

*Stephen Bevans SVD\**

**“THE LOVE OF CHRIST IMPELS US” (2 COR 5:14)  
INTERCULTURAL LEADERSHIP FOR INTERCULTURAL  
LIVING AND MISSION**

*The Divine Word Missionaries are preparing for their 18<sup>th</sup> General Chapter to be celebrated in Rome in June and July of 2018. The central theme is “The Love of Christ Impels Us” as a foundation for spirituality, community and mission. The author presented this paper at a meeting of the SVD leadership in the Americas in August 2017, focusing on leadership. He grounds his reflection in a theological approach to the Chapter theme and contextualizes it in the recent SVD reflection on mission. Then he summarizes the SVD approach to interculturality, one of the central concerns of the General Chapter of 2012. On this basis he lays out the tasks and challenges for inspirational leadership at the service of mission. – The oral style of the conference has been maintained.*

The purpose of my reflections today will be to offer a *theology of leadership*—one of the five areas of reflection at our Sixteenth General Chapter in 2006—but within the context of the theme of our coming Eighteenth General Chapter and that of our last (Seventeenth) General Chapter in 2012. As such, this is a response to Marcelo Cattaneo’s request<sup>1</sup> to offer this presentation and to lead you in reflection today. In his e-mail to me on November 22 of last year [2016], Marcelo wrote this:

... the main suggestion is to focus on the upcoming **General Chapter’s theme**, meaning to say, a reflection that would emphasize our spirituality of incarnation, under-

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<sup>1</sup> Marcelo Cattaneo SVD is the coordinator of the leadership teams in the Americas (Editor’s note).

stood as the core of our SVD life and mission. From that platform, we would like to reflect on **leadership** as being co-responsible servants at all levels, and on **interculturality** as God's gift to us still to be fully acknowledged and consciously assumed by us.

As I'm sure you can appreciate, this is a tall order, and I have spent a lot of time in the last months about how I might think about all of these themes together in some kind of coherent way. As I thought about it, the theme of "leadership" seemed to be the best way to tie together all three themes: We are urged by the love of Christ to be rooted in his Word and committed to his mission. That mission is one that is guided and shaped by the discipline and practice of interculturality, but such a practice and discipline can only be successful if there are leaders in our midst that move and inspire us in that direction.

It is this logic that suggests how I'm going to develop my reflections this morning. In a first part, I'm going to reflect on the theme of our upcoming General Chapter: "The Love of Christ Impels Us': Rooted in the Word, committed to His Mission." Then, in a second part, I'm going to reflect on the theme of our 2012 General Chapter, summarized by the word "interculturality." Finally, in a way that I hope will draw everything together, I'm going to offer a theology of leadership that calls and inspires us to be rooted in God's Word and commits us to intercultural mission.

## 1. "The Love of Christ Impels Us" (2 Cor 5:14)

### 1.1 The Love of Christ

As the First Guide to Communal Reflection from the Generalate points out, the phrase "the love of Christ" has a double meaning.<sup>2</sup> First, and I think principally, it refers to the "fundamental and unshakeable reality" of Christ's love for us. As the first letter of John puts it, God in Christ has loved us first (see 1 Jn 4:19; 4:10). As we root ourselves in the Word, we recognize more and more the depth of that love, with the result that we ourselves "fall in love" with Christ and make him the center of our lives (Const. 401)<sup>3</sup>—and so the second meaning of the phrase "the love of Christ."

<sup>2</sup> *First Guide to Communal Reflection*, <http://svdcuria.org/members/histtrad/gchapter/gc2018/docs/160126guien.htm>, 1. [This is available to members of the SVD only; editor's note].

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

We read of and contemplate Jesus being anointed by the Spirit at his baptism, committing himself to bringing a word of hope and joy to the poor, liberation to those oppressed by powers—political or demonic—beyond their control, *paying attention* to unimportant blind beggars, *embracing* repulsive lepers, *having compassion* on hungry crowds. We read about Jesus’ parables of God’s mercy, patience, generosity, and inclusion. And we read about and contemplate his openness to everyone, so much so that, as the late Virgilio Elizondo observed, what scandalized some religious people was that he was never scandalized by anyone or anything. Jesus, in the words of British theologian Mark Oakley, was “God’s body language,” or in the words of Pope Francis “the face of mercy.”<sup>4</sup> We read of and contemplate, finally, Jesus unjustly condemned to death, dying for us, in Paul’s words, “while we were yet sinners” (Rom 5:8), and being vindicated by his resurrection. Jesus’ lifestyle of service and giving and mercy and inclusion was not a mistake. In the words of evangelical theologian Rob Bell, “love wins”—the love of Christ wins. Rooted in the word we are overwhelmed to recognize, as Juan Luis Segundo puts it, “God is like Jesus.”<sup>5</sup>

### 1.2 *Impels us*

This love of Christ—in both senses—*impels* us to be committed to his mission. It’s important, however, to understand the meaning of that word “impel.” Because it is *love* that impels us, it can never mean that we are forced or that our commitment is somehow against our will. Just the opposite. We are so amazed, so overwhelmed, so bowled over by God’s love in Jesus that we move naturally and enthusiastically to join him in his mission. I think that word “impel” needs to be interpreted more as “urge”—the Latin reads “*Caritas Christi urget nos*”—or “encourage,” “persuade,” “animate.” These words capture much better the movement of love that we recognize and that sweeps us up. As we will see when we reflect more directly

<sup>4</sup> Virgilio Elizondo, “The Miracle of Conversion,” Reflection on the Readings of the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, *Give Us This Day*, January 20, 2013, Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press 2012, 205. Mark Oakley, *The Collage of God*, Norwich, UK: Canterbury Press 2012, 25, 27; Pope Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus*, Opening Message for the Year of Mercy, [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_letters/documents/papa-francesco\\_bolla\\_20150411\\_misericordiae-vultus.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco_bolla_20150411_misericordiae-vultus.html).

<sup>5</sup> Rob Bell, *Love Wins: A Book about Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived*, New York: HarperOne 2011; Juan Luis Segundo, *Christ in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1987, 22-26.

on leadership, it is this kind of leadership that Jesus always exercises. Jesus does not lead by force, but by urging, by exhorting, by inspiring, by persuading, by animating.

Being impelled by Christ's love is a movement of the heart, and here we encounter one of Arnold Janssen's most powerful ways of speaking about that love—the love expressed in his Sacred Heart. The *Second Guide to Communal Reflection* makes this link as well, noting that St. Arnold “always understood [the love symbolized in Jesus' Sacred Heart] as the spiritual foundation of the mission house”<sup>6</sup>—in other words, of his whole bold, risky venture of founding the SVD. As Peter McHugh quotes St. Arnold, “the Eternal Word was not content to love us as God; He wanted to love us also in an assumed humanity, in the Sacred Heart of Jesus.” Arnold, says McHugh, “had put his finger on an essential aspect of devotion to the Sacred Heart, and it finds an echo in our *1967 Constitutions* (p. 2): ‘we propose to make the goodness and humanness of God visible in our Society.’”<sup>7</sup> Ultimately, the image of the Sacred Heart is a missionary image: it is the love of God that impels and animates our own hearts to give ourselves over to God's work of mission.

Pope Francis confirms this, I think. He writes that “the primary reason for evangelizing is the love of Jesus which we have received [the first meaning of Paul's phrase], the experience of salvation which urges us to ever greater love of him” [the second meaning].<sup>8</sup> He goes on to say that such understanding of love and “falling in love” is the result of being rooted in the Word: “The best incentive for sharing the Gospel comes from contemplating it with love, lingering over its pages and reading it with the heart. If we approach it this way, its beauty will amaze and constantly excite us. But if this is to come about, we need to recover a contemplative spirit which can help us to realize ever anew that we have been entrusted with a treasure which makes us more human and helps us to lead a new life.”<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Second Communal Guide to Reflection*, 2.

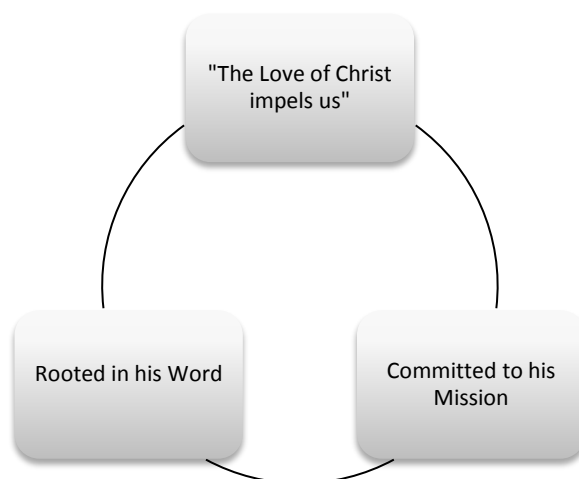
<sup>7</sup> Peter McHugh, SVD, *The Spirituality of Our Society: A Theological Appreciation*, Manila: SVD Manila Province 1975, 92. McHugh does not give the source of the quotation from St. Arnold. The line of the Constitutions is from the Prologue.

<sup>8</sup> Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG), [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html), 264.

<sup>9</sup> EG 264.

### 1.3 *Entering into the Circle*

As I have reflected on this theme of our coming General Chapter, I have begun to imagine a kind of circle or spiral of continuous reflection and action. The love of Christ that we recognize and within which we are taken up *urges* us to share his mission. We come to know that love, however, only by being rooted in his Word, particularly in the scriptures. That love, then, moves us to missionary commitment as missionary disciples, and particularly, as SVDs to commitment to our four characteristic dimensions. And as we encounter Jesus in the people we serve in mission—our dialogue partners of faith seekers, the poor, people of various cultures, people of various religions—we are urged once again to the contemplation of the Word of God that reveals ever more deeply the love of Christ. The circle might look something like this:



It seems to me that we could enter the circle at any point, and go in any direction. As SVDs, we're caught up in the work of mission. That should lead us to deeper contemplation of the Word that we encounter as we work with our confreres/sisters and lay partners, among the people we serve, and in the scriptures. That will lead us to a deeper love of Christ. Or our love of Christ from some experience or encounter could lead us to step back in contemplation, which would lead us to deeper commitment to mission. Or contemplation of the Word could lead us to greater action, where we encounter the Lord in the confreres/sisters/lay partners and the people we serve, and so grow in

our understanding of Christ's love for them and for us. The possibilities are many, and the growth is life-long as the circle becomes a spiral.

#### *1.4 Prophetic Dialogue and Missionary Discipleship*

It seems to me that we could even connect this dynamic to the theme of the 2000 General Chapter: *Prophetic Dialogue*. Our dialogue with God's people as we share Christ's mission moves us to a deeper dialogue with the Word. As these experiences of dialogue deepen our understanding of God's love for us in Christ, we are impelled to prophetic action by a renewed commitment to Christ's mission as men committed to a clear and relevant preaching of the gospel in word and deed, to offering a word and a witness of hope, and creating just communities and confronting all manner of injustice.<sup>10</sup>

The *Second Guide for Communal Reflection* from our SVD Generalate introduces the phrase from the 2007 Aparecida CELAM conference and Pope Francis's *Evangelii Gaudium*: "Missionary Disciples"—although it uses the term "*Transforming Missionary Disciples*." It was probably not conscious, but this phrase is similar to the phrase chosen by the World Council of Churches' Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) for their March 2018 World Mission Conference: "Moving in the Spirit: Called to Transforming Discipleship."<sup>11</sup> As the understanding of "Transforming Discipleship" has developed in the CWME, we can see a parallel with our 2018 General Chapter theme. The official proposal for the Conference points out three dimensions to Transforming Discipleship. First, it indicates that discipleship is more than "being in a loving, friendly relationship with Jesus." It is to be understood in the more active sense of "what Pope Francis calls 'missionary discipleship'" [committed to his mission]. Second, discipleship calls us to be open to the transforming presence of the Spirit, "to embark on a spiritual journey that will constantly challenge us and shape us into a people who reflect the Lord Jesus in our actions, words, and attitudes" [rooted in the Word]. Third, true discipleship calls us to a discipleship that is

<sup>10</sup> See Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder, *Prophetic Dialogue: Reflections on Christian Mission Today*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 2011, 19-55; see also Stephen Bevans, "A Prophetic Dialogue Approach," in: Craig Ott (ed.), *The Mission of the Church*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic 2016, 3-20.

<sup>11</sup> See Stephen Bevans, SVD, "Transforming Discipleship: Missiological Reflections," *International Review of Mission*, 105, 1 (July, 2016): 75-85; See also *International Review of Mission* 105, 2 (November, 2016)—an entire issue on "Transforming Discipleship."

committed to transforming our world “in which injustice seems almost insuperable, where hatred and racism seem to thrive, where suffering is ... widespread and terrifying” [again: committed to his mission].

### *1.5 A Process of Spiritual Rekindling*

Our SVD Generalate’s *First Guide for Communal Reflection* notes that the “objective of the 18<sup>th</sup> General Chapter is to foster a process of a spiritual rekindling, bring us back to the Word of God as the source of our life, vocation, and mission and our religious missionary commitment.”<sup>12</sup> My sense is that this “rekindling” will happen when we intentionally place ourselves in the circle/spiral that deepens our knowledge of Christ’s love as we root ourselves in God’s Word and commit ourselves to God’s mission embodied in Jesus of Nazareth. It will happen as we more intentionally enter into carrying out our mission in a spirituality of Prophetic Dialogue. It will happen as we recognize our call in the Spirit to a *Transforming Missionary Discipleship*. The context of our spiraling, our practice of Prophetic Dialogue and our cultivation of Transforming Missionary Discipleship is our membership in a community that is committed to both intercultural living and intercultural mission.

## **2. Intercultural Living and Mission**

### *2.1 Connected with SVD Tradition*

It has been a commonplace in the SVD that our communities have been nationally and culturally mixed from the very beginning of our Society. Indeed, our Society was founded by a German in Holland, and among the first members at Steyl was the young Austrian/Italian/Ladino Joseph Freinademetz. There was never a policy in the Society of particular provinces having different missions. Constitution 303.1 is probably well known to us: “A distinguishing feature of our community life is that confreres from different nations live and work together. This becomes a mutually enriching experience when based on deep respect for one another’s nationality and culture.”

Only gradually, however, have we come to the point where we are today. Especially those of us who are older know how in the past there was a dominance of European or North American cultures in our communities. This was certainly my experience both as a student

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<sup>12</sup> *First Guide for Communal Reflection*, 1.

in Rome and a young missionary in the Philippines. Gradually, however, in the light of Vatican II, local cultures became much more appreciated, and certainly by our 1988 General Chapter we began to speak powerfully and eloquently of “passing over” into the culture in which we work.

Sent by Jesus, We leave.  
 Together as brothers from many cultures,  
 we pass over to be with others,  
 offering and receiving good news,  
 with respect, understanding, compassion, and love.  
 Led by the Spirit, We enter.  
 Joyfully, full of hope,  
 we serve, share, and become one with all people,  
     especially with those on the frontiers of our faith,  
     and the margin of society.  
 And so we witness, and help to build  
 a loving communion of all humanity, and  
 a communion of humanity with the Triune God  
 who loves us.<sup>13</sup>

## 2.2 Interculturality

Through the years, this vision of thirty years ago has matured into the vision of interculturality *Ad Intra* (Intercultural Living) and *Ad Extra* (Intercultural Mission). Of course, none of us live out this vision perfectly, and all of us can tell tales of gross cultural insensitivity on the part of our confreres toward one another and toward the people with whom we work. But the Seventeenth General Chapter has spelled out the vision, and a group under the leadership of Roger Schroeder, Tim Norton (SVDs), and Adriana Milmanda (SSpS) have met at Nemi during the last several years to work out workshops on interculturality and are in the last stages of developing a retreat around the theme as well. Actually, in July 2017 a team from here in the US presented retreats on interculturality to both SVD and SSpS members. Christian Tauchner SVD has wisely cautioned about a naïve use of interculturality, especially in the light of Joseph

<sup>13</sup> “Following the Word—Passing Over,” XIII General Chapter, 1988, *Nuntius SVD* XII, 5 (1988) 689-90, <http://svdcuria.org/members/svdocs/nuntius/1988en.pdf>.



Ratzinger's hesitant approach to culture and inculturation. Nevertheless, he says, "there are also courageous steps towards a profound understanding and practice of intercultural relationships and perspectives."<sup>14</sup> As Tauchner suggests, these steps have been less in the area of "abstract anthropology" and more in the area of "practical engagement."<sup>15</sup>

In an essay to be published shortly, Roger Schroeder first distinguishes the term "interculturality" from "multiculturality."<sup>16</sup> As he explains it, multiculturalism "refers simply to the fact that members of different cultures are present in the same situation or grouping," with the minimum goal of peaceful coexistence, but one that aims at mutual cooperation and even some mutual adaptation. There is no doubt that achieving even such multiculturalism would be an accomplishment, especially within some communities! *Crossing* cultures, he explains is a further step—I would think the one envisioned by the 1988 General Chapter—of attempts at understanding, appreciating, and interacting with "the other," while still maintaining one's basic cultural identity.

*Interculturality*, however, moves persons into a totally different realm. Schroeder quotes SVD Vice-General Robert Kisala, who writes of interculturality as the emphasizing and making more explicit "the essential mutuality of the process of cultural interaction on both the personal and social level."<sup>17</sup> Then Schroeder adds that "this mutuality would ideally entail both enrichment and challenge." The process of interculturality involves learning from each culture in a community, sharing not only at the superficial levels of food and holidays but at the deeper levels of feelings and fears and struggles, listening to one another, asking questions of one another, working out real cultural equality and facing inequalities of power (Fornet-Betancourt),<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Christian Tauchner, "Editorial/Vorwort": *Verbum SVD*, 53 (2017) 5.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>16</sup> Roger Schroeder, "Missionary Discipleship in Glocal Contexts from an Intercultural Perspective." The essay will be published in a book written by SVD and SSPS missiologists tentatively entitled *Missionary Discipleship in Glocal Contexts*. I am referring in this section to p. 5 of the manuscript.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Kisala, "Formation for Intercultural Life and Mission": *Verbum SVD* 50 (2009) 335. Schroeder quotes this on p. 5.

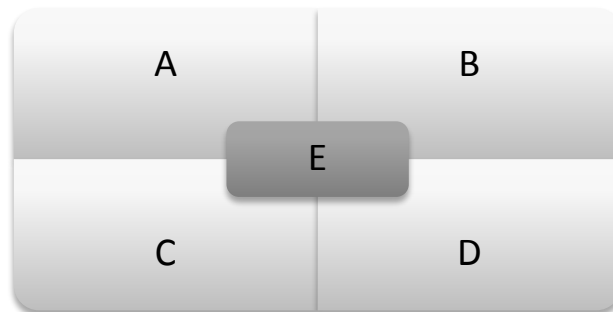
<sup>18</sup> Schroeder refers to an important quotation by philosopher Raúl Fornet-Betancourt: "the discussion around cooperation between cultures and peoples is a sham, if not accompanied by a policy which seeks ... to redress the imbalance of power which characterizes the existing world 'order,' compounded as it is by ongoing globalization." "Interacción y asimetría entre las culturas en el contexto de la globalización. Una introducción," quoted and translated by Adriana Carla Milmanda, "Inserted Life: The Radical Nature of an Incar-

learning how to express negative feelings and misunderstandings toward one another. Key to the practice of interculturality (“intercultural competence”), SVD anthropologist Jon Kirby points out, is the ability to deal honestly and creatively with cultural difference.<sup>19</sup>

### 2.3 A New Community—In Context

Roger Schroeder refers to a helpful diagram by missiologist Anthony Gittins in his book *Living Mission Interculturally*.<sup>20</sup> The diagram illustrates how, in a community composed of many cultures (e.g. A, B, C, and D), real interculturality involves the creation of a new culture within the community that is the product of the honest and creative interaction among all the cultures concerned. SVD PANAM Zonal Coordinator Marcelo Cattaneo says that interculturality is achieved when it focuses on “no longer just a folkloric aspect but rather [is] an experience of unity in the gospel spirit, ... when we go beyond the cultural interpretations of our common task and allow ourselves to be guided by congregational and gospel criteria ..., when we can be open to the novelty we encounter in each person who sees, thinks and feels in a different manner, without inhibitions or complexes, without pride or prejudice.”<sup>21</sup>

Schroeder points out, however, that such a new culture needs to



nated Spirituality,” in: Lazar Stanislaus and Martin Ueffing (eds.), *Intercultural Living*, Sankt Augustin, Germany/New Delhi, India: Steyler Missionswissenschaftliches Institut/ISPCK 2015, 46.

<sup>19</sup> Jon P. Kirby, “Building Intercultural Competence,” in: Stanislaus and Ueffing, 114-34, see esp. 117.

<sup>20</sup> Anthony J. Gittins, *Living Mission Interculturally: Faith, Culture, and the Renewal of Praxis* (A Michael Glazier Book), Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press 2015, 23.

<sup>21</sup> Marcelo Cattaneo, “Missionary Avenues and Challenges,” in: *Light Shining in Darkness: PANAM Pathways of Mission* (In Word and Deed, No. 4) Rome: SVD Publications 2016, 85.

be at the same time an “inculturated culture.” What this means is that this new culture always exists within a broader context, and needs to reflect that context. For example, an SVD community in Argentina consisting of an Indonesian, a Filipino, a Brazilian, and an Argentinian needs to be a place where every one of these cultures flourishes, and the confreres interact in a way that none of them totally dominates the other. However, the community exists in *Argentina* and needs to engage in SVD mission by SVDs. The common language, therefore, needs to be Spanish; the main holidays celebrated need to be Argentinian; meals would usually be Argentinian (although they might include rice and Asian spices), the community might meet daily for sharing mate, they would engage in the four SVD characteristic dimensions and seek out the four SVD dialogue partners, and practice mission with a spirituality of prophetic dialogue. As Christian Tauchner puts it, “The local culture—from the Brazilian rainforests to the postmodern settings of metropolitan São Paulo, Beijing or Berlin—will remain to work as the unavoidable reference point for actors coming together from all different walks of the earth. Certainly, interculturality should not be taken as an excuse to avoid contact, critical engagement, and insertion into the deep waters of the local cultures which are in a profound change everywhere in the world.”<sup>22</sup>

This situation could obviously not be something that is final, but a constant process that is always developing, always being worked on, and always changing with different confreres from different cultures. As Jon Kirby insists, the development of intercultural competence is not something that, “once achieved, can be put aside for the next task.” It is, rather, “at the very heart of our missionary endeavor—inculturating the gospel leaven into an ever-changing human condition. We are always in the process of becoming a part of and apart from any given cultural context. Continually adapting with increased sensitivity is, therefore, a life-long and open-ended process.”<sup>23</sup>

#### *2.4 Ten Theses on Interculturality*

In his amazingly helpful book on interculturality, Anthony Gittins sketches out ten theses that might help us to better understand, live, and minister interculturally.<sup>24</sup> I present them here with a few comments of my own as well.

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<sup>22</sup> Tauchner, 10.

<sup>23</sup> Kirby, 133-34.

<sup>24</sup> Gittins, 4-5.

First, intercultural living (and I would say mission) is “an intentional and explicitly faith-based undertaking.” It is radically different from what our SVD Constitution 303 speaks of as “merely living and working together.”

Second, our faith can *only* be lived culturally, and so “failure to live deeply within and through one’s own culture can produce a kind of religious or spiritual schizophrenia.” Interculturality, therefore, is not about giving up our culture, but allowing it to be transformed by the others with whom we live and minister.

Third, intercultural living and mission should not be considered a *problem*, but a challenge—and I would even say an opportunity.

Fourth, intercultural living and mission is not natural—although it is, Gittins says, “perhaps ‘supernatural.’” I would say, therefore, that is the stuff of our spirituality, our prayer, our self-denial.

Fifth, it is far from easy—“but it is highly desirable and appears to be urgently desired by God ...” As we will see, it mirrors God’s *Trinitarian* life and mission.

Sixth, good will is not enough, but “commitment and sustained hard work.” As Tony Pernia has written, interculturality needs “to be consciously created, intentionally promoted, carefully cared for, and attentively nurtured.”<sup>25</sup>

Seventh, living and ministering interculturally demands “graciousness, diplomacy, compromise, mutual respect, serious dialogue, and the development of a common and sustaining vision.”

Eighth, interculturality is new for almost everyone—our default is to live monoculturally and ethnocentrically.

Ninth, however, this new perspective is more and more being considered absolutely necessary for religious life today. While we might be ahead of other congregations, we SVDs are not alone in our concern for intercultural living and mission.

And finally, interculturality is increasingly important and necessary not just for religious like the SVDs but also for any person of faith. In an increasingly globalized, migration-shaped world, fostering truly intercultural communities is becoming more and more central to the church’s missionary task.

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<sup>25</sup> Antonio Pernia, “The SVD in the Year 2012. Report of the Superior General to the XVII General Chapter,” in: *SVD Mission in 2012: Sharing Intercultural Life and Mission*, Rome: SVD Publications 2012, 36. Quoted in Paulus Budi Kleden, “Trinitarian Spirituality and Interculturality,” in: Stanislaus and Ueffing, 34.

### 2.5 Intercultural Mission, Trinitarian Mission

Ultimately, therefore, our SVD quest for interculturality is part of our commitment to Christ's mission, impelled by Christ's love for us and our love for him as we root ourselves in God's Word. This mission, of course, is not Christ's alone. It is his own participation in the mission of the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit. It is part of the mission of God, the mission of the Trinity.

God's presence and activity in human and cosmic history—God's mission—reveals who God is in the depth of the divine mystery. As Christians, we believe that God's mission was fully accomplished in the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. "Against the idea of God," SVD General Councilor Budi Kleden writes, "as the one who draws a clear line separating the sacred and the profane, the holy and the sinful, the faithful and the pagan, Jesus proclaimed a God who trespasses the borders, forgives and embraces all (Mk 7:24-30). Borders that excluded groups of people due to gender, race or grades of holiness were questioned and criticized in the name of the God of communion and communication."<sup>26</sup> It is this experience of God in Jesus, anointed at his baptism by the Spirit and intimately one with the mystery he called Father, which prompted Christians to speak of God as "Trinity." As Kleden concludes, "Trinity says that God is not a monad but communion and communication, setting Himself free by opening Himself up to others."<sup>27</sup>

The Trinitarian God, therefore, is the ultimate foundation for interculturality. As communion and communication, faith in God as Trinity reveals that the center of reality, reality in its deepest mystery, is absolute giving, absolute openness, absolute self-emptying. And yet, at the same time, Trinitarian faith reveals that such giving, openness, self-emptying is the source of all self-identity and self-realization. Leonardo Boff, at the beginning of an essay on the Trinity, says it memorably: "Christianity's most transcendent assertion may well be this: In the beginning is not the solitude of One, but the communion of Three eternal Persons. ... In the remotest beginning, communion prevails."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Kleden, 24-25.

<sup>27</sup> Kleden, 36.

<sup>28</sup> Leonardo Boff, "Trinity," in: *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 1993, 389.

### *2.6 Intercultural Mission and SVD Mission*

God's mission is calling women and men—indeed all of creation—to share as fully as possible (according to their natures) in this communion that God is and shares. Here is the point of our commitment to interculturality and how it intersects with our commitment to Christ's mission. Human beings particularly, as Anthony Gittins emphasizes, cannot *not* be cultural beings. To be incorporated into God's communal life, therefore, means that such incorporation must be intercultural, in a way that images Trinitarian communion—totally open, totally giving, and at the same time and because of that, totally gifted with self, with one's full human identity. God's mission, therefore, is *intercultural* mission; our mission as Christians and SVDs, is consequently intercultural mission as well.

As SVD Constitution 301 declares, “In baptism we are called to share in the divine life as members of the people of God and disciples of Jesus Christ. Through our vows we enter a community that is caught up in the mission of the Son and the Spirit sent from the Father to the world.” Baptism plunges us into the divine life, and calls us to share in God's intercultural mission, to be transforming “missionary disciples”<sup>29</sup>; our commitment as religious and missionaries drives us in a particular way to engage in this task of “intercultural mission.” As SVDs, we are the church's leaders in this missionary task. Those of you who are leaders of SVDs have a particular task in calling SVDs to the missionary witness of intercultural living and the leadership of intercultural communities in the church. It is to this task of intercultural leadership that we now turn.

## ***3. Intercultural Leadership for Intercultural Living and Mission***

### *3.1 Leadership Today*

“Leaders” are not to be confused with “managers.” While good leaders do need to practice the skills of good management, the two are not at all the same. Lay theologian Leonard Doohan quotes Peter Koestenbaum who suggests that the models of leadership are “religion, art, politics, and love.”<sup>30</sup> As Timothy Brown and Patricia Sullivan express it, “the art of leadership involves influencing, guiding,

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<sup>29</sup> EG 120.

<sup>30</sup> Peter Koestenbaum, *Leadership: The Inner Side of Greatness*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass 1991, 50.

and directing others to new heights of understanding, interacting, and commitment. Thus, the difference between a leader and a manager lies in the ability to motivate or inspire others—in other words, *to give a vision*.<sup>31</sup> Leaders' concerns are with Mission; managers' concerns are with Maintenance.

In an interview in the Summer 2015 issue of the newsletter of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) in the United States, *Occasional Papers*, leadership consultant Peggy McAllister says much the same thing. She distinguishes between a “reactive form of leadership”—which we might call management—and a “creative state of leadership,” which to her mind is the right way to lead today. Reactive leadership, she says, focuses on “trying to prevent problems, on preventing what feels threatening, and on maintaining our comfort zone.” This kind of leadership urges us to try to be “utterly perfect,” to control others, or to be “the nice girl” and give up our power.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, creative leadership practices the art of “trying to bring something into being.” In this mode of leadership, McAllister says, “we are asking different questions of ourselves and others. Instead of trying to protect something, we are trying to create outcomes in service to something much bigger than ourselves.”<sup>33</sup> Leaders need to ask questions like “what are we in service to and how must we express that now? ... How do we model openness, community, and collaboration in everything we do? How do we bring all the voices into the room? How do we move into this mystery together?”<sup>34</sup>

Leonard Doohan distinguishes between a “transactional leadership” that promises rewards for loyalty and performance, and “transformational leadership” that offers vision and mission.<sup>35</sup> Such an understanding of leadership, Doohan insists, roots ministry not in the acquisition of skills, but “in a changed attitude toward others, a conversion, and a new way of looking at the world ... ‘the heart of leadership lies in the hearts of leaders.’”<sup>36</sup> Accordingly, Doohan offers “ten core values” of leadership today, all of which combine to make what

<sup>31</sup> Timothy Brown and Patricia Sullivan, *Setting Hearts on Fire: A Spirituality for Leaders*, New York: Alba House 1997, 5.

<sup>32</sup> Annemarie Sanders, IHM, “Readying Congregations for New Understandings of Leadership,” An Interview with Peggy McAllister, *The Occasional Papers*, Leadership Conference of Women Religious, 44, 2 (Summer 2015), 24.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>35</sup> Doohan, *Spiritual Leadership*, 21-22.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 12, quoting Lee G. Bohman and Terrence E. Deal, *Leading with the Soul: An Uncommon Journey of Spirit*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass 1995, 6.

he calls a “spiritual leader.” These are: (1) a sense of call and inner integrity; (2) faith in a shared vision; (3) nourishing the shared vision and inspiring commitment; (4) relentless pursuit of a common mission; (5) profound sense of community and human interdependence; (6) humility toward one’s views; (7) making a difference in others’ lives; (8) having the courage to say what needs to be said; (9) challenging others to their best; and (10) ability to maintain distance from task and people.<sup>37</sup> Pastoral theologian Ann Garrido and scripture scholar Donald Senior offer twelve “habits” of good leadership that overlap somewhat with these ten.<sup>38</sup>

Such an understanding of leadership obviously reflects a different understanding of power. For a creative, transformational, spiritual leader, power is not a “zero sum” concept, to be held on to or dealt out carefully with the conviction that whatever is shared is lost. Rather power is understood as something that grows and expands as it is shared. “We keep our power,” spiritual writer Thomas Moore writes, “when we protect the power of others.”<sup>39</sup> To quote Doohan yet again: “Leadership exists only when *power and wisdom come together*, and the leader knows both are attained through dialogue among the entire group ... who have discovered their own self-leadership.”<sup>40</sup> As Marcelo wrote to me in his e-mail, leaders are “co-responsible servants at all levels.”

### 3.2 Three Theological Paradigm Shifts

The vision of a more creative, transformative, and mission-centered leadership that I have sketched out here is based on Trinitarian mission and baptismal equality, a foundation marked, as leadership itself is today, by profound paradigm shifts in theology in the last half-century, although their roots go back much further.

A first paradigm shift has been in the area of *Trinitarian theology*. In Protestantism this shift was begun by Karl Barth in the first half of the twentieth century, when he began his massive systematic theology, *Church Dogmatics*, with a thorough treatment of the Trinitarian nature of God. For Catholics the shift began with Karl Rahner’s

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 30-33.

<sup>38</sup> Ann M. Garrido, *Redeeming Administration: 12 Spiritual Habits for Catholic Leaders in Parishes, Schools, Religious Communities, and Other Institutions*, Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press 2013; Donald Senior, *The Gift of Administration*, Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press 2015.

<sup>39</sup> Quoted in Brown and Sullivan, *Setting Hearts on Fire*, 15.

<sup>40</sup> Doohan, *Spiritual Leadership*, 15-16.



small but groundbreaking work on the Trinity, followed by works by German theologian Jürgen Moltmann, American Catherine LaCugna, and the Brazilians Leonardo Boff and Maria Clara Bingemer. In both Protestantism and Catholicism there has been a renaissance in Trinitarian theology, so much so that most theologians would agree that today Christian theology's "only option ... is to be Trinitarian."<sup>41</sup> In addition, the Trinitarian perspective emphasizes the radical missionary nature of God. If God is what God does—exist as a loving communion—God also does what God is. The Triune God, in other words, is a "communion-in-mission," expressed better as a verb rather than a noun.<sup>42</sup> As Christians—as SVDs—read and contemplate the Word of God they are swept up in the love of God in Christ, and impelled to commit themselves to God's mission in him, working for a world of intercultural healing and harmony.

The second theological paradigm shift has been *ecclesiology*. It is marked by the development of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church at the Second Vatican Council, but its roots go back to the liturgical, patristic, and biblical movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth century.<sup>43</sup> A century before the Council, the church understood its essence as institutional, hierarchical, and monarchical, and Pius X could speak of it in 1906 as fundamentally an "unequal society."<sup>44</sup> At the Council the chapter on "The People of God" was placed before the chapters on hierarchy and laity, thus pointing to the fundamental equality of all believers, an equality based on baptismal "missionary discipleship."<sup>45</sup> Any understanding of leadership in the church today has to begin with this reality of fundamental

<sup>41</sup> Catherine M. LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life*, San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco 1991, 3.

<sup>42</sup> See Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder, "The Mission Has a Church: An Invitation to the Dance," in: *Prophetic Dialogue*, 9-18. See also Edward P. Hahnenberg, *Ministries: A Relational Approach*, New York: Crossroad 2003, 91.

<sup>43</sup> See Thomas F. O'Meara, *Romantic Idealism and Roman Catholicism: Schelling and the Theologians*, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press 1982, 138-60; John W. O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II?*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2008, 71-80.

<sup>44</sup> Pius X, *Vehementer Nos* (to the Bishops of France), February 11, 1906. Quoted in Michael A. Fahey, "Church," in: Francis Schüssler-Fiorenza and John Galvin (eds.), *Systematic Theology: Roman Catholic Perspectives*, vol. 2, Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press 1991, 32.

<sup>45</sup> See Richard R. Gaillardetz, *Ecclesiology for a Global Church: A People Called and Sent*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 2008, 184-205. See Stephen Bevans, "Lighting the Fire: Vatican II, Baptismal Equality, and Missionary Discipleship," Presentation to the National Association of Lay Ministers, May 29, 2014 [unpublished]. On "missionary discipleship," see EG 24.

equality and vocation to discipleship. There are no passive Christians. Leadership has to serve the mission of the church that all share equally in an ordered communion.

A third paradigm shift has been present in theology at least since the time of the great theological visionary Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, and has been expressed in various works of process theology, but has only come to full blossom in the Catholic Church the last several years with writings by John Haught, Denis Edwards, Ilia Delio, and Elizabeth Johnson, to name only a few authors.<sup>46</sup> This is a shift that has embraced as fully as possible the “*new creation story*” of contemporary physics and the theory of evolution in contemporary biology. In this theological perspective, God is not *outside* of creation, manipulating it and determining every aspect of its existence. Rather, God is *within* the process of creation that has not stopped but is ongoing. The God of evolution is a God who deeply respects creation’s freedom, and works by the power of persuasion rather than the power of domination. This is especially true in terms of human freedom, where God shows Godself, as Ilia Delio beautifully expresses it, “the beggar of love who waits at the souls’ door without daring to force it open; God does not violate our freedom to create ourselves because divine love has imparted to us the freedom to be.”<sup>47</sup>

### 3.3 Trinitarian Mission and Baptismal Discipleship

Putting all three of these theological paradigm shifts together, we discover a powerful theological foundation for leadership that dovetails amazingly with its contemporary understandings. We can outline this foundation in the form of a Trinitarian narration within the perspective of God’s emerging universe. God has chosen certain women and men to be partners in getting the job done and giving them the tools to do it.<sup>48</sup> Christians call this the church.

The Triune God is the Leader of the universe, whose vision is the completion of creation, a vision that Christians call the Kingdom, or Reign, or *Kindom* of God. In order to bring the vision to completion,

<sup>46</sup> See, for example, John Haught, *God after Darwin: A Theology of Evolution*, Cambridge, MA: The Westview Press 2000; Denis Edwards, *Partaking of God: Trinity, Evolution, and Ecology*, Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, Michael Glazier 2014; Ilia Delio, *The Emergent Christ: Exploring the Meaning of Catholic in an Evolutionary Universe*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books 2011; Elizabeth A. Johnson, *Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love*, London: Bloomsbury 2014.

<sup>47</sup> Delio, *The Emergent Christ*, 10.

<sup>48</sup> See Brown and Sullivan, *Setting Hearts on Fire*, 15.

the Spirit has been present in and to the world from its first nanosecond, sent from the Heart of God's self, the divine Matrix whom Christian tradition has often named the "Father," the "Source of All Being." As Denis Edwards puts it powerfully, "as particles of hydrogen and helium separated out from radiation and formed the first atoms, as the clouds of gas compressed to form the first generation of galaxies, as the universe was lit up by the first stars, it was the Spirit of God who breathed life into the whole process."<sup>49</sup> As the earth formed, as life on earth began and plants and animals and humans emerged, the Spirit was present, but not, as Elizabeth Johnson says, as a monarch, but as a lover,<sup>50</sup> coaxing, cajoling, persuading, grieving, raging, but always letting be.

The Spirit was there as well, no doubt, as women and men tried to understand their mysterious drive to go beyond themselves, and developed the first gropings of religion. And the Spirit was among God's people Israel, chosen for the blessing of all nations (Gen 12:3), as life-giving breath, as life-restoring wind, as prophet-anointing oil, as nourishing water, in powerful wisdom, as hope-filled and challenging word. The people were unfaithful, but God remained faithful, promising a new covenant with a new outpouring of the Spirit that would change their hearts of stone to hearts of flesh. The work was slow and painful, with many mistakes and much sin, but God's leadership never faltered. God was working for "an order of His own quality." This is why God "proceeds in the slow and hard way, which alone promises the highest prize."<sup>51</sup>

"In the fullness of time" (Gal 4:4) the Spirit took on a human face in Jesus of Nazareth, the Word-become-flesh, whom the Spirit anointed to bring good news to the poor, to heal the lame, to give sight to the blind. Jesus was tempted to use his authority for his own ends, but he resisted and persisted in God's way of leadership—not manipulating, but leading by example, by integrity, always offering freedom. His message was one of forgiveness, of healing, of inclusion. It was God's vision that he preached and embodied: "The time is fulfilled, the Reign of God is at hand, repent and believe the good news" (Mk 1:15)—in other words, think differently, imagine a new way of

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<sup>49</sup> Edwards, *Breath of Life*, 172.

<sup>50</sup> Johnson, *Ask the Beasts*, 159.

<sup>51</sup> John Hick, Introduction to John Wood Oman, *Grace and Personality*, New York: Association Press 1961, 6; D. M. Niccol, "Philosophy of Religion. Lectures by Dr. John Oman on God in Relation to the World and Man," unpublished, c. 1920.

living, realize that although God's ways are not our ways, they could be!<sup>52</sup>

Jesus was clearly a leader, a man of power. He didn't speak "like the scribes," quoting authorities. He spoke from his own experience and deep relationship with God—"you have heard it said, ... but I say to you." He gathered disciples and sent them out in his name, sharing his vision and his work with them. When his disciples vied with one another for power and position within their ranks, Jesus reminded them that his was a different vision from the "kings of this world." They lord it over one another, Jesus said, "but among you it shall not be so. Rather, the greatest among you be as the youngest, and the leader as the servant" (Lk 22:25-26). He was among them, he said, as one who served (Lk 22:27).

As he predicted, Jesus was arrested and killed. At his trial he was asked about his authority, and acknowledged it, but it was not a human authority with which he preached and healed. His kingdom was not of this world. And yet, three days after his death, that vulnerability and weakness was vindicated. He was raised to life, and shared that life and new authority with his disciples. As God had sent him, so he sent them, a sending that was soon sealed by the Spirit at Pentecost. Eventually the church was born, but only through the patient yet persistent prodding of the Spirit to think out of the box, to go beyond preconceptions—to go beyond Judaism and include all peoples, all nations, all cultures.

The early disciples, then, gradually understood themselves, as Canadian novelist Rudy Wiebe describes it, as a "Jesus society":

a new *society* that sets all the old ideas of man living with other men on its head, that looks so strange it is either the most stupid, foolish thing on earth, or it is so beyond man's usual thinking that it could only come as a revelation right from God. ... [In the church] you have a new attitude toward everything, toward everybody. Toward nature, toward the state in which you happen to live, toward women, toward slaves, toward all and every single thing.<sup>53</sup>

What holds the church together is Baptism. As its early theologian Paul wrote eloquently, baptism plunges us into Jesus' death, so that

<sup>52</sup> See Rudy Wiebe, *The Blue Mountains of China*, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1970, 258, and Gregory Boyle, *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion*, New York: Free Press 2010, 155.

<sup>53</sup> Wiebe, *The Blue Mountains*, 258.

we might hope to share in his resurrection (Rom 6:1-11). By it we become a “new creation,” in which differences of nationality, social status, culture, and gender are overcome because we have all put on Christ (Gal 3:27), and live now no longer ourselves but in him (Gal 2:20). Such life in Christ means, says Paul, that we have become his body (1 Cor 12:27), and that the Spirit has lavished upon each one of us gifts that differ, but for the benefit of all (1 Cor 12:4-7). It is because we are baptized into Christ that we Christians share in his mission of service, carrying it out in the way he did, acknowledging and sharing his leadership. It is because of baptism, “which is accessible to all,”<sup>54</sup> that all Christians are endowed with an instinct or sense of the faith that needs to be taken seriously by the church’s leaders.<sup>55</sup> It is this kind of understanding of God’s authority in the church as a whole that Pope Francis expresses in EG when he speaks of the ministry of the bishop as fostering “missionary communion in his diocesan church.” Sometimes, Francis says, the bishop “will ... go before his people, pointing the way and keeping their hope vibrant.” At other times, he will simply be present in their midst. But at other times “he will have to walk after them, helping those who lag behind and—above all—allowing the flock to strike out on new paths.”<sup>56</sup>

In the light of our missionary triune God, who “hasteth not and is not weary”<sup>57</sup> in leading creation to its fulfillment in freedom; in the light of Jesus’ life of loving service to God’s dream of a completed creation; in the light of our baptism, which calls us to be Christ in the world and endows the entire church with Christ’s authority: in this light we can understand the deep theological foundations of leadership today, both in our church, but also in our world. It is because many in our church—and especially our leaders!—have not made the conversion, the new way of looking at the world on which Leonard Doohan insists, that we struggle with leadership today. We have a long way to go. Fortunately, however, we have a Leader who is omnipotent in love, patience, and mercy!

#### ***4. Intercultural Leadership for Intercultural Mission***

In bringing these themes together, there is no doubt that effective leadership will be the key to ensuring that our SVD confreres contin-

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<sup>54</sup> EG 104.

<sup>55</sup> EG 119.

<sup>56</sup> EG 31.

<sup>57</sup> John Oman, *Vision and Authority, or The Throne of St. Peter*, London: Hodder and Stoughton 1902, 176.

ue to grow in the love of Christ by rooting themselves in the Word, and so commit themselves more fully to Christ's mission. There is no doubt either that without effective leadership our SVD confreres will not grow in the intercultural competence needed for SVD mission work today.

What I hope I have shown in these reflections on leadership is that leadership itself needs to be inspired, indeed *impelled*, by the love of Christ that reveals the patient, persuading, inspiring love of God in the processes of cosmic history. What I hope I have shown is that leadership itself is a spiritual discipline, and so has to root itself in God's Word, and be itself committed to God's/Christ's mission. What I hope I have shown is that leadership today has to respect the dignity of every person it serves, and so needs to respect culture, generation, gender, age as it inspires and challenges women and men to form intercultural communities that image the unity-in-diversity of the Triune God.

In the light of our previous and upcoming General Chapters, SVD leaders have to lead their communities to deeper commitment to Christ's mission today, and to the realization that mission today can only be *intercultural* mission. Commitment to Christ's mission as SVDs begins with the work of making our multicultural communities into truly *intercultural* communities. As Tim Norton writes, "as leaders consider these increasingly complex realities, it is important that ... they think broadly about difference. They are called to assist their communities in recognizing their diversity and finding ways of attending to it."<sup>58</sup> Norton writes for a general audience, but, as an SVD, certainly has SVD leaders in mind. He calls leaders to be "good listeners both to the people they are leading and to the Spirit that guides." He calls them to do the hard work of holding regular and well-prepared community meetings that can sort out differences and attend to points of friction and conflict.<sup>59</sup> He calls them as well to take special care of newly-arrived missionaries, making sure that they get connected with confreres and the people they serve—"Wise leaders need to invite them out of their rooms—and not take no for an answer."<sup>60</sup> All of this, he says, "may require a different style of accompaniment than those who went before them."<sup>61</sup> In sum, leaders

<sup>58</sup> Timothy Norton, SVD, "Christian Leadership and Intercultural Dynamics in Multicultural, Inter-generational Communities," in: Stanislaus and Ueffing, 173.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 181.

sensitive to the intercultural task need to offer “clear explanations, professional preparation and regular feedback,” and “in the end to trust their new members [and older ones too, I think!] and the Spirit who leads them.”<sup>62</sup>

These are a few ways that intercultural leaders can lead SVDs to deeper commitment to Christ’s intercultural mission.

Let me conclude this presentation this morning with a slight adaptation of a blessing for leaders composed by the late Irish poet John O’Donohue—itsself a theology of leadership. May this blessing guide you as you participate in this workshop in the coming days:

May you have the grace and wisdom  
To act kindly, learning  
To distinguish between what is  
Personal and what is not.

May you be hospitable to criticism.

May you never put yourself at the center of things.

May you act not from arrogance but out of service.

May you work on yourself,  
Building up and refining the ways of your mind.

May those who work for you know  
You see and respect them.

May you learn to cultivate the art of presence  
In order to engage with those who meet you.

When someone fails or disappoints you,  
May the graciousness with which you engage  
Be their stairway to renewal and refinement.

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 187.

May you measure the gifts of the mind  
Through reading and creative thinking  
So that you continue as a servant of the frontier  
Where new will draw its enrichment from the old,  
And you never become a functionary.

May you know the wisdom of deep listening,  
The healing of wholesome words,  
The encouragement of the appreciative gaze,  
The decorum of held dignity,  
The springtime edge of the bleak question.

May you have a mind that loves frontiers  
So that you can evoke the bright fields  
That lie beyond the view of the regular eye.

May you have good friends  
to mirror your blind spots.

May intercultural leadership for intercultural mission be  
for you  
A true adventure of growth into the love of Christ, which  
impels us.<sup>63</sup>

#### ABSTRACTS

Die Steyler Missionare bereiten sich auf ihr 18. Generalkapitel vor, das im Juni und Juli 2018 in Rom stattfinden wird. Das zentrale Thema heißt: „Die Liebe Christi drängt uns“ – eine Grundlage für Spiritualität, Gemeinschaft und Mission. Der Autor trug diesen Beitrag bei einem Treffen der Steyler Leitungsteams aus ganz Amerika im August 2017 vor und konzentrierte sich dabei auf die Leitungsfunktion. Die Grundlage seiner Überlegungen bildet ein theologischer Zugang zum Thema des Generalkapitels und seine Einbettung in der neueren Steyler Missionsperspektive. Darauf folgt eine Zusammenfassung der Steyler Sicht von Interkulturalität – eines der zentralen Anliegen des Generalkapitels von 2012. Auf dieser Basis entfaltet er die Aufgaben und Herausforderungen einer inspirierten Leitungsfunktion im Dienst an der Mission. – Der mündliche Stil des Vortrags wurde weitgehend beibehalten.

<sup>63</sup> Adapted from John O'Donohue, "For a Leader," *To Bless the Space Between Us: A Book of Blessings*, New York: Doubleday 2008, 151-52.



Los Misioneros del Verbo Divino se están preparando para su XVIII Capítulo General a celebrarse en Roma en junio y julio de 2018. El tema central reza “El amor de Cristo nos urge” y es el fundamento para la espiritualidad, la comunidad y la misión. El autor presentó esta reflexión en un encuentro de los equipos coordinadores de la congregación en las Américas en agosto de 2017 y enfocó el liderazgo. El fundamento de su reflexión lo constituye un acercamiento teológico al tema del Capítulo y su contextualización en la reciente reflexión de la SVD sobre la misión. En seguida presenta un resumen del entendimiento de interculturalidad – una de las perspectivas centrales del Capítulo General de 2012. Sobre esta base explica las tareas y desafíos de un liderazgo inspirado al servicio de la misión. – El estilo oral de la conferencia ha sido mantenido.

Les missionnaires du Verbe divin se préparent à leur 18<sup>e</sup> Chapitre général qui sera célébré à Rome en Juin et Juillet 2018. Le thème central en est « L'Amour du Christ nous presse » comme fondement de la spiritualité, de la communauté et de la mission. L'auteur a fait cette présentation axée sur le leadership lors d'une rencontre des dirigeants SVD dans les Amériques, en août 2017. Il fonde sa réflexion sur une approche théologique du thème du Chapitre et le contextualise par rapport à la réflexion récente des SVD sur la mission. Il résume ensuite l'approche SVD de l'interculturalité, un des thèmes centraux du Chapitre général de 2012. Sur cette base, il décline les tâches et défis d'un leadership inspirant au service de la mission. Nous avons gardé le style oral de la conférence.