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ASIAN DOCUMENTS ON SOCIAL COMMUNICATION - NEW EDITION

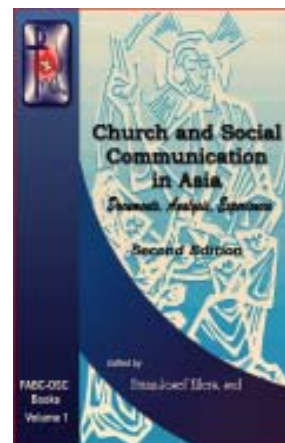
The FABC-Office of Social Communication has launched an updated edition of "Church and Social Communication in Asia - Documents, Analysis, Experiences" (FABC-OSC Books v. 1).

The book presents all final statements of FABC communication meetings from 1996 to 2007, including the annual meetings of Asian communication bishops (Bishops' Meets), all six BISCOMS (Bishops' Institutes for Social Communication), and special gatherings of experts (Roundtables) on Communication Research, Communication and Evangelization, and Social Communication in Religious Traditions of Asia.

The 230-page volume also gives analyses of the communication dimension of the Asian Synod (1998) and the related document "Ecclesia in Asia." It features articles on Communication Theology, Communication Spirituality and reports on two special OSC

initiatives on the academic level: the Asian Research Center for Religion and Social Communication (ARC) based at St. John's University (Bangkok), and the M.A. Program in Social/ Pastoral Communication at the Graduate School and Theological Faculty of the Pontifical University of Santo Tomas (Manila).

The new edition (ISBN: 978-971-510-209-4) is available at Logos (Divine Word) Publications, Manila.



BANGLADESH: CHRISTIAN CULTURAL ACADEMY PLANNED

A seminar of some 60 artists on July 18 in Dhaka aimed to finalize the plan to build a "Christian Cultural Academy" for training artists in the country who are Christians. The meeting was organized by the Christian Co-operative Credit Union Ltd. (CCCUL) with the view to help Christian artists take their rightful place in Bangladesh's pluralistic society. The seminar also reported on the progress of a project to preserve Christian-Bangla culture, history, music and language. Christians account for about half of one percent of the country's 160 million people. (UCANEWS)

KOREA: PRIEST'S E-MAIL MINISTRY ON ITS THIRD YEAR

Fr. Matthew Cho Myeong-yeon's e-mail ministry marks its third year in 2008. Fr. Cho, 38, of Seoul archdiocese was working on the archdiocesan website, the largest Catholic Internet portal in South Korea. In January 2005, he began posting his daily reflections on his own website "Opening Dawn" <www.bbadaking.com>. The reflections were made available to subscribers by e-mail. The ministry has spread by word of mouth among local users mostly in their teens and 20s. Today, it has more than 6,300 e-mail subscribers including non-Catholics. (UCANEWS)

INDIA: PRIEST THREATENS DEFAMATION SUIT AGAINST JOURNALIST

Fr. George Jacob, principal of St. Xavier's Higher Secondary School, in Bhopal archdiocese, Madhya Pradesh state threatened legal action against "Today's Indian" weekly tabloid journalist Prakash Saxena for blackmail. The priest alleged that after refusing to give money to Saxena, the weekly published two articles accusing Fr. Jacob of mismanagement, corruption and violations of priesthood. Fr. Jacob lodged the complaint to the police on July 4. Saxena, however, denied blackmailing the priest and did not regret writing the articles. He said he has still some damaging evidence he will publish in the coming days. (THE HERALD)

JAPAN: CATHOLIC MOVIE AWARD GOES TO DOCUMENTARY ON OKINAWA BATTLE

Signis Japan awarded this year's 32nd Catholic Movie Award to the film "Himeyuri" (star lilies) directed by Shohei Shibata and released in theaters in March 2007. The film is about 200 girls in southern Okinawa forced by circumstance to nurse soldiers wounded in World War II's Okinawa battle. The girls were called the Himeyuri Corps and many of them died in the battle. The award ceremony was held on July 4 at Zero Hall in Nakano, Tokyo. (JCN)

BANGLADESH: CHURCH TRIES TO CORRECT 'OUT OF CONTROL' SINGING OF HYMNS

The Bangladesh Bishops' Commission for Liturgy and Prayer has organized a meeting of 71 choir leaders and representatives of parish liturgy committees in Dhaka July 13-18 to help solve the problem of "out of control" singing of liturgical hymns. The participants were taught appropriate tones, musical notation and volume for different spiritual occasions. Auxiliary Bishop Theotoniuz Gomez of Dhaka said there is "need to control the use of musical instruments in the liturgical celebration." "Union and harmony in tunes is a must to express the depth of spirituality," the prelate added. (UCANEWS)

INDIA: NEWSPAPER APOLOGIZES FOR POLITICAL JOKE ON 'LAST SUPPER'

The Pune-based English daily "Sakaal Times" has apologized after Catholics protested its political joke on Leonardo da Vinci's famous painting, the "Last Supper." The daily carried a rendition of the painting on July 22 in which the faces of Jesus and His disciples are replaced with those of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and parliamentarians. This caused a rally of some 300 Catholics outside the newspaper office demanding unconditional apology. The apology was printed the following day July 23 on the paper's front page signed by the editor in chief. (UCANEWS)

INDIA: EVANGELIZATION AND COMMUNICATION

Speaking at the Karnataka Regional Catholic Communication meeting, Bishop Henry D'Souza of Bellary said, "Evangelization should be the central theme of communication. It should fire all Catholic communication. True evangelization brings emancipation, progress, transformation and meaning into people's lives. Therefore, communication should be the core of Catholic communication." Bishop Aloysius Paul D'Souza, chair for social communications, who was present, called for building friendly relations with people of other faiths through the media. Strategic plans drawn at the meeting include conducting courses on pastoral communication, public relations and media education. (CBCI)

SINGAPORE: MEDIA OUTREACH PROGRAM

A media outreach program "Finding God in the Dark" was organized by CANA, Singapore archdiocese's Catholic Centre, and the Association of Pauline Cooperators for four Saturdays August 23 to September 13 at Waterloo Street. The aim is to explore movies and their impact on Christian viewers. Each of the three-and-a-half hours sessions starts with a movie screening, followed by a discussion of themes and concepts, and ends with group sharing. Visit <www.catholiccentre.com.sg> for details. (CN)

PHILIPPINES: INTERNATIONAL MEDIA CONFERENCE

Ateneo de Davao University of the Jesuits hosted the first international media conference organized by the Asian Congress for Media and Communication (ACMC) in Davao City August 21-23. The theme of the conference "Media in Asia: Tool for Human Rights Education and Monitoring" tackled issues on human rights in both academic and practical perspectives. ACMC is a Philippine-based Asia-wide professional organization of media lecturers, practitioners and students. (CBCP MONITOR)

SINGAPORE: ST. ANNE PRAYER BOOK TO RAISE FUNDS FOR MYANMAR CHURCH

A 100-page prayer book titled "St. Anne lead us to Jesus, God is only a prayer away" was published to commemorate this year's annual feasts of St. Anne on July 26. Some 15,000 copies have been printed and sold with the hope to raise funds for the mission in Myanmar and to the Bukit Mertajam St. Anne's Dialysis Centre. The book contains novena prayers, the Mysteries of the Rosary and Novena to the Divine Mercy. (CN)

PHILIPPINES: SCAPULARS NO FASHION ACCESSORY

Scapulars, the devotional artefact worn to show affiliation with a religious order, are not fashion accessories and should be worn with reverence. On this note, Archbishop Fernando Capalla of Davao reminded the faithful to give reverence to the scapular, which he said is a sign of "total consecration." Wearing it implies that "one's thoughts, desires, actions and relationships are motivated, enlightened, and guided by one's love for God and the Blessed Mother," he said. (CBCP MONITOR)

INDIA: TEXTBOOK ROW DIVIDES CHURCHES IN KERALA

Archbishop Daniel Acharuparambil of Verapoly and president of the Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council, launched a protest march on June 30 to withdraw a controversial social science textbook for seventh grade in Kerala schools that promotes communism and atheism. About 4,000 people joined the demonstration, chanting slogans against the state's Marxist-led coalition government which introduced the 56-page textbook in the new academic year. Muslim and Hindu groups joined the Catholic led protest. Orthodox and Protestant Churches, however, say they find nothing objectionable in the book. (UCANEWS)

TAIWAN: 'CATHOLIC WEEKLY' RE-LAUNCHED

"Christian Life Weekly," Taipei archdiocese's Chinese-language weekly launched in 1952, has changed from broadsheet to tabloid format. Its name was also changed to "Christian Life Weekly." The re-design was initiated by the new archbishop of Taipei, Monsignor John Hung Shan-chuan, svd. It was announced on August 10 and the replacement came on August 17. The paper has a circulation of 5,000 copies and features local and global Church news and commentaries. (KNA)

CHINA: CATHOLIC CHURCH PRODUCES NEW TESTAMENT IN ENGLISH AND CHINESE TO SERVE OLYMPIC VISITORS

Christian Churches have distributed thousands of copies of the New Testament in English and Mandarin to hotels and churches in Beijing and other host cities of the 2008 Olympics to serve Christian visitors. The Protestant Church printed a total 100,000 of its bilingual New Testament. The Catholic black, hardcover edition printed by the government-approved bishops' conference numbered 30,000. It has the Olympics slogan "One World One Dream" and the phrase "In Commemoration of the Beijing Olympic Games 2008." The Protestant edition, meanwhile, bore the Beijing Olympics emblem on its cover. (UCANEWS)

PAKISTAN: PRIEST RUNS COMPUTER CENTER FOR CATHOLIC YOUTH

Oblate Father Maqsood Nazeer started early this year the St. Eugene Computer Center inside the compound of Holy Rosary Church in Quetta, southwest of Islamabad. Named after St. Eugene de Mazenod, founder of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the center offers three-month courses on how to use various computer programs including "Inpage," an Urdu publishing software. It has three computers. Quetta is the capital of Balochistan, considered Pakistan's most underdeveloped province. Christians and Hindus form two very small communities, whereas 98 percent of the people as Muslims. (UCANEWS)

SRI LANKA: CHRISTIANS AND MEDIA RIGHTS GROUP PROTEST MEDIA HARASSMENT

Christian priests joined representatives of media rights groups in a "silent protest" against media harassment in front of the Magistrates Court in Colombo June 30. About 50 journalists and Anglican and Catholic priests stood, holding placards bearing photos of detained Christian journalist Jayaprakash Sittampalam Tissanayagam and written messages demanding justice for journalists. The Protestant Tamil journalist for "The Sunday Times" newspaper was taken into custody on March 6. Journalists have been arrested, threatened and harassed since the civil war between Tamil secessionists and the Sinhalese-led government began in 1983. (UCANEWS)

PHILIPPINES: ONLINE FORMATION TEAM STARTS TRAINING

A group of seven religious educators began on August 31 a five-month training program to become "learning facilitators" in the Asian Connection of the "Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation" (VLCFF). The training is under the guidance of Salesian Fr Renato de Guzman of Don Bosco Technical Institute in Makati City. VLCFF is the online catechetical program of the University of Dayton's Institute of Pastoral Initiatives (IPI) in Ohio, USA. Fr De Guzman is developing the VLCFF Asian Connection, which will offer certificate courses for catechists, religion and Christian-life teachers. VLCFF was founded by IPI Director Sr. Angela Ann Zukowski, mhsh. (UCANEWS)