

VADE MECUM

ON

**JUSTICE, PEACE, AND
THE INTEGRITY OF
CREATION**

*of the Congregation of the
Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate*

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Foreword

Ministry on behalf of Justice and Peace, which in more recent times has been expanded by the ecological aspect as "Integrity of Creation", is an important dimension of evangelization. Many Oblates all over the world are working with and for the poor and are therefore exercising this ministry, even though they may not use this terminology. The Parable of the Good Samaritan is being put into practice everywhere.

In modern times, the Church has gradually come to a new understanding of her duty in the world: it is important but not sufficient to assist the poor by charitable actions; the causes of poverty and injustice, however, must be tackled on the structural level. Ministry on behalf of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) is basically a ministry on the level of structures.

Since the 1992 Chapter, the central Government of our Congregation has committed itself to providing Oblates with a suitable instrument to help them integrate the needs of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation in their ministry. The General Administration's internal JPIC Committee, chaired by Fr. Daniel Corijn, Vicar General, has prepared the *Vade Mecum*. Confreres who are deeply involved with this type of ministry were consulted. The General Council followed the different stages of the text and gave its final approval.

The *Vade Mecum* is intended to be a help for all Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate as they strive to integrate into their ministry this vital aspect of the "liberating presence of Jesus Christ and the new world born in his resurrection" (C 9).

J. Marcello Zago

Rome, February 17, 1997

Marcello Zago, OMI
Superior General

CHAPTER I

THE WORLD TODAY

An analysis of our world today shows an ambiguous reality: we live in a world with exciting possibilities but also with tremendous destructive elements. Perhaps the picture has always been gray, but today the differences and contradictions are sharper than ever.

(1) Positive aspects

The world of today has many wonderful positive aspects. We may think about the tremendous progress on the levels of technology and communication, or we can look at the growing interdependence of people and countries, so that in all truth it may be said that the world has become a global village. Within this context there appears a strong awareness of the dignity of the human person. Surely the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights and its gradual acceptance by the different countries of the world has contributed to this; and so have the religions and the churches of the world. It is an awareness and a concern that, whatever happens, human rights should be respected and their violation must be rejected. Such awareness applies not only to individual persons but also to peoples and nations. There is a social conscience developing all over the world.

There are other positive aspects in our world of today, e.g., the increasing effort by people everywhere to participate in the social and

economic life of their country, the end of some dictatorships and the search for democracy, the growing recognition of the dignity of women, the concern for peace and reconciliation, the commitment to integral human development, the awareness of the need for solidarity, the practice of intercultural and interreligious dialogue, the ecological concern. This latter aspect is becoming more and more pronounced, as people begin to realize that there can be no genuine justice and peace in our world unless we begin to act as true stewards of creation, thus safeguarding the survival and the integrity of our planet.

In this world of ours the mass media, the modern means of communication, play a tremendous role. They provide us with information and make us aware of the world's situation. They are an immense unifying factor and generate goodwill and solidarity.

(2) Negative aspects

There are indeed also many negative aspects to our modern world. The same *means of communication* many times are one-sided or biased, insisting too much on sensational aspects without offering means for real change. They create an insatiable appetite for consumer goods, whose manufacture depletes the available resources of the earth, causing at the same time deep resentment and despair among those who will never be able to afford them.

On the level of *development*, the gap between the so-called developed North and the developing South has been widening steadily. The idea that, as more and more wealth is being created, some of that wealth will "trickle down" the economic ladder, is just not working. And so the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. "Conditions have

become notably worse" says Pope John Paul II in *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, "... one must denounce the existence of economic, financial and social mechanisms, which although they are manipulated by people, often function almost automatically, thus accentuating the situation of wealth for some and poverty for the rest. These mechanisms, which are manoeuvred directly or indirectly by the more developed countries, by their very functioning favour the interests of the people manipulating them. But in the end they suffocate or condition the economies of the less developed countries." (S.R.S., 16). This phenomenon of poverty or underdevelopment becomes also more and more visible in so-called developed countries, creating a whole category of people who are "excluded" from what a developed society normally has to offer.

Four manifestations of such "underdevelopment" are the *lack of housing, the inadequacy of health facilities, the problem of unemployment and underemployment, and the lack of access to education*. Many individuals and families struggle to survive without a roof (or a very inadequate one) over their heads. When they become sick, the problems grow even worse as health facilities are not always sufficiently available. And if they are unemployed or have only a part-time job (as is the case for more and more people), it becomes extremely difficult to survive in a decent human way. The lack of access to education perpetuates this vicious circle.

Another big problem is the huge *foreign debt* in developing countries and the demand for *structural adjustments*. Loans that were made to these countries, with a view of helping them to develop, have become a tremendous burden, as interest and repayment of capital swallow up the greater part of the export earnings. And so the debt of developing countries plays tremendous havoc with people's lives by creating widespread hardship and deprivation.

There are many *other negative elements* in the situation of our world today. We can think of the millions of migrants and refugees, the production of arms and its trade, the never-ending violence and wars, the killing of unborn children through abortion, the burdens put on women's shoulders, the shortage of food and the lack of drinking water, the pollution of the environment, the many injustices concerning land ownership, tribalism and extreme nationalism, racism and discrimination, the fundamentalist movements, the great inequality in access to the world's resources, economic globalization concentrating power in the hands of a small elite, the neo-liberal system that creates exclusion, individualism and greed.

"These evils afflict many parts of our world; they are most evident, however, in the chorus of the powerless, of those bereft of hope and deprived of their rights, in the plea of so many persons desperately looking for meaning in life, a sense of belonging, more justice and equality, for something to believe in and for someone to trust. Theirs is a cry for salvation. The weariness, indeed, the resignation of those who have given up all hope of ever having their voices heard, has touched us deeply," said the Oblate General Chapter in 1992 (*Witnessing as Apostolic Community*, 2).

(3) Can we remain indifferent?

When we become aware of the existing evils in our world, the question comes up: can we remain indifferent? What can be done to change all this? And who should work for change? Is it the role of the politicians only, on national and international levels? Or should the Church take a prophetic stance and be the voice of the voiceless? Need she be involved in social matters? Does she have a right to do so? And where do we, as Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, fit in?

"And God saw all that was made, and it was very good." (Gen. 1,31). Creation is gifted with all kinds of resources that are entrusted to the stewardship of the human family. As they are not unlimited, we have to preserve them for ourselves and for future generations. Competition for scarce resources creates conflicts, whilst the conservation of nature and natural resources contributes to justice and the maintenance of peace. These are three interlocking elements in the journey of the human family: justice, peace, integrity of creation. We have to work on all three levels.

There is no doubt that today we know more about the immense suffering of the poor and the oppressed people than ever before in history. Moreover, we have become convinced that the promotion of justice, peace and the integrity of creation is an integral element of the Church's evangelizing mission. It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ that compels us to go out, like him, with compassion and love to the crowds of the poor and suffering people, and to take their side. We as missionaries are called to bear witness to the religious dimension of the human journey and to the ethical aspects of life on our planet earth.

CHAPTER II

THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR MINISTRY FOR JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

After looking at the situation of today's world, a faith reflection is now necessary. What do the Biblical Tradition, the Church's teaching, Theology and our Oblate Charism have to say about a ministry for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)? Here follow some basic elements.

(1) The Old Testament

The whole Old Testament is centered on this double decisive happening: the liberation of the Jews from an oppressive situation in Egypt (cf. Ex 3:7-12), and the Covenant between God and the People of Israel (cf. Ex 19-20). God is thus revealed as the liberator of the oppressed and the defender of the poor (cf. Ps 72: 12-14). It is above all the prophets, like Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, who unmask the social and political structures of Israel as abominable and sinful in God's eyes (cf. Is 1: 11-17; Jr 22: 13-17; Am 5: 10-14; Mi 3: 9-12), and they draw the conclusions for daily life:

Yahweh says: Practice justice and do good. Free the one who is wronged from his oppressor. Do no harm to the foreigner, the orphan or the widow; do them no violence, and let no innocent blood be shed here.... Wretched the person who builds his house with stolen

goods, its storeys with injustice! Wretched the one who makes his fellowman work for nothing and refuses him a salary!
(Jr 22: 3,13)

From the people the Lord demands faith in God and justice toward their neighbours. Only those who practice justice toward their neighbours can really know God, the liberator of the oppressed.

Do not violate the right of the foreigner, or of the orphan, or take as pledge the clothing of a widow.

Remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and Yahweh, your God, rescued you. (Dt 24: 17-18)

As Yahweh is just and merciful toward the oppressed and hears the cry of the poor, the same demands are made from each person and from the people of Israel as a whole. On the structural level, these demands for justice and liberation were enforced in the Jubilee Year (cf. Lv 25: 8-19), that occurred every fifty years as a return to the original just situation concerning persons, land and debt in Israel.

(2) The New Testament

The message of Jesus of Nazareth confers a new and definitive depth to the demands of the Old Testament regarding love of neighbour realised in the practice of justice. The Parable of the Good Samaritan (cf. Lk 10: 29-37) and the Last Judgement scene (cf. Mt 25: 31-46) show a clear radicalization of those demands: it is the attitude and the deeds of each person toward the poor and the rejected that are decisive for salvation. One cannot love God and refuse to help one's neighbours, who are God's children:

If a brother or sister is in need of clothes or food, and one of you says, "May things go well for you; be warm and satisfied", without attending to their material needs, what good is that? (Jm 2:15-16)

All people are created in God's image and likeness. All are God's children. Redemption and salvation are offered to all in and through Jesus Christ, who died and rose for all. All are thus truly brothers and sisters.

There is no longer any difference between Jew and Greek, or between slave and free person, or between man and woman; but all of you are one in Christ Jesus.
(Ga 3:28, cf. Ga 6:15; Col 3:11; Ep 2:14-18)

This is a recognition of the universal fraternity and of the suppression of all barriers and discrimination. It is a call for a profound equality between all human beings and a foundation of the ever renewed demand for true solidarity.

The message of the New Testament is very clear. Jesus considers himself as sent to combat every kind of evil and to relieve human misery, to proclaim good news to the poor and to free those who are oppressed (see Lk 4: 16-21). His preaching and the "signs" he works reveal that God is on the side of the poor. The followers of Jesus are similarly sent out to proclaim the same good news and to work for the coming of God's Reign, a Reign of justice, reconciliation, unity, peace and harmony with the whole of creation.

(3) The Church's Teaching and Experience

Over centuries the Church has gradually developed a body of doctrine that is usually called the *Catholic social teaching* or the *social doctrine of the Church*. This is in fact nothing else but an expression of the Church's corporate memory of what it believes, enriched by ongoing experience. The social teaching of the Church is thus not a static doctrine but has known a gradual evolution, in line also with a growing world *social conscience*.

The early Church Fathers spoke passionately of *ta koinia*, the common goods of the earth. They insisted that these belong to all, and that private ownership that neglects this principle is nothing else but injustice. "Are you not a robber, you who make your own the things which you have received to distribute? That bread which you keep belongs to the hungry" (St. Basil the Great, 4th Cent.).

In modern times Pope Leo XIII published his Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1890), thus stimulating a renewed social commitment by the Church. Pope John XXIII insisted on "the universal destiny" of material goods and wealth, and on the necessity for an equitable distribution of the world's resources. During and after the Second Vatican Council, the Church linked repeatedly two urgent topics, viz., peace and social justice; in fact, it saw justice as the necessary condition for a stable peace within and between nations. The 1971 Bishops Synod affirmed that "action on behalf of justice and the participation in the transformation of the world" are seen as "a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel"; the conviction that ecology, or the integrity of creation, is a full-fledged part of this concern gradually came about in the last decades. Structural change as a necessary condition for global social justice was mentioned for the first time by Pope Paul VI. And John Paul II has insisted strongly "that the social

message of the Gospel must not be considered a theory, but above all else a basis and a motivation for action" (*Centesimus Annus*, 57).

Talk about social justice is thus not enough; it has to be put into practice. By the early 1970s Justice and Peace groups began working all over the world. This movement was especially strong in Latin America, where Basic Christian Communities began reflecting on the Bible in the light of the experience of poverty. Out of this reflection liberation theology gradually developed and matured. The Latin American bishops, in the Medellin and Puebla Conferences (1968 and 1979 respectively) confirmed this new method of christian reflection, declaring that the Church must make a "preferential option for the poor". Such an option has not remained a theory, but has been lived out in many places, even well beyond the boundaries of Latin America.

Missionaries have always been involved with the social and human development of the people. More recently, however, Religious have tried to live their consecrated life in a new way, immersed in shantytowns and refugee camps, among people with Aids or street children, in the struggle against apartheid, with oppressed indigenous people, or in the decayed inner cities of the industrialized North. In this way they live out their prophetic calling in Church and society.

(4) A Theological Reflection

In reflecting briefly upon the reality of today's world and the salvation and liberation offered by Jesus Christ, we arrive first of all at *a theology of salvation*, in which salvation is not only a promise for the future but also a reality beginning already here on earth. The Lord's Spirit is given as a divine force which already here and now builds up the new heavens and the new earth. Such integral salvation ultimately

is a question of transforming human relationships through the power of the Spirit, as people gradually learn to love, forgive and serve one another. This implies a "conversion" with very practical social implications. Salvation brings even the whole creation back to balance, harmony and beauty. The extent of this is seen in the cosmic covenant described by Isaiah in chapter 11: "the wolf lives with the lamb, the panther lies down with the kid; calf and lion cub feed together with a little boy to lead them" (Is. 11:5-6).

A second theological reflection centers around *the value of the human person*. In an anthropological vision shaped by Christian faith, we understand that every human being is the image of God, and all that affects a human person affects God. Wherever a more humane world is built up, there God's Reign is growing; wherever a human being is disfigured, wounded or crushed, it is God who is disfigured, wounded or crushed. Jesus makes this very clear as he identifies himself with the poor and the suffering. And because every person is an image of God and a sister/brother of Christ, Christian love implies an absolute demand for justice, namely a recognition of the dignity and the rights of one's neighbour.

Another aspect of theological reflection is *the relation between creation and redemption*. Creation is not simply material, profane, and therefore of no interest to God. On the contrary, creation is holy; it is the first manifestation of God's mystery, it is God's first word. "Through him all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through him" (Jn 1:2-3). Creation is the first act of salvation history. All history is in fact salvation history, and in and through Jesus Christ, it becomes redemption history. Even though God is the source of creation and distinct from it, God is also present in the world. God is both transcendent and immanent. Every person is offered a share in the divine life through grace and is called to respond to God's offer. In this

sense all of creation is saved. One cannot therefore accept a separation between spiritual and temporal, between profane and sacred, between natural and supernatural, between body and soul, between Church and World. It was Paul VI who wrote: "One cannot dissociate the plan of creation from the plan of redemption. The latter touches the very concrete situations of injustice to be combated and of justice to be restored" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 31).

A further part of the theological reflection deals with *the theology of sin*. The fight against sin is in the center of the Christian life. But what is "sin"? More and more we understand sin as that which goes against life, which is death dealing. Sin is thus not purely the breaking of a law, but the destroying of human relationships: with God, with oneself, with the community. It is the expression of evil, hatred, jealousy or greed, the result of deliberate human choices, based on a revolt against God. It involves personal sin as well as social sin. Today we recognize even "structures of sin" in society. They "are rooted in personal sin, and thus always linked to the concrete acts of individuals who introduce these structures, consolidate them and make them difficult to remove. And thus they grow stronger, spread, and become the source of other sins, and so influence people's behaviour" (John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 36).

In final analysis, *a theology of the Reign of God* is necessary. Jesus proclaimed God's Reign and inaugurated it in his person. It "aims at transforming human relationships; it grows gradually as people slowly learn to love, forgive and serve one another." Its nature "is one of communion among all human beings - with one another and with God." Building God's Reign means "working for liberation from evil in all its forms". The Reign of God is "the manifestation and the realization of God's plan of salvation in all its fullness" (John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, 15).

A theological reflection on the reality of today's world brings us to the conclusion that action on behalf of justice, peace and the integrity of creation is an absolute demand of the christian imperative of love, a constitutive dimension of preaching the gospel. It is the gospel itself that calls us to become involved in the transformation of the world.

(5) The Oblate Charism

The famous sermon that Eugene de Mazenod preached in Provence to the simple people of Aix-en-Provence in the Church of the Madeleine on the first Sunday of Lent 1813 is well known. It indicates the eminent dignity of the poor in God's Church, and De Mazenod addressed himself to these people according to his motto: *Evangelizare pauperibus misit me*. In today's terminology, we would say: he manifested a preferential love for the poor.

During the whole history of the Congregation, as of the Church, the message of equality, justice, love, has been proclaimed in the name of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Still, it is really only since the 1971 Synod of Bishops, with its document *Justice in the World*, that this concern has become focused as part and parcel of evangelization. We, Oblates, have integrated this vision into our 1982 Constitutions and Rules: "Action on behalf of justice is an integral part of evangelization" (R 9). According to Father Jetté, this means "that the proclamation of the Gospel is incomplete if one refuses or neglects to proclaim the human and social requirements that flow from the Gospel message, as would be respect for human rights, the struggle against oppressive structures, taking part in transforming the world" (*O.M.I. The Apostolic Man*, p.106).

In recent times more than ever in human history, thanks to mass media, we have become aware of the immense suffering of the poor and the oppressed. We have also become more aware that the poor do not become poor by chance, but that many times they have been made poor and are maintained in their poverty by "structures of sin". God is not indifferent to human suffering. Jesus' response was one of compassion and love in action. Following Christ and conscious of today's world's reality, Oblates everywhere begin to realize that they have to "help to create a society based on the dignity of the human person created in the image of God" (R 9). And this is not just a question of helping the poor and the oppressed through charitable actions, it is a question of promoting justice. As Vatican II said: "The demands of justice must first of all be satisfied; that which is already due in justice is not to be offered as a gift of charity" (*Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, 8).

The 1982 Constitutions and Rules clearly indicate why we, Oblates of Mary Immaculate, should be involved in issues of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. "We are members of the prophetic Church... We announce the liberating presence of Jesus Christ and the new world born in his resurrection. We will hear and make heard the clamour of the voiceless, which is a cry to God who brings down the mighty from their thrones and exalts the lowly (cf. Lk 1:52)" (C 9). We situate ourselves as missionaries involved in the human journey from Creation to God's Reign.

The 1986 General Chapter was also very clear: "We Oblates are sent to evangelize the poor and the most abandoned, i.e. to proclaim Jesus Christ and his kingdom (C 5), to be witnesses of the Good News to the world, to motivate actions which might transform individuals and society, to denounce whatever is an obstacle to the coming of the kingdom" (MTW, 14). In 1992 the Chapter theme was *Witnessing as Apostolic Community* and it was said that "the credibility of our witness

depends in part upon our commitment to justice" (WAC, 21). For that reason the General Administration was asked to challenge the Oblates' commitment to the weakest in their midst. The Chapter also declared: "In solidarity with persons of goodwill, especially those, Christians and non-Christians alike, who are dedicated to the pursuit of justice and peace, we commit ourselves to a dialogue with society" (WAC, 24).

In October 1989 the General Council launched a "Brief Message" to the whole Congregation. It might be good to repeat it here:

WE MISSIONARY OBLATES

CANNOT BE INDIFFERENT TO THE MISERY OF THE POOR.
LET'S ACT IN SOLIDARITY ...!

CHAPTER III

ACTION ON BEHALF OF JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION

In talking about action on behalf of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, three points should be taken into consideration. First of all, as Oblates of Mary Immaculate we are motivated by our religious missionary vision. A second point is that in JPIC matters we have to be strongly aware of the existing links between Justice and Evangelization. And thirdly, we will need an instrument, a tool for understanding the social reality of our world and a means for effective action.

1. Motivated by a religious missionary vision

In our JPIC ministry, as in all other ministries, we are acting as Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, i.e., as religious missionaries. We are called to witness in this world of ours as consecrated persons and as apostolic communities. As consecrated persons we will act with a religious motivation and purpose, we will work for the coming of God's Reign. And as members of apostolic communities, we will opt for team work rather than for individual commitments.

The attention to issues of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation is a dimension of all our ministries. It has to be integrated and expressed in our preaching, our catechesis, our sacramental celebrations, our presence to people, our solidarity of compassion, our life style, individually and in community. It affects each and every one in his daily life

and mission. Some Oblates, however, are called to animate their brothers in this important area of the apostolate and to exercise the special ministry of being present "where decisions affecting the future of the poor are being made". But "whatever their work, Oblates will collaborate, according to their vocation and by every means compatible with the Gospel, in changing all that is a cause of oppression and poverty" (R 9).

Furthermore, as Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate our contribution is not only a matter of doing something, it is also a way of living and witnessing. Through our vow of chastity "we free ourselves for a love which reaches out to everyone and challenge the tendency to possess and use others for selfish purposes" (C 15). Through our vow of obedience we challenge the spirit of domination and we stand "as a sign of that new world wherein persons recognize their close interdependence", in common submission to God's will (C 25). Through our vow of poverty we have committed ourselves to a simple life style, in solidarity with the millions of poor and marginalized people.

2. Links between Justice and Evangelization

The present-day situation of the world, as already described above, is marked by serious injustices, which keep the greater part of humanity from sharing in the building up and the enjoyment of a just and fraternal world. The statistics are indeed alarming and show a tremendous inequality in access to the world's resources. Listening to the Word of God in order to better discern the divine plan for salvation, one becomes aware that the person of Jesus Christ and the liberating force of the Gospel can bring about a change in the world's situation.

Evangelization contains a call to conversion, a call to turning away from sin to loving God and neighbour. It is the Church's responsibility to give witness before the world of the need for love and justice contained in the Gospel message. In that sense the Church needs to act on behalf of justice and to participate in the transformation of the world. There is an essential link between Justice and Evangelization, as the 1971 Bishops Synod clearly indicated; justice is a constitutive dimension of preaching the Gospel. Also Pope Paul VI was very clear on this point: "It is impossible to accept that in evangelization one could or should ignore the importance of the problems... concerning justice, liberation, development and peace in the world" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 31).

Evangelization thus not only aims at individual conversions, a "change of heart", but has also to do with changing unjust structures, the "structures of sin", as John Paul II calls them. "The recognized priority of freedom and of conversion of heart in no way eliminates the need for unjust structures to be changed. It is therefore perfectly legitimate that those who suffer oppression on the part of the wealthy or the politically powerful should take action, through morally licit means, in order to secure structures and institutions in which their rights will be truly respected... It is therefore necessary to work simultaneously for the conversion of hearts and for the improvement of structures" (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation*, 75). Trying to bring about a better world only by the conversion of hearts without the transformation of unjust structures is an idealistic utopia, while working for the transformation of unjust structures without the conversion of hearts is a materialistic illusion. Both are necessary to bring about justice, peace and integrity of creation.

3. An Instrument for Action : Social Analysis

In the world of today people are bombarded with information by means of the media (newspaper, radio, T. V.). They are also confronted every day with all kinds of problems that have to be addressed and for which a solution has to be found. If we are to make genuine sense of that information and if we want to be relevant and effective in tackling these problems, we have to seek to understand the society in which we live, we have to analyse our society and see what kind of forces are at work and what are the causes of the problems we encounter. We have to discover the reality of networks that exist at the heart of our everyday life, networks of powers, of persons, of action groups. We have to find out why originally well intended structures have become "structures of sin". This process is called "social analysis".

Social analysis is thus basically the analysis of the causes. It helps to attack social evils at their very roots. When we are not aware of the causes, we are like a doctor treating the symptoms of a disease without ever tackling what causes the disease. That results in the disease persisting, in problems not really being solved. Vatican II insisted already: "The cause of evils, and not merely their effects, ought to disappear" (*Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, 8). Social analysis is thus a tool for understanding the social reality of our world today and a means for effective action.

There are various models of "social analysis". As religious missionaries we are primarily interested in christian models. Three such christian models are indicated here and worked out in detail in Appendix II. They are: (1) "revision de vie"; (2) the pastoral cycle; (3) missionary analysis.

(1) "Revision de vie"

This model follows strictly the "see-judge-act" dynamic. It takes as starting point a precise experience in life, or a concrete situation lived by a group or a person. It describes the facts and analyses the situation. It sheds the light of God's Word onto this reality and sees it within the context of salvation history. It calls for meditation and prayer, leading to conversion. Action then follows, which is seen as a mission in today's world.

(2) The pastoral cycle

This is a six-stage process of analysis, reflection and action. An evaluation of the action that has been taken makes us reflect again on our experiences in the light of the action taken, going on to identify the problems as we perceive them now after our action has in some way or another given birth to a new reality. And so the cycle starts again, around and around, ever deepening our analysis and always making our action more relevant and more effective. Because of this dynamic of continuity, this process is also called "the pastoral spiral".

(3) Missionary analysis

Here we have a method of analysis within a broad concept of a missionary praxis. This method is grounded in the reality of our missionary presence within the Church and tries to integrate elements of what is known as the pastoral cycle with elements of the Oblate charism. Through our missionary presence we seek to hear people's need for salvation and to be part of a response to this need, favoring the most abandoned, the groups least touched by the Church (Constitutions 1-5). This method of missionary analysis includes community reflection and missionary planning as two essential phases of the process.

Social analysis is best done in a group, a team, or a community. The interaction of the group members is an important element of the process. The proposed models with their detailed explanation in Appendix II are intended for such group work.

CHAPTER IV

THE JPIC DIMENSION IN FORMATION

A reading of our Constitutions and Rules reveals that the Oblate Congregation is totally missionary. The formation of its members has, therefore, to be a missionary formation that is truly focused: forming men who, having become disciples of Jesus Christ, are ready to continue his mission as apostles. Formation today has necessarily to be directed toward an evangelization in the fullest sense of the word, a total evangelization, of which ministry for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation is recognized as an integral part (see Rule 9).

In this context, five elements seem to be indispensable for an integrated formation of Oblates as missionaries in today's world.

1. An attitude of profound respect for each human person

Today there is a lot of talk about human rights and it is said that it is the duty of governments to respect those basic rights. But it is also the duty of each individual person and of all groups within society. It surely is also the duty of the Church. Today the Church understands better than ever before that defending human rights is a fundamental aspect of human and christian life.

A profound respect for the human person is the basic attitude which has to be instilled and developed during the formation process.

From the moment we look down at a human being, a poor person, a beggar, a stranger, a refugee, a woman, a child, as "something", we are on the same track as the slavedrivers who considered human beings to be merchandise to be sold. From the moment we "thingify" (make things out of) people, we no longer respect them, as if they had no human rights.

Our attitude toward women, for instance, needs to be based on the necessary respect for the human person, who is the living image of God. She is not an object or a thing, she is a human person. And she is as much image of God and as much redeemed by Jesus Christ as man is. Man and woman are equals. Any scriptural interpretation that tries to justify male domination is wrong and has to be rejected.

It is very important that Oblates in initial and ongoing formation, religious, future priests, are being conscientized and develop in themselves this fundamental attitude of respect toward any human person, because each one of them is son or daughter of God Almighty, redeemed by Jesus the Saviour, and brother or sister of us all.

2. An attitude of love for the poor

A second attitude that has to be developed during the Oblate formation process is our love for the poor. The Oblate's mission is to evangelize the "most abandoned...", the poor with their many faces" (C.5). Oblate formation therefore must foster a missionary love for the poor. It is essential that it communicate an understanding and appreciation of the mission proper to Jesus, such as He himself described it at the synagogue of Nazareth (see Luke 4:16-30), and concretely lived it out until he died on the cross. Oblate formation also communicates an understanding and appreciation of the mission to the poor as lived by Saint Eugene de Mazenod and his first companions.

This love for the poor is one of our motives to vow evangelical poverty. The 1986 General Chapter insisted on this point: "We choose to be poor to enter more perfectly into communion with Jesus and the poor (C 20). We want to be close to them so as to share what they have and what we have..." (MTW, 16).

Our love for the poor demands thus a real solidarity with them which allows us to be evangelized by them. In "*Missionaries in Today's World*", it is said that we, Oblates, want to be near to the poor "in order that we might learn to see the Church and the world from their perspective and to see them through the eyes of the crucified Savior." (MTW, 16). Real solidarity with the poor is not spontaneous; it has to be learned and consciously accepted.

If we have a true love for the poor, this will surely influence our life style: we will then live a simple life, witnessing to evangelical detachment. It happens, however, that by becoming religious or priests, we obtain a social promotion. We are then tempted to live like rich people, using money as if there were no limits to our resources. The 1992 General Chapter recommended a far more intense formation on the financial level: "Train Oblates in formation to take care for and share the material goods at their disposal and to use money wisely." (WAC, 36). Our life style has to express clearly our love for the poor.

3. Being with the poor

It is not enough to have a profound respect for each human being, it is not enough to really love the poor; Oblates in formation need to experience the life of the poor and the situations of marginalization and injustice. One of the strategies to make this happen is "immersion" in poor areas. Already the 1986 Chapter stated: "We encourage Oblates

to establish communities in poor areas" (MTW, 25). And again: "Our formation houses will be located, whenever possible, in poor areas and they will be characterized by a simple life style so as to provide a concrete experience of poverty" (MTW, 160). Immersion in poor areas is a very striking element of formation in Latin America. Of course, formation remains the goal; immersion in the situation of the poor is the context in which formation takes place. It stimulates a simple life style, an active solidarity with the poor, a participation in their struggles for justice, a discovery of the value of work and money.

Presence to the poor may also happen through pastoral and missionary experiences in poor areas. Pastoral and missionary initiation has become an integral part of our formation programs; more and more such experiences take place in poor areas. They can be very profitable when the young Oblate is helped in his experiences through proper supervision, accompaniment, evaluation and integration.

4. Study of the social teaching of the Church

It is often said that the social teaching of the Church is "the best kept secret". Indeed, few people know the official position of the Church on social problems. In seminaries, therefore, it is not enough to treat these questions in a few free lessons, it has to be done in a proper obligatory course, as was strongly recommended by the Congregation for Catholic Education in 1988. Nor is it enough to learn about the social questions in general; the social problematic of the local Church has also to be studied.

For Oblates in formation, it is essential to receive a good grounding in this part of moral theology, as they prepare for missionary life

in today's world. Insistence on the study of the social teaching of the Church is not new for the Oblates. Already in the Chapter document of 1986 it is stated that, next to a solid theological and philosophical formation, Oblates should be opened up to other intellectual fields, and first on the list is "the study of the Church's social doctrine", so as "to be missionaries among the poor" (MTW 159). Oblates need to know the social teaching of the Church and base their actions upon it.

5. Social analysis

In order to be able to apply the social teaching of the Church to a concrete situation, it is necessary to know that situation thoroughly. Social analysis is a useful tool in order to come to grips with the local and universal situation. It opens our eyes to understand why things are the way they are. It makes us aware that there are people who work for changing unjust structures, people who feel responsible to work for a better world with the help of all existing resources put together.

Experience teaches that we cannot presume that young seminarians, when they enter the seminary or the novitiate, know in depth the social, economic, political situation of their country and of the world. They have gradually to learn how society works, and in this learning process they have to be helped by experts in the field. Becoming acquainted with instruments of analysis they will understand more clearly how the social, economic and political power structure of society is established and maintained. There are various models of social analysis that all have some value. For Christians it is important to verify our analysis asking what God's plan for society might be. During the formation years seminarians should get acquainted especially with forms of christian social analysis.

CHAPTER V

ANIMATION PROGRAM

Action in favor of justice, peace and integrity of creation is required today more than ever, as an integral part of the Church's evangelizing mission and of our Oblate charism. No doubt, many Oblates are involved in JPIC actions, without perhaps describing them as such. We can only encourage these Oblates to continue in that direction. The program outlined in this chapter is intended to help, in a more systematic way, the animation of the Congregation on the level of ministry for "Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation". The purpose of such animation is to reach the local level, where JPIC ministry is exercised in the name of the community.

1. Objectives

(a) Objectives situated on the level of basic aims and purposes:

- i. That Oblates and their collaborators have an overall view and an ever deeper knowledge of the Church's social teaching;
- ii. That JPIC ministry be more and more integrated into every form of Oblate pastoral ministry; that it be truly part of our missionary identity, according to the requirements of our own charism;
- iii. That Oblates and their collaborators be in fact engaged in networks that strive by non-violent means to promote more justice through the transformation of structures on local, national and international levels.

(b) Objectives situated on the level of formation:

That Oblates and their collaborators be enabled

- i. to look at the world:
 - with the eyes of the compassionate Jesus;
 - with the eyes of someone who reads reality critically (social analysis);
- ii. to understand the link between Evangelization and Justice;
- iii. to understand the link between structures and injustice;
- iv. to understand ministry for justice, peace and integrity of creation as one of the constitutive elements of our Oblate charism.

(c) Objectives situated on the level of action:

- i. That individual Oblates act in accordance with the above mentioned principles;
- ii. That Oblate communities take these principles into consideration when elaborating their missionary project;
- iii. That each Province and Delegation establish a JPIC Committee;
- iv. That each Oblate Region establish a JPIC Commission for the Region;
- v. That on a Congregation-wide level a proper JPIC Network be operative.

2. Animation for Action

Our activity in favor of justice, peace and integrity of creation is rooted in, and draws its dynamism from the dignity of the human person, as well as from the hope that the Gospel brings; both of these dimensions are to be perceived through the lens of our own Oblate charism.

(a) Elements of Strategy:

- i. Recourse to several types of activity: information, conscientization, prayer, immersion, changing life style, finances in relation to the requirements of JPIC;
- ii. Realism in action: undertake what is feasible;
- iii. Action adapted to the different groups to be animated;
- iv. Use of an understandable language with an evangelical flavor: ministry in terms of caring for suffering people, ministry of compassion, ministry of (local and/or international) solidarity, making human life more fully human.

(b) Animation:

- i. *For those already engaged in JPIC ministry:*
 - that they be encouraged to continue this work;
 - that they be invited to integrate more and more the aspects of the Oblate charism into their activity in favor of justice, peace and integrity of creation;
 - that they be invited to share their vision and experiences with other interested Oblates.

ii. *For other Oblates:*

- that sessions be organized at the level of a Province or an area wherein would be treated the theology and spirituality that are at the basis of social commitment;
- that Oblate newsletters/reviews carry items concerning JPIC ministry.

iii. *For Oblates in first formation:*

- that the social doctrine of the Church be thoroughly studied;
- that concrete experiences of JPIC ministry be integrated into the formation programs;
- that immersion in the world of the poor be encouraged;
- that responsible stewardship and use of material goods be promoted;
- that efforts toward a simple life style be made.

iv. *For those responsible for Oblate finances:*

- that Provinces/Delegations engage themselves in financial planning that involves a conscious effort for justice;
- that their financial reports manifest the degree to which concern for justice forms a part of their administration of temporal goods;
- that particular attention be given to placing our investments so that they do not favor enterprises that exploit people but rather are in some way of benefit to the poor (cf. R 144);

- that attention be given, by individual Oblates and by Provinces/Delegations, to the cost of their life style, in comparison with that of ordinary people in their milieu.

"Action on behalf of justice is an integral part of evangelization. ... Whatever their work, Oblates will collaborate, according to their vocation and by every means compatible with the Gospel, in changing all that is a cause of oppression and poverty." (Rule 9)

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Preamble

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, Therefore,

The General Assembly proclaims

This Universal Declaration of Human Rights

as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of the Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex,

language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-selfgoverning or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11

(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks to his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.

(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14

(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15

- (1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.
- (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16

(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17

- (1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
- (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief,

and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
- (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21

- (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
- (2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.
- (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23

(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27

(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29

(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

Appendix II

Three Christian Models of "Social Analysis"

1. "REVISION DE VIE"

This model of social analysis strictly follows the well known pattern of SEE - JUDGE - ACT. It starts from a precise experience or a concrete situation that a group or at least one of the participants has lived.

SEE

Objectives: - to gather the maximum of information

- to deepen the experience and situate it in a larger context.

Gathering information:

1. describe the event, the experience - in detail:
"what are we talking about? what are the facts?"
2. who are the persons involved? what are they doing?
what do they say? to what kind of thinking or values are they referring? what kind of interests are they defending?

3. how does the event happen? what are the different steps? what kind of forces are playing here? who are the allies and who are the enemies?
4. And for the members of the group: what obstacles have we met? Have we committed any strategic mistakes? What lessons do we draw from the experience?

Deepening the experience and situating it in a larger context:

What does this experience or this situation reveal

- concerning the functioning of society,
- and concerning the possibilities of action in the places of influence and on the forces that structure society ?

JUDGE

This is the time of listening to the WORD,
of CONVERSION
of PRAYER

Objectives: - to receive God's Word
- to change our way of looking at things
and to purify our motivations
- to meditate in prayer on the given experience
and on the "calls" that it contains.

Receiving God's Word:

Go further than a superficial bringing together of the given experience or situation and a certain biblical text.

The aim of this part is to situate this precise commitment in the totality of the HISTORY OF SALVATION, in order to become aware of the value and the greatness of the responsibilities taken. This is indeed done through meditating a certain biblical text; one could also refer to the liturgical year, which is the greatest actualization of the HISTORY OF SALVATION.

Changing our vision and purifying our motivations

What are the "idolatrous" movements that infiltrated themselves in our analysis of life? the desires to build one's own glory? the search for power? for revenge?

Meditating in prayer on the "calls" of the experience

Where is God sending me? What is our mission?
so that God's name may be sanctified -
so that God's will be done -
so that God's Reign may come.

ACT

This is the moment of working on a strategy:

- what are we going to do?
- which objectives do we want to reach?
- which persons do we have to meet?
- which informations do we have to find?
- what plan of action do we work out?

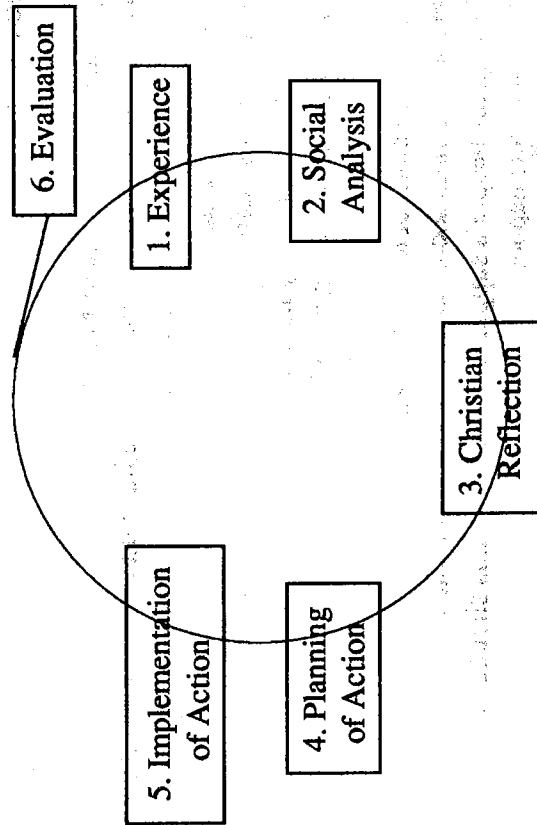
Which role is each one going to play ?

Finish with a PRAYER to the Lord who sends us on a MISSION.

*This model is based on experience
and described by Fr. Jean-Pierre Caloz, o.m.i.*

2. THE PASTORAL CYCLE

The *Pastoral Cycle*, or sometimes also called the *Pastoral Spiral*, is a six-step process of analysis, reflection and evaluation. It does not end however with the evaluation of the action taken. It is an ongoing process: the evaluation of the action makes us reflect again on our experience in the light of the action taken, going on to identify the problems as we perceive them now after our action has in some way or other given birth to a new reality. And so the cycle starts again, around and around, ever deepening our analysis and always making our action more relevant and more effective.



In **step one** we reflect on our experience and try to identify problems. This is usually relatively simple, although different people may identify different problems. After having identified several problems, come to an agreement to tackle one specific problem at the time. Choose a problem about which the group feels strongly. Take a common and current problem that is not too big to tackle. Get all the information possible about it. Look at the history - when did it begin and when did we become aware of it? Is it part of our culture or is it a tradition?

Step two is the real *social analysis*, i.e., the analysis of the causes. This is probably the most important stage of the process and yet, many people are inclined to pass over here and move directly to the planning of an action. Sometimes the causes will be very obvious; sometimes it may be difficult to expose the real root causes. Do not hurry. Go deep. Ask why, and why, and why. The following and similar questions could be used:

a) Questions about *cultural structures*:

Here we examine education, mass media, cultural activities and

religion, and we ask ourselves:

- What is their content ?
- Who controls them ?
- What influence do they have ?
- What values do they transmit ?

b) Questions about *social structures*:

Here we examine social standards and social status.

- Who gains people's support and loyalty in this situation?
- How does this happen?
- Who loses people's support and loyalty?
- What is helping to change the situation? And what is not?

c) Questions about *economic structures*:

- Who is growing richer from this situation?
- How do they become rich?
- Who is growing poorer from this situation?
- What are people doing to change it?

d) Questions about *political structures*:

- Who is gaining power from this situation?
- How do they gain power?
- Who is losing power from this situation?
- What are people doing about this situation?

In **step three** we do some christian theological reflection. We ask ourselves what God has to say about our problem. How does the Bible, the Word of God, tackle this problem? What did the prophets have to say? What did Jesus do and say? Are there any Church documents which may enlighten us? Try to imagine what God would say if the Lord were to speak to us now about this situation. In silence, we listen for a while to God speaking in our hearts. Try to leave aside your own thoughts and feelings, but listen to the Lord. This is a moment of conversion, as we confront ourselves with the example of Jesus.

Afterwards, the group shares what came through in the silence. This may be a saying or a story from the Bible, a text from Church documents, an aspect of our charism, or some other symbol of faith, a song, a poem, a picture, a drama, etc. The group prays then for light and strength to do what God wants done about the problem.

Step four is planning action in order to tackle some of the identified causes of the problem. In planning an action, we have to address causes that we can do something about, we have to identify possibilities for effective action.

One way of doing this is to brainstorm for concrete and possible actions to be taken. Then the group chooses one action and plans it in detail: *who* will do *what*, *when*, *where* and *how*? It can be very helpful to role-play the action and come up with an alternative plan of action.

During **step five** we implement the planned action. Many times we make plans, and many times they just remain plans. Therefore we emphasize this step, because all planning is useless if it does not, in some way or another, lead to action. *Step five* may take quite some time.

Step six is the evaluation of the action done, leading into a new reflection on our experience in the light of the action taken, going on to identify the problems as we see them now that our action has in some way changed the reality or changed our perception of that reality. And so we begin a new "pastoral cycle" with an ever deeper analysis and a new more relevant and effective action.

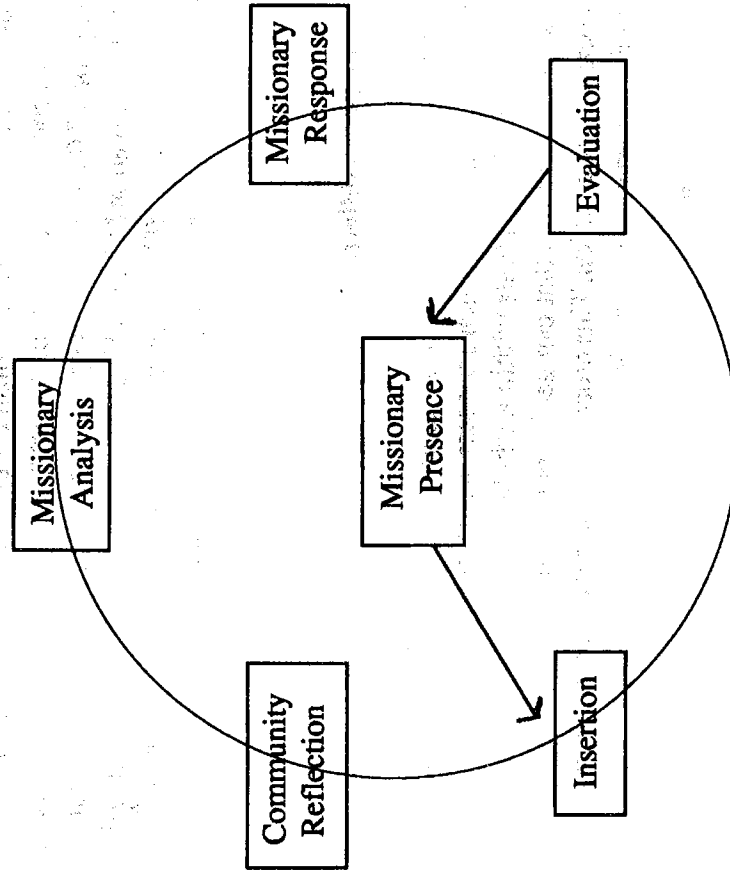
In evaluating the action, the following questions may be useful:

- What was done and what was the result?
- What were the successes? What were the failures?
- What have we learned for the future?
- What is the Lord saying to us now?
- How do we see the situation now?
- Repeat the cycle and take further action.

This model, slightly adapted by Fr. Daniel Corijn, o.m.i., was taken from: LUMKO INSTITUTE (Ed.) Love Your Neighbour. Christian Social Analysis, South Africa, 1989.

3. MISSIONARY ANALYSIS

This model describes a method of missionary analysis within the framework of an Oblate missionary praxis. The method is grounded in the values and principles of the 1992 Chapter Document *Witnessing as Apostolic Community* that calls for a very specific way of being and acting. "We can be effective evangelizers only to the extent that our compassion is collective, that we give ourselves to the world not as a coalition of freelance ministers, but as a united missionary body." (WAC, 7).



Missionary Presence

Our missionary presence is the integrating dimension of Oblate apostolic community. It has a clear value base, an organic structuring and an interactive dynamic. It exists essentially for others. The 1992 Chapter was clear in this regard: "It is not primarily for its own sake that our common life exists, it is flesh for the world" (WAC, 8).

Insertion

Our missionary presence as "flesh for the world" must be incarnated. This is a conscious experience of insertion as a way of being "close to the people" (C 8) in order to hear the call of Christ "through people's need for salvation" (C 1) and "proclaim Christ and his Kingdom to the most abandoned" (C 5). It is more than being located somewhere or being assigned to a ministry. It is being in mission.

Community Reflection

An appropriate tool of reflection for an apostolic community is that of corporate reflection. In such a process the members function as a body, as a group of individuals within a whole. It is a way of building up a missionary presence that can get in touch with and share around the experience of insertion. This process has a number of precise steps and requires some specific attitudes.

Missionary analysis

In the process of doing a missionary analysis, situations are focused as objectively as possible; contributing factors and forces are examined; consequences are probed; interrelationships and linkages are recognized; actors, whether individuals, groups or institutions are identified. For us as Oblates, a good starting point is to be consciously present to, with and for all the people where we find ourselves. If we are in a parish, we must see it as a window through which we see the reality of the people and a door that lets us enter into their journey in a life-giving way.

Our missionary analysis starts with a look at the local reality. What is being lived at this level? What feelings are being experienced? What insights are emerging? What calls are being heard? What are the expectations? Possible responses?

This analysis must then move to a more global level. What is the context of our insertion? What is being experienced there? What are people's needs of salvation? Why do these exist? Who are the most abandoned? Why are they in such a state? Who are those least reached by the church? Why is this so? What is the situation of mission? Why does such a situation exist? What are the tensions, the change processes involved?

After sufficient reflection on the local and global realities, the following three steps can be completed and a summary statement prepared:

a. *Focusing the situation*

What is life giving and what is death dealing for the people? It is important to be concrete and to look for connections between the elements at play. This step requires an ongoing dialogue with all the persons involved.

b. *Identifying the issues*

What are we dealing with? We need to name the issues. Are we dealing with something at a social, a cultural, an economic, an institutional or an ecclesial level? Is it local, national or global? Is it something that already has been identified by others? How are they understanding the situation?

c. *Examining contributing factors*

What are the causes? What are the driving forces behind the causes? What are the linkages between the causes? This step may call for consultation and research. People working in various disciplines may be brought together to discuss the situation.

Once some kind of a summary statement is arrived at, it is good to do some theological reflection, to look at the emerging issues through the eyes of faith. There are two challenges involved. The first relates these issues to our christian faith. What responses are we invited to give as Christians? The second relates these issues to our Oblate charism. What responses are we invited to give as missionaries? These considerations impact on our own evangelization and ongoing conversion.

Missionary Response

Our missionary response consists of missionary planning and implementation.

Missionary planning has to do with choosing the means for our mission, making choices about the future, conveying meaning to every aspect of our activity. The first step is to be clear about the mission we want to pursue with the people of a given area. There is the long range, the object of our hope; there is the short range, the object of our love. Both are to be carried out in a spirit of faith. Beyond that there is the challenge of acquiring the necessary skills related to the planning process and of having access to the necessary resources.

Implementation is about choosing strategies that are feasible. The overall plan must be divided into specific projects with concrete lines of action. What, who, where, how, at what cost and by when, are basic questions that need to be addressed for each project. Additional factors such as the availability of appropriate leadership, clear means of accountability and modes of collaboration, should be factored into the step of implementation.

Evaluation

Evaluation has to do with an honest, continual review of our missionary presence and activity. Is our presence authentic? Is our activity effective? It is not simply a technical review. It must take into

consideration elements such as the direct or indirect impact of our presence and activity. What persons and what structures are being affected? What collaboration is being fostered? What effect is all this having on the local Oblate community? Are we living our charism in a way that attracts others? Are lay associates being integrated? Are we reaching out to youth? A grid incorporating the various calls from recent General Chapters would be helpful.

This model has been prepared by Fr. Ronald Carignan, o.m.i.

Appendix III

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