of Indonesia was sponsored by the Mission Commission of the Bishops' Conference (KKM-KWI) (Subangun 1993).<sup>7</sup>

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal (*Pembaharuan Karismatik Katolik*) began in Jakarta in 1977 and by the early 1990s the movement had been acknowledged in all but two dioceses. Subangun's study of 1993 discovered that many charismatics are transient members; no less than 57.4% of charismatics join the movement for just a few months to three years. Some move on to join a Pentecostal Church, others return to more conventional Catholicism. Almost all Indonesian Catholic charismatics are found in the cities and a majority (60.2%) among the Chinese-Indonesian ethnic minority. Their ethnic minority status, their distance from politics and their economic prosperity together with an otherworldly spirituality, all tend to make this movement ingrown, even escapist. Internally, members develop strong emotional bonds. Positively charismatic groups have given "heart" to a more formal and dutiful religious observance (24%).

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<sup>7</sup> For a more recent and accessible appreciation see, "The Spectacular Growth of the Third Stream: The Evangelicals and Pentecostals", in *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*. Edited by Jan Sihar Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink. Leiden: Brill, 2008, 867-902.

As elsewhere, some Indonesian Catholics join after personal problems (24%) or a serious family rift (22.3%). A large majority began going to meetings “to know more about the charismatic movement” (66%). Many were looking for blessings (25%) such as speaking in tongues (67.1%) and healing (32.8%). Others seek knowledge of the Word (18.6%) and prophecy (16.9%). A fifth joined because they were initially invited by family or friends (22.8%) (2003, 35-43).

This study shows how issues of boredom in life and with the conventional church, as well as emotional problems, trigger entrance into a charismatic group, at least for a while. Social justice is not on the agenda. An attempt to bring about a conversation between the movement and basic ecclesial communities did not bear much fruit (Prior 2002,18-35). Reading the results of this study together with that of other surveys, Subangun concludes that charismatic Christianity can be counted under the rubric of “religious entertainment” (Subangun 2003,43).

More critically, Catholic charismatics are less prone to inter-religious tolerance than non-charismatics. Some 27.1% of charismatics have an unconditional positive attitude to Muslims while 36.5% of non-charismatic have such an attitude. Charismatics know they are held in suspicion by other Catholics; 22.7% feel their families support them, 13% have families who forbid them joining, while 36.6% find their families appreciative.

#### The Gajah Mada Study (2010-2012)

More recently a comprehensive study of Pentecostalism has been undertaken in five Indonesian cities (Jogyakarta, Jakarta and Surabaya in Java, Medan in Sumatra and Manado in Sulawesi) by the Centre for Religious and Cross-cultural Studies (CRCS) at the prestigious Gajah Mada University.<sup>8</sup> Although there are more than 100 Pentecostal and charismatic Churches and groups and more than ten thousand local congregations or fellowship organisations in the country, given the number of diverse Churches researched in this study, the Gajah Mada results can be taken as representative of the movement and its growth throughout the archipelago.

#### Urban Minorities

No less than 64.7% of Chinese-Indonesian and 46% of other Indonesians joined a Pentecostal or Charismatic Church as adults, rather than as children through their family’s previous commitment. While just a third of Indonesian Pentecostals are Chinese-Indonesians (34.4%), this is remarkable when we take into account that only around 6% of Indonesians has a Chinese ancestry. Until the 1960s most Pentecostals came from the lower socio-economic strata of society and from the periphery of their previous religious affiliation (mainly Christian but also Buddhist or Muslim). But since the 1970s an increasing number has come from the middle classes and the more educated who now form a majority of Pentecostal adherents. Temperance and reliability ensure they accelerate their upward social mobility. Many have high status positions in society as scholars and government officials, or are successful in business and they are becoming visible in the bureaucracy, parliament and political parties.

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<sup>8</sup> Results to be published in late 2013. A study of five cities, none of rural areas; I personally am not aware of a significant Charismatic/Pentecostal presence in rural Indonesia.

## Urban Migrants

Two-thirds of Pentecostals are urban migrants not living in the place of their birth (63%) of whom 24% arrived more than 15 years ago; 8.4% between 10 and 14 years ago; 12.4% between 5-9 years ago, while 18.2% migrated to their present city less than five years ago. Clearly, Pentecostalism is largely an urban-migrant phenomenon.

## Minimal Inter-Faith Contact

Just as in Subangun's research 17 years previously, so the Gajah Mada study finds that Pentecostals are less inclined to dialogue with their Muslim neighbours than Christians from mainstream Churches. However the more detailed Gajah Mada study found that the main characteristic was "live and let live": there is little contact between Christian charismatics and Muslims, no overt hostility, and while common societal goals may be shared such as the anti-pornographic and anti-alcohol laws, there was no collaboration to achieve these goals. While loud amplified music and a perchance to proselytise annoys Muslims, the best description of relations is to say that they ignore each other unless hostile incidents erupt.

## Motivations for Joining

Just 16.4% of Pentecostals are also listed as members of other Churches. Some 9% of Pentecostals were previously Catholic, though the survey does not clarify whether some or all of these are remain Catholic for sacramental ministry while being committed Pentecostals for their day-to-day spiritual and social needs. Reasons for leaving a previous denomination, including the Catholic Church, and joining a Pentecostal community are given as:

93.6% obtain the energy and power to continue

92.1% experience the love of God

91.45% obtain hope for the future

88.6% experience healing

85.6% experience forgiveness and are restored/  
made whole

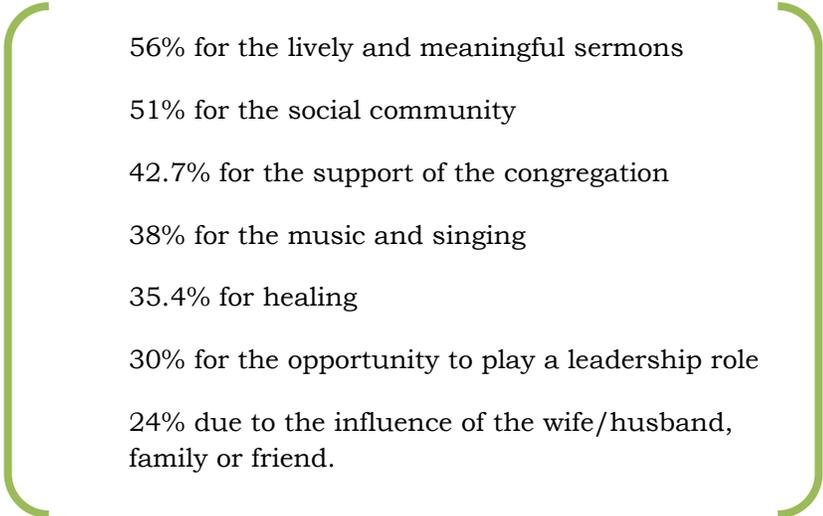
84.9% experience greater success in life.

Sermons (No.1) and singing (No.4) help create an atmosphere that supports community (No.2) and close bonding (No.3). as elsewhere the focus is on the heart (imagination and emotions) rather than the head (doctrine). In particular, women and young people discover more room to express and develop their talents in music and in oracular and organisational skills. Women, however, are not yet visible in top positions, although they are present at all levels in the larger mainstream Protestant

Churches. Regular Sunday and weekday activities form an important strand in the individual's personal, family and social life.

### Impact of Joining

The impact of joining is described as follows:

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- 56% for the lively and meaningful sermons
  - 51% for the social community
  - 42.7% for the support of the congregation
  - 38% for the music and singing
  - 35.4% for healing
  - 30% for the opportunity to play a leadership role
  - 24% due to the influence of the wife/husband, family or friend.

In short, Pentecostalism gives dignity and identity to ethnic minorities, and provides security, close community and mutual help to unsettled urban migrants. Presumably this is what was lacking in their previous religious/ecclesial commitment. Without necessarily emphasising the “prosperity Gospel”, the Pentecostal impact is similar: families become thrifty, temperate, honest<sup>9</sup> and faithful and so become upwardly mobile. They are generally tolerant of their Muslim-majority neighbours by not feeling the need to take them into account. Charity rather than social justice motivates social engagement. Charged to “win the lost”, they are not yet inclined towards inter-faith dialogue, although reflections by younger Pentecostal scholars on religious pluralism and dialogue are increasing (e.g. Yong 2003, 2005).

### South Korea and Japan

Paul Swanson of the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture at Nagoya, Japan, led a research programme on Pentecostalism and Shamanism in Asia.<sup>10</sup> Very different understandings as to why Pentecostalism is so prevalent in South Korea yet barely visible in Japan were presented at their January 2012 research seminar (Govorounova 2012, 10-49). Andrew Kim argued (2012, 11) “that the reason for Christianity’s popularity in Korea lies in the inclusion of Pentecostal elements with ties to Shamanism, a tradition that has shaped Korean cultural landscape and has moulded religious imagination of Koreans.” Further, “no religious tradition that has

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<sup>9</sup> 70% of Indonesian Pentecostals claim they have never given bribes, and 20% only on one occasion! When taken at face value, these statistics are remarkable (if not incredible!).

<sup>10</sup> Papers in process of publication.

managed to survive in Korea through the centuries has failed to include shamanistic elements” (2012, 16). However, Mark Mullins of Sophia University, Tokyo, observed that, “Pentecostalism shares so many functional features with the new religions, both spiritualistic and experiential, that they are virtually interchangeable in the marketplace of religions (2012, 26). Mullins, then, concludes that, “it was the process of urbanisation and modernisation in Korea and Japan and its accompanying movement of the masses from rural areas to the cities that gave rise to Christianity in Korea and to new religions in Japan in the post-war period.” (2012, 28). Rafael Shoji proposed that “what is perceived as a syncretism of Pentecostalism and Shamanism is in fact a common acceptance of a spirit world with radically different interpretations.” (2012, 43). My own observations in Indonesia coincide with this take: Pentecostalism and Shamanism (indigenous physical, psychological and social healing) are functionally equivalent. In practice much Pentecostal phenomena interweaves with popular religiosity and shamanistic practice.

The lively debates and the lack of academic consensus among the participants of the Japanese-Korean research seminar underlines the importance of further research on the relationship between indigenous religiosity, popular Catholicism, shamanism/traditional healing, populism in politics and the Pentecostal/Charismatic movements. In eastern Indonesia people have no difficulty taking on multiple identities – Christian, Muslim, indigenous, “the more the better” (Lewis 2012, 343-345). Many, though not all Southeast Asian cultures are inclusive and cumulative. This is neither syncretism nor sequential conversion, but rather an accumulation of religious practices in order to cope with quite different needs and networks. Without further clarity on this issue Church responses will remain inadequate.

### **The Philippines**

As Kessler and Rüländ (2004) have undertaken their major study in the Philippines, I need not comment on this, the only large Catholic-majority country in Asia, except to note the reasons listed by Leonardo Mercado (2005, 80-81; see also 2001) as to why the mass El Shaddai movement is hugely successful among Catholics. Each of the eight reasons listed is rooted in Filipino culture whether indigenous or global. Firstly, El Shaddai emphasises the role of the Holy Spirit and the recovery of primal speech which has survived in Filipino folk Christianity. Secondly, it holds attractive worship where everybody participates with the Filipino penchant for the dramatic. Thirdly, it uses communication effectively, broadcasting 14 hours of television weekly in channels throughout the Philippines. *Bagong Liwanag Magazine* has a run of 300 thousand per month and the *Miracle Newsletter* reaches 150 thousand per issue. Fourthly, the charisma and method of Mike Velarde and his use of psychology and showmanship. Fifthly, El Shaddai answers the immediate income and health needs of the people who come from the lower classes. Sixthly, it reflects on lived experiences in the context of the world in the light of God’s word. Seventhly, it empowers the laity in line with folk Catholicism. And eighthly, it uses Filipino symbols and the Filipino concept of causality. Culture works on the level of the physical, the social, the worldview and the symbolic.

The contrast with the tightly clerical Church of Japan and South Korea is marked. With strong indigenous roots, Catholicism in the Philippines, is absorbent, open to a

multitude of expressions, and so no less than 58% of the Pentecostal movements thrive within the Catholic Church.

### **Crucial Issues**

From the Kessler/Rüland study, as well as from research conducted in other Asian countries where Christians form small yet vibrant minorities, four issues call for an adequate Church response. Firstly, the Pentecostal movements are answering the spiritual and social needs of urban migrants uprooted from their indigenous cultures and among ethnic minorities sidelined in national life. Secondly, the movements are functionally parallel to elements of indigenous cultures ignored by mainline Catholicism, such as healing and spirits. Uprooted culturally, confused by rapid social upheaval, urban migrants express their need for personal and social healing in terms very similar to those from their primal cultural background. Thirdly, while charity is widespread among members and beyond, social justice concerns are absent. A more just society is established through personal moral renewal. And fourthly, on the whole the members of the Pentecostal movements are less inclined to converse with neighbours from other faith traditions. Evidently, Pentecostalism is not the problem, for it is seen as the answer to problems faced by those who are joining the movement. Which brings us back to the question in the title of this paper:

How should we be responding to the need of perplexed Catholics for certainty and stability? How can we maximise lay participation, nurture warm fellowship and proclaim a gospel of hope and empowerment to the bewildered and the marginalised? How can we acknowledge the world of spirits, shamans and miracles, the felt need for physical and psychological healing, while also responding to the real need for societal and cosmic healing? How can we proclaim the gospel in all simplicity without being simplistic? How can we read the Bible critically without emptying it of its supernatural power? How can we develop non-authoritarian team-leadership? How can we encourage fellowships to move beyond the personal and familial cares of their members to live out the social gospel? How can we be confident in our own identity while being open to the Spirit working in other faith-traditions?

### **CHURCH RESPONSES IN ASIA**

Responses to Pentecostal-like movements by the Asian bishops have been remarkably positive, a clear case of “receptive ecumenism”.<sup>11</sup> Acting on the results of the survey in India, the Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCBI) called for parish renewal through smaller Christian communities and the Catholic charismatic renewal (CCBI 1997, 9-10). In a similar vein the Catholic Bishops of Indonesia issued lengthy, cautiously positive guidelines on the charismatic renewal (KWI 1997, 13-36) and, at their national assembly in the Jubilee Year 2000, placed the empowering of Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs) at the heart of their pastoral approach (KWI 2001, 11-19; also Mardiatmadja 2003). Earlier Episcopal guidelines in the Philippines were

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<sup>11</sup> The term is Walter Kasper’s, former President of the Secretariat for Christian Unity. In his paper on Catholic and Protestant ecumenical principles (Durham University, UK, January 2006) he described ‘receptive ecumenism’ as the openness to accept what gifts other churches can give us that we need in order to be more complete than we were before. This approach is rooted in the thought of John Paul II who describes ecumenical dialogue as: “not only an exchange of ideas but an exchange of gifts” (UUS 28).

geared to accommodate Pentecostal-like groups that were mushrooming autonomously outside the parishes (Manila 1983).

In thus responding in a relatively non-defensive way, the bishops of the Philippines, India and Indonesia have followed through on the basic theological and pastoral thrust of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) over the past 20 years.<sup>12</sup>

Implementing these pastoral guidelines on BECs and the CM are aimed at encouraging the scattered Catholic communities of Asia to move beyond sectarian self-interest and a narrow concern for self-preservation and boldly venture into the surrounding society with imaginative and pertinent programmes to uphold human and transcendental values in this age of globalisation and consumerism. Given that the Kessler/Rüland 2004 study shows that centring pastoral planning on BECs has done little to slow the rapid expansion of Pentecostal/Charismatic movements in the Philippines, we need to enquire as to how adequate such a pastoral response is.

### **Tectonic Shifts**

In the startling words of Felix Wilfred, former long-time secretary of the Commission for Theological Concerns of the FABC, we are facing a "crisis in world Christianity" (Wilfred 2000, 2004). The globalising world is forging a multi-polar Christianity in a multi-religious world, where a major role is being played by religious movements that are naturally pluralistic. Religious and cultural boundaries are being redrawn. The rapidly changing kaleidoscopic culture of Christianity is largely coming about from the margin, from Pentecostal/charismatic movements. But as Chinese hieroglyphics inform us, crisis is both danger and opportunity.<sup>13</sup>

All mainline Churches are being challenged by the exponential rise of Pentecostal-like movements throughout Asia and the rest of the world and there are no signs that the growth of Pentecostalism is abating. They represent a mission from below, a mission of transformation, a popular religious culture taking the popular worldview of the people with its felt needs seriously. They emphasise oral tradition, lay leadership and maximised participation. Their dynamic Christian experience and participatory worship empower laity, in particular women. They are united by a close, warm fellowship nurtured in worship.

It is all too apparent that the Catholic Churches of Asia have not been coping well with the problem of social change and have not been responding adequately to the felt religious needs of those battered by ongoing social, cultural, religious and moral upheavals. We have become too static a force in a very dynamic society. In particular, our churches have not satisfied the desire of many to experience the healing power of God in their daily life, to have direct contact with the Bible, to live in an active and warm fellowship, to enjoy sustained pastoral care. We are being challenged to take

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<sup>12</sup> The fifth FABC Assembly (Bandung 1990) called for a pastoral strategy based on the development of BECs as "a new way of being Church". A separate desk was established in the FABC Office for the Laity to accompany the Asian bishops' conferences as they implemented this policy.

<sup>13</sup> Ganoczy (2003, 89) maintains that chaos theory can be applied to present day religious upheaval; as in physics, chaos is a turbulent phase from which new possibilities of order can arise.

religious experience more seriously. Those leaving the Church are among the most neglected pastorally and the most fervent spiritually. Pentecostals reveal what is lacking in the Catholic Church's presence which is not responding adequately to the immediate cultural context. To respond will call for an enormous exercise in imagination. What responses, then, have the Churches been making?

### **FABC: Applying the Conciliar Vision**

#### Rooted and Concerned

For over 40 years the ongoing "theological-pastoral think-tank" of the Asian bishops has been the Offices, workshops and assemblies of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FAB). Thus, John Locke SJ, of the Office for Theological Concerns (FABC-OTC) opines that any pastoral approach needs to begin with a reflection on the "shared experience of living in a threatening world of constant change... How has it affected us personally? How has it affected our local Catholic Church?" (Locke 1990, 15). The Second Vatican Council laid aside the image of the church as a fortress and returned to the patristic image of the people of God. On pilgrimage, we are engaged in the "threatening" process of incarnating the Reign of God in the contemporary world (Locke 1990, 21).

In line with the central thrust of the Asian Catholic Churches, John Locke notes two important criteria in discerning the authentic presence of the Spirit in these new religious movements. Firstly, have they taken root in Asian cultures and traditions? And, secondly, do they lead people to a concern for the poor and the marginalised and for social transformation? (Locke 2000, 14) For open-minded believers truth has to be sought continually for truth is greater than ourselves and larger than our individual traditions, for God is truth. Thus we contemplate truth rather than possess it.

#### Taking Religious Experience Seriously

The FABC-OTC also sees the conversion of Catholics to Pentecostalism as challenging us to take religious experience more seriously. The departure of so many Catholics is also challenging us to rethink the theology of Baptism in the Spirit and the role of *glossolalia* in a way that would harmonise with and not obscure other Catholic beliefs. The FABC-OTC itself sees signs of the presence of the Spirit in the thirst for prayer, a hunger for the Word of God, the rise of participatory celebrations of the Eucharist, a docility to charisms and in the promotion of peace and justice (FABC-OTC 1997, 81-82). Reflection on lived experience has the power to transform.

The FABC-OTC goes on to link elements of Pentecostalism to certain characteristics of popular religiosity where the heart, feeling and poetic discourse are more important than the intellect, reasoning and analytical language in our relationship with God; where there is a strong sense of God's presence in everyday life and in nature, in images and in places; where the religious meaning of life, marriage and death is emphasised; and where the religious values of the weak and the sick, the poor and the marginalised, the elderly and children are acknowledged as loci of God's presence. (FABC-OTC 1997, 83). All this is in line with the findings of the Kessler/Rüland study.

## Stark Simplicity

The success of Pentecostal-like churches lies in their ability to present a truth that can serve as an anchor for social customs and practices while seeking to reorganise all spheres of life according to their particular set of values (Fonseca 1999, 590). Stark simplicity is not necessarily a negative, this depends on how the movement relates its membership to the rest of the world. One positive example is that of Mahatma Gandhi who united the Indian people around appropriate symbols (salt, *satyagraha*, *charkha*) and so galvanised the nation through a simple but convincing constructive programme (national education, village industries, etc.) (Fonseca 1999, 592). To be simple and clear is not necessarily to be fundamentalist and sectarian.

This pastoral style proposed by the FABC for more than four decades should be visible in Asia's local Churches via our solidarity with the marginalised, inter-faith dialogue, inculturation and liturgical renewal. This style is planted at the grassroots through the fostering of basic ecclesial communities (BECs) as "a new way of being church", a local church, "incarnate in a people, a church indigenous and inculturated... a church in continuous, humble and loving dialogue with the living traditions, the cultures, the religions – in brief, with all the life-realities of the people in whose midst it has sunk its roots deeply and whose history and life it gladly makes its own." (FABC I Taipei 1974)<sup>14</sup> But clearly this is not the case everywhere, or at the very least, this "new way of being Church" is not adequately responding to the underlying causes as to why Catholics are continuing to join the Pentecostals.

And yet the continuing and rapid increase of the Pentecostal movement both within and without the Asian Church, raises questions regarding the key FABC vision of creating "a new way of being Church" by focusing upon BECs who witness to Gospel values in multi-faith societies, while also welcoming the presence of the charismatic/ Pentecostal movement. We need to compare and contrast these two phenomena in more detail.

### **Pentecostal Renewal and Basic Ecclesial Communities**

#### Neglecting the Social Gospel

At a workshop during the *Seventh FABC Plenary* (Bangkok 2000), Antonio De Los Reyes presented a paper on charismatic movements (CMs) and small Christian communities (BEC)s. He opines that the charismatic movement, "has not come to grips with the imperative of channelling its formidable power into the needs of the temporal world, towards the gospel's call to transform the social order according to the plan to God... The movement has been unable to catalyse most of its adherents to embrace the radical discipleship of the early Christian communities. It has confined itself to a spirituality of conversion, of holiness and fellowship, failing to galvanise its adherents into a force of advocacy and action against the structures of sin" (De Los Reyes 2000, 10). On the other hand de Los Reyes sees small Christian communities as, "circles of households living in the same geographical area who integrate worship, catechesis and social action into their social, cultural and economic life... centred on

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<sup>14</sup> The expression 'A New Way of Being Church' is found in FABC documents since the 1990 Bandung General Assembly. Basic Ecclesial Communities are being fostered through the Office for Laity's Asian Integral Pastoral Approach (AsIPA) workshops.

Christ, rooted in the Word of God, gathered in meaningful celebrations of the Eucharist, open to dialogues of life with people of other faiths, and committed to the transformation of society and the liberation of people from oppressive structures.” (2000, 11). He asks that the two movements enrich each other and asks, “Is it viable to merge the dynamism of the charismatic movements and the solidity of the basic ecclesial communities to strengthen the catholic faith in Asia? Not only is it viable, it is perhaps the soundest option for the Church.” (2000, 12).

While it is true that much of the charismatic movement has little social conscience, BECs *per se* cannot be identified with social activism. Many dioceses established BECs in order to re-organise large parishes with insufficient ordained pastors and so BECs have developed as parochial sectors directed by the centre rather than as a grassroots church of the poor. Many BECs remain as small neighbourhood groups for pietistic bible sharing and administrative units for the larger parish. Nevertheless, the crucial challenge made by De Los Reyes must be considered further.

Rephrasing a statement from a Latin American study that compared Pentecostalism with Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs) (Martin 1990), we might ask: while Pentecostalism is truly an imaginative faith *of* the poor, has the FABC simply produced an abstract vision *for* the poor? While neither Pentecostalism nor BECs are limited to Asia’s poor, it may well be that some Pentecostal communities are practising what Catholic bishops and pastoral workers are theologising about. While BECs are being actively promoted by the FABC, the Charismatic Movement (CM) has arisen on its own. BECs are implementing the vision of the FABC while the CM is answering felt needs for security and empowerment.

### Two Types of Christian Community

To a large extent charismatic or Pentecostal Catholics embody one type of Christianity, the BECs another. While much of the CM tends to be indifferent to the world emphasising personal renewal, BECs ought to be actively engaged with the social and political world through systematic analysis and concerted action. Much of the CM tends towards cultural conformism cleansed from corruption and dishonesty, while some BECs are inclined to be culturally dissident as social systems are at the root of injustice. Usually both the CM and BECs among the economically prosperous accept or even legitimise the existing social order. BECs among the urban poor and rural neglected are expected to critique the status quo and work for social, cultural and religious transformation, while the CM engenders hope for spiritual and material betterment. Even as the CM eagerly awaits for Christ to come again in glory, BECs are expected to witness to the coming of God’s Reign on earth in the here and now. These are two distinct types of Christianity, and yet as political change fails to bring about the social transformation envisioned by BECs, so the CM garners ever more adherents who live an unambiguous morality, are embedded in a trusting community and are upwardly mobile.

### Three Crucial Issues

In line, then, with the FABC approach, three key criteria for evaluating and responding to both Pentecostal/charismatic movements and basic ecclesial communities are: First, their rootedness in culture; Second, their openness to other faith-traditions and, Third, their solidarity with the marginalised. All this has been

spelt out lucidly in numerous assemblies and workshops. The question is: how much of this vision has reached the grassroots, for it is at the grassroots we are facing the pastoral challenge. Do the grassroots have other priorities?

In order to bring together the *Gaudium et spes* vision and the dynamic insights of the Pentecostal movement, we need to keep in mind three crucial issues, namely: 1) How adequately are basic ecclesial communities embodying the engaged *Gaudium et spes* vision of the church, and how far are the Charismatic movements distanced from, or supportive of, this conciliar vision? 2) How can BECs embody the *Gaudium et spes* vision and at the same time answer the felt needs of bewildered, powerless persons at the edge of society? 3) What sort of culture in parish and diocese do we have to nurture to make space for both movements, not in parallel but in a dynamic and creative tension? It will be helpful, therefore, to concentrate upon convergences between CMs and BECs as well as on their well-known disparities.<sup>15</sup>

### The CM and BECs: Convergence and Disparity

#### The Spiritual Challenge

The CM embraces the mystery of the supernatural which imbues hope. Healing is central, but not just miraculous healing. Pentecostal-like groups engage intensely in counselling where the pained unburden themselves. Theirs is a spiritually potent community, a spiritual experience that transforms.

Both movements experience God as gracious and holy, merciful and just, as members turn away from selfishness and commit their lives to serving one another. God's "power" and "sovereignty" are disclosed when believers choose to live under the cross, suffering for justice and love. There is much scope for common action for compassionate justice and practical love (Self 1992, 71).

Both BECs & the CM emphasise the renewal of their adherents' lives. Both encourage their members to put their religious beliefs into practice. The CM stresses an experience of personal conversion and stresses a change of individual life style and morality; members are expected to interpret the bible piously and apply it to their individual lives. By way of contrast, BECs are encouraged to read the bible in the light of the signs of the time which should lead to social commitment. In practice the link or non-link between faith and life in BECs and the CM may be somewhat similar.

For some participants involvement in the CM is but a phase in their faith journey (Indonesia & India). The CM tends to endure in Pentecostal groups that open up the world of the supernatural in daily life where psychological, and to some extent physical healing is central; members seek deep personal experience rather than profound theology. Many BECs are also ephemeral communities active for only a certain time ("fragile flowers"). Where BECs are firmly rooted in the cultural and social traditions of popular culture, as in Eastern Indonesia and the Philippines, they have a considerable potential to endure and prosper over the long haul. There seems to be little if any emphasis upon healing in BECs. What seems to endure in both movements

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<sup>15</sup> This analysis has been greatly assisted by that of Cecília Mariz (1992), although there are striking differences between Catholic Brazil and multi-faith Asia.

is personal family-based religious practice and belief which remains Catholic where it is accompanied by regular sacramental celebrations.

Nonetheless, due to rapid social change, Catholics now feel relatively free to forge new meanings and networks in CMs and BECs that are often only loosely connected with the parish. There is a plurality of models in contemporary Catholicism (Pace 2003, 67-79). As in Latin America, Catholic loyalties are shifting from parish to movements, groups and organisations (Smith 1994).

### The Social Challenge

In large, diverse and increasingly anonymous cities, both the CM and BECs offer warm fellowship where everyone is recognised and made to feel at home. Both movements answer the psychological need to be part of pastoral planning, decision making and implementation. In both movements members feel significant, relaxed and good. In the CM there is total involvement. The larger gatherings are complemented by cell groups for bible study and support. These smaller groups in both movements support egalitarian gender relationships. The CM often spawns interest groups for self improvement, self renewal or devotion.

Both the CM and BECs offer a support network centred on the duty of mutual assistance. They offer psychological support by praying, talking, listening and advising each other. CM members tend to help one another individually; the movement enhances the individual in line with post-modern urban society. BECs respond to the administrative and financial needs of the parochial community, while internally acting as an extended family to its heterogeneous membership. BECs are bound by cultural neighbourliness, popular devotions, and on occasion by specific social issues. Thus BEC members help themselves by working together and finding collective solutions to shared problems, running credit unions, taking on local economic projects, engaging in local political, legal and human rights advocacy and the like. Some BEC members might on occasion fight publicly for the interests of the poor whereas the CM is primarily concerned with the strict personal morality its own membership and aims to change society by inviting others to join their charismatic community.

As examples from the Philippines, South Korea and India show, the CM is open to continuities with indigenous religious styles. In affirming the central role of healing and spirit possession, the CM is interacting with vital areas of Asian culture so far neglected by the more formal process of inculturation. The movement is considerably more adaptable to grassroots religious experience and spontaneity than the traditional parish. In Asia, as elsewhere, Pentecostal religion shows a remarkable likeness to the social and cultural experience of the urban working classes. For many BECs, and not just the Pentecostal movement, are rooted in oral, "pre-literary" culture and so both movements are challenging us to re-root our theology, spirituality and pastoral practice in experience (narrative and testimony) rather than in abstract concepts or top-down planning.

### The Prophetic Challenge

At its dynamic best the CM is a transformative movement from below that has sprung up answering felt needs of laity and religious, a movement which the ecclesial hierarchies of Asia have come to acknowledge. In contrast BECs have usually been

initiated by diocesan pastoral programmes. Understandably where diocesan programming has engendered BECs and the ongoing nurturing of the small communities is neglected, many evolve into little more than administrative units within a conventional parish. Potentially both the CM and BECs could be empowering communities rooted in people's lives but this is not the case everywhere.

Both the CM and BECs are potentially prophetic. Despite its otherworldliness and its respect for constituted authority, the CM fosters new hope and so a critical, non-fatalistic outlook on life. "Baptism in the Spirit" involves a dramatic shaking-up of the taken-for-granted world and members embrace of a new way of seeing reality itself. Meanwhile some BEC members discover new horizons through sharing life issues in the light of the scriptures. Both the CM and BECs, therefore, counteract a fatalistic outlook by encouraging people to disagree with reality as conventionally defined and so lead to transformation (c.f. Mariz 1992). Also, BECs and the CM are not that far apart when it comes to their practical goals for the common good: both movements confront the destructive forces of power, repression, collusion and corruption with the gospel message of servant-hood, liberation and community sharing (Self 1992, 72).

Nevertheless, the CM approach to social change is individualistic; one changes society by converting the individual. The stress on personal sanctification and changes in personal morality are cast in a rational mould: spiritual introspection, methodical self-discipline, the application of faith to everyday experience, all engender an ethos of rational individualism (Smith 1994). This responds to the stresses of modern society on the individual. And yet although fundamentally conservative, politically withdrawn and structurally authoritarian, CM members avoid lying, corruption and injustice and some steer clear of a blatantly consumerist lifestyle. In contrast, BECs occasionally mobilise political participation, as in the people power movement in the Philippines in the 1980s and the democracy and human rights movement in South Korea during the same decade. Potentially, BECs can provide a power base for organised influence on NGOs and political parties. However, long term political success remains elusive.

### The Leadership Challenge

Neither the CM nor BEC movements place much emphasis upon the parish or parish councils, although the CM is accompanied by a number of prominent clergy and religious. Participants of both movements are inspired directly by God in prayer and bible sharing. Everybody is deemed competent to reflect upon and interpret the bible.

CM leaders, and in some cases those of the BECs, are not primarily functionaries or administrators but spiritual leaders. Successful CM leaders are acknowledged as prophets, healers and counsellors. Pentecostal-like groups have myriad ministries and ordinary members lay claim to spiritual maturity and gifts and minister in the church. This tends to bridge the lay-leader divide of the conventional parish.

Many, though by no means all, BECs have evolved collective leadership and decision making. These create open spaces for thinking and articulating which fosters an attitude of engaged criticism while developing their members' organisational, communication and leadership skills. Team leadership and common deliberation on

life issues cultivate a sense of responsibility for the condition of society.<sup>16</sup> Where BECs are little more than parish wards, leadership tends to be in the hands of one person only. Leadership in the CM may also revert to a single, powerful charismatic individual as in the KTM of Indonesia. In these cases authoritarianism is the norm.

A key contrast is that CM leaders emerge through their charismatic gifts, while BEC leaders are chosen by their membership, not necessarily because of their ability but often because they are available. This contrast challenges us to seek an appropriate balance between personal, entrepreneurial ministerial charismatic leadership and ordered, constitutional, differentiated roles within the church (Gros 2006, 40).

### The Ecumenical Challenge

For forty-four years the official conversation between the Catholic Church and Classical Pentecostals has to be the greatest secret of the ecumenical movement! It is an extraordinary, even prophetic dialogue between the largest Christian church and the fastest growing Christian movement. Catholic/Pentecostal understanding has deepened and mutual respect fostered. I am not aware of any echoes in Asia nor am I aware that any of the documentation has been published in Asia. The reports of the Five Phases of the dialogue between Pentecostal leaders and the Vatican should inspire conversations at the local level between Catholic charismatics, classical and indigenous Pentecostals together with activists in basic Christian communities.

Without in any way neglecting ongoing contact with mainline churches, forty-four years after Pentecostals and Catholics engaged in dialogue it is not too soon for the Catholic Churches of Asia to open up to indigenous Pentecostal communities. To my knowledge only the bishops' conferences of India and Indonesia have commissioned studies. The FABC, national conferences of bishops and theological/pastoral academies could all collaborate in initiating such conversations. This would necessitate our looking anew at the oral, indigenous cultures of Asia from which the majority of Catholics spring.

### **The Challenge to Parish and Diocese:**

#### **From Ecclesiastical Hierarchy to Community Networking**

As we have seen, where a substantial minority feel that their religious needs are not being met they may join a new religious movement either within or without the church. We have, then, to identify religious and pastoral needs. And if we wish to answer the needs of Asian Pentecostals, then we must replace the hegemonic culture of the conventional parish.<sup>17</sup>

The Johannine Council (1962-1965) provoked cultural pluralism within Catholicism on a broad scale. This led to the rise of many new movements including the CM and

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<sup>16</sup> One crucial issue not considered here is the incongruity of a participatory and egalitarian ecclesiology in the BECs within the larger context of a hierarchical church.

<sup>17</sup> I am leaving doctrinal issues aside and concentrating on cultural and pastoral concerns. I concur with Walter Hollenweger that Pentecostalism has a Catholic root and this explains why comparatively few Catholic charismatics leave the church (Hollenweger 1997, 144-180). "One could say that Pentecostalism is a way of being Catholic without accepting the juridical structures of the Catholic Church." (Hollenweger 1999, 166).

smaller communities such as BECs. Some of the new movements interpret the council as a call to engage the world and take up social justice issues (a *Gaudium et spes* church) while others read the council as calling for a more devotional church (a more intense personal experience of God). Often, but by no means always, BECs take the former line, while charismatic groups take the latter. The conventional parish is not coping with these divergent trends. In many cases parishes have evolved into a *complexio oppositorum* (a complex of contradictions) of different organisations which live side by side without any meaningful reciprocal enrichment. “The whole of Catholicism ... has to decide whether ... the development of its identity must be that of a great network of sites (each) reserved for a registered clientele, or of an open ‘sanctuary’, humanising, hospitable (where) ... ‘each one has their gift, each one their burden.’” (Melloni 2003, 19)

### The Conventional Parish

It is not sufficient to make liturgical, catechetical and pastoral suggestions for giving new life to the parish.<sup>18</sup> The conventional parish is culturally monotone and limited to a commonsense view of life. It depends upon the ordained pastor and his pastoral council where top-down authority is centralised through controlled channels. This ideal of comprehensive organic integration reflects a stable, rural society with its well-ordered, organic community. All components are synchronised by the central authority in order to achieve accord. Such a parish or diocese does not see the need to balance divergent movements through complementarity, but integrates or eliminates them in the name of harmony. In this conventional ecclesiastical culture there is little room for particular interests, social diversity, cultural pluralism or religious non-conformity, let alone for questioning authority. These are viewed as detrimental to the common good.

Unsurprisingly this conventional Catholic culture was marked by authoritarianism, elitism and patriarchalism. Such a parish culture conforms closely to that of the rural Asia of yesteryear or the conformist cultures of authoritarian Asian governments today. Without a radical change in parish culture and pastoral care, Pentecostal churches will continue to absorb Catholics who no longer find a place in the church.

### A Shift in Parochial Cultures

Neither BECs nor the CM can breathe in a staid, homogenous religious culture. For if BECs are absorbed into the institutional structure of the conventional parish they tend to be reduced to little more than parish wards. In that case Catholic activists move out into extra-ecclesial networks. Similarly, when charismatics are brought under the control of the conventional parish, and clear demarcations are insisted upon between liturgical rites and charismatic celebrations,<sup>19</sup> then understandably many move on to the freer Pentecostal churches.

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<sup>18</sup> This seems to be the approach of various Episcopal conferences (e.g. Philippines, India, Indonesia) and also theologians such as Jesús-Angel Barreda (1998, 358-360).

<sup>19</sup> While the disciplinary norms of the Instruction on Healing (art. 1 - 10) are theoretically plausible, I am not aware of their implementation which, if carried out, might well drive even more Catholics into the Pentecostal churches.

When left to mature according to their own dynamic, both movements advance social pluralism, foster participation in the wider society and promote an expectation and practice of both church and societal accountability. The CM and BECs express a process of social differentiation in the direction of personal choice and greater participation.

In both BECs and the CM women experience independence and self-esteem. Both movements encourage individual choice and therefore free will. The emphasis is on achieved rather than ascribed status which contrasts sharply with the conventional parish.

The BECs and CM fit neatly into the ecclesiastical pyramidal structure of the Church only by being absorbed by them, the BECs reduced to administrative/devotional units under the Parochial Council, the CM as a spiritual complement. To respond adequately to the challenge of the Pentecostal movements, we would need to shift from an authoritarian to a collegial culture; from a commando ethos to one of listening; from a religiosity that inculcates acceptance to that which inspires faith-in-action; from a church culture over-adaptive to local and global cultural norms to a church culture embedded in the values and norms of the Scriptures; from a church centred on its members to a church focused on its mission to society.

#### Towards a Communion of Communities

If we are to take up the pertinent suggestion that the charismatic movements and basic ecclesial communities should learn from each other (De Los Reyes 2000), then the culture of the conventional parish needs to be replaced by an open, networking culture. We need to develop the parish into a flexible poly-centred web where BECs and the CM can mutually enrich rather than studiously avoid one another. If these two powerful movements were somehow to combine their strengths in the coming decades the result would be extraordinarily potent. If the CM absorbs, and is transformed by, the social justice vision of the BECs while the BECs take up the emotional, communal, narrational, hopeful and radically embodied “experientialism” of the CM, the offspring could be more powerful than either parent (Cox 1995, 319).

The central threads converging in the “nucleus” of this poly-centred web would consist of Catholic activists and their families in both movements. This core would take part in ongoing training that would require the concentrated energy of the parish pastoral team.

Lay leaders from both charismatic cells and BECs could be trained together with ordained pastors according to the reflection-action-reflection (see-judge-act) model of reading life in the light of the scriptures and then acting upon it. This would assist both the CM and BECs in uncovering the social roots and religious implications of the problems of life. Both groups could learn to read the bible in a way that links Christian symbols, events and teachings to the life of Asia’s poor. Then, as long as the ordained leadership does not feel threatened by developments but continues to work

collegially in bold-humility, the open parochial culture would cultivate a communion of communities.<sup>20</sup>

But are we ready to leave aside our clerical and oligarchic monarchy? Recent scandals worldwide and systemic dysfunction within the Vatican curia inform us, as nothing else does, that authoritarian hierarchies are powerless in a cyber-world. Business conglomerates have learnt this lesson and adapted accordingly. Will Bishop Francis of Rome allow conversations to recommence on collegiality and subsidiarity in the communion of Churches?

Having said that, it is also true that there will be no enduring Catholic response to the rise of Pentecostalism as long as we fail to ordain an adequate number of presbyters to serve Eucharistic communities in the context of rethinking the whole issue of ministry (Burrows 1980, 2006; <sup>21</sup> Lobinger 1998).<sup>22</sup> Living in widely-scattered communities, many Asian Catholics receive only occasional ministry from an ordained pastor. As long as we neglect to nurture our sacramental communities with a regular and a deeply emotional sacramental ministry open to transcendence while rooted in daily life, Catholics will continue to look to Pentecostal movements for their spiritual and personal nourishment. ■

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<sup>20</sup> For an appreciative yet critical look at *Gaudium et spes* 40 years down the road see Felix Wilfred, "Asian Christianity and Modernity Forty Years after *Gaudium et Spes*", *Info on Human Development*, 32 (2006) 1-3, 15-20. Wilfred argues for a broad sociological-political-economic-cultural analysis of society rather than a narrower cultural-anthropological one.

<sup>21</sup> Burrows laid the theological groundwork for a rethink of ministry in the Catholic Church in his 1980 book. More recently, quoting the *Annuarium Statisticum* (Burrows 2006, 5), he gives the following data: from 1978 to 2003 the number of Catholics in the world grew from 757 million to 1.07 billion. To serve 300 million more Catholics in 2003 there were 15 thousand fewer priests. For rethinking grassroots team ministry see Lobinger 1998, 2004.

<sup>22</sup> By restricting the ordained priesthood to university-educated, celibate members of the community and making the vocation full-time and life-long we are preventing our communities from becoming Eucharistic by denying them regular sacramental celebrations. One or more of these restrictions needs to be lifted.

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