

# ***TANGAZA COLLEGE***

***THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA***

## **URBANIZATION IN AFRICA: QUEST FOR A MISSIONARY INTERPRETATION, PRESENCE AND ACTIVITY**

by

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### **STUDENT'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the material used here in  
has not been submitted for academic credit to  
any other institution: all sources have been  
cited in full.

Signed Daniele Moschetti

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## INTRODUCTION

In September 1995, the Pope John Paul II came to Africa to celebrate the African Synod on African soil and bring us the fruits of that Synod in the Apostolic Exhortation "The Church in Africa". He told all Christians in Africa: "The Synod is over; the Synod has just begun". And it is very true!

Now, our great challenge is to study and reflect upon the teaching of the Synod, to discuss the important issues in our Christian communities in order to transform our personal lives and our communities in the spirit of the Synod.

My personal attention and study have been dedicated to one of the great phenomenon mentioned in the document: **Urbanization in Africa** as a challenge for the African Church.

In fact in "The Church in Africa" we read: "...All the preparatory documents of the Synod, as well as the discussions in the Assembly, clearly showed that issues in Africa such as increasing **poverty, urbanization, the international debt....figure among the fundamental challenges addressed by the Synod**"(51).

The need to apply the Gospel to concrete life is felt strongly in Africa. How could one proclaim Christ in this immense Continent while forgetting that it is one of the world's poorest regions?

And again, during this year we shall assist to one of the most important world appointment: "The city summit" Habitat II UN Conference on Human Settlements which will be held in Istanbul, Turkey, in June 1996, twenty years after the first UN Conference on human settlement held in Vancouver, Canada.

Habitat II will deepen understanding of urban challenges and opportunities so that realistic steps can be taken at city, country and international levels to overcome the grave deterioration of living conditions and social problems and enrich the potentials of urban life.

In 1996, the International Community is celebrating also "The United Nations Year for the **Eradication of Poverty**". Despite advances in human welfare and technology, there is today a growing polarisation between rich and poor and a failure of political will to address the silent

emergency of those people who cannot make ends meet. And in Africa poverty, this most ruthless killer, is on the increase!

**Poverty and Urbanization** go hand in hand, especially in the cities! Not by chance they figure among the first two challenges pointed out by the Apostolic Exhortation. They are “privileged” of a World Conference and a UN year celebration! John Paul II, previously, in *Redemptoris Missio*, had already pointed out the necessity for a further reflection on the rapid and profound transformations which characterize today’s world “..especially in the southern hemisphere, are having a powerful effect on the overall missionary picture...urbanization and massive growth of cities, especially where the demographic pressure is greatest...”(RM 39b).

Hence, he invited the whole Church and the missionaries also to rethink the image of **Missio ad Gentes** “...today the image of missio ad gentes is perhaps changing: efforts should be concentrated on the big cities, where new customs and styles of living arise together with new forms of culture and communication which then influence the wider population...”(RM 39b)

This new phenomenon and new missionary situation, here in Africa, call us to reflect, to interpret, to deepen our efforts and vision for a new missionary presence and ministry among the city and slum-dwellers of our Continent.

I have lived my pastoral experience here in Nairobi, for several years, ministering among slum-dwellers of the city. This experience has convinced me that the Church has insufficiently paid attention to a missionary/pastoral reflection, presence and action for an effective urban ministry not only here in Nairobi but even in our African cities.

For this reason, I have chosen Nairobi as a paradigm of an African city. It represents a religious centre but also a mission field like many other African capitals and secondary cities.

In my approach to this long-essay, I tried to be interdisciplinary and to face the phenomenon of urbanization in Africa from different angles: social, demographically, biblical, theological, ecclesiological and missionary-pastoral.

In the first chapter, the phenomenon is put within the frame of the overall picture of the world situation which involves the trends of population and urbanization world-wide.

The second chapter is dedicated entirely to the trends of this spectacular circumstances which are in Africa: from the historical background of the African cities to the present period of city

growth with the increase of poverty and slum areas in its surroundings within the context of the whole Continent at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In the third chapter, I present how in the Bible and in Church history, the city has always been a concern and challenge for the Plan of God: through his Ministries, Prophets, Jesus, Paul, the Church etc. My personal research on the urbanization in the Church's documents complete the biblical-theological vision.

In the last chapter, I dare propose a contribution and reflection for a newly emerging missionary vision and praxis for urban ministry in Africa. A new experience of Church is developing and new models of presence and action are necessary to renew, to change structures, methodologies and being able to answer co-operatively to the different and variegated needs of the city and slum-dwellers of our times. And the answers can not be only spiritual!

The annexes, maps and statistics enclosed will help the essay to be more comprehensive and allowing the reader, I hope, to have a broader understanding of the challenge ahead!

Of course, the reader has to keep in mind that this long essay is based and dependent upon projections which could change at any time for unexpected factors. In any case, the tendency of this phenomenon of urbanization is irreversible: a complete new world in gestation!



## CHAPTER 1

### POPULATION AND URBANIZATION TRENDS IN THE WORLD

While the challenge posed by human settlements and by the forces and processes that underlie their growth differ greatly in the developed and developing countries, there are certain demographic and urbanization trends that they share, even if unequally. The trends analysed below are based upon projections and estimates prepared by the United Nations Population Division. While United Nations population and urbanization projections and estimates are acknowledged as the most authoritative available, they must nevertheless be interpreted with considerable caution. They are extrapolations of observed data on fertility and mortality rates, sex ratios, life expectancies, and rural-urban migration, and the statistical base of some of the estimates is undeniably weak.<sup>1</sup>

Trends do not necessarily depict the future. They can, however, suggest the shape of things to come, the scale of the challenge ahead. In the case of the trends outlined below, the scale of the challenges posed to human settlements by population and urbanization trends are quite demanding. Viewed globally, they are challenges of unprecedented dimensions.

#### 1.1 POPULATION TRENDS

Some 2000 years ago, the world's population probably numbered around 300 million, and it took around 1,500 years to double. Only in the 18<sup>th</sup> century did it begin to grow significantly: from about 1750, at the outset of Europe's industrial revolution, until the 20<sup>th</sup> century it grew at the unprecedented average rate of 0.5 per cent per annum. By 1900, the world's population had reached about 1.7 billion - a six-fold increase in 150 years. From then on, the rate of

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<sup>1</sup> "The urbanization projections are, for example, dependent upon country definitions of urban areas, which range from 100 to 20,000 or more inhabitants. In some cases, part of the statistical basis for estimates is not simply empirically weak but purely hypothesized. Finally, their very nature excludes assumptions concerning the desirability of the trends defined or criteria for evaluating their realism." United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), Global Report on Human Settlements 1986, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 21.

growth doubled, remaining at about 1.5 per cent per annum until 1950. In the 35 years since then it has grown at around 1.9 per cent per annum: the world's population almost doubled, to reach 4.8 billion in 1985 and it will reach 6.1 billion for year 2000. Another relevant phenomenon is the constant change in the distribution of the world's population between developed and developing regions. Between 1750 and the early 1900s, population growth was concentrated in today's developed countries. Since 1950 it has been increasingly concentrated in the developing countries.

The speed of population growth will ensure its continuation for decades to come. It is almost certain that an additional 80-90 million children will be born every year until the next century. The end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century could witness the high point of several centuries of accelerated growth, and while demographic expectations are for a gradual decline in growth rates until world population stabilises at some time in the 22<sup>nd</sup> century, the immediate prospect is for some 6.1 billion people by the year 2000, increasing to 8.2 billion by the year 2025, or a 71 per cent increase in a period of 40 years. By the year 2000, 8 out of 10 people will be living in today's developing countries (See TABLE 1).

Together, Sub-Sahara Africa and Southern Asia, the world's poorest regions, would, when and if world population stabilises, account for 50 per cent of the world's population, compared with 30 per cent today.

When population growth will end is a matter of speculation. The main single determinant is declining fertility. Fertility levels have declined rapidly, and are now close to, or even below, the levels necessary for the maintenance of the population at its present size in Europe, Northern America, Japan, and the Soviet Union. Among the developing countries, fertility decline has occurred in Eastern Asia and in Latin America.

## **1.2 URBANIZATION TRENDS**

Population growth is more than matched by the pace of urbanization. In the mid-eighteenth century, the first period in human history to witness sustained and accelerated population growth, no more than 3 out of every 100 persons lived in towns. It was only in 1900 that the first country, the United Kingdom, became predominantly urban. Even by 1920, only an estimated 14 per cent of the world's population lived in urban areas, but by 1950 the

proportion had reached one-quarter, and by 1980 it stood at around 40%. If present trends continue, nearly half the world's population will live in towns and cities at the turn of the century, and the figure could reach 61% by 2025 (See TABLE 2).

Given the growth of population, these percentages translate into very large numbers of people. Between 1980 and 2000, the number of urban dwellers is projected to increase by 1.1 billion; by 2025 there could be 5.0 billion people living in urban areas, 3.3 billion more than in 1980.

According to the United Nations Population Report, patterns of population growth inevitably mean that it will be in the developing countries that urban population will increase most rapidly. Urban settlements in the developing countries are at present growing three times faster than those in the developed countries, and 85% of the growth in the world's urban population between 1980 and 2000 is projected to take place in the developing countries. The figure for the period 1980-2025 is very close to 90%.

Of course, these averages conceal very significant regional variations, not just between developed and developing countries but also between the regions of the world (See FIGURE 1 and 2.1/2.2). Nevertheless, they herald a change of truly dramatic dimensions. In 1960, the developing countries as a group were still overwhelmingly rural, with only one in five of all people living in urban areas, and there were 30 countries in which less than 10% of the total population lived in urban settlements. By 1985, there were only 10 such countries, and by the year 2000 there may be no more than two (Bhutan and Cape Verde). Between 1960 and 1980, the number of countries in which urban residents became the majority almost doubled, from 45 to 82, and for the year 2000, it will rise to about 125. By the turn of the century, 40% of the population of the developing countries is projected to be living in urban areas.

As in the case of population growth, it is in today's poorest countries that urbanization will be particularly rapid. In the past 15 years the urban population of the developing countries as a whole has been growing at around 3.6% per annum.

Today, the urban population of the poorest countries stands at more than 1.8 billion. By the year 2000, the urban population of today's poorest countries is projected to reach 2 billions.

It is interesting to know that the world's rural population is also projected to grow for several more decades, but at much slower rates than the urban population. It numbered around 2

billion people in 1960, accounting for 66% of the world's population, and by 1980 it had increased by 35% to 2.7 billion. Today, the world's rural population is numbered around 3 billion.<sup>2</sup>

### 1.3 THE GROWTH OF LARGE TOWNS AND CITIES

Large cities are playing an increasingly important role in absorbing urban populations, especially in developing countries. In 1960, there were 114 cities with populations of 1 million or more, 62 of them in the developed countries. Some 29.5% of the world's urban population lived in such cities.

Between 1960 and 1980, the number of "million" cities doubled to 222, their numbers increasing from 62 to 103 in the developed countries<sup>3</sup> and from 52 to 119 in the developing countries (See TABLES 3.1/3.2 and FIGURES 3.1/3.2). In 1980, 34% of the world's urban population lived in cities with more than 1 million people. The number of "million" cities is projected to increase still further, to 408 in the year to 2000, and to 639 by 2025 (See MAP) .

Nearly the whole growth, some 87%, is projected to take place in the developing countries. By 2025, more than half of the urban population in the developing countries, some 2.0 billion people, is projected to be living in cities with more than 1 million people.

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). Global report on human settlements. Statistical annex. (Nairobi: 1995 Draft), 2-14.

<sup>3</sup> The Greco-Roman influence on the structures and urban milieu of the western world is undeniable: the city-state, focalizer of all important political, cultural, religious and economic matters. Rome probably the first city in history with 1 million inhabitants in the second century of our era, during its time was a powerful metropolis, imposing its principles and methods of a predominant centralized urban civilization throughout the provinces of its empire.

Some centuries later, for reasons of security, the fortress city, dominated by its medieval citadel or protected by surrounding walls and moats, makes its appearance in the western world, with popular quarters easily comparable to our present-day slum areas.

The discovery of the New World and the Colonial era will again modify the urban tissue and social stratification in the European cities, which subsequently over several centuries will be engaged in the adventure of international trade and exploitation of resources of other populations and exotic countries. The 19th century and its Industrial Revolution then plays a determinant role as turning point between a still massively rural Europe and a strongly urbanized 20th century Europe; and it will be the same for North America. But contrary to what is happening today in the Third World countries, western world mass urbanization is taking place gradually in phases, profiting the secondary cities, which are rich in energy sources, raw materials, and communication means, while the metropolis assume the role of prestige cities and national headquarters of administration and business. Moreover the shift of rural hand-labour towards the cities will be generated by a period of technological progress and considerable economic expansion: not generally the case today in the developing countries.

Most spectacular is the anticipated growth of cities with more than 4 million people. Such cities were unknown in history until only a century ago, when London reached that figure. The number of “4 million” cities is projected to nearly double by the year 2000, and to increase nearly four times by 2025. While the number of people living in these very large cities is expected to decline in relative terms in the developed countries, it is expected to increase significantly in the developing countries. By 2025, more than 1.2 billion people, 28.2% of the urban population of the developing countries could be living in “4 million plus” cities.

The growth of large cities does not, however, stop here. Beyond the “4 million” cities are “supercities” or “megacities” that are taking urban policy-making and planning into completely uncharted territory. In 1980, there were seven agglomerations with populations in excess of 10 million, three of them in the developed countries. If present trends continue, there will be 22 by the turn of the century, and all but 4 of them will be in developing countries. The largest, Mexico City and Sao Paulo, could have populations around 25 million. As would be expected, given population growth and urbanization trends, the poorest cities in the world are prominent among those that are projected to grow most rapidly and to very large sizes.

As we have just seen, these trends indicated the magnitude of the global problem posed by human settlements. At a time of financial crisis, an additional 30,000 urban dwellers must be accommodated every day in the developed countries, but developing countries have the task of providing shelter, services, and work in cities for an additional 140,000 people every day.

They must seek to do this when more than 300 million are already without productive employment, 700 million people live in absolute or relative poverty, and development prospects for many of them appear more constrained than ever before.

#### **1.4 A DISTINCTION: URBANIZATION AND URBANISM**

At this point is very necessary to make a clear distinction of what is URBANIZATION and URBANISM, two different but connected phenomena.

There are several ways in which the concept of URBANIZATION is derived from the concept of city.

**Sociological definitions.** Sociologists tend to define urbanization as a process of diffusion of the influence of urban social organization to a rural hinterland. The forms of influence referred

to in such definitions include matters of custom, the traits of persons living in urban centres, their specialized forms of social organization or technology, and the division of labour. A variant of this kind of definition is that of rural sociologists who view urbanization as the appearance of urban traits or characteristics in a rural or agricultural population. A rural population is said to be urbanized when it exhibits the way of life of an urban population. These definitions of urbanization differ somewhat from those of urban ecologists who depict a city as integrating a rural hinterland through the exercise of a dominance function. One problem with these definitions is that they confound the process of population concentration in territorial centres with the influence of a way of life common to them.

**Demographic definitions.** Demographers and urban ecologists regard urbanization as a process of population concentration. Eldridge defines it as concentration or by the increase in the size of individual concentrations. The concept of urbanization as a process of population concentration implies movement from a territorially dispersed population to a population concentrated in urban places. The process needs not to be continuous in time. Equilibrium points short of complete urbanization are possible as is a deconcentration or dispersion of the population.

The definition of urbanization as a process of population concentration in which there is an increase in the ratio of persons living in urban places to the total population in a territory is somewhat independent of both the size of the places and the number of points of concentration, an increase in the number of points of concentration, an increase in the size of the population in existing points, or in both. But there can be an increase also in both, the size of points of concentration and the number of points of urban concentration without an increase in the urbanization of a territory if the rural segment of the total population grows at a greater rate than the urban and if there is little migration to cities.<sup>4</sup> Thus, according to this definition, only when a larger proportion of the inhabitants of an area come to live in cities is urbanization said to occur.

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<sup>4</sup> New Catholic Encyclopaedia, 1st ed. (1967), Vol.14, s.v. "Urbanization" by A.J.Reiss Jr., 482-487. New Catholic Encyclopaedia, 3rd ed. (1979), s.v. "Urbanization by D.Pasquariello, 684-685.

**URBANISM** has been agreed upon to be as “a special mode of existence or way of life”. The work of L. Wirth “Urbanism as a way of life” is particularly representative of this approach. These include:

- a) a complex division of labour with a diversified occupational structure which forms a major basis of the system of social stratification;
- b) high territorial and social mobility;
- c) marked functional dependence of the population;
- d) substantial personal anonymity in interpersonal contacts and segmentation of social roles and role interactions;
- e) reliance on indirect modes of social control;
- f) normative deviance

A growing number of sociologists appear to share the point of view that the formal criteria of scientific definition of what is urban follows from the definition of an urban community in terms of its demographic uniqueness, that is its absolute size and density of settlement.<sup>5</sup>

## 1.5 CONCLUSION: A NEW WORLD IN GESTATION

More and more human beings are becoming an urban species. Population and urbanization growth are so much inter-dependent because of the great “availability” of the cities to absorb natural increase of population, rural-urban migration and even immigration which are the main driving forces underlying changes in urban areas.

Confronted with the facts and figures mentioned, we are forced to admit that human beings today already find themselves facing an entirely new situation: an urban world about to see the light; a life-style which already affects a growing number of individuals and groups, which propels nations towards a new type of society and a new social order; a factor which, above all in developing countries, will greatly modify the idea, objectives and strategy of socio-economic development, of human promotion, of religions. Many also firmly believe that we are seeing and taking part in the hatching of a new culture, a new religiosity and new era in the history of humankind.

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<sup>5</sup> A dictionary of the social science, by J. Gould-W.L. Kolb (Eds.), s.v. “Urbanization” and “Urbanism” (1964), 738-739.

This gigantic urbanization phenomenon primarily involves the poorest developing countries: of almost 3 billion city-dwellers living on our planet by the year 2000, 75% will be living in the cities of developing countries.

How can the churches make manifest the divine initiative of the Gospel in the concrete situation of urban growth? Pope Paul VI responded modestly in a message to a Congress on Urbanization and Pastoral Care: "The situation is so unprecedented that it calls for a new way of being Christian and of proclaiming the Gospel, consequently let us seek together....." So what I also can say is: "Let us seek together..." But in what direction?

The cities are a chaotic collection of vast and daily changing problems. Can we do more than identify some of the principal problems from a missionary-pastoral point of view which presupposes a specifically Christian theological vision of the city? Is there a theology of the city? Should we condemn the monstrous city as a place of human arrogance? And the situations are so different! In developed countries the old cities are declining in a context of de-christianization. In the cities of developing countries the role of the Church varies considerably: in some she plays a role of social integration and in majority; in others the church is only a tiny minority, in a different religions context, unable to influence the urban problems.

What kind of missionary-pastoral care and pastoral theology could be common to such different situations? No general pastoral guide can be adapted to fit all these different situations. Each Christian Community and Local Church has to start from the beginning, interpreting its presence and activity, and the signs of its own time, being responsible for its own answers, knowing that they are not building the celestial city of Jerusalem on earth.

We need a spirit of initiative, a sense of humour and peace. This spirit will lead us to a variety of missionary-pastoral programs emerging from the dialogue between the needs of the people in the urban area and the talents, creativity and spirituality of missionary-pastoral team members.



## CHAPTER 2

### URBANIZATION IN AFRICA

#### 2.1 THE RISE OF CITIES IN AFRICA: A BRIEF HISTORY

A criterion for an urban typology in Africa is that of history and culture. The book of O'Connor lists six types of African city.<sup>6</sup> Typologies, usually, help us to realize how varied in origins, patterns of growth and socio-economic functions are the African cities.<sup>7</sup>

**The indigenous city** was originally a centre of pre-colonial and pre-Islamic administrative and political power. It was usually associated with divine kingship and may even have been a mobile city, moving with the king and his court. Examples of this type of city are Addis Ababa in Ethiopia and many city of the Yoruba tribe in Nigeria. Colonial rule had the effect of stabilizing these indigenous capitals.

**The Islamic city** was the consequence of the immigrant religion of Islam and its characteristically urban culture. It is found in the savannah and Sahel regions of West Africa and on the East African coast. As O'Connor rightly points out, African initiatives remained dominant in the development of these towns and all, except the most remote, received stronger alien influences in the colonial period. The Muslim tradition is well represented in the smaller towns of Agadez and Abeche and in the capital cities Njamey and N'djamena of Niger and Chad; also the small Kenya coastal town of Lamu.

**The Colonial city** arose out of the colonial experience. These type dates from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when long-distance colonial trade began and lines of communication (particularly railways) were set up. In some cases, indigenous or Islamic cities were converted into colonial cities, but many were newly established. Such towns were originally administrative and the participation of the African majority was exercised within the framework of white minority rule. At independence, all the structures of this type of city were retained, as were the economic links with Europe. The racial zones that characterized the colonial city were

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<sup>6</sup> Anthony O'Connor, *The African City*, (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd. 1983), 28-41.

<sup>7</sup> I have partially used, as a way of summary for the urban typology of the African city, the one given in the book of Aylward, Shorter, *The Church in the African city*, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1991), 24-25. I have found it concise and explanatory.

maintained on a basis of wealth and class. The European residential zone is today occupied by Westernized Africans of high income. These type of urban centres includes not only most capital cities, but also the majority of the provincial towns.

**The European city** is simply a special case of the colonial city. It was colonial in the strict sense, being a centre of permanent European settlement. In this type of city the attempt was made to exclude long-term African residents. Often it was a replica of the modern town in Europe and reflected contemporary town-planning ideas. This type of town has proved most vulnerable in the long run to the dramatic influx of African migrants after political independence, and although independent governments attempted to carry on the policies of the colonial regime to deter migrants, the worst squatter and slum areas are found in this type of town. Examples of these cities are Nairobi in Kenya, Harare in Zimbabwe, Lusaka in Zambia.

**The Dual city** is a combination of the preceding types, two or more; for example, indigenous-colonial and Islamic-colonial. These are maintained as separate and distinct cultural sectors, with a measure of interaction between them. At independence, the distinction between the sectors often became vague. Examples are Khartoum in Sudan, Kano in Nigeria and until 1966, Kampala in Uganda.

**The Hybrid city** is one in which there is a convergence of different cultural sectors. In some cases, it was formerly a dual city. Examples of this city are Kumasi in Ghana, Lagos in Nigeria and Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso.

## 2.2 AFRICAN CITIES IN THE 1990S

Looking back over the period from the early 1960s, when most African countries obtained formal independence, to the mid 1990s, African cities have changed in at least three major ways:

1. their size, their spatial organization or morphology;
2. the quality and distribution of public services and infrastructure;
3. their employment base.

- 1) Size is the most obvious difference, since the population of most African cities have grown several fold over the last few decades: some have grown more than tenfold during this period. Two clear trends are visible.

First, the largest cities have continued to grow in population, although by the 1980s and 1990s their rates of growth have declined in comparison to the spectacular rates of growth during the 1960s and 1970s. And whereas the main component of the growth of the largest cities was rural-urban migration in the earlier post-independence period, natural increase is now the major element.

Second, in many countries, many or most medium-sized cities have been growing more quickly than the largest cities. This may very well be partly a result of the more difficult economic situation facing urban dwellers as a whole during the last decade and a half; but it may also be reinforced by the steadily deteriorating condition of infrastructure and public services in the largest cities.

- 2) The deterioration of services and infrastructure is another common trend of the 1990s.

This is to some extent an inevitable result of the fact that, as national (and urban) economies stagnate in absolute terms, at the same time as urban populations across the continent continue to grow the resources necessary for roads, sewers, water systems, schools and hospitals simply cannot keep up with the needs of the population. While there is a clear differentiation between the living conditions of the small groups of upper-level managers, foreign diplomats, senior politicians and successful businessmen on the one hand, and the growing numbers of lower-income urban dwellers on the other hand, there is also a general deterioration in the public services and infrastructure available to everybody.

- 3) Changes in labour market have been very dramatic since the 1960s. In the decade following independence, the educational system was expanding at every level, and African graduates had little difficulty finding good jobs in either the public service and its parastatal arms or the large scale private sector. Now, the public service is contracting everywhere, parastatals are being disbanded or privatized to cut back on the numbers of employees they support, and even university-educated professionals have great difficulty in finding secure employment, if in fact they obtain suitable employment at all. Partly as a counterpart to the decline in well-paid, secure employment, more and more urban

dwellers have found work in the "informal", or small-scale, unregulated sector where a bewildering variety of activities have developed to respond to the needs and financial capacity of the poor. These developments are reflected in the continued growth of spontaneous, popular housing areas; in the ever increasing numbers of ambulant hawkers and food sellers on every corner of many downtown African cities; in the increase in size and numbers of open-air markets; in the pervasiveness of small-scale, privately owned public transport vehicles that have taken over the market from the monopoly state-regulated bus companies; and in a virtual explosion of small trades and services dealing with almost every facet of life in the city. From an overly regulated city which reflected the needs of the colonial powers to control African urban life in every possible way, we are witnessing the birth of a new city form which reflects the new African reality. What could be called the "self-help city"<sup>8</sup> in the 1970s, might very well be called the "informal city" in the 1990s.

All these changes have had a major effect on city form. Where once the central business district, with its clean, wide streets and high-quality shops and offices was the focus of urban life - in both the large capital cities and in secondary cities as well - the centre of gravity has shifted.<sup>9</sup> Not only are central business districts more poorly maintained and more populated with small-scale hawkers and vendors than in the past, but more and more of the population is moving to the periphery of the larger cities, where land is cheaper and much more easily accessible, where shelter can be constructed economically using locally-available materials. This horizontal expansion of the African city into its rural hinterland not only attenuates major infrastructural elements such as piped water, electricity, sewerage and roads to a point where their efficacy is greatly reduced; but it also adds considerably to the costs of such services as education, health and social assistance.

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<sup>8</sup> Andrew Hake, African Metropolis. Nairobi: self-help city, (London: Sussex University Press, 1977).

<sup>9</sup> United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, op. cit., 1995 draft.

## 2.3 ELEMENTS OF THE PRESENT CITY GROWTH IN AFRICA

### *A choice of society*

The city is the reflection of a society, its basic options, its inequalities and injustices, its aspirations and setbacks. It is an incontestable fact that the majority of African countries are, at present, still followers of a western model of economic growth which only amplify these inequalities, and continues to widen the gap between a privileged rich minority and a larger poor mass of the population. Even in countries where efforts have been made to promote popular development programs aimed at all social level of the country, and even when "legislation is inspired by ideals of justice and sharing", in reality the western model continues to predominate.

In this system, the city becomes the prestige symbol of the life-style of a dynamic and fortunate minority, draining the country's resources towards an export-import economy highly vulnerable and burdened by the weight of foreign debts. A type of economy and high society which favour:

- expansion of intensive mechanized mono-culture;
- the replacement of traditional farm production and produce, by the "agribusiness" of the multinational societies;
- land concentration in the hands of a few;
- the creation of an industrial sector more in function of benefits, exploitation of abundant hand-labour and world market openings than based on the real needs of the country;
- the setting up of a costly bureaucratic system and highly corrupted;
- the tendency towards prestige spending and for armaments.

Ultimately, this economic model exploits rather than develops the country; generates poverty and unemployment, deprives the farmer of his subsistence means and consequently, instigates the rural-urban pull phenomenon, while feeding of the city masses depends more and more on the world market.

### ***Demographic growth***

In Africa, the average demographic growth rate is presently 2,5-3%, implying the doubling of the continent's population every 10-15 years. Even if a gradual lowering of the birth rate is foreseen towards the end of the century, by the year 2000 Africa will have 831 million inhabitants. This massive continent, considered scarcely populated, will be rapidly filled by a young population, and whose life expectancy will be longer than in the past.

Although the city birth rate is lower than the rural rate, this difference is largely compensated by a reduced mortality rate (in particular infant mortality), due to at least a minimum of basic medical care.

### ***Rural exodus and migration***

Population displacements has been a constant phenomenon in the history of mankind, and country exodus towards the city a positive element in the process of socio-economic development. Motivated generally by the search for a better ~~live~~, this exodus is a sign of ~~1~~ vitality.

In its present stage, the movement of African rural populations towards urban agglomerates, qualified by certain experts as the greatest mass migration movement of all times, is somewhat disconcerting due to its proportion and duration.

The situation is still more preoccupying if considering the underlying causes of this city-bound migration: while the growth of the western world cities was fed by industrial investments and the need for working hand labour, in the developing countries it is foremost the poverty of the rural world which forces man to go towards the city in search of fortune. Regardless of the misery of the popular sectors of the African cities, for millions of people the "city" represents the only and last chance to survive, because there is less death by hunger than in the countryside, even if the living conditions are deplorable. The migrant is not so much "attracted" by the city but as "rejected" by a rural world more and more poorer. This pattern is indicated by the terms "push-pull factors" and the imbalances of urban development in African countries come mostly from ~~vital~~ ~~than~~ the desire to reach the city. It is the preservation instinct one of the elements which signals the departure.

In many African countries, this rural exodus combines with large numbers of refugees and displaced persons (more than 24 millions altogether) who, for reasons of conflict, drought, disasters, clashes etc...take to the roads and for whom slums and shanty towns become a last haven and choice.

### ***City pull factor***

The city pull is very determining. Mass media, the radio, brochures, communication means, and expanding tourism bring the country closer to the city, and convey the image of a different world where everything is "easy and available". Those who leave, keep in touch with the village or family, and the letters and money sent back home feed the "city myth" and the desire to leave. Many people, through their mini-trades of quasi-illegal activities, support a family left behind in the village, and when returning there, this "migrant" often brings some money to buy a piece of land or build a house, and enough stories to nourish other dreams.

Moreover, socio-cultural factors also play a major role in this city pull. Basic education, more often urban than rural in content and methods, spurs departure. For many young people, the city is a means of freedom from tribal constraints, village customs and laws which they consider as an obstacle to their freedom of action. The city is also a factor for the emancipation and promotion of women, who can better insert themselves into the urban milieu as domestic helpers, shop-keepers, secretaries etc.... but also prostitution, illegal distillation etc. and arrange their life to their own taste; but above all they escape the constraints of the rural family context (taboos, made-marriages etc.), and the state of inferiority affecting her whole life. Today, the majority of families have relatives, friends or acquaintances in the city, thus representing another factor contributing towards an accelerated rural exodus, connected with the "pull-factor" it helps in the final decision of the new-comers.

But the reality that the majority of these migrants will find, it is extremely different!

## **2.4 INSIGHTS INTO THE LIFE OF THE SLUM**

In 1986, more than 600 million human beings (approx. 45% of urban world population) find themselves forced to live on the fringes of large "modern cities", outskirts areas commonly called "shanty towns" or "slums", a label which differs according to the country and language:

slums, bidonvilles, shanty towns, canico, musseque, tchika, moundoum el questir (zinc roof cities), brarek (literally hut areas).

But whatever the name, the reality and the common denominators are always the same: groups of irregular constructions, put together with recuperated materials (in particular flattened metal drums), unplanned and without even a minimum of preliminary infrastructures. A dense population living in over-crowded hovels, temporarily and illegally occupying unhealthy outlying land areas unsuited for real construction purposes, living day-to-day, with no steady work or simply surviving on “informal” and even illegal earning methods. In many cities misery permeates the city streets, even in the luxury areas placing themselves on the sidewalks under old blankets or plastic sheets or cardboard, and in most cases showing a sub-human conditions.

The relationship urbanization/slum areas is very important for grasping fully this phenomenon of urbanization in Africa. Today, in Africa and in general in the developing countries, does not exist situation of urbanization without slum areas.

The report given in ANNEX 1 on the slums and squatters in Africa shows the reality of the cities of this Continent. But Africa will face a more difficult time due to economical crisis and to an increase of poverty in the Continent as whole.

According to my personal experience of four years living my pastoral ministry in slum areas I tried to jot down some general elements common to African slum areas' life, culture, religiosity and economy.<sup>10</sup>

Contrary to a wide-spread idea, a slum area is not the “spontaneous” off-shoot of cities. Various important factors account for its birth and affect its growth, while its particular traits mark both individuals and families by imposing certain “primary” rules of social order, which are no longer of the village and certainly not of the affluent part of the city. When speaking of life in the slums, it is customary to mention only the negative sides which are real, anyway: the poverty, lack of water, electricity, services etc., the promiscuousness and disorder, etc...although not everything is negative in the “slum-urban village” life and its community

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<sup>10</sup> In ANNEX 2, I present the analysis of the slum of Korogocho (Nairobi - Kenya) as an example of this growing reality in Africa. It is based on my research-analysis of the area where I am exercising my ministry and has been integrated with analysis of some NGOs.



aspects. Often a sub-integrated zone is considered a "social-sore", less for reasons of humanitarian concern than as a good reason for its elimination.

This opens a great possibility for the African Churches to be part of this process of giving back dignity, creating awareness and responsibility in the slum-dwellers and in the society at large.

### **a) POVERTY AND WORK**

Evidently the first essential factor which is inherent to a slum, above all due to the shift of rural poverty<sup>11</sup> to the city, i.e.: those who have lost their lands, the over-flows of the rural world, come together in these areas with their hunger, lack of funds, and without work. Generally, poverty is more bearable in the urban areas than in the rural milieu. There is less chance of "starving" because the city offers more possibilities, if not of earning a living, at any cost, at least of surviving.

Work is the prime goal of all reaching the large city, since those who leave the village are already unemployed. Due to the economic crisis and the growing mass of unskilled "unemployed", there is little chance of finding a steady paying job in the modern industrial, commercial or tourist sectors. This is the same for the young who, with elementary diploma in hand, try to find place in the city among those already unemployed in these sectors. The only hope for the majority of the working age group is temporary or odd-job employment, i.e.: city

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<sup>11</sup> When I use the term poverty I refer to the comprehensive definition given by Robert Chambers in Poverty and livelihoods: whose reality counts?, an overview paper prepared for the Stockholm Roundtable on Global Change, 22-24 July 1994, and Townsend Peter in The International Analysis of Poverty, (New York: Harvester/Wheatsheaf, 1993), in Global Report on Human Settlements, op. cit., draft 1995, 3-12.

\* **Poverty** is more than low or inadequate income. It refers to lack of physical necessities, assets and income. A loss of assets is often what precipitates poverty.

\* **Deprivation** encompasses more than poverty as includes other dimensions such as isolation, vulnerability, and powerlessness. In physical terms, people can be considered deprived if they lack the goods and services that are ordinarily available in their society. Physical deprivation centres on the conditions experienced: poverty on the lack of income or other resources available that so often underpins deprivation. Powerlessness is important in that it weakens people's capacity to bargain for political and legal rights, access to services and goods allocated by governments.

\* **Vulnerability** means "defencelessness, insecurity and exposure to risk, shocks and stress". Many low-income households have sufficient income to avoid deprivation until they have to cope with a sudden shock - for instance a sudden increase in the price of staple foods or in school fees or in a serious injury or illness for an income earner. Poor housing and living conditions and a lack of basic services makes people particularly vulnerable to illness and injury.

sweepers, cleaners, diggers etc.; for women there is always possibility as domestic helpers or in the "informal sector" etc.<sup>12</sup>

In this line, it could be studied new approaches for the socio-economic relations between slum and rural world for creating a new national economy "urban-rural" combination.

However, precisely because it is spontaneous, and often flourishes on the fringes of rules and regulations (and of course even outside the law), this urban informal sector is also easy ground for abuse and exploitation of poverty in all its forms: miserable pay, long working hours, child labour, violence, delinquency, criminal association for theft, gambling, prostitution of every type, illegal distillation of alcohol, gangsterism, etc..

#### **b) THE DWELLING**

A slum inhabitant is generally a "squatter" - an illegal occupant on a land not his and subject to eviction at any time: while the slum is usually located close to major agglomerates on lands not suited for building purposes: marsh areas, steep and arid-hill sides, old public disposal dumps, road or railway embankments, etc... as without land ownership, deeds and legal recourse, one can only build a temporary shelter. Nevertheless this "occupancy" is not totally free of charge, as nearly always there are first-comers or "house owners" who usually abusively consider themselves "owners" entitled to extort occupancy fees. The local authorities and city administration use the pretext of this illegal occupancy to periodically order mass evacuation of the lands and destruction of the huts and hovels, and even as an excuse to abstain from improving the infrastructures and public services.<sup>13</sup>

With a few exceptions, (the slum, as any other community, has its social strata or class, its rich and profiteers), the family dwelling remains the hut built with city waste or recuperated materials.

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<sup>12</sup> The official term "INFORMAL SECTOR", refers to the countless mini-trades or family-run activities: side-walk stands, pushcart (mkokoteni in Kiswahili), peddlers, popular transport means (matatus etc.) and in general all the legal and illegal trades invented by a hungry urban population.

It is interesting to note that this sector of activities is drawing the attention of renowned and powerful authorities and organisms such as the World Bank, Unesco, ILO, because of its inherent vitality and dynamism, and the fact that it also represents an important job-creating instrument and leads to progressive development and intermediate technology in harmony with the real economic growth of the country and general interest of the population.

<sup>13</sup> A full and good report on demolitions in Nairobi is presented by NCKK, Nairobi Demolitions: what next?, (Nairobi: NCKK 1991).

With no space wasted, the "buildings" are arranged without any pre-ordained planning. Several families can share one dwelling, making room for relatives or friends as they arrive from the village, or even increasing the family income by taking in boarders. The hut serves mainly to sleep, as a deposit for family belongings or as mini-workshops. In fact, daily life takes place outdoors. Yet if given the right and a little opportunity, the slum dweller is capable of bettering his surroundings, and many damaged household gadgets of our consumer society (i.e.: sewing machines, tools, radios, etc...) can be repaired and made to function again in these "urban ghettos".

The popular housing projects or low rent buildings offered to the poor by the local authorities are of little interest because their number is limited and rents far beyond the financial means of these people. Anyway, small popular co-operatives for housing projects could be encouraged and stimulated by the churches to improve the conditions of the hut-structures of the area.

### **c) PUBLIC SERVICES**

For the most part, they are inexistent or limited to the strictest minimum. Many authorities of large cities refuse to face the issue and do their duties, under the pretext that the slum areas are located most of the times outside the legal city limits.

In most cases, the streets here are footpaths or beaten tracks, which when it rains turn into mud and smelly catch-all ditches. Sometimes a few electric lines are conceded by the city authorities or installed abusively by protected profiteers. Each family stores its own water fetched and carried over long distances, or taken from a pipe with two or three neighbourhood taps serving about 200 families.

It is no better in the education and health sectors. Very few schools except those run by voluntary agencies or denominational bodies, most of the times as informal schools. For this reason and for the high school-fees many of the children can not afford to attend classes. It is nearly impossible to learn a trade unless by apprenticeship and for secondary work.

A hospital is beyond their reach and often medical care depends on a distant clinic or dispensary, or the occasional passage of some voluntary or semi-official medical teams. Many diseases are present in the slums and Aids has become the fatal one.<sup>14</sup>

There is a great necessity on the side of the churches of answering even partially to these needs, first of all calling upon the responsibilities of the Governments and of the local administrative authorities. To create awareness, education and assistance for the sick, among the slum-dwellers and the members of the several churches present in the area.

#### **d) CIVIL, LAND AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

The slum dwellers have no other force except that which it has always represented in history - presence at the doors of the city of a mass of starving and homeless. Their force is their poverty and in a certain measure, the fear which they inspire.

From the administrative point of view, it is symptomatic to note that the slum is considered much more a social problem, like alcoholism, drugs, crime and violence, prostitution, street-children and less as a human group to be organized and helped to grow.

In an irregular position with regard to the law, the slum dwellers have no civil rights except those which the local authorities are prepared to concede. No progress can be achieved while the eviction fear persists. Assuring land or settlement rights through appropriate legislation (sale, rent or Community Land Trust) is essential in order to encourage family habitat improvements. It is a field where there is a need of trained personnel and specialized.

Generally slum-dwellers are without protection and recourse even of the police, and vulnerable to the exploitation of their poverty, the pressure of private interests or the activities of criminal gangs.

The women have a greater role to play in this particular context of slum because they contribute in a determinant way to the work required for the development of the shelters and

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<sup>14</sup> According to Dr. Oduol, chairman of Advisory Committee, Kenya Aids Non-governmental Organization Consortium, "an estimated 70% of women with HIV are between the ages of 14 and 24. Life expectancy is projected to decline from 59 to 43 years for men and 62 to 44 years for women by the year 2000. Only Kenya has 1600 Aids orphans and the figure is expected to rise to 600,000 by the year 2000 and close to one million by the year 2025. An estimated 30 to 40 per cent of babies born to infected mothers also get infected with HIV and most of them develop Aids and die within two years." In a study-research presented by Dr. Oduol at: Aids Policy Workshop at the Isack Walton Inn, Embu. Daily Nation, Friday, November 3, 1995.

infrastructures, family, education and community life. Their emancipation and promotion will help for a better future. "We want only to underline that the plans of development must be supported by official policies, but they must be grounded on communitarian planning which may grant to the women the rights to feel recognized, to strengthen in them the consciousness and the esteem of their merit; to celebrate the "diversity" as central mean, in the future, for every participation on the human settlements".<sup>15</sup>

#### **e) STREET-CHILDREN**

Ill feeling and bitterness towards an unyielding adult environment in which these children live often leads to violence and damaging of public and private property. The child is often in conflict with the law. They become easy targets for exploitation by thieves, black-marketers, the sex industry or just ordinary people who knowingly or unknowingly, take advantage of a large pool of cheap child labour. They are also open to many health hazards, becoming easy victims to communicable diseases, malnutrition and drug and solvent addiction. All this determines a necessity of a specific and new approaches for rehabilitation on the part of the local authorities and the churches.

### **2.5 URBANIZATION IS A CHALLENGE FOR AFRICA**

Nowadays, Africa is the world's least urbanized region, with only 30% of its population at present living in towns and cities. It has however, the world's highest urbanization rates, averaging around 4.6% per annum throughout the 1970s. The annual average rate of urbanization is not expected to decrease to 3% until after 2025.

The rates of growth of urbanization combined with high population growth rates will ensure a dramatic increase in the region's urban population. As shown in FIGURE 4, this is expected to increase from 104 million in 1975 to more than 765 million by the year 2020, and to 804 million by 2025.

Differences in urbanization growth rates within the countries and regions are shown in TABLE 2 and in FIGURE 4. Southern Africa is already predominantly urban, while in Eastern and Western Africa, only approximately 20-25% of the population live in urban areas. By the

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<sup>15</sup> In a thesis prepared by Paola Meardi, Il ruolo delle donne in un insediamento informale di Nairobi: per una prospettiva di pianificazione nella periferia delle città del Terzo Mondo, presented during the Academic year 1994-95, Politecnico di Milano, Facoltà di Architettura, 57.

year 2020, approximately 60-70% of the population of Northern and Southern Africa is expected to be living in towns and cities, while the figures of Eastern and Western Africa are projected to be 40-50%. The annual average rates of growth of urban populations is in Eastern and Western Africa, however, the highest in the region, although the rates for both are in decline. Growth rates in Eastern Africa were around 7% per annum during most of the 1970s and are unlikely to go down to 5% until after 2010. In Northern and Southern Africa, natural population increase will be the dominant factor in the growth of urbanization, while in Western and Eastern Africa, which have some of the fastest-growing cities in the world, rural-urban migration will be the most significant factor in the growth of towns and cities.

Aylward Shorter in his book "The Church in the African city" notes the frightening effect of the African city "on the peri-urban surroundings, on the human rejects that it casts aside and, above all, on the dehumanized urban rich that it cherishes."<sup>16</sup>

As we have already seen, the level of urbanization in Africa is still low in comparison with other continents, though the rate of growth is steadily increasing. Shorter, who between 1968 and 1975 made studies on urban social realities and in 1974 participated in the AMECEA - AACC Urban consultation in Nairobi<sup>17</sup>, is of the opinion that while "Africa's urban level today is under 30%, by the end of the century it will probably have reached more than 40%".<sup>18</sup> If we consider that in 1970 Africa had only seven cities with more than 1 million people and 137 towns of 100,000 compared with five years from now when the continent is expected to have 95 cities of 1 million, five of them with more than five million inhabitants, we can surely conclude that by the end of the century there will be greater number of people living in the cities of Africa.

African city dwellers come generally from rural areas; most of them young graduates or school leavers. Half of migrants are single, in search of work or opportunity for higher education. Shorter continues "the typical age structure of an African town is one in which around 85% are under the age of thirty, with young adults between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine accounting for 30%. 55% are between the age 1 and 19, 30% are between the age 20 and 29,

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<sup>16</sup> Shorter, op. cit., 137.

<sup>17</sup> A full report of this interdisciplinary Seminar held in Nairobi (Kenya) from February to October 1974, is in The Church and the city: training for urban ministry in Africa, sponsored and published by AMECEA - AACC in 1975.

<sup>18</sup> Shorter, op. cit., 8.

10% are between the age 30 and 40 and 5% are over 50 years of age.”<sup>19</sup> In cities men outnumber women. They are centres of family problems which accumulate as people experience cultural disorientation and secularisation,<sup>20</sup> faced with the temptation to bribe for a job or to buy the good will of influential people.

African cities could have contributed to the development of national culture if it did not have a dual society, a society divided between rulers and ruled, elite and masses, intellectuals and workers, rich and poor. Urban dwellers are also religiously divided into Muslims and Christians. In the same way, Christians see themselves as Catholics or Protestant with Protestants further divided into many denominations.

African urbanization, in its current phase, is a complex phenomenon involving numerous factors (demographic, economic, social, political, cultural, religious). It affects an entire country (including the rural area) and which has particular incidence on the actual process of city growth.

This process can only be understood in the context of an overall study and new approach of the vital problems of the nation: agriculture, nourishment, population, education, health, employment, transportation, etc....and can be controlled only within the framework of an “integrate” development plan for the entire country.

For the sake of national cohesion there is an urgent need to promote programmes which instil pride and contribute to the building of a culture of justice, peace, unity, harmony and social integration for counter-acting the increasing poverty.

As Alvin Toffler rightly underlines, this new situation brings a new urbanism in the African cities “...a new civilisation is emerging in our lives and cities...This new civilisation brings with it new family styles; changed ways of working, loving, and living; a new economy; new political conflicts; and beyond all this an altered consciousness as well a new religiosity...The dawn of this civilisation is the single most explosive fact of our lifetimes.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>20</sup> Study confirmed by Larry Nyemeier and others, Summary of the Nairobi Church survey, (Nairobi: DayStar University College, 1989), 9-39.

<sup>21</sup> Alvin Toffler, Power Shift, (New York: Bantman Books, 1991), 9.

## 2.6 AFRICA.....TOWARDS THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

But how will be the future for the African Continent? Will poverty continue to increase or we can have some hopes? How will the expectations of those who will inhabit the Continent be met?

We are at the end of an era. Six years ago (1990), with the recent process of democracy, in Africa people spoke of the "second liberation". Last year (1995) people start to look towards the year 2000, hoping that the new millennium will be kinder to the people of the African continent.

In one of his books, Paul Kennedy says: "It is impossible to say with certainty whether global trends will lead to terrible disasters or be diverted by astonishing advances in human adaptation" What is sure is that we live in a world troubled and fractured, whose problems deserve the serious attention of politicians, church leaders and the public at large. There is also a warning: if the present challenges are not met, "humankind will have only itself to blame for the troubles, and the disasters, that could be lying ahead."<sup>22</sup>

Today Africa is the locus of the world's demographic explosion. In 1950, Africa's population was only half the size of Europe's population; by 1985, Europe and Africa each had 480 million people. Currently Africa's population stands at an estimated 650 million, but by 2025, it is expected to reach 1 50 million.<sup>23</sup>

Professor George Kinoti of the University of Nairobi, in his book, "Hope for Africa", refers to a study covering the period 1988-90 made by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 1992, which says that, food and not luxurious consumer goods, must be African concern. During the period studied, some 168 million Africans were victims of chronic hunger.<sup>24</sup> By comparing the results, within just one decade there was an increase of 40 million people suffering from hunger.

In early 1980s the World Bank, applying austerity measures, introduced Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) to "help" Third World countries balance income and expenditure.<sup>25</sup> SAPs

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<sup>22</sup> Paul Kennedy. Preparing for the Twenty First Century. (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 349.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>24</sup> George Kinoti, Hope for Africa, (Nairobi: AISRED, 1994), 16.

<sup>25</sup> It is a fresh news that ".....the World Bank may be forced to suspend project funding in poor countries by July 1996 due to donor fatigue and the bank's failure to get money for the International



became a matter of deep concern, firstly because they focused only on short term objectives; secondly, they favoured agriculture instead of industrialization; thirdly, they made life harder for the poor and marginalized; fourthly, they were used as instruments to recolonize developing countries.<sup>36</sup>

The UNDP Human Development Report reflects on the present situation: "Between 1979 and 1985 the number of African people living below the poverty line increase of one-fifth in the entire developing world. That number is projected to rise rapidly in the next few years from around 250 million in 1985 to more than 400 million by the end of the century".<sup>27</sup>

Desmond Tutu two years ago said: "The magnitude of the economic crisis is manifest in rising costs of living, adverse commodity prices, a ruthless free market, the unfair and heavy debt burden, the falling prices of raw materials, the over-burdening of social services, rising unemployment especially among women and young people, unacceptable high mortality and morbidity rates among children and women and noticeable increase in general abuse and violence".<sup>28</sup>

According to Toffler, Africa is also falling behind other continents because people are unable to feed themselves. It is a shame to read that in the past two and half decades, food production throughout most of the world rose steadily, but not in Africa. Enjoying the status of a food exporter at the beginning of the 1970s, Africa became a food importer in the 1980s. "In 1986 African nations imported more than twice the amount of cereal grains they had (imported) 10 years earlier, while food aid in cereals had more than quadrupled."<sup>29</sup>

Shortage of water is also a serious problem. Vast portions of the region do not receive sufficient rainfall. Cultivation must be supported with irrigation, which if not carefully handled contributes to further erosion. "About 15% of Southern Africa is degraded because of water eating away at the land."<sup>30</sup> There are two other types of erosion: one cause by deforestation and the other by strong winds in countries like Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and

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Development Authority (IDA). Mr O'Brien warned yesterday that poor countries must look for ways to be self-reliant..." in Daily Nation, Friday, January 19, 1996, 1.

<sup>26</sup> Kinoti, op. cit., 25.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 21

<sup>28</sup> Desmond Tutu, Sermon delivered in Kisumu, September 1993.

<sup>29</sup> Jessica T. Mathews, "Hope for a troubled Continent" (reprinted from World Monitor, The Christian Science Monitor monthly) 1988, 4.

<sup>30</sup> World Bank, "Environment in Southern Africa", World Development report 1993, 109.

Zimbabwe Soils eroded in Africa go to the sea if carried by water, but some of it also reaches South America when carried by the wind. Soil degradation in Africa is both cause and consequence of poverty.

Africa is being marginalized. It is no longer a secret that the fall of the Berlin Wall in October 1989 and the end of the Cold War started a severe loss of Western interest in Africa. Robert Kaplan predicted that "21<sup>st</sup> century France will be withdrawing from West Africa as she gets increasingly involved in the affairs of Europe."<sup>31</sup> What he predicted about subsidies has already happened. He foresaw that France would cease to support local currencies in Benin, Cameroon, Gabon, Togo, Niger, and the Ivory Coast. In January 1994 citizens of 13 countries in Africa woke up and discovered suddenly that their currency had been devalued by 50%. Britain seems to be following the same path. The USA, which never had colonies in Africa, has also changed its behaviour. Aid to Africa has been drastically reduced. It is known that "nine of twenty-one US foreign aid missions to be closed over the next three years are in Africa."<sup>32</sup>

Due to Structural Adjustment Programmes, 4 million children born in Africa last year will not live to age five. One-third of Africa's children are severely malnourished. One in three goes without schooling.<sup>33</sup>

A 1992 World Bank study reports that 220 million Africans south of the Sahara live in absolute poverty. Eighteen of the World's 20 poorest countries are in Africa. Due to war, drought, famine and desertification, food production has dropped to a level 20% below the 1970 levels.<sup>34</sup> The number of people who cannot afford even two meals a day is increasing.

There is a great economic pressure from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization (GATT). Many of Africa's nation-states miss their Cold War

<sup>31</sup> Robert Kaplan, "The coming anarchy", *Atlantic Monthly*, February 1994, 52.

<sup>32</sup> Kennedy, *op. cit.*, 64

<sup>33</sup> Jose Belo Chipenda, *General secretary's report to the Dodoma, Tanzania Consultation*, (Nairobi: AACC, January 1995), 12.

<sup>34</sup> The *Daily Nation* of Monday, 22 January 1996, reported that "The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has warned of a difficult year ahead for Africa. Its director-general Diouf, says in a report that there are low food stocks in the major donor countries, pointing to a sharp decline in food reserves. The report says food aid allocations to sub-Saharan Africa had dropped as world cereal supplies tightened. Last year, food aid shipments reduced to the lowest levels ever in 20 years...the report predicts further production decline this year and adds that given the steep increase in world cereal prices, many of the 44 low income food deficit countries in Africa will be hard pressed to import food."

sponsors. There is an exaggerated number of trained soldiers and weaponry available to any warlord with resources and determination.

Despite the momentous changes taking place in the world, Africans continues to be "notorious, religious" Despite the problems described above, the continent is still the font of African Traditional Religion and fertile ground for the spread of Judaism, Eastern religions, Islam and Christianity.

Islam which for long time was confined to North Africa, has become very active in Black Africa during the past twenty years. Mosques, clinics, cultural centres and bookstores are being built in traditionally Christian locations. There is a sense within the Muslim community that the opportunity for Islamic expansion is at hand. In general, Muslim fundamentalist leaders take strong exception to the globalisation of western values; to this end they are establishing Islamic political parties in countries where their influence is gaining popular support.

In a recent study of Paul Gifford,<sup>35</sup> it is interesting to identify the new trends in African Christianity, noting that the most significant development within African Christianity during the last decade has been the mushrooming of new churches, a phenomenon comparable only to church growth in Latin America. "In any major African city, from Harare to Freetown, from Nairobi to Kinshasa, these new churches are to be found every Sunday in schoolrooms, cinemas, theatres, halls and hotel conference rooms."<sup>36</sup> They grow rapidly and become big churches in a very short period of time. This new dimension in African Christianity is seen by some as a threat to Catholics, Orthodox, Mainline and African Independent Churches because they use effective communication methods. Unfortunately, instead of evangelizing non-Christians, these new churches are drawing their membership from baptised members of long-established churches.

A survey conducted by the Ghana Evangelism Committee in 1986-87 and repeated five years later, revealed that, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, the Musama Disco Christo Church, the Church of the 12 Apostles, the African Faith Tabernacle, the Anglican Church and the Catholic Church suffered membership declines respectively of 14%, 17%, 22%, 23%, 2% and

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<sup>35</sup> Paul Gifford, "Some recent developments in African Christianity", *African Affairs*, 93 (1994), 514.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 515.

2%. Growing churches were Methodist, with 2% and Presbyterian Church with 17%. The big winners were the Assemblies of God, 87%; the Church of Pentecost, 31%; the Apostolic Church, 27% and the Christ Apostolic, 36%.<sup>37</sup>

These new churches draw their membership from young people in the cities. This is a new phenomenon. In the 1960s and 1970s African churches were rurally oriented. Even if they had representative congregations in the cities, their presence was intended primarily to provide pastoral care on behalf of the "mother church" in the rural area. The church in the city was the tenuous custodian of tested traditional values, binding worshippers to the land, the vernacular and the faith of their fathers/mothers.

Now, for the first time in Africa, there is a generation of people born in the city, with weak links to the village of their parents. Because of the demands of their studies and the urge to seek jobs within the global market, these young people are fluent in English, French or Portuguese with only limited knowledge of their parent's linguistic or social background. They live in a different environment. So far the church has not learned how to cope with these new realities. It is this situation that makes the new churches, ministering in one of the European languages, so attractive to young people in a non-hierarchical manner.

A new wind of optimism surrounded Africa in 1990 with the process of democracy and multi-partyism. New enthusiasm permeated the continent when it was believed that Africa was at long last achieving its second and more authentic liberation. Expectations were high, but for 15 months. Africa was hanging between the ballot and the bullet, similarly in Togo, Zaire, Nigeria and, most devastatingly, in Burundi and Rwanda. The Rwanda genocide of one million people silenced the clergy and destabilised the Church. From April to July 1994, horrible things happened in Central Africa leaving people asking: "Is the Church in Africa, Protestant and Catholic, able to recover from the shock of the Rwanda genocide or must it determine to withdraw altogether from politics? After taking stock of what is happening in Africa, is it still possible to consider the state as the source of all social good?"<sup>38</sup>

Africa is a continent in crisis. Every single country is in need of people who are credible in their moral integrity, who can be heard when they speak, a light shining in the darkness.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 526-527.

<sup>38</sup> Jose Belo Chipenda, op. cit., 17.

African are faced by a variety of internal and external threats: to life, to justice, to peace, to the environment, to the unity of the Church, to the family, to tolerance. All of these are due to the struggle for power, grasping desperately for diminishing resources.

## 2.7 CONCLUSION: THE CHURCH FACING THE AFRICAN CITY

It is in this Continental context that urbanization is growing fast. Africa will have to face a new era with great hope. And many people will come to the cities!

Even to the Church is asked to answer to this reality!

Since long time ago, many voices in Africa have arisen requiring from the Church a new plan for the urban mission and new methods of pastoral activities. Like Fr. B. Clechet wrote that "urbanization and industrialization call for a new pastoral approach" and he concluded "...the Church needs to plan: not only building centres, but also revising and adapting new methods of pastoral activities".<sup>39</sup> Eight years later, the AMECEA Bishops stated: "The study Conference (of 1976) makes us once more aware of the lack of specific pastoral approaches to adequately meet the life situations of urban peoples and communities. The Conference failed to arrive at any substantial conclusions in this regard. However, the principle of building Christian Communities (SCCs) would seem to provide the key to renewed pastoral approaches in urban areas".<sup>40</sup> Fr. Aylward Shorter has pointed out that the Christian task and mission in Africa is the evangelization of a Continent in the process of rapid urbanization. It is the evangelization of the urbanization process itself: "if the Gospel of Christ makes a lasting impact in Africa, it will be because it has helped the urban process to become less invidious and less unjust, more human and more enduringly creative. It will have given the African town a soul."<sup>41</sup> This soul is something that at the moment is lacking because of confusion and disorientation in the citizens and the pastoral agents. P.C. Lloyd in "New Elites of Tropical Africa" wrote "Thousands of Christians already streaming into the city can either become witnesses of Christ to the city community or they can lose their faith in the diaspora situation. Will the Church be once again too late or will she recognize the signs of the times and respond in time?"<sup>42</sup> How effectively did we in African Church respond to the happenings of the

<sup>39</sup> Bernard Clechet, "Town Apostolate", *AFER*, 2 (1968), 170-172.

<sup>40</sup> "AMECEA Plenary Conference, 1976. Conclusions", *AFER*, 5 (1976), 254.

<sup>41</sup> Shorter, *op. cit.*, 148.

<sup>42</sup> P.C. Lloyd, "New Elites of Tropical Africa", *AMECEA Documentation Service*, 10/74/3, (1974) 2.

1960's, 70's and 80's? How effectively did anybody respond? That is the point! It was not just the Church...but the Church missed many opportunities to make a difference. And one of the main reasons, was that we in the Church did not expect things to be different!

If we could have anticipated even some of the many events and being able to bring the Christians along, and get them in touch with what was behind, the Church could have been much more present and much more a part of the answer, instead of dragging along behind. We missed enormous opportunities to make a difference and be a difference because we did not anticipate!

This is the hot question to which the African Church at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has to give a prompt answer.

The Church must put in a lot of efforts to seriously study in a systematic manner, the actual phenomenon of urbanization from all points of view: economic, cultural, religious, moral, educational, environmental and political. It is only from conclusions of such interrelated serious studies that effective remedies can be expected.

The Church must come up with a well-formulated strategy of apostolate and presence in urban areas, and essentially in the slums of Africa's cities. Such apostolate and presence demand really a complete rethinking of most of the old pastoral methods. It demands a new way of preparing and even selecting pastoral agents for urban evangelization. It demands a new ecclesiology fit for urban areas and mentality; a message that is Good News for city dwellers and the manner is communicated. It demands more democratic ways of dealing with city people, new ways of communication closer to them, creating meaningful relations and welcome the new-comers.

Fr. John Waliggo says that "the strategy that is demanded is for the Church to be the first in the slums, so that whoever comes, finds it there. She must trust the maturity of the pastoral agent to deal with the situation as he or she judges fit. There must be ample room for creativity and innovation. The life-style of the city pastoral agents must be completely in tune

with that of the people served. They must experience the same insecurity, fear, want and inconveniences in order to be credible<sup>43</sup>

City apostolate demands not only inculturation but inter-culturation where all people of different tribes, races and backgrounds can fully participate and create a "rainbow People of God" as Desmond Tutu likes to call this sort of mosaic.

Urban ministry demands strong ecumenism and religious dialogue. It is to unite people, help them to live peacefully, respect each other's cultural and religious traditions, calm down fundamentalism, encourage common strategies and actions.

The mission for the Church in Africa at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to come up with a new and relevant theology for the urban people, springing up from the real experience of the poor and slum-dwellers a huge number and the majority in the African cities. From this new theology will be based a new Presence, a new Message and new missionary/pastoral methods.

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<sup>43</sup> John Mary Waliggo, "Urbanization in Africa: challenges for the Church", Newsletter Archdiocese of Nairobi, 11 (1994), 4. It was also presented as lecture during the African Synod panel discussion on 15/4/1994.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **THE EMERGENCE OF THE CITY IN THE BIBLE, CHURCH HISTORY AND MAGISTERIUM**

The building of cities is not a modern phenomenon. And God has always been present in them with His Plan of Salvation through His ministers, the prophets, Jesus, Paul, the Church etc. and all the different people involved in one way or another in the ancient cities. In the period just after the Flood several cities are mentioned, including the infamous Babel. The roots of urbanisation can be traced back almost to the dawn of human history.

In the Bible we find that there are many cities. There are at least 1400 references to cities from Genesis to Revelation

But what does the term “city” mean in the Bible? Can we make any valid connection between these early settlements and the huge industrial, political and economic, populated centres of our time? The Hebrew word translated “city” can refer to various kinds of settlements, some of which were probably no more than walled villages. So we will need to take care how we apply biblical texts to modern cities. But the essential function of cities has not changed. Even the earliest cities were power centres with a significant influence on the surrounding area. Indeed, as is often the case with prototypes, some features of city life can be seen more clearly in these early cities than in later more complex ones.

What then does the Bible mean by the term “city”?

- 1) Cities, especially capital cities, are often regarded as representing nations. When the prophets speak to Damascus, their words are for the whole nation of Syria. Cities are national focus points. The Bible recognises their strategic significance and the Church needs to do the same.
- 2) Cities are regarded as “corporate personalities”, not just collections of individuals. Judgement, responsibility for sin, repentance and blessing take place at city level as well as among individuals. If a prophet calls a city to repent, it is the city as a whole which must respond. Some citizens may be personally guilty, others may be tolerating sin, still others may be its victims, but they are all part of a sinful city.



- 3) The Bible speaks not only about various cities but about “the city” as an institution, cultural or spiritual reality. Particularly in Hebrews and Revelation the city is a symbol as well as a geographical feature. The city stands for the world without God, secular culture, the exclusion of moral and spiritual absolutes. Each city has unique characteristics and its own distinctive history, but all cities manifest the same “urban spirit”. This is clear from the final chapters of Revelation: all the cities of Earth are identified with Babylon the Great. When she falls, they all collapse too. The city is the world in a concentrated form.
- 4) The Bible is not anti-urban. It sees value and corruption in both city and countryside. Its vision of the future contains both urban and rural elements, though the centrepiece is the City of God. But the Bible recognises that there is something distinctive about the city, a difference of degree. The whole world is under the control of the evil one (1 Jn 5:19), but his headquarters appears to be in the city. Sin is present everywhere, but it is concentrated and reaches its most virulent form in the city.

### 3.1 THE OT'S STRATEGY IN THE CITY: JUDGEMENT AND HOPE

The Old Testament introduces us to many cities, and reveals more of the Lord's response to their building. The city is always under judgement, but there are a number of more positive comments also. Cities are products of human creativity, skill and industry. Several passages celebrate the beauty, architecture and culture of cities. The order and security they provide are valuable. Even when judgement is pronounced over the city, it is with sadness not pleasure. The biblical writers are not anti-urban, contrasting the horrors of the city with the merits of rural areas. The aversion many Christians have to the city is not justified by biblical evidence.

There is potential in the city for both good and evil. Whatever the motives behind the building of cities and whatever they symbolise, human beings made in God's image cannot help producing things in value, even in their rebellion and independence. Cities are worth saving. They may be built to the glory of men and women rather than the glory of God, but there is a glory about them which is worth redeeming. God's heart for the cities of the human race is not to destroy them but to redeem them. This is of fundamental significance for urban mission.

## ***THE CITY UNDER JUDGEMENT***

The O.T. is realistic about the sins of the city. The prophets highlight many different sins and each city has its own particular weakness (the militarism of Nineveh, the sexual perversion of Sodom, the gross affluence of Tyre). But from the hundreds of references five main sins stand out.

1. Oppression - The unjust treatment of the poor by the rich, the weak by the strong, the citizens by their rulers. Using violence, bribery, slander and extortion, oppressors dominate the cities. Many prophets warn of judgement on this behaviour. "Woe to the city of oppressors, rebellious and defiled" (Zp 3:1).
2. Idolatry - This was not confined to the city; at times the countryside was full of idols. But the prophets speak out clearly against urban idolatry. Jeremiah imagines people walking past ruined Jerusalem and asking, "Why has the Lord done such a thing to this great city?" The answer they will receive is that the city "worshipped and served other gods" (22:8-9).
3. Bloodshed - Cities are places of violence where the weak suffer and innocent blood is shed. Twice Ezekiel calls out, "Woe to the city of bloodshed" and declares that "the blood shed is in her midst: she poured it on the bare rock; she did not pour it on the ground, where the dust would cover it" (24:6-9).
4. Sexual immorality - Sodom and Gomorrah are infamous for their sexual perversion but many other cities were centres of vice and sexual sin. In one of the most revolting chapters in the Bible, Ezekiel compares the immorality of Jerusalem unfavourably with the behaviour of Sodom (ch. 16). It is worth noting that in this chapter, as elsewhere, the sins of injustice and sexual immorality are exposed and condemned together. There is a tendency in the Church to emphasise one at the expense of the other, but sexual purity and social justice are both important to urban life.
5. Pride - It is the arrogance and stubbornness of the city which hinder it from responding to God. Zephaniah captures the spirit of the city when he writes of Nineveh: "This is the carefree city that lived in safety. She said to herself 'I am, and there is none besides me'" (2:15). This is the language of divinity and of pride.

### ***GOOD NEWS FOR THE CITY: HOPE AND LOVE***

The good news is that though he hates the city's sins God loves the city and has not abandoned and disowned it

The city is under judgement, but judgement is not inevitable. God has a strategy to rescue the city.

He will act to reclaim it for the Kingdom with his strategy of love and hope.

1. God loves the city Scattered through the O.T. are several references to this. His love for Jerusalem is well-known but Damascus also is called "the town in which I delight" (Jer 49:25), and Jonah is rebuked for failing to share God's concern for Nineveh. A vital ingredient of urban ministry is a God-given love for the city.
2. The ministry of the prophets "Listen" cries Micah (6:9) "the Lord is calling to the city". Though often his call was to warn of judgement, the point is that God cared enough for the city to send messengers to it. Several prophets, in fact, received revelation of urban life as it could be with the Lord at its head. The city of God is the central feature of the O.T. vision of a restored land, a city without walls but totally secure.
3. God uses the city Psalm 107 celebrates the benefits of city life, contrasting it with life in the desert and hostile countryside: it is portrayed as God's solution to human needs. In spite of its rebellious origin, God graciously adopts the city and uses it to rescue the needy. This gives us hope. "The very fact that God has called the city into his service - man exclusive work and a spiritual power in rebellion against God - is a proclamation of coming reconciliation.
4. The city of refuge The setting up of the Cities of Refuge (Josh 20:1-9) is a very significant example of God's willingness to use the city. He not only uses cities built by men and women, he even uses them in a similar way. Cain had built a city as a refuge. Now God was establishing refuges, but with the significant difference that they were only for inadvertent killers. Cain would not have found refuge there. This is redemptive, to make use of the city in a way which honours the original motive behind its building but without compromise. The city is not transformed out of all recognition: unrighteous features are removed, but all that is positive and useful about it is affirmed.

5. The city of Jerusalem. The centrepiece of God's recovery plan in the O T was Jerusalem. His response to the development of cities was not to retreat to the countryside but to establish his own city. Jerusalem, the city of God, was intended to be a radical alternative, a city set on a hill to show what a city could be like. What Israel was to be at a national level, Jerusalem was to be at an urban level, a model of justice, joy and peace

Israel had not been a city-building nation. Apart from the enforced construction of cities in Egypt, they had not started building their own cities until the time of Solomon. They had inherited their earlier cities from the Canaanites. God had in a remarkable way protected them from the lure of city-building programme. Jerusalem therefore was not of Israelite construction. Indeed it was one of the last cities in Canaan to be captured by Israel. God chose for his city a place that had no history, that could give Israel no reason to take pride in their achievements. The crucial thing about this city was not its history but its destiny.

Jerusalem was a concrete sign that God had not rejected the city, a working model of the New Jerusalem that was coming.

One of the tragedies of O.T. is that Jerusalem fails to fulfil its destiny. God's recovery plan seems stopped. As the O.T. draws to a close the city of Jerusalem is a pale shadow of its former glory. The walls have been rebuilt and the temple restored, but there is little vision or prospect of Jerusalem influencing anyone.

But still the prophets give us hope. Jerusalem may have failed but God's purpose will be fulfilled. A new Jerusalem will come which will demonstrate God's purpose for urban life. The recovery plan will take off again: "Today in the city of David a Saviour has been born" (Lk 2:11). With the coming of Jesus God's rescue plan for the human race and its cities enters a new phase.

### **3.2 JESUS' MISSION: A RENEWED GOD'S PLAN**

Jesus' ministry had a significant urban dimension to it. We are accustomed to think of his miracles in rural settings, but it was in the cities (of Korazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum) that most of his miracles were performed (Matt 11:20). These were signs of God's Kingdom coming near to the cities and demonstrations of his love for their citizens. Jesus embodied God's persistent mission to the city.

But the cities refused to repent and welcome Jesus. Matthew and Luke both record his solemn words to them as he stands in the prophetic tradition. He compares them with the cities of Tyre, Sidon and Sodom, all of whom would have repented if they had seen these miracles. He pronounces a "woe" against them and warns them that on the day of judgement they will receive a more severe punishment than those cities because they had rejected him (Mt 11 20-24; Lk 10 12-15).

Jesus is the supreme revelation of the Father's character and will. But how does he minister in the city?

1. Jesus addresses cities rather than individuals. He treats them as corporate entities responsible for their lack of repentance. It is not that no individuals in the cities responded to him but that the cities as a whole rejected him.
2. Jesus speaks the word "woe" to the cities, a solemn denunciation not used lightly in the Bible but normally aimed at those who rely on a security other than God. Jesus agrees with the prophets that the city is under judgement.
3. He adds to the list of the sins of the city another sin - the failure to recognise God's Son. The miracles were signs that pointed to him but they had been ignored. Elsewhere Jesus compares his own generation with the city of Nineveh: that city repented at Jonah's preaching but contemporary cities had refused one who was greater than Jonah and thus invited condemnation.
4. The comparison between ancient and contemporary cities is a warning to us that we dare not relegate what the Bible says about the nature of the city to ancient history. Whatever cities are characterised by the same sins and worse. Whatever improvements modern cities might claim, the biblical trend is a decline into greater wickedness and degeneracy - except where the Kingdom of God breaks in.
5. There is a word of hope hidden in what is otherwise a solemn passage. Jesus says "if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day" (v.23). Sodom could have been saved! There was a way, unavailable at that time, for a ministry of miracles would have led to repentance. There is hope for wicked cities when the power of God is manifested.

Jesus also acknowledge the special place Jerusalem once had in the plans of God. He tells his disciples no to swear by it, because it is the "city of the Great King" (Mt 5:35). As he approaches the city he cries out, "if you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace...you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you" (Lk 19:42-44).

Though he predicts his destruction, Jesus' love for the city is very evident. He weeps over it as he speaks of its citizens being slaughtered and its buildings demolished (v.41). He laments over it: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem....how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing" (Mt 23:37). Jesus is no less severe in his judgement than the Old Testament prophets, but there is a new revelation of God's love for the city here.

But Jerusalem has rejected God's love. Throughout its history it has killed prophets and now it will be the place of Jesus' execution. Jesus wanders no longer but "sets his face to go to Jerusalem" (Lk 9:51), saying "surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem" (Lk 13:33). The tragedy of Jerusalem continues, her final act as the special city of God is to reject and crucify his Son. In doing this she shows herself to be like every other city.

His journey to the city is in marked contrast to the pride of the city. He rides on a borrowed donkey, stopping only to weep over the city. When he arrives he speaks about injustice and robbery and drives the money-changers from the temple. The characters at the centre of the stage are children shouting his praises and the blind and lame he heals, none of whom counted in the city. This is all he does in Jerusalem. He ignores the rich and powerful, neither threatening nor trying to appease them. He will not even stay the night in the city but goes to Bethany. God's mission to the city does not take the form we would expect: the little people have a key place in it.<sup>44</sup>

A few days later the whole city is in uproar again. The crowd which had shouted "Hosanna" before was now a cold city shouting "Crucify". Jesus is condemned and then taken outside the city walls to be crucified. The city has rejected God once more.

But it was the death of Jesus outside the city that was the unexpected climax of God's rescue plan for the city. His refusal to compromise with the power of the city, his death and

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<sup>44</sup> Murray Stuart, City Vision, a biblical view, (London: Daybreak, 1990), 41-48.

resurrection broke its power and released men and women from its grip. Paul writes about Jesus that “having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross” (Col 2:15). The city is one of the powers that has been defeated and exposed through the death and resurrection of Jesus. The city is now caught up in God’s great purpose of reconciling all things in heaven and earth to himself (Col 1:20). The city will be redeemed, on the basis of the cross, to be a blessing to the human race, a place of justice and joyful security. With Jesus himself as its foundation stone God’s recovery plan is back on track.

### **3.3 PAUL AND THE NEW MISSION TO THE METROPOLISES**

The characteristics of the Pauline understanding of mission manifest themselves first of all in what one may call Paul’s “missionary strategy”

During the first decades of the early Christian movement there were, speaking in general, three main types of missionary enterprises:

- 1) the wandering preachers who moved from place to place in the Jewish land and proclaimed the imminent reign of God;
- 2) Greek-speaking Jewish Christians who embarked on a mission to Gentiles, first from Jerusalem (often forced to leave the city because of persecutions) and then from Antioch;
- 3) Judaizing Christian missionaries who, according to 2 Corinthians and Galatians, went to already existing Christian churches in order to “correct” what they regarded as a false interpretation of the gospel.

For his own missionary program Paul takes over elements from the first two types mentioned above; at the same time he modifies these elements decisively. Perhaps one could say that his own understanding of his mission is best expressed in a passage toward the end of his letter to the Romans (15:15-21).

From Acts one may get the impression that Paul was, almost exclusively, an itinerant preacher. This is not correct, particularly in view of the fact that in some places he stayed for longer periods (about one and half years in Corinth, two to three years in Ephesus). It may therefore be more appropriate to say, that Paul was engaged in mission in certain strategic centres. He

frequently speaks of his mission as directed toward various countries and geographical regions. There is undoubtedly a certain method in his selection of these centres.

He concentrates on the district or provincial capitals, each of which stands for a whole region: Philippi for Macedonia (Phil 4:15), Thessalonica for Macedonia and Achaia (1 Thes 1:7f), Corinth for Achaia (1 Cor 16:15, 2 Cor 1:1), and Ephesus for Asia (Rom 16:5, 1 Cor 16:19).

These "metropolises" are the main centres as far as communication, culture, commerce, politics, and religion are concerned. To say that Paul "did not think in terms of individual 'gentiles' so much as 'nations'" is, however, misleading. Paul thinks regionally not ethnically; he chooses cities that have a representative character. In each of these he lays the foundations for a Christian community, clearly in the hope that, from these strategic centres, the gospel will be carried into the surrounding countryside and towns.<sup>45</sup> And apparently this indeed happened, for in his very first letter, written to the believers in Thessalonica less than a year after he first arrived there he says, "The word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia" (1 Thes 1:8).

Paul's missionary vision is world-wide, at least as regards the world known to him. Up to the time of the apostolic council (AD 48) the missionary outreach to Gentiles was probably confined to Syria and Cilicia. Soon after the Council, however, Paul begins to see mission in "ecumenical" terms: the entire inhabited world has to be reached with the gospel. And since Rome is the capital of empire, it is natural that he would contemplate a visit to this metropolis (Rom 1:3); however, when he is informed of the existence of a Christian community there, he postpones his visit to a later period when he would call upon the Roman Christians en route to Spain (Rom 15:24). Meanwhile he concentrates his efforts in the predominantly Greek-speaking parts of the empire, in a region extending from Jerusalem to Illyricum (Rom 15:19).

Furthermore, Paul is founding local churches, which he seeks to nurture through occasional pastoral visits and lengthy letters, and by sending his fellow-workers to them. He intercedes on behalf of his congregations and counsels them about a great variety of very practical and down-to-earth matters; he waits for them to grow in spiritual maturity and stewardship, and to

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<sup>45</sup> "...as the cities grew in number and power, their relations with the countryside became more and more ambivalent. Each depended upon the other, but by every measure of physical and social advantage the symbiosis was one-sided in favour of the city...." in Wayne Meeks, The First Urban Christians: the social world of the apostle Paul, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983), 14.



become signs of light in their environment. All of this obviously takes time. Nevertheless, it takes place within the framework of a fervent eschatological expectation. Whereas, in some early Christian circles, an ardent expectation of the imminent end tended to dampen the idea of a wide-ranging missionary outreach, exactly the opposite is true in Paul's case. There is no conflict between apostolicity and apocalyptic in Paul, only a creative tension.<sup>46</sup>

Paul has to move on to other regions, since he has made it his ambition to preach the gospel not where Christ has already been named, "lest I build on another man's foundation" (Rom 15:20)

So for Paul was very clear

- a) In view of the shortness of time and the urgency of the task it would be bad stewardship to go to places where others have already evangelized.
- b) He is not suggesting that the work of mission is completed in the cities and regions where he has worked, but simply that there are now viable churches, which may reach out into their respective hinterlands; therefore he has to move on to the "regions beyond"

### **3.4 THE CHURCH WITHIN THE CITY IN HISTORY**

By the end of the New Testament era the Church was quite firmly established in most of the main cities of the Roman Empire. From these centres the churches were reaching out to the nearby towns and villages. As numbers increased and administrative developments were necessary, urban bishops were recognised as regional church leaders with responsibility for a city and its environment. Distinct rural churches probably emerged only in the third century, at first in northern Italy and then in France.

New Testament usages were taken up by the Church Fathers in the patristic age when they addressed their letters to "the church that is in..." or "the church that is in pilgrimage in..." or "that resides at...". This practice became so widespread that it gave rise to use of the expression "residence" or "place" of the church, in Greek, *Parokia*: the place where the church assembled, the parish.

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<sup>46</sup> David Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, (New York: Orbis Book, 1991), 129-131.

According to Eusebius, the parish is the church of a city and coincides with the local church. In this the practice of the Christians was in disagreement with parallel situations of the era, such as synagogues, the schools of philosophy. The Christians were constrained to develop a new model. For what reason? Because they had to work out a unity at the city level: they understood that their mission was coextensive with the city.

When Christianity became the official religion of the Empire this emphasis on the city as the basic church unit continued: "the principle of one parish per city was soon confirmed by legislation; the Council of Chalcedon even made the creation of a new parish conditional upon the unit of a city".<sup>47</sup> The church leaders in the larger cities began to take precedence over others and metropolitan bishops exercised wide influence. The recognition of the leader of the church in Rome as the primary Church leader was a logical further step down this road.

There are several new elements here: the emergence of hierarchical leadership structure, the disastrous partnership of Church and State, and the replacement of trans-local apostolic teams and local elders with static but powerful bishops. But the central importance of the city was clear and the strength of the Church in these strategic centres was a key factor in its growth and influence.

However, enormous changes were taking place. Barbarian tribes were making inroads into the Empire and before long Rome itself had fallen. For the next several centuries the cities were in decline, their populations shrank and there was a return to a mainly rural life. The Church was faced with the problem of adjusting to this less urban situation: the reverse of the challenge facing it today!!

Toward the eighth century the Carolingians confiscated ecclesiastical property, and church structures began to disintegrate under the pressure of the feudal system. Noblemen demanded chaplains for their own service, and lesser clergy for their dependants. Charlemagne instituted tithing, from which the system of benefices derived. A benefice was assigned to the cleric who took upon himself the care of a residential settlement, which consequently became his "parish". The older structures changed too because under Charlemagne the cities lost the importance they once had. Many cities adopted the Roman practice of station churches as a way to express the unity of the local church.

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<sup>47</sup> Benjamin, Tonna, Gospel for the cities, (New York: Orbis Book, 1985) 125.

The rise of Islam and its capture of the cities of Asia Minor and North Africa, which had been strong Christian centres, increased the problem.

How did the Church adapt in this turbulent period? Sadly, the predominant feature was withdrawal.<sup>48</sup>

The growth of the Church during the Dark Ages and early Middle Ages was insignificant. The focus of Christianity was radically shifted from urban centres of North Africa to rural Europe. For one thousand years there was no real gain in the numerical strength of Christianity. There was simply a swapping of urban estate for rural estate.

During the eleventh and twelfth centuries there was a renaissance of urban life in Europe in the guild movement. The bishops felt threatened by the stronger guilds, but the urban clergy, and later the mendicant orders, in general, supported them. The political and social thinking of the Scholastics drew inspiration from the life of the guilds. The church in consequence, became the animator of the guild movement, thanks to its teaching, not to its structures. It proposed a form of collective life to the urban community and there emerged from it yet another form of the bond between church and city, splendidly symbolized in the cathedral. The cathedral was built by the citizenry, not by the episcopacy, not by the nobility, and it gave expression to the symbiosis of the church and the urban guild movement. Nor was it reserved for worship: it served also as a meeting place where citizens discussed public affairs. The cathedral was not only a testimony of faith but a proof as well of the will to inspire the life of the city to evangelical values.

Christianity also inspired the city through the confraternity. The function of the confraternity in the life of the Christians of the medieval city was crucial. It was not an elite group; rather, it was supposed to be the Christian people itself, structured and organized for action. In practice all belonged to a confraternity, and it came to form the real structure of the city's laity. It was organized along more existential lines than were the parishes. As in the earliest days of Christianity, ecclesiastical structures were modelled on those of the urban population. But the

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<sup>48</sup> As we read in Winston Crawley, *An urban world*, (Ed. Larry Rose and Kirk Hadaway, Broadman Press, 1984), 40, 'The major adaptation made by the church to its new situation was the monastic system...the withdrawal of the major strength of Christianity from the cities into monasteries, with more of an inward focus than an outward ministry, helped the church to survive a chaotic period in the history of Europe, but it also left the church ill-prepared for the new urban challenge that would come with the revival of cities in later centuries'.

artificial nature of the parochial structures of the time did not have negative effects on the general population, because the population was also served by this other structure. The confraternities were so in resonance with the social life of the people that often they found themselves in conflict with ecclesiastical authorities.

We must admit, however, that the Council of Trent did not succeed in curbing the medieval erosion of the structures of the primitive church. Taking place four centuries before the era of massive urbanization, its introduction of the division of urban territory into parishes served only to generalize the rural, not the urban, parish model. And this happened in the cities! Then gradually the principle of "non-interference" of the church in public affairs came to be adopted. The church was a "perfect society", and that was enough. The polycentric structure of the urban church was fixed. Not even the religious orders attempted to dismantle the walls thrown up between one internal urban community and another From the pastoral point of view, the city was no longer a unity; it did not have a unified public life. Urban society became provincial

The Reformation meant a new stage in various ways, and it is interesting that many of the Reformers were city-based and tried to use the city as the basic unit for their new conception of the Church.<sup>49</sup>

The rapid urbanisation which accompanied the Industrial Revolution in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was the next major challenge to the Church's urban strategy or lack of it.<sup>50</sup>

Once again the Church was ill-prepared for this development and failed to establish itself in the growing cities. The urban poor and the working classes in particular became very largely isolated from the churches. Various efforts were made to reach the cities in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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<sup>49</sup> One example is Calvin's attempt to create a theocratic system in Geneva, which would bind the Church and the city together. A similar but different experiment was the disastrous attempt to set up an Anabaptist Kingdom in the city of Munster. Neither provides us with a helpful model of Christian urban ministry for both perpetuate the close allegiance of Church and State which had ruined Europe for centuries. But both had recognised the central importance of cities for the growth of the Church. A more relevant example from this period, and one which is much more faithful to the pattern of the early church, is the urban ministry of the mainstream Anabaptists ( who rejected the Munster incident). Until forced out by vicious persecution, their missionaries targeted the main cities of their day in a way that was reminiscent of the apostle Paul.

<sup>50</sup> Murray Stuart, op. cit., 64.

### **3.5 URBANIZATION AND CITY IN THE MAGISTERIUM**

The debate over the merits of city versus country living will probably never be settled to anyone's satisfaction. The Church, for her part, has contributed to this debate throughout her history in different ways.

Specifically, I will show, here below, how the Church has recognized and reflected on the new phenomenon of the growth of number of cities and urbanization in the world.

I have undertaken a personal research of quotations from the documents of the Church on this matter which I have found quite interesting but difficult to gather (See ANNEX 3)

Even for the African Catholic Magisterium the issue of urbanization is still very far for being taken seriously into consideration by the Regional or National Episcopal Conferences, by the local bishops in their pastoral letters and for the urban formation of their clergy, Christian communities and laity.

Even in this case, I have undertaken a long research in different directions, places and documents of the African Church (AMECEA, documents of SECAM, etc ) but I did not find particular documents concerning this issue from the African Magisterium, and I have come to the conclusion that urbanization is still a new phenomenon in Africa, only 20-30 years, but it needs and will need more concern, attention and a new missionary-pastoral vision from the whole African Church.

Since Vatican II the phenomenon of urbanization has been treated in several documents of the Church. This shows her concern for the socio-demographic implications of it throughout the world and re-launch here and there the challenge for a new interpretation, presence and activity in this new context in which the Church will happen surely to be minister of Hope and Salvation.

Already in one of the document of Vatican II, Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* of 1965, we can read: "...urbanization too is on the increase, both on account of the expanding number of city dwellers and the spread of an urban way of life into rural settings..."(GS 6) This phenomenon brings migration and the creation of big cities and the abandonment of the rural areas "Is sufficient attention being devoted to the arrangement and improvement of the life of the country people, whose inferior and at times miserable economic situation provokes the flight

to the unhappy crowded conditions of the city outskirts....” (OA 8) and even in *Justice in the World* prepared in 1971 during the Synod of Bishops “rural stagnation and lack of agrarian reform, massive migratory flow to cities giving rise to great numbers of marginal persons...” It was repeated in 1991 by John Paul II in *Centesimus Annus* “...these people crowd the cities of the Third World where they are often without cultural roots, exposed to situations of violent uncertainty...” (CA 33). The confrontation between rural and city regions is always connected with poverty “...there is a growing urbanization, above all in developing countries, as an effect of rural emigration... almost always directed towards urban regions. It is true that certain policies...have the effect of discouraging rural development...” (6) in a document prepared in 1994 by the Pontifical Council for the family, *Ethical and pastoral dimensions of Populations*. The city fosters discrimination and also indifference “...it lends itself to new forms of exploitation and of domination...much misery is hidden...other forms of misery spread where human dignity founders: delinquency, criminality, abuse of drugs, eroticism...” (OA 10). Even the last Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*, of John Paul II puts urbanization at the second place, after poverty, among the fundamental challenges “...issues in Africa such as increasing poverty, urbanization figure among the fundamental challenges addressed by the Synod...” (51)

Urbanism, as new customs and styles of living, is one of the major effects “...urbanization and other factors influencing community living create new mass-culture which give birth to new patterns of thinking, of acting and of use of leisure...open up the riches of different cultures to each and every individual, with the result that a more universal form of culture is gradually taking shape...” (GS 54).

Even in 1971, Paul VI in *Octogesima Adveniens* wrote “...urbanization upsets both the ways of life and the habitual structures of existence: the family, the neighbourhood, and the very framework of the Christian community. Man is experiencing a new loneliness...Urbanization, undoubtedly an irreversible stage in the development of human societies, confronts man with difficult problems...” (OA 10). In *Redemptoris Missio* the Pope underlines also “...new forms of culture and communication...influence wider population...” (SRS 39b)

The families have to face different problems and one of them is surely housing “...A thousand million people, that is one fifth of the human race, do not have decent housing. In 1986, more

than 600 million people - 45% of the total urban population of the world - lived in zones of misery around big cities, in shanty-towns or in slum neighbourhoods "(2) a report given in a document of 1987, *The Church and the housing problem*, prepared by the Commission *Iustitia et Pax* and again repeated by John Paul II in 1987 in *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* " the lack of housing is being experienced universally and is due to the growing phenomenon of urbanization . "(SRS 17).

The weakest who are victims of dehumanizing living conditions are the youth and the children "... youth escape from a home which is too confined and seek in the streets compensations and companionships..." (OA11) and " what place in this world being brought to birth, should be given to youth?..." (OA12) and John Paul II answer in *Ecclesia in Africa* "...the economic situation of poverty has a particularly negative impact on the young, that is why they tend to flee the neglected rural areas and gather in cities which in fact do not have much more to offer them..." (115).

And what about the Church immerse in this reality? " the Church directs her attention to these "new poor" in order to recognize them, help them, defend their place and dignity in a society hardened by competition..." (OA 15) But even gives directives to the bishops " He must take special account of those changes which have been brought about through urbanization, migration and religious indifferentism..." (AG 20) and continues in the *Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops* "...from the ecclesial point of view, there are some areas with sufficient number, and sometimes too many, of places of cult and religious houses, while in other areas are insufficient or lacking completely This complex situation has to be present to the bishop for an efficient pastoral care and requires from him special forms of apostolate..." (Direttorio 161) and "...it is the task of the bishop to equip the organic pastoral work of the city of structures which allow organization, co-ordination...of pastoral activity...the megalopolis...more than one city is a complex of cities, and requires rather a missionary work..." (Direttorio 190). This new phenomenon requires "...a new presence of the priests, who in this new situations have to face a specialized pastoral work..." (17) in a document of 1980, *The collaboration among the Local Churches*, Congregation of clergy.

John Paul II in *Redemptoris Missio* is explicit when invites us to reflect on the new reality of the *missio ad gentes* "...today the image of *missio ad gentes* is perhaps changing: efforts should

be concentrated on the big cities... individuals or small groups cannot be evangelized if we neglect the centres where a new humanity... is emerging..."(RM 39b) and in a visit to Burundi in 1990 he invited the religious to "...faced with these conditions, religious are urged to draw nearer to the poorest and the neediest...to adopt a personal and community life consistent with their commitment. " In 1989, the Synod of bishops on Formation of the priests affirmed that "...everywhere in the world, urbanization is growing... it requires the breaking of communitarian links...formation must build a solid interior spirituality and... a right sense of Ecclesial Communion and of the Mission..."(Enchir Vat.Suppl.1412).

As we have just seen, there is an increasing awareness and profound analysis in the General Magisterium of the Church on urbanization in these last 30 years, starting from Vatican II to *Ecclesia in Africa* of 1995

But unfortunately, in my opinion, this awareness is not yet corresponding to concrete, constant, adequate and planned missionary and pastoral answers. There had been some prophetic missionary-pastoral initiatives in cities in the past years but most of the times they were not the norm and within a real planning of the Local Churches, at least in Africa but even in other Continents.

We need to be aware of this important function of the Magisterium, but by itself, it does not impress the ordinary Catholic lay-person and citizen. He/She sees little importance for the resolution of the problems of his/her world.

In part this discrepancy between teaching and response has been due to the lack of active education for the laity in implementing programs which have seemed far too academic for the average lay-people. Fr. Schillebeeckx has put it in this way: "...the Church has for centuries devoted her attention to formulating truths and meanwhile did almost nothing to better the world. In other words, the Church focused on orthodoxy and left orthopraxis in the hands of non-members and non-believers".<sup>51</sup>

The movement toward concreteness does impress the lay-person: he/she is encouraged by the concern of Christians, whether clerical or lay, whether Catholic or not, for the integral development of the society, the City of God, for the poor, the lonely, the aged, the

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<sup>51</sup> Gustavo Gutierrez, Theology of Liberation, (New York: Orbis Books, 1973), 10, note 34.



demoralised of the city. They see the Church as a teaching Church less by what she says than by what she does. The Church need to exploit the production of the city dwellers by developing new learning models which communicate values in concrete ways, especially through examples of the works of mercy and involvement in re-structuring the urban society.

This is a challenge that we, as Church, need to be ready to face!!<sup>52</sup>

### **3.6 CONCLUSION: MISSION TO THE CITY**

It has been said that "in the beginning God created a garden for humanity to dwell in", but people left the garden and built cities. If the Bible's Garden of Eden was meant to be mankind's natural home, history determined otherwise.

Centuries ago Isaiah prophesied that ambitious people would "cover the earth with their cities" (Is 14:21); in our generation this is being fulfilled in a way previous generations could not have imagined.

Urbanization is a process as much as it is physical growth in size of cities. The city is still the social, cultural, religious, technological laboratory of the world. The decisions made, the trends started, the goods bargained, the beliefs promoted in the city will spread throughout the country and the society.

For the Church and her mission this presents an absolute choice: if she abandons the cities she will be pushed to the edge of society and find herself with no voice and no credibility; if she returns to her biblical roots and targets the cities she can make an impact as the early church did.

We live in an urban world. According to the Bible the city has always been crucial and now we can see the evidence in front of our eyes.

It is vital, then, that urban mission is given a very high priority by the Church. We need to train and prepare personnel. We sometimes think of the cities, especially the slum areas, only in terms of problems but there are tremendous opportunities also, unique to the cities.

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<sup>52</sup> For the status of Global Mission 1995, in Context of 20th and 21st Centuries, see TABLE 4, David Barret, "Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 1995", International Bulletin of Missionary Research, January (1995), 26.

**First**, there is a great number of people in the city. Although the density produces social, economical, cultural and environmental pressures and may seem oppressive, the city presents a great field for evangelization. It is in the cities that the “crowds” are to be found. Here there are many who are rootless and lacking in direction, crying out for the compassionate ministry of the Church.

**Second**, there is the variety of people in the city. Many cities contain a multi-cultural mix. Urban mission is usually cross-cultural and often affords opportunities to reach people who are unreachable in their own environments. Far more resources are needed for ministry among poorer but more settled ethnic minorities. It is in these cities that the Church has a marvellous opportunity to work out the implications of our calling to be a multi-racial community, something that in many of our churches remains at the level of theory. Sadly enough, urban churches have not often taken up this challenge.

**Third**, the cities are where very many poor and powerless people live. In many countries and even in Africa, the Church tends to be middle-class and unsuccessful in reaching the poor. If church growth and effective ministry are only possible in middle-class areas, what sort of God do we worship, and of what value is the salvation we proclaim? The weakness of the Church in the slum areas is an accusation on the Church as a whole. The cities are crucial for the Church’s mission, but it is the slum areas that present the greatest challenge.

Biblically the poor are a priority for the Church and there are grounds for expecting God to work significantly among them if only the Church is prepared to get involved.

**Fourth**, as we have noted already, the cities are places of great influence and the centres of communication. Strategically it makes sense to focus on the cities if we want to reach the world. As well as reaching into the slum areas the Church will need to look for access among the powerful in the city centres, but in doing this it must take care to avoid two traps: compromising its radical stance for the sake of increased acceptance, and becoming identified with the rich and powerful in a way that undercuts the Gospel.

Thus, whether we look into the Bible or out towards our urban world, we find that we cannot avoid the city and its central importance in God’s mission to the nations.

## CHAPTER 4

### A MISSIONARY VISION AND PRAXIS FOR THE URBAN MINISTRY IN AFRICA

#### 4.1 NAIROBI AS A PARADIGM OF AN AFRICAN CITY: RELIGIOUS CENTRE AND MISSION FIELD

For a better understanding and not being so general I have chosen to focus my attention on one African city: Nairobi. My missionary and pastoral experience here for several years has helped me to frame the problem of urbanization in Nairobi in the wider context of the whole Continent. Of course, there could be some differences among the cities, between West and East, North and South of Africa, with some exceptions for Muslim centres<sup>53</sup>, but generally the phenomenon of what is happening in Nairobi is mainly a common fate in the African cities.

The city of Nairobi, as many other African cities, has developed a double face. One is in the daylight face of a religious, Christian city, with some 800 churches or chapels of which 100 are Catholic<sup>54</sup>. (See TABLE 5)

In the city there are Christian centres of all kinds: organization centres like the (Protestant) National Christian Council of Kenya (NCCCK), and the All African Conference of Churches (AACC), the Kenya Catholic Secretariat (KCS) and the Secretariat of the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa (AMECEA); retreat houses and centres for pastoral counselling; colleges of theological studies: 6 schools of theology and a Catholic University. There is also a growing number of religious houses apart from the 22 parish houses: 72 sisters' communities and 40 fathers/brothers' communities (mid-1988). Finally

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<sup>53</sup> An interesting reflection by Pierre Delooz which unfortunately I will not develop challenges the culture shock that Christians have in moving to cities but this does not happen according to him for the Muslim "...The urban life-style, it seems, is not on the fringe of their system...is the system. City often poses a special sanctity for Muslims and are regarded as the only places in which a full and truly Muslim life may be lived. It is as if Islam's religious goals and rituals were more easily achieved in an urban context...The usual problems.. overpopulation, housing...remain problems also in Muslim cities...Their growth is also parasitic and creates severe problems for the poor, but the problems seem more manageable in the framework of the Islamic faith..." Pierre Delooz, "Pastoral problems and opportunities in supercities", Eds. William Jenkinson and Helen O'Sullivan, in *Trends in mission*, (New York: Orbis books, 1991), 164.

<sup>54</sup> For the statistics and data of this part, I will refer to the Survey done by a committee for the commemoration of the centenary history of the Kenyan Catholic Church done in 1989 in the book by: John Baur, *The Catholic Church in Kenya: a centenary history*, (Nairobi: St.Paul Publications Africa, 1990) and to the *Summary of the Nairobi Church survey*, Daystar University College, op. cit., for the Protestant side.

there are the innumerable religious meetings, from the evangelical crusades of the popular faith preachers to the renowned international conferences (e.g.: General Assembly of the World Council of Churches 1975; the International Eucharistic Congress in 1985).

The other face of the city is directed towards the people groping in the dim light or in the very darkness of the night: the millions of slum-dwellers, the unemployed and under-employed, the frustrated youth, the desperate prostitutes, the disappointed migrants who have got lost in the jungle of the city and have not found their way to the church any more; and also the "new rich" whose religious feelings have become suffocated in the pitiless race for money.

Both faces exist in any city and like the history of Nairobi of the last thirty years shows that more than half of its population gropes in the dark, religiously and economically. On Sunday the churches are full with some 300 thousand faithful, but that is not even 15% of the whole flock of Christ. Of course, many Christians go irregularly to church but two thirds of the Catholics and more than half of the Protestants are never seen in church. What has happened to Nairobi, "the City in the Sun" that boasts itself to be 80% a Christian city?

As we have already seen in chapter 2, the African cities grows twice as fast as in the countryside, and so does the Christian population. Nairobi had nearly 125,000 Catholics in 1969 but counted over 500,000 in 1989, four times more. During the same period parishes increased from 12 to only 22, and the number of priests working in the parishes from 25 to 50, only twice as many, and the city grew in size as well. Many Christians came to live in estates and slums where there is no church. The Catholic Church attendance has gone down so much in the past twenty years, from over 60% to under 30%. The non-Catholic Churches and sects have almost doubled their church attendance during this same time, from a low 20% to nearly 40%. They have tremendously increased their places for Sunday worship, from some 250 to 750; the Catholic facilities went up from some 50 to hardly 100. The vicinity of so many Protestant churches has attracted quite a number of Catholics; their healing services and the promises of "being saved" have made these churches even more attractive. **One conclusion seems to be: smaller churches and nearer to the people!!**

There is another conclusion. Nairobi has become the largest mission field in Kenya, greater than the large nomadic areas where there are some 800,000 traditionalists. The two thirds of Christians of Nairobi who do not practise their faith any more count more than a million alone.

To them may be added a further hundred thousand so-called "nominal Christians", who have never been baptized but who call themselves Christians, and another hundred thousand or so who are still traditionalists. Most urgent is the mission to the newcomers, the migrants from the countryside in search of work, whose yearly number has risen to 100 thousand, including the care for those in despair having looked for work in vain and the special groups already marginalized like thieves, prostitutes, lepers, drunkards, street children, handicapped, refugees etc.. All of this is part of THE GREAT MISSIONARY CHALLENGE FOR THE AFRICAN CHURCH!!

#### **4.2 A CHALLENGE FOR THE CITY TRADITIONAL APOSTOLATE**

Independence in many African countries has brought in an unexpected growth not only of the Capital cities but also of the other towns and given birth to many new urban centres as recorded also by Fr. Shorter "With the advent of political independence, there was a dramatic surge in urban growth. Between 1960 and 1980 the Church in Africa, despite an initial reluctance, and despite a lingering anti-urbanism, began to establish an effective presence in the towns."<sup>55</sup>

One of the historical problems of the pastoral ministry in these areas has been that the missions were planted rather outside the centres, so that the towns grew up without a church nucleus. A great number of Christians had always settled down and forgotten the habit of church-going, until eventually a priest came to stay in their midst. The rapid growth that followed brought with it many other problems, such as "lost" migrants, unemployment, secularism and an unexpected great share of the youth in both the population and the problems. The majority of the migrants to the cities and towns are youth<sup>56</sup> as John Paul II has stated in the last Apostolic Exhortation "The Church in Africa" n. 115.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Shorter, op. cit., 65.

<sup>56</sup> For example: the migrants to Nairobi from the countryside in the recent past some 100,000 per year, were indeed to 90% under the age of 30, and two thirds of them were men, looking for work or education.

<sup>57</sup> "The economic situation of poverty has a particularly negative impact on the young. They embark on adult life with very little enthusiasm for a present riddled with frustrations and they look with still less hope to a future which to them seems sad and sombre. That is why they tend to flee the neglected rural areas and gather in cities which in fact do not have much more to offer them. Many of them go to foreign countries where, as if in exile, they live a precarious existence as economic refugees...". John Paul II, The Church in Africa, (Nairobi: St. Paulines Publications Africa, 1995), 115.

The African city has developed as a place where African culture is undermined more than anywhere else, and the slums have even produced a sub-human culture. They are places most in need of well-inculturated Christianity that restores both Christian religiosity and African humanness in full hope.

**The urban situation calls for a specific and missionary urban ministry.** Generally speaking, such a ministry has not yet been developed in Africa. Pastoral care followed the established rural pattern of parishes<sup>58</sup>; the city are units in themselves and city life follows its own grouping, going across parish borders. Hence much missionary-pastoral action should have been carried out on an urban basis, with specialized teams as already indicated by the bishops of Tanzania in their response for the 1974 Synod in Rome.<sup>59</sup> This does not mean, however, that nothing is being done for the people living in urban centres. All the methods used for the care of spiritual and human welfare in the villages are also found in the urban parish. What is often missing is an adaptation of these methods and new creativity to the urban situation and an overall plan for urban ministry that takes the new factors of city life into consideration. The city traditional apostolate does not have any more sufficient answers. So far, only youth ministry has made "some steps" in this direction.<sup>60</sup> But many more attempts should have been made to tackle the problems of the city and its slums and shanty towns. And above all in creating a web of networks to make known the theological/pastoral reflections of particular experiments carried out in the past here in Africa.

Fr. Alex Zanotelli, in one of his articles<sup>61</sup> noted that there is a slow reaction of the missionary organizations to face these challenges, and above all the lack of planning to meet them; and the socio-political-economic situation of the cities has indeed developed into one of the major

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<sup>58</sup> "Learning how to adapt their basic principles to their new situations often requires help from those who should know how to deal with the problems of city life, especially the pastors of city parishes. Unfortunately all too often these pastors are transferred from the bush to the city without being given any orientation to their new duties and tend to run the city parish in the same way they ran their bush mission." AMECEA Documentation Service, 10/74/3, (1974), 3.

<sup>59</sup> "Most of our priests, pastors and missionaries have been brought up in a country milieu and have not been trained for the urban apostolate...Priests, religious and lay people engaged in the urban apostolate need a special preparation through orientation courses and seminars. There is need for a national co-ordinator of urban apostolate work..." AMECEA Documentation Service, 6/74/2, (1974), 19-20.

<sup>60</sup> For example a pastoral document prepared by M.A.C. (Meeting and African Collaboration), a committee made of the Permanent Committee of SECAM and five representatives of Missionaries Institutes working in Africa. It is the fruit of a meeting held in Nairobi on 13-14 May 1982.

<sup>61</sup> Alex Zanotelli, "Facing problems of rapid urbanization", AFER 30, (October 1988), 277-284.

issue for the Churches. In the countryside, poverty and lack of education is embedded in a society of basically equal standards of life, with an ancient tradition of sharing; in the cities it is contrasted with a much richer middle and upper class that seems to have nothing to do with the poor. Unfortunately this gap has also become reflected in the Churches.<sup>62</sup> Too few of "the poor ones of the Lord" have found a refuge in our Church. The situation is the same in the Protestant Churches; only in the indigenous Churches and sects have a greater number of the poor found a home. Why? Only because these churches place themselves within slums areas and their style of worship is closer to the poor people?<sup>63</sup> This is another aspect of the great challenge open to us.

It is encouraging that in recent years many religious communities have put on their programme the "preferential option for the poor."<sup>64</sup>

But it is still too much theoretical!! The dramatic reality of poverty in the cities is calling us for a true reflection and implementation of what is concretely for us this option, as African Church and specifically as religious.

A special attention and task is needed for the apostolate to the professional, business class, universities etc. creating bridges between rich and poor for the benefit of both. The poor needs to be supported in taking their evangelizing responsibility towards the rich class too which needs to be awoken to their Christian mission and duties.

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<sup>62</sup> In the Daystar University Survey on Nairobi reveals, there are among the Catholic church-goers twice as many people with completed secondary school education (66%) and ten times fewer illiterates (3%) than in the whole population of the city. Further, the proportion of the unemployed and underemployed is only half of that in the whole population.

<sup>63</sup> Some studies have shown that people tend to adhere to sects and new religious movements in times of social and economic turmoil. The established churches have difficulty in dealing with the spiritual needs of those affected by economic and physical despair. On the contrary, sects and new religious movements seem to provide a safe haven and a warm emotional environment where the desperate can find solace for their problems. However, other studies have shown that involvement with sects usually leads to withdrawal from political and social responsibilities.

<sup>64</sup> In recent years some few experiences have been realized by some religious sisters, brothers and fathers to face the reality of poverty, destitution, exploitation on behalf, for or with the poor. The experiences are different as different are also the ecclesiology, theological vision and spirituality which move these pioneers. The different fields where some religious are involved are: destitute and pregnant girls, street children, prostitutes, elderly, physically and mentally handicapped, informal schools, vocational training centres, single mothers, alcoholism and drug addicts etc.. There are very few attempts of serious communities of insertion in growing and sharing the life of the poor. I mention few attempts in Kenya: some Missionary Sisters of Charles de Foucauld in Mathare Valley - Nairobi, the Pandipieri urban apostolate in Kisumu with Fr. Burgman (Mill Hill) and the pastoral team present there since 1977, and since 1990 Fr. Zanotelli (Comboni Missionaries) and other few confreres and a lay volunteer at Korogocho - Nairobi.

There has also developed a common insight that half of the problems in the African city would be solved if the influx of the unemployed from the countryside could be stopped. As we have seen the phenomenon will continue for several years but something can be done to curtail it. Rural development schemes have in this regard an additional religious obligation. In fact, workers in the city have not only the duty to go home from time to time to visit parents and relatives but also to place their acquired skills and resources at the service of their whole home area by elaborating and executing development programmes, if this is in their capabilities and possibilities. Such a co-operation could open up specifically African ways of tackling the city-country problem.

The issue of urbanization was part of the pastoral agenda for several years at the beginning of the 70s in the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa (AMECEA) but for the last 15-20 years it has been an almost forgotten hot issue; only rare articles or books published and with little implementation and further reflection. There is not a Special Committee for gathering the goodness, the new insights, information and methodologies for a needy urban ministry. There are some attempts here and there but what is really missing is a network for sharing these experiences.

And the same I dare say even for other Local Churches of the whole African continent!

It remains to a great extent still true what was deplored in one of the AMECEA meetings in 1973, namely that "there is an apparent deterioration in the effectiveness of the Church in urban areas as compared to rural areas"; nor was the warning well heard that "if the urban apostolate is going to succeed, only specially-trained people, clergy and religious as well as lay, should be assigned duties in urban areas" There is no doubt that the countryside is still



twice as well served in terms of personnel and worship facilities as the cities.<sup>65</sup> For an overall view of the Church's personnel in Africa see TABLE 6.<sup>66</sup>

### 4.3 SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES: SIGNS OF HOPE IN THE CITY

In an age like ours in which a greater number of cities are so confused and outraged, we should ask ourselves why the biblical writers have placed in a city the climax of the divine plan of salvation for the human beings. The vision of the New Jerusalem recalls to our mind the fact that the human being was planned with an urban future in the mind. We are destined to live in community; and when the prophets were looking for a metaphor to describe how should be a community, they thought exactly to the city.

Of course bishops in Africa have been encouraging the establishment of Small Christian Communities. AMECEA made their establishment a priority at Nairobi (1976) and renewed their intent in Malawi (1979). SECAM (the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences in Africa and Madagascar) has also been fostering them: at Yaonde' (1981) and Kinshasa (1984).<sup>67</sup>

The SCCs, or Basic Christian Communities, have been described in Church documents as "a source of hope for the universal Church" and "causes of joy and hope in the Church."<sup>68</sup> Nevertheless, there are many who have heard little as to what they are all about. The purpose of the policy was threefold: to ensure that people could practise their Christian faith in the places where they work and live in small groups and not anonymous, to bring about a greater lay participation, and to provoke a more authentic inculturation. Not only was there to be a

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<sup>65</sup> At this regard is interesting to read what Fr. Alex Zanotelli has written in 1988. *op. cit.*: "It is notable that in Africa so few missionaries are living in these areas, so few of them are with the people sharing their conditions.... Generally missionaries prefer to remain distant, safely locked in structures, from where they get out to help the poor. I find it strange that about 80% of missionary personnel in Africa is engaged in rural parish work, while there are very few actually involved in ministering to the slum dwellers of the towns and cities...."

We have to realize also that even the other 20% personnel remaining for urban ministry most of the time comprises of elderly people who remain nearby the city for treatments, or personnel assigned to houses of formation, provincial houses, retreat houses, and other special commitments etc..

<sup>66</sup> This table has been prepared for the African Synod 1994. At this moment, there is no clear and detailed indication and subdivision for the whole Continent on how many Church personnel are resident and ministering in rural and urban areas.

<sup>67</sup> The Kinshasa meeting had this to say: "We recommend to Episcopal Conferences, Assemblies and Associations in Africa: 1) to do all they can to encourage the emergence of a pastoral plan for "Small Christian Communities" or "Small Ecclesial Communities" that are able to undertake integrated activities of evangelization and development." *AFER*, (December 1984), 377.

<sup>68</sup> Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Evangelization today), n.58.

decentralization to the out-station but a measure of decentralization to neighbourhood household groups.

This model of being Church-Community seems to befit the human situation of the city and slum-dwellers, creating a network of solidarity and mutual trust.

Fr. Shorter notices that "... This policy in Africa clearly showed that one cannot carry out a transition from a paternalistic Church **for** the people to a mature Church **of** the people by simply ordering it from above...Events showed that, instead of master-plan created in the bishop's office, the experiment had to be started from below, in suitable environments and with suitable leadership. Where this happened, the experiment was successful...."<sup>69</sup>

However, the SCCs have to be integrated and co-ordinated within the overall plan of the missionary-pastoral project of a given parish.

Even if we have to admit that joining a SCC is not the only way of practising the Christian commandment of universal love.

Participation, shared power and empowering people, are very ecclesial dimension still very urgent in the Church. The SCCs are very ecclesial also because of their centrality in reading the Scripture and the life of the People, in their context, even with political, economic and social dimension.

The first evident value of the SCCs is that they create more personal interrelationships.<sup>70</sup> The second important value of the SCCs is a new distribution of power in the community; it is much participatory and avoids all centralization and domination.<sup>71</sup> The third value that is important to point out is that SCCs starts from the "base-level". Gustavo Gutierrez says that "base" means the poor, oppressed, believing people, marginalized races, exploited classes, despised cultures, and so forth.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Shorter, op. cit., 102-3.

<sup>70</sup> "Their Christian life as community is characterized by direct relationships, by reciprocity, by a deep communion, by mutual assistance and by communality". Leonardo Boff, Ecclesiogenesis: the Base Communities reinvent the Church, (London: Collins, 1986), 11.

<sup>71</sup> Leonardo Boff, Church: Charism & Power, (London: SCM, 1985), 9.

<sup>72</sup> Gustavo Gutierrez, "The irruption of the poor in Latin America and the Christian Communities of the Common People", in S.Torres and J.Eagleson eds, The Challenge of Basic Christian Communities, (New York: Orbis Book, 1981), 115-116.

These three main characteristics of SCCs as “communitarian”, “ecclesiological” and “basical” have their consistency because of the “missiological” dimension. It is the mission of the Church-Community that brings the above three factors into focus. The goal of the SCCs is much more than being simply “college of piety”. The community functions in a way enables its participants to realize that they have intrinsic worth, that they have the mutual support of others, and that they too have a voice. In this way, the voiceless and powerless are empowered to speak and act, thereby becoming active subjects within history.

#### **4.4 THE LAITY INVOLVED IN JUSTICE AND POLITICS IN THE CITY**

One of the challenges before the Church-Community in the African city is the promotion of justice, peace, development and liberation.

That the promotion of justice is an essential dimension of evangelization does not need an elaborate defence today. And if the proclamation of justice and peace is an integral part of the task of evangelization, it follows that the promotion of these values should also be part of the pastoral programme of each Christian community.

John Paul II in his recent visit to Africa (September 1995) issued “The Church in Africa”. He urged that all pastoral agents are to be adequately trained for this apostolate: “The formation of clergy, religious and laity, imparted in the areas of their apostolate, should lay emphasis on the social teaching of the Church. Each person, according to his state of life, should be specially trained to know his rights and duties, the meaning and service of the common good, honest management of public goods and the proper manner of participating in political life, in order to be able to act in a credible manner in the face of social injustices” (107).

**Evangelii Nuntiandi** declared also that “there are close links between evangelization and human advancement, that is, development and liberation”(EN 31)

John Paul II says that in promoting the various aspects of authentic development “...the Church fulfils its mission to evangelize...”(SRS 41). In the last Apostolic Exhortation “The Church in Africa” he confirmed also the importance of the laity of the Continent as a “sine qua non conditio” for the implementations of the requirements of the faith: “The laity are to be helped to become increasingly aware of their role in the Church...they are to be trained for their mission through suitable centres and schools of biblical and pastoral formation...Christians

who occupy positions of responsibility are to be carefully prepared for political, economic and social tasks by means of a solid formation in the Church's social doctrine, so that in their places of work they will be faithful witnesses to the Gospel."(90)

And the call to faith today is a call to justice, because the vision of a new humanity of freedom, fellowship and justice is confronted with an actual world and city where there is poverty, oppression, unfreedom, inequality, injustice, violence and hatred.

Christian life must be a life of service. If we are to take Christ's teachings seriously, we have to recognize that all aspects of human life present us with opportunities for disinterested Christian service. That includes the promotion of justice, peace and politics. Vatican II described the gap between faith and daily life as one of the more serious errors of our time (GS 43). Paul VI in a section headed "Call to Action", wrote: "It is not enough to recall principles, state intentions, point to crying injustices and utter prophetic denunciations; these words will lack real weight unless they are accompanied for each individual by a livelier awareness of personal responsibility and effective action. It is all too easy to throw back on others responsibility for injustices..."(OA 48).

Despite such guidance, the gap between faith and daily life persists. The call for the Church to "stay out of politics" can be heard from many sides. Anyway, this is the challenge for the Christian vocation of the laity in Africa and in the city; they have a great role to play in it. Politics is a noble vocation for the lay people and an opportunity for service which means more than the party struggle and embraces concern for the common good.

Even the clergy have a right and duty to speak out on issues directly affecting the Church or to defend fundamental values and the common good.

Hence, it is of fundamental importance for clergy and laity to form themselves and to form others on their own precise role in the promotion of justice and human development. The Church has to be involved in the realities of the world in order to bear witness to the values of the Gospel. And the Christian Communities are called to be conscientized on justice and peace issues and "...it is up to the Christian Communities to analyse with objectivity the situation....to shed on it the light of the Gospel's unalterable words and to draw principles of reflection, norms of judgement and directives for action from the social teaching of the

Church..." (OA 4). The creation of justice and peace groups active and relevant at parish, deanery, diocesan and national level are a must!

The city needs laity, Christian Communities, professional people prepared to face the realities of injustices and ready to enter into the arena of politics, social and economical sphere, with true Christian principles.

#### **4.5 THE CHURCH'S MISSIONARY/PASTORAL PLANNING**

The Church could become a model of a growth community which designs its future by effective planning processes in which she defines her priorities and objectives, and thus establishes a programme of actions designed to attain realistic goals.

The planning function of a community is a complex but very important dynamic of life and growth. The planning process in its most simple form can be thought of as a cycle, going through four phases:

1. Beginning with the information of experience, there must be an identification of the resources available for the planning;
2. The needs are identified, and then transformed into objectives;
3. Actual actions are undertaken which bring the resources to work at the objectives;
4. There is an evaluation of the operations. With the evaluation the cycle begins again.

Although this cycle is oversimplified it can give the basic model for every planned action of the human community. The Church is a community of services, of emergency and of welfare and the importance of planning is never understood fully. The art of management and the skill of planning are both difficult pastoral objectives. Especially in the city there are trained personnel and a high level of skills available (e.g. CORAT, an ecumenical organization placed in Nairobi), which can assist and train church personnel and lay-people with these skills.

It is vital to seek to know the will of God for a community, as vital as it is to establish a conviction that a given plan is the will of God. The discernment of the possible will be aided by the presence of the Holy Spirit. The planning function will demand vision, patience, dedication.

If the Church can demonstrate the art of planning in the city, the models she develops may be very useful indeed to other groups, and thus she can extend her influence and ministry to a larger part of the population.

And in the cities we need a MISSIONARY/PASTORAL PLANNING!!

When I refer to "missionary" (spirit), I want to underline the missionary maturity which should involve all the sectors of the Church-Community. It could be misunderstood and exploited to one's own interest to solve the immediate problems of one's setting, forgetting the ones more universal of the Church. There is the temptation of the pastoral agent to say that since evangelization involves "all the world" but in the first instance only the place of his/her pastoral work.

Nowadays, the use of the adjective "missionary" has been too much exploited and applied to everyone who was involved dynamically in the fields of traditional pastoral work. It is good but sometimes we do not cover with a new term an attitude anxious only of what is of personal and immediate interest.

The history of theological and ecclesial renewal has demonstrated that the Church has been able to look courageously inside Herself and to find the strength of her renewal when she felt to be more responsible toward the "exterior". Proves of this are the Second Vatican Council, the last Synods and some encyclicals. When the problems can be analysed and seen in a different light and to feel their gravity and urgency, the Church is called to re-orientate the true value-scale, the priorities, the activities, ourselves, the mentality of faith and the feeling of being Church-Community.

Only in the measure in which we acquire a true mentality of frontier<sup>73</sup> deriving from the continuous contact with whom is in need of the Good News of Liberation, that is the poor, the outcast, the persecuted, the non-Christians, the slum-dwellers etc., we can have a mentality of

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<sup>73</sup> In using the term "mentality of frontier" I assume the definition given by Cardinal C. M. Martini "...the social and cultural complexity in which we live, it renders the frontiers of today a mobile reality, always in transformation and in need to be continuously re-focused. The real risk is to sit down on the frontier, and a little bit later to realize that the limits of it have been already changed; the need to which we wanted to answer has already changed its shape and face.. assuming new forms and complexity...This is the great challenge of the frontiers of today...they are not anymore only geographical...but they enter in the dynamic of life and need an attitude of constant attention, of spiritual tension and of discernment...." Carlo Maria Martini, Preghiera e conversione intellettuale, (Casale Monferrato: Ed.Piemme, 1992), 141.

frontier even in the "interior". In this way we could detect the sectors of our pastoral ministry less provided of evangelization and in need of an effective Christian missionary witness. It requires a deep spirituality which sees in the Holy Spirit the Inspirator of all the missionary work.<sup>74</sup>

#### **4.6 PLURALISM OF MODELS OF PRESENCE AND ACTION: THE PARISH AND THE INSERTED COMMUNITY**

What I intend to propose, here, is an inclusive and pluralistic presence and action for this reality of the city by two structures which could be of great complement if there is a common missionary/pastoral vision: the parish and the inserted community.

For a relevant and effective ministry in the towns and especially towards slum-dwellers, there is the need to have a maximum of the collaboration and vision among the pastoral agents, being religious community, laity, sisters, brothers etc., putting at the disposal of the missionary/pastoral plan all their gifts and skills. Some placed and working in the parish and some choosing to live physically in the inserted community of the slum but under the same umbrella and for the common cause. They are one missionary/pastoral team and one community. The agents need to come together at least once a week for the pastoral and spiritual sharing. One needs the other for organization, for being closer to the people and to be open and relevant to their human and spiritual needs.

##### **4.6.1 THE PARISH: in need of a missionary spirit**

The parish is a territorial concept of rural origin, it has many limitations when applied to the situation of the city. There is no reason at all why urban parishioners should attend their designated parish church or mass centre. "Urban parishes may contain vast industrial areas with a daily influx of hundreds of thousands of workers. While pastoral work in these parishes may be conducted among a small minority of residents affiliated to the parish by domicile, the work sector may be hardly influenced by the Church at all."

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<sup>74</sup> As the *Evangelii Nuntiandi* expresses it very well at n.75: "...it must be said that the Holy Spirit is the principal agent of evangelization: it is he who impels each individual to proclaim the Gospel, and it is he who in the depths of consciences cause the word of salvation to be accepted and understood. But it can equally said that he is the goal of evangelization.....for it is he who cause people to discern the signs of the times.. which evangelization reveals and puts to use within history."

The parish, in this particular time, feels the old age and a static moment of renewal. It does not answer anymore to the real needs of the people. It has been accused of centralization and too much sacramentalization for its pastoral work and I certainly agree. It needs a new vision and a renewed missionary spirit!!

At this stage in Africa I believe that this renewal and awareness is still on the way. It is too early to see already some results, except for some radical experiences like Korogocho (Nairobi) and Pandipieri (Kisumu) in East Africa, which are already present in slum areas since several years with the external support of the parish. Even few others have been attempted in other African cities throughout these years.

What I feel is that it is necessary to look forward and to experiment new ways and even re-adapting structures which can be of good service for the pastoral agents who can not, for reason of health or other reasons, go to live physically in the slums or engage themselves to special ministries.

The concept of urban parish as a legalistic ideal of static territory contained limitations.

I agree with what Fr. Shorter suggests "the parish should be regarded as an event...it is a happening or experience that draws people to it, as a source of stability, integration and prayer...It is a "house of the Church" which beckons to people and welcome them...It is not only a place where the Gospel is celebrated in worship, but a place where Christians help the Church fulfil its entire urban mission...It needs to have a physical existence...and facilities for the community: a hall, a set of rooms, a community centre, a multi-purpose building..

....a place where relationships are created, resource-persons trained and services offered...a source of reflection, prayer, spiritual growth, stimulation and renewal...But the parish is not merely a magnet that draws people to it....but it propels people outwards to other environments in the city, to their work environments...and to their various Small Christian Communities and neighbourhood....its action is simultaneously centripetal and centrifugal and penetrating and elusive."

#### **4.6.2 THE INSERTED COMMUNITY: a prophetic presence**

In a recent document of the Church I have found, at last, an interesting and encouraging comment on the "insertion into poor neighbourhoods". The document quotes: "In recent



years, poverty has been an issue which has involved religious very intensely and which has touched their hearts...how to evangelize the poor. But religious have also wanted to be evangelized through their contact, with the world of the poor.. In face of the impoverishment of great masses of people, especially in abandoned and marginal areas of large cities and in forgotten rural areas, "religious communities of insertion" have arisen as one of the expressions of the preferential and solidary evangelical option for the poor."<sup>75</sup>

These communities intend to accompany the poor in their process of integral liberation, but are also fruit of the desire to discover the poor Christ in marginalized brothers and sisters, in order to serve him and become conformed to him.

And the document continues "...insertion is a reality which cannot but arouse admiration for the tremendous personal dedication and great sacrifices which it involves; for the love of the poor which carries one to share their real and harsh life and poverty; for the effort to make the Gospel present in sectors of the population which are without hope; to make them feel a living part of the Church..."<sup>76</sup> These communities often live in areas deeply marked by a violence which gives rise to insecurity and sometimes, to persecution even to danger of life. Their great courage is clear testimony to the hope that it is possible to live as brothers and sisters, despite all situations of suffering and injustice.

There is also an encouragement for implementation of this way of being religious and missionary with a strong invitation "...superiors shall be careful to select suitable members and to prepare such communities in a way that will ensure connection with other communities of the institute, thereby guaranteeing continuity..."<sup>77</sup> This kind of experience should not be seen as exceptional but within the charism of a given congregation and be encouraged to everybody who feels this particular invitation of the Holy Spirit. The superiors have to allow these kind of experiences together with motivated personnel both in the inserted community and in the parish for a good number of years before evaluating the results of such experiments. Often these people are changed and destined to other commitments "for circumstances beyond one's control" before even the possibility of an evaluation. If we have to experiment and open new

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<sup>75</sup> Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Fraternal Life in community, Congregavit nos in unum Christi Amor, (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1994), 66.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 63b.

roads of ministry in the African urban setting, we need also seriousness and continuity from bishops, superiors of religious congregations, provincials etc., in allowing and supporting such projects!

Within the context of the urban ministry and parish area, the community of insertion has a great advantage of being physically, psychologically and spiritually present among the poor and marginalized and it can give a lot of new insights for the implementation of the missionary/pastoral planning of the parish as whole. When insertion among the poor has become, for both the poor and the religious community itself, a true experience of God, there is experienced the truth of the affirmation that the poor are evangelized and the poor evangelize. The minister needs an authentic spirituality of incarnation and this is always arising out of genuine encounter between God's Word and his World. An authentic process of incarnation with the people requires a kenosis through learning how to wait, to listen, to forgive and to persevere. If this experience of life is done in a spirit of openness, this mission changes completely the horizon of life, the spirituality and humanity of the pastoral agent.

#### **4.6.3 THE MISSIONARY/PASTORAL TEAM: AN IMPERATIVE!**

Structures are important but the pastors cannot do the parish and pastoral ministry just by themselves. He needs a team. The 1973 AMECEA Plenary went into considerable detail on the urban apostolate and concluded: "Team apostolate was thought most suitable for the urban situation."<sup>78</sup> The Standing Committee for Pastoral Planning in Lilongwe Diocese (Malawi), went further and stated team ministry are absolutely an imperative.<sup>79</sup> This team has to work co-operatively, as a "steering committee" with the same vision and missionary/pastoral planning striving to implement it. Co-operation more than ever in the history of mission. This will be difficult, especially at first since the missions have appealed traditionally to self-sufficient agents with high level of independence.

The composition of the team for urban ministry depends on the local situation and the specialized personnel available. In a Catholic parish, besides the clergy (including deacons and

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<sup>78</sup> *AFER*, Vol. XVI (1974), 266.

<sup>79</sup> "It is a fact that without a team, no work can be done in urban centres. The problems are many and one head cannot suffice for such a work. The town is ready-made for team work where the members specialize in their section but at the same time exchange their views and experiences in regular meetings. These meetings are most important to prevent any interferences or overlapping..." Report p.10.

permanent deacons if there are any) there are religious sisters or brothers, catechists, seminarians, lay teachers, community workers, and other specialists and co-operators.

A team but with different roles, competence and activity.

In the church's openness to ministries and in a continuous and communal growth, the religious and the laity are able to discover new forms of active participation, involving the Christian community increasingly in their initiatives and works. In the evangelical service of many and urgent activities for human promotion and social ministry for the people, religious and laity translate into a convincing dimension of corresponsibility within their roles in a common mission.

The setting up of a pastoral council with the representatives of all the SCCs is conceived as an aid to the pastoral team and parish priest. Those responsible and part of the missionary/pastoral team should form a full-time team which meets more frequently than the pastoral council and independently of it on weekly basis.

#### **4.6.4 THE HUDUMA: *The ministries to the community***

"Huduma" is a Swahili word meaning "service" "ministry". It is inspired by the First letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 12: 4-11; 27-31: "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord..."

The Huduma<sup>80</sup> is a way by which the Christians can use their gifts together with other members at the service of the whole Community. It is a way to create new ministries in our parishes and SCCs by the laity. This ministry is a free work and commitment for the benefit of whoever is in need of that particular service. Each Huduma is formed by 1 or 2 members chosen by each SCCs, so becoming their representatives during the regular weekly meetings of the Huduma and especially for the service to whom they are delegated within the SCC.

The Huduma covers a wide range of needs within the community and consists of:

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<sup>80</sup> For this part I refer to the booklet prepared by the Christian community of Korogocho on "Huduma ya Jumuyia Ndogo Ndogo". This methodology is a result of years of attempts and efforts by the whole Christian Community together with the pastoral agents. It is a very good achievement for a new methodology in slum areas and even with more flexibility in the parish setting.

### ***Organization***

- **Huduma ya Watumishi (Baraza)**: SCC representatives in the Pastoral Council (Chairperson, secretary etc. of SCC);

### ***Liturgy/Catechises***

- **H ya Liturgia**: Liturgy, inculturation, preparation: baptism, confirmation etc. Necessity to have a liturgy close to the people and attentive to the events of the week. It is constitutive of the reality of the people and with it we can propose the different World of God related to their lives; each SCCs is in charge to prepare the Sunday celebration in turn together with the huduma;
- **H ya Legio Mariae (Matembezi)**: Home visits, evangelization, prayers in liason with other ministries: e.g. health, poor, faith, sick etc.;
- **H ya Utaratibu**: Co-operation with liturgy committee, ushers, offertory collection, to keep order in liturgical celebrations;
- **H ya Kwaya**: Choirs (adult and youth), co-operation with liturgical committee;
- **H ya Wapokeshaji**: Extraordinary ministries of holy communion to the sick (working together Afya Bora);
- **H ya Mazishi**: Funerals, help, prayers, liturgy and accompanying to the cemetery;
- **H ya Imani**: Preparation for catechumenate, sacraments etc.;
- **H ya Upatanisho**: Reconciliation, elders, discipline;
- **H ya Wakatekumeni**: Catechumens, importance of SCCs, sponsors;
- **H ya Sunday School**: catechism for small children during the time of the Sunday mass;

### ***Education/Awareness/Leisure***

- **H ya Haki na Amani**: Justice & peace, in the church social analysis, reconciliation, non-violent education, human rights, conscientization on political/economical issues to create a peace-making culture;
- **H ya Michezo**: Youth entertainment, dramas, sports, competitions;
- **H ya Shule**: To plead for poor children in government schools, school fees, uniforms, etc.; supervise the running of the church's schools (informal, nursery);
- **H ya Haki za Wanawake**: Fight discrimination, formation of women, advocacy, adult education;

- **H ya Wafanya Kazi (YCW):** Importance of trade unions, justice for workers, unity among workers, legal advice,
- **H ya Mwakili Wadogo (Paralegal):** People trained by Legal Advice Centre lawyers: rent, land, civil, workers' rights etc., organization of seminars, workshops etc.; to study the opportunity of Community Land Trust;
- **H ya Elimu ya Watu Wazima:** Adult education, literacy, languages: English, Kiswahili;
- **H ya Gazeti:** Preparation of parish or sublocation newsletter;
- **H ya Library:** Keeping a small library; selling books, magazines, calendars. (Usually run by youth groups);

### ***Health***

- **H ya Afya Bora:** Visiting the sick at their homes for medicines, hospital etc.; formation on health, environment etc.,
- **H ya Wagonjwa:** Praying with and for the sick in their houses;
- **H ya Uhai (Pro-life):** Formation of women, child care, dangers of abortion, AIDS and promiscuity, help for girls and women;

### ***Social Service***

- **H ya Maendeleo:** Development, special SCC projects (e.g. crosses, necklaces, chairs, batiks, baskets etc.) to help the poor, the handicapped, drunkards, thieves, prostitutes etc.; looking for market of SCC products;
- **H ya Maskini:** Care for the poor, home visits, and gathering after Sunday mass; the Sunday offerings (vegetables, food etc.) are for them;
- **H ya Jamii:** Social services and assistance after recommendation of the SCCs;
- **H ya Maji:** fairness in provision and sale of water; running of water-posts;

### ***Counselling/Activity/Meetings***

- **H ya Familia:** Family and marriage counselling;
- **H ya Wazazi wapekee:** Single mothers/fathers counselling;
- **H kwa Walevi (AA):** Alcoholic anonymous meetings; helping one another; prayer and home visits; seminars.
- **H kwa Vijana:** Senior youth, junior youth, street children, girl guides, boy scouts, altar boys/girls, intermediate;

### ***Ecology***

- **H ya Usafi (Mazingira)**: Cleanliness in the estate and environment; formation, hygiene, health education, co-operation with NGOs; creating small building co-operatives for housing improvement;

#### ***4.6.5 Other possible proposals:***

- **Rotating celebration of the Eucharist**: The daily celebration of the Eucharist, instead of being celebrated in the morning at the church center, may be planned in one of the houses of the sick of the area of the SCCs, during the evening hours to allow the participation of the people of the area and of the Small Christian community members. It may be a way to strengthen the care and contacts with the sick, the people and the whole area.
- **Domestic training centres**: for mainly girls who have been dropped out from schools or can not afford high school fees. The aims of the programme is to provide the youth with little or without education, to realize their potential as women, to give a sense of self-worth, to help them to improve their standard of living and that of their future families. The course is a two year programme in home management about health science, nutrition, house-keeping, personal growth, catering, hand-craft, dress making etc.<sup>81</sup>
- **Recycling projects**: the great challenge to face the vast problem of garbage and solid waste of the cities, could be partially tackle by creating new jobs in small co-operatives for recycling the various materials like glass, iron, plastic, papers, etc.
- **Ecumenism and Dialogue**: To form ecumenical groups with the different churches, sects and to dialogue with other religion' s representatives for the benefit of the slum-dwellers with strong social objectives. These are the main purposes:
  - ♦ to uplift the moral and spiritual standard of slum-dwellers by preaching the Word of God;
  - ♦ to unite all people to work together as a community in voluntary work;
  - ♦ to help people of slum areas to become aware of their rights, through the Word of God, education, crusades etc..
  - ♦ to work together with other charitable organizations and NGOs to upgrade the status of the slum.

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<sup>81</sup> This programme is already viable in Pandipieri Catholic Centre of Kisumu. It has given a lot of successful results and positive remarks.

- ♦ to stimulate the administration and village elders, to maintain peace and security in the area.<sup>82</sup>

- **Rural-City exchange:** Urban-rural reinforcement is a feature of modern Africa. Town and country need each other. So the need to foresee and to experiment new ways of relationships and exchange between these two-ways flow. Exchange visits of representatives of the parishes to ensure a continuity and a fair implementation of possible initiatives like: small business, possible adoption of orphans and street-children for reintegrating them into a rural extended family etc. Educated, formed and committed Christian city-dwellers could be recruited for the formation of rural leaders, for improvement of Christian family life, for catechetical and liturgical creativity. And the same for the rural-dwellers.

Christian city-rural dwellers could be helped to reflect on the socio-economic relationship between city and countryside, and between rural towns and larger cities. To become more aware of the long-term effects of urbanization, its advantages and disadvantages, and try to confront the issues of social justice that are involved. To pass from the view of city as an extra burden to a view of an extra missionary/pastoral resource.

#### **4.7 OTHER RELEVANT FIELDS OF ACTION FOR AN EFFECTIVE URBAN MINISTRY**

In this section, I would like only to mention some other fields which could be of relevant impact for an effective urban ministry in the African cities.

**Formation and training of priests/religious:** As already objected by Fr. Shorter "our seminaries, Bible schools, pastoral centres offer comprehensive all-purpose course. They do not specialize in training for urban ministry....."<sup>83</sup>

The Nairobi Church Survey of 1986 found that only 1 per cent of the city's clergy had received any training in urban ministry.<sup>84</sup> Bishops, Church leaders and superiors of missionary

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<sup>82</sup> For this proposal, I refer to the successful initiative carried on in Korogocho by KPM, Korogocho Peace and Action Makers, a non-partisan organization, formed by more than 10 different churches and with the participation sometimes of the Sheikh of the nearby mosque. After 3 years of activities they have drawn some objectives and fixed a constitution of this very necessary co-operation in Korogocho. They have taken several initiatives especially in moments of tension of violence, tribal clashes etc. to bring together the parts, pressing the administration to ensure security and peace in the area, organizing rallies and common prayers etc..

<sup>83</sup> Shorter, op. cit., 146.

societies should seriously consider making such training available in their formation and academic curriculum. The urban personnel also needs the highest professional and vocational qualifications in order to deal with people of every class and educational background, and in order to understand the socio-economic mechanisms of the city.

After having done some interviews with youth on their reality in slum-areas, the question asked in return by them was why the young African religious (men and women) and diocesan seminarians are very seldom seen ministering in these areas. If the future of African cities and their future ministry will deal mostly with these realities of their brothers and sisters why not to be trained and minister even in these areas? This is another great challenge posed to future young African ministries and their responsables of formation.

**University co-operation and students' ministry:** The necessity of training ministers for urban ministry brings to the light the great possibility to run some courses on African urban experiences with the help of a university department of social sciences. These departments have conducted a great measure of urban research over the years, although they have not usually put much interest in the religious aspects of the questions they have studied. Even with other departments could be foreseen a co-operation (E.g.: Arts, Literature, History etc.)

To reinforce university chaplaincies which have the connection between academic studies and Christian faith and commitment. They play an important part in the Church's urban mission in Africa if they are able to help the students to open their minds on the great needs of their brothers and sisters even for the choice of their future profession. An availability and exposure of students ministering in slum-areas for different cultural and training contacts would be very much advantageous for both parts.

**Artists (Music, Art):** It is a new field of ministry which needs a lot of new insights. Artists could be invited for seminars/workshops to enhance the interest and the sense of beauty for nature, environment, music in youth groups of parishes and slum-areas. To train and help starting artistic groups as small development project (e.g.: batiks, drawings etc.), to embellish the walls of the parish, of the church and slum areas with murals and together with youth. To promote musicals and youth concerts.

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<sup>84</sup> Nyemeier and others. op. cit., 45.



**Primary and Secondary Schools:** To set a team of catechists, religious and specialists at city level for visiting, catechising and counselling in daily and boarding schools.

**New bridges between rich and poor:** To promote solidarity, reciprocal knowledge between these two social classes of the city, very much separated, and try to enhance the interest, the direct dialogue, involvement in sustaining the activities and the development projects of poor slum-dwellers. To try to make them aware of the root-causes of the socio-economic and political injustices present in the slum and poor areas.

**Young Christian Students/Workers:** To care for their spiritual and human needs forming active and co-operative associations according to their needs and fields of interest.

**National Youth Ministry:** To create a national youth centre and to post a full time pastoral team for ministering among the different realities of the youth of the country. Its task should be to co-ordinate the pastoral team, counselling, workshops, seminars, Bible courses, organizing meeting between rural and urban youth, students and workers.

**Hospitals:** To care for the spiritual and physical health in time of sickness, an appropriate time for a relevant pastoral ministry, a new effective encounter with the Lord. The necessity also to develop new ways of prayer, ministry, anointing of the sick more in line with the African tradition and feelings.

**Special Ministries:** Great phenomenon like street-children, prostitution, drug abuse, alcoholism, single mothers, Aids victims etc. call for new specialized ministry, especially in the cities. These realities are more and more present in all the different areas of the city and the most affected are the youth, being the majority in Africa.

There is the need of establishing and setting up of specialized rehabilitation centres which can allow these people to rebuild their self-trust and positive human values.

**Media:** Explore the world of the media with the objective of making aware the citizens of the country of the necessity of an accurate information about the cities. Trying to get the support and interest of journalists who can pass through the press true and right information on city-life. Use of magazines and articles for urban and pastoral education. To create religious-cultural radio/tv programmes suitable to educate and answer the various needs of people in the cities and countryside.

**Ecumenism and Dialogue:** Ecumenical reluctance in the African city may be a symptom of the urban privatization of religion. It may contribute to the growth of a secular attitude and a conviction that religion is irrelevant to the city's problems. The urban situation presents the Churches with opportunities for learning about one another and for sharing in worship and witness. The proximity of the various denominations makes ecumenical understanding and co-operation much easier for the promotion of Christian unity. Stronger social objectives at city level could help in establishing a good ecumenical and religious dialogue even with other religions.

#### **4.8 SEARCHING FOR SPIRITUALITY IN THE CITIES**

The given facts, figures and projections should be a direct challenge to the mission and spirituality of the Church in the world and above all in Africa. Even the Church documents I have quoted, constitute a stimulus and challenge to all of us to rise and face such reality with an attitude of searching.

If mission means announcing Jesus Christ's Good News of salvation to the poor, and the poorest of the poor are today living in the slums of the great cities, then the disciples of Jesus should be there "to bring the Good News to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, and to the blind: sight to set the down-trodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favour" (Lk 4.18).

If mission means revealing that God is the Father of the poor, of the oppressed, of the outcasts, of the prisoners, then one of the places for carrying out that mission is in the city and slum areas.

But which spirituality is requested from the people who accept this challenge?

We need to cultivate a new spirituality for our lives and our cities: a spirituality of the Kingdom present everywhere and everybody. This will be a spirituality of resistance to any authority or authorities which undermine the authority of God's Reign in us, among us, or everywhere in the world. If we allow the Spirit to lead us, we can do none the less all that was opposed to it. This spirituality demands that we contemplate faithfully and hopefully the Kingdom of God within us and around us, as well as its growth in the liberation of all. Bring Good News to the people tired of experiencing bad news, offer hope to people who see all doors closed, encouraged the struggle of people who are weary, and praise God joyfully.

A life of faith which involves the kind of trust and loyalty, passion and commitment that we develop in God, as we go among the poor and marginalized peoples of the cities, as well as in each other and ourselves, that will give us the courage to be willing to risk being different.

A spirituality open to the world in its historical, social, political and economic dimensions; of being able to discover and become increasingly aware of the presence of Christ in the world, in events, and in the poor. The incarnational and contemplative dimensions of religious life should find expression together.

Spirituality which creates new paths for reconciliation among communities, broken people, in the city and slums where tensions and violence are everyday bread.

An ecumenical spirituality open to develop our understanding that the passion for unity is a fundamental service of mission in the city. "Unity in witness and witness in unity." An openness to the spiritual enrichment of the diversity of other Christian denominations and even other religions so much present in the cities.

A spirituality of the "Kingdom of God" which is revealed in PRESENCE, in PARTICIPATIVE COMMUNITY, in CERTAIN VALUES, in HUMAN STRUGGLES, in HISTORICAL PROCESSES.

- The Kingdom of God is found in certain **presence** more clearly than others. So we can find its expression in Creation itself, the place of God's dwelling and, therefore, God's reign. We find it in the variety and diversity of cultures, revealing God's presence in among unique groups of people, especially whenever we are among the poor joining with them in their efforts and struggles to reorder the wealth of the rich of our day.
- The Kingdom of God is found in our midst when Jesus' vision "that all might be one" is realized. This occurs in systems and structures that promote **participation**. This participation gets actuated when the dignity of all people is realized in freedom, all can share in the resources in a way realizing equity, and when relationships of mutuality and solidarity occur.
- The Kingdom of God is found in **certain values** that Jesus preached by his words and proclaimed by his life claim the dynamics of human interaction: truth and freedom, reconciliation and justice, compassion and care, love and community.

- The Kingdom of God is found among us in **human struggles** as well, specifically when these are geared to human liberation and solidarity among peoples. These struggles will promote solidarity in positive ways through traditional forms of conscientization as well as new tools for social analysis; communitarian movements that invite greater collaboration and collective responses; strategies geared to find weak points in the dominant system.
- The Kingdom of God is found in **whatever processes** that promote the values and struggles, in the forms of presence and participative communities that reflect these values with the marginalized.

We should be committed to a spirituality of littleness, daily actions of significance that make a difference: small communities among poor people and with them. Small faith communities will sustain our faith as we seek to support each other in the challenges facing us. These communities will be characterized by certain attitudes and reflection forms that will be signified in the ways we:

- search the scriptures to know how we should walk with God;
- search the wisdom of poor people to balance our own insights;
- search the signs of the times that we might be converted;
- search for truth that we might speak truth to those in power.

The aspirations of city-dwellers must become the aspirations of the pastoral agent and optimism is very important in city apostolate; no one can effectively evangelise cities when one has a pessimistic view of such life.

#### **4.9 CONCLUSION: LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE OF AFRICA WITH HOPE**

Very often, Christians forget their commitment to build a just and peaceful world and city. In time of distress they tend to put all their hopes in heaven. To those who put all their hopes in a future afterlife, the Kenyan bishops warn that "...to withdraw from political responsibilities for the sake of looking forward to an eternal city in heaven is to refuse to build the Kingdom of God and to make it already present among us.." I think that the title of their pastoral letter of 1992 "Looking toward the future with hope", summarises how evangelization should be carried out in situations of injustice, oppression, and social-economic despair, like in the city

and slum areas of our African towns. The agents of evangelization have to assume a posture of prophetic hope in times of distress and unbearable testing as the only means to witness to the risks of a new era. The life and deeds of many Christians testify that this hope is still alive.

Mission done "in a time of distress" requires a new paradigm, in which activities are secondary while **presence and communion with the people** are the primary tasks.

A new era of evangelization is open. Even the African Synod invites us to take a hard and honest look at the situation in our African countries, in our cities and in our communities and face the real problems. But at the same time, the Synod gives all the peoples of Africa a powerful message of hope with the conviction that problems can be overcome if they understand their root causes, act in solidarity and trust in the Lord of history: "**Africa is destined not for death, but for life!**"(57).

In order to be a presence that inspires hope and promotes a new future, the Church needs to take into account the past and the present. It is what I have tried to do in this long-essay, looking back to what the situation of our African cities told the Church in the past, with an eye at this present and gigantic phenomenon but with a great hope and dream for the future.

A missionary African Church open and ready to be **Presence** in this new urban world in gestation which is about to see the light.

John Paul II in *Redemptoris Missio* continues: "...It is true that the "option for the neediest" means that we should not overlook the most abandoned and isolated human groups, but it is also true that individuals or small groups can not be evangelized if we neglect the centres where a new humanity...is emerging, and where new models of development are taking shape. The future of the younger nations is shaped in the cities..."(RM 39b). It is for this reason that the Pope sees in the cities a great opportunity for the Church and for the *Missio ad Gentes* to be present in the African cities with new energies, new presence, new methodologies and renewed Spirit. It is not a matter of neglecting "old presence" in the country-side or among the nomads but a choice of strategy for the future of Christianity and its new frontier of mission.

Even for Missionary Congregations this new invitation is appealing for evaluating, rethinking and reshaping planning and priorities for future commitments.

My Congregation, Comboni Missionaries, is preparing for the XV General Chapter in 1997, and this long-essay would like to be also a modest and humble contribution for our further general reflection.

Since our XIth Chapter of 1975 among the different priorities chosen by our capitulars, there was the voice: **Mission to urban areas** (n. 32 of Chapter Acts 1975). And this priority has been reconfirmed in the following chapters of 1985 (n.3 and 48) and of 1991 (n. 2.2d - 3.2b - 40.4 - 41.7). But as Fr. Bellagamba evaluated and pointed out in the acts of the PanAfrican Assembly of Evangelization in Africa of the Comboni Missionaries held at Nairobi in 1989, this priority, among others, does not seem to walk and in tune with the praxis: "Urbanization is one of the crucial phenomenon: but many of your missionaries are for and serve rural areas.."<sup>85</sup> And it is very true: very few Comboni missionaries have chosen or are actually working in cities or slum-shanty towns of Africa.

We are called to join the vast numbers of anonymous men and women, who in the midst of poverty, distress and despair, economic crisis and ecological disasters of our cities contribute with their work, words and presence to bring forth a new era of justice and peace. It is rewarding to know that among them there are many Christians, who are holding on to their faith by sharing the suffering and the living conditions of their brothers and sisters. They are the ones who, through their solidarity, lifestyle and presence, make God's word relevant to the poorest and most abandoned of the African cities.

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<sup>85</sup> Antonio Bellagamba, "La situazione della missione (Oggi e dalle relazioni all'Assemblea", in Evangelizzazione in Africa: per una metodologia comboniana Atti dell'Assemblea Panafricana dell'Evangelizzazione (Nairobi 1989), (Roma: Biblioteca Comboniana, 1989), 138.

## CONCLUSION

Wally N'Dow, the secretary general of HABITAT II, is convinced that the gathering of Istanbul is more than a conference. It is a recognition by the International Community, an awakening, that time is running out on us.

If we want to save the future, we have no choice other than to find answers today to one of the most neglected and urgent problems of our time, one that goes to the very heart of our everyday lives: how we live, where we live, and above all, if we live.

And the city encompasses many issues and hard questions to answer.

There could be two scenarios for the twenty-first century: cities of despair or cities of hope? The future depends on our answers and on our awareness now.

David Barrett's annual series of statistics and trends in world mission 1995 make thoughtful reading as the challenges to Christians seem to increase each year. He quotes Prior Schutz of Taizé who says that the secret for the follower of Christ is to treat each as a word from God because "statistics are signs from God". And these signs are to be interpreted.

The city is a "sign of the times" for the Church and our society. This great phenomenon needs an interdisciplinary and co-operative approach and interpretations by different entities.

The different sectors of city-life like socio-economical, cultural, religious, political have to be studied and approached within a global and holistic vision. Even the Church needs to be fully part of this process of bringing a renewed hope to the city-dwellers of the 21st century.

There are already some orientations and experiences of pioneers to tackle this challenge of urban ministry in Africa. For this reason, no room for despair but hope in God and in the infinite human resources to overcome the negative scenario.

As Church, we shall try to put at the service of the city dwellers our presence, missionary/pastoral plans, time, resources, creativity and patience to be an instrument in God's hands. Few basic strategical orientations should be kept in sight:

**NETWORKING:** one of the urgent necessity is to create and facilitate a networking and flux of information and theological-pastoral reflections from the pastoral agents present in the African cities.

**ON-GOING EVALUATION:** experiences and attempts done in the urban African context need to be evaluated and being considered as a platform for a new and more convinced vision for the cities.

**INTER-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH:** as I said above, this interdisciplinary approach needs to follow methodological guidelines from below. Starting the analysis from the actual reality and resources of the common and poor people, the city and slum-dweller of today.

It will be of great help the modern sciences like psychology, anthropology, sociology etc. With these tools, we shall have an overall picture of the new culture, customs, communication, a new society and religiosity which will emerge in the African cities at the dawn of the 21st century.

**ECUMENICAL CO-OPERATION AND INTERFAITH-DIALOGUE:** another great challenge for the Church is certainly ecumenism. Co-operation at ecumenical level between the various churches and religious denominations.

Christian, and wider religious, disunity is a scandal in the city, because undermines the efficacy of social action and human development. If the city is to become a more human environment in Africa, then ecumenical co-operation and interfaith dialogue are essential.

Things can and must change in the African cities. But change depends both on thought and action; and the change we want in Africa has to originate from the thought and activity of the African Church and People.



## ANNEX 1

### SLUMS AND SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS IN AFRICA

Here are examples of some African cities and capitals where the level of impoverishment is growing rapidly:

BANGUI (Central African Republic). Estimated population 500,000 in 1985. Around three-quarters of Bangui's population lives in self-built housing referred to as habitat spontaneous. The city's sewerage system was constructed in 1946, when the population was 26,000 and has never been expanded. Almost all squatter settlements are dependent on pit latrines and lack electricity and dependable supplies of water. None of the settlements is the result of conscious planning, and their inhabitants have no title to the land they occupy

CAIRO, Egypt. Estimated population 7.7 million in 1985, 9.6 million at the end of 1994. Severe overcrowding, lack of basic services, and deteriorating housing conditions characterize many parts of this rapidly expanding city. More than 3 million people are estimated to live in the cemeteries of the city, while many others sleep in mosques. Only 10% of the city's population are able to afford low-cost housing provided through public programmes.

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone. Estimated population 480,000 in 1985, 650,000 in 1990. Most of the city's rapid increase in population has been accommodated in unplanned residential areas. The absence of affordable housing and rapidly increasing land prices have forced low-income groups into very high density housing areas in and near the city's centre and onto sites ill-suited for housing, such as river banks, steep hills, and even the sides of garbage dumps. A 1978/9 household survey revealed that only 20% of households in the metropolitan area had a water tap inside their houses and only 5% had access to flush toilets. Most of the city is not served by sewers, and the sewage that is collected is discharged untreated into the sea.

LUSAKA, Zambia. Estimated population 740,000 in 1985; 1.3 million in 1995. More than one-half of the city's population lives in squatter settlements or illegal residential developments. The squatter settlements have grown rapidly in the past two decades, and many have populations of 20,000 to 50,000. Despite the efforts that are being made to upgrade the settlements, the social and physical infrastructure in many of them remains rudimentary.

NAIROBI, Kenya. Estimated population 1,2 million in 1985; 2,1 million at the end of 1994. Unauthorized dwellings house (slum areas) all around the city; 50-60% of the city's population lives in them. The city's largest squatter settlement is Kibera. Mathare Valley grew from 4,000 inhabitants in 1964 to more than 50,000 in 1971 and is occupied by more than 130,000 people. Many areas with unauthorized constructions have grown at comparable rates. Typically, squatter settlements have very high densities, their structures are rudimentary, and water supply and sewage-disposal facilities are either elementary or non-existent. Few settlements have access roads or street lighting.

NOUAKCHOTT, Mauritania. A small town with 5,000 inhabitants in 1965, it grew to 135,000 in 1977, and since then the population has doubled. In 1995 around 707,000. Most of the very large increase in population has been housed in illegal shanty or tent settlements. Since 1972, the government has distributed 7,000 unserviced plots, and an estimated 64% of the city's population today live in self-built settlements on these plots and in unauthorized settlements. More than two-thirds of the city's inhabitants have no direct access to water; the bulk of the city's population is compelled to purchase water of questionable quality from water vendors at a price up to 100 times that paid by those with piped water connection.

In Mauritania, with about 1.6 million inhabitants, and where 14 million hectares have been sterilized by the creeping desert, the country's structure has been completely overturned. In 1970, 83% were nomads and 17% non-migrants; it is the exact opposite today as two-thirds of the present population live in the sub-integrated zones of the capital Nouakchott, in extreme poverty. If this evolution continues, Nouakchott will have more than 1 million people in few years, or nearly the total population of a desertified country.

With some variations, the same living conditions and the same rapid urbanization pace can be found in the main cities of Mali, Niger and Senegal.

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso. Estimated population 310,000 in 1985; 681,000 end of 1990. Around 60% of the city's population live in a wide belt of "spontaneous settlements" built around the centre. The settlements typically lack access to piped water, sanitation, and electricity, and their inhabitants have no tenure to the land they occupy.

In SAHEL countries. In these countries, the nomad has folded his tent to occupy a haphazard lean-to in the streets or outskirts in any one of the region's cities. For the Sahel populations

chased from the rural or pasture zones by drought, war and hunger, often there is no other solution except makeshift shelters and hovels, where there is still a possibility of getting something to eat. the city If urban growth in Africa Sub-Sahara averages 6-7% yearly, the sub-integrated zones grow twice as quickly.

TUNIS, Tunisia. Estimated population 1.3 million in 1985; 2.1 million at the end of 1994. A 1978 study revealed that 135,000 people were living in the city's old town centre (medina) and its two "faubourgs" at a density of 500 persons per hectare, with some 40% of all households living in a single room. Another 300,000 people lived in squatter settlements at an average density of 925 persons per hectare. The medina and the squatter settlements, which together housed 45% of the city's population, accounted for a little more than 10% of the city's total residential area. Just under one-third of the population, predominantly upper-income and middle-income groups, lived in garden suburbs that accounted for nearly two-thirds of the city's total residential area.<sup>86</sup>

LAGOS, Nigeria. It is for Africa what Mexico City is for Latin America: a monster-city consisting of islands, marshlands and sand banks, which has doubled its population in 10 years: from 2.5 million in 1975 to 5 million in 1985, and 11 million at the end of 1994. According to experts, Lagos is nothing more than an enormous slum, whose island-part density is 2800 people per hectare, where running water reaches only half the population, with open sewers and uncollected waste.

EQUATORIAL AND CENTRAL AFRICA. Even if less proved by climatic conditions, nevertheless do not escape from this evolution and urban pauperism. Presently Kinshasa numbers more than 4.5 million, more than half of whom are settled in unwholesome surroundings.

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<sup>86</sup> United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), Report 1986, op. cit., 80.

## ANNEX 2

### .....AN EXAMPLE OF SLUM: KOROGOCHO (NAIROBI-KENYA)

Korogocho is part of Kasarani division, in the East sector of Nairobi, and also part of Kariobangi, which corresponds with one of the six main slum areas of Nairobi. It is divided into different villages: Korogocho, Gitathuru, Grogan, Highridge, Kisumu Ndogo, Nyayo, Ngomongo and Ngunyumu. The villages grew separately at different times as a result of the policy of demolition of slums and resettlement of squatters pursued by Nairobi City Commission during the years 70s and 80s. Moreover until recently as a result of the immigration from the rural areas. Now Korogocho forms a physically homogeneous settlement. Some variations are evident; some villages are populated by particular ethnic groups: Luo in Ngunyumu and Kisumu Ndogo; Luhya in Korogocho; Kikuyu in Grogan and Gitathuru. In some villages residents are poorer than residents of others.

Although it is very difficult to make an accurate population estimate, the Census done by Action Aid in 1992, seems to confirm the presence of more than 20,000 residence units. With an average of 5 persons per residence, it is reasonable to accept the figure of 100,000 inhabitants. We have to take in account that the population growth of the slums in Kenya is 4-6% per annum.

With the high population growth in slum areas, it is not surprising that the structural and population density is very high. In some areas, a house-plot of 25x75 ft. has as many as 25 rooms. The houses in the slum are of various categories and sizes. Some are made of mud, others of flattened tin and cardboard and some are mud and wattle covered with plaster or corrugated iron sheets. The layout plan of each plot depends on the size of the plot but often takes the shape of either I, M or U type plan. The average room size is 3x3mt. The conditions of the dwellings are usually very poor with no ventilation and are generally overcrowded.

Even with the poor conditions of the houses, people are still willing to pay higher rent, as the slum often provide the cheapest shelter available.

The common language in the slum is Kiswahili. Ethnic languages are also widespread where people of one background cluster together.

Religions are also as diverse as the settlements themselves and there is a strong attachment to religion. Splinter churches can be found all over the slum evidenced by flags and signs of crosses, even in residential houses.

Many denominations are present even a Muslim mosque with relative community. Many sects are spread all over the slum. In the people there is a great demand of spirituality and for God since the situation is really degrading and suffering at all levels is experienced by all the people. Children and women are the most vulnerable.

In many cases, the answer given by the people to their desire of meeting God and "to forget" for a while their problems, is to be member of one of these many sects present on the territory.

Sure they are more appealing because there they can express and externalize fully themselves with all their problems, in prayer, shouting, crying in an unending Sunday-worship. Most of the time, this is an escape from their reality.

The average income in the slum is Kshs. 1000-1500 per month. Incredible fantasy and creativity is the usual way for survival in Korogocho. For a great number of people, life is exactly this: a FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL. Small scale activities, primarily hawking, petty commodity trading, artisans (jua kali) and small services provision, illegal activities such as prostitution and illicit distilling of alcohol. The result is a life of precariousness, tensions and suffering with an incredible poor versus poor exploitation.<sup>87</sup>

Others who are employed are engaged mainly as clerks, messengers, drivers and watchmen in the city offices. There are, however, still many unemployed people, the majority being women and youth. In nearly all the areas, a few individuals and the church have tapped water from nearby formal settlements and sell it to the informal settlement residents for between 50-100 cents per 20 litres container.

Waste water is normally disposed of by throwing it just outside the structures. Toilet facilities are poorly constructed. As the number of toilets is very small compared to the number of users, it is not uncommon to see open areas used as toilets, thus causing a serious health hazard, especially during the rainy season.

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<sup>87</sup> Aberra Paulos, Janvier Kabeya, Daniele Moschetti, "Injustice in the slums of Nairobi with reference to Korogocho" in Tangaza Justice and Peace Commission, (1994), 35.

Garbage is strewn all over the settlement. The City Commission of Nairobi has not been able to cope with garbage collection. Nearby, there is the presence of one of the biggest dumping places of Nairobi, where many people work for gaining their daily bread (20-40 Ksh.).

The slum has temporary earth roads and numerous footpaths. Vehicular access is possible on the main road but very limited because the terrain is very rough and the houses are built very close together. More than 50% of slum dwellers walk to their places of work, as they normally can not afford the high transport costs.

There is no electricity in the slum area, except for Ngungumu. There are no governmental or City Commission health facilities inside the slum area. However, at Kariobangi parish there is a dispensary run by the Comboni sisters; a City Council Dispensary is within walking distance and it is supported by the numerous private clinics all around the slum, most of the times with their expensive services.

There are very few social facilities in the slum area. Churches, mosque and nursery schools are often used as meeting points for social functions. There are also many unlicensed public pubs often selling illegal liquor

The main shopping facilities are numerous kiosks often found in and between the houses. These kiosks offer a range of goods, both industrial and consumable.

Most older residents (over 40-50 years of age) are illiterate. Most youth attain only primary school level of education because of the lack of enough educational facilities and the inability of parents to send their children to school. Nursery schools are few and run by organizations such as churches, NGOs and private individuals. All this is always under the threat of eviction and demolition<sup>88</sup> since the land does not belong to any of the people present in Korogocho. The land belongs to the Government.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> NCCK, "Nairobi demolitions, what next?", op. cit..

<sup>89</sup> Daniele Moschetti, "Evaluation of pastoral ministry: the Jumuyia ya Kindugu", in one of my pastoral papers presented on May 1995 for the course lead by Fr. Patrick Ryan on "Evaluation of Pastoral Ministry", Tangaza College, Nairobi, academic year 1994-1995.

## ANNEX 3

### URBANIZATION AND CITY IN THE MAGISTERIUM FROM VATICAN II

The quotations from the documents of the Church are strictly referred to the issue of urbanization trying to cover the whole range of General and African Magisterium following orderly the year of publication.

#### **1965: Decree *Ad Gentes*, Vatican II**

"...the ministry of the word is also necessary so that the Gospel might reach all men. The bishop should be, above all, a preacher of the faith who brings new disciples to Christ. To fulfil this noble task as he ought be must be fully acquainted with conditions among his flock.....He must take special account of those changes which have been brought about through urbanization, migration and religious indifferentism." (AG 20)

#### **1965: Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, Vatican II**

"...urbanization too is on the increase, both on account of the expanding number of city dwellers and the spread of an urban way of life into rural settings.....it is above all in countries with advanced standards of economic and social progress that these developments are evident. but there are stirrings for advancement afoot among peoples eager to share in the benefits of industrialization and urbanization...." (GS 6)

"...industrialization, urbanization, and other factors influencing community living create new mass-cultures which give birth to new patterns of thinking, of acting and of use of leisure; heightened media of exchange between nations and different branches of society open up the riches of different cultures to each and every individual, with the result that a more universal form of culture is gradually taking shape....." (GS 54)

#### **1968: *Medellin Documents***

"...the uplifting of the rural areas will contribute to the necessary process of industrialization and to participation in the advantages of urban civilization..." (Justice 14)

"...in Latin America the transition from a rural to an urban society which leads patriarchal families to adopt a new life style of greater intimacy, with better distribution of responsibilities and more dependence on other micro-societies.." (Family/Demography 2)

### **1971: *Octogesima Adveniens, Paul VI***

"...A major phenomenon draws our attention, as much in the industrialized countries as in those which are developing urbanization. After long centuries, agrarian civilization is weakening. Is sufficient attention being devoted to the arrangement and improvement of the life of the country people, whose inferior and at times miserable economic situation provokes the flight to the unhappy crowded conditions of the city outskirts, where neither employment nor housing awaits them?

This unceasing flight from the land, industrial growth, continual demographic expansion and the attraction of urban centres bring about concentrations of population, the extent of which is difficult to imagine, for people are already speaking in terms of a "megapolis" grouping together tens of millions of persons..." (OA 8)

"...within industrial society urbanization upsets both the ways of life and the habitual structures of existence: the family, the neighbourhood, and the very framework of the Christian community. Man is experiencing a new loneliness...Urbanization, undoubtedly an irreversible stage in the development of human societies, confronts man with difficult problems. In this disordered growth, new proletariats are born. They install themselves in the heart of the cities sometimes abandoned by the rich; they dwell on the outskirts - which become a belt of misery besieging in a still silent protest the luxury which blatantly cries out from centres of consumption and waste. Instead of favouring fraternal encounter and mutual aid, the city fosters discrimination and also indifference. It lends itself to new forms of exploitation and of domination whereby some people in speculating of the needs of others derive inadmissible profits. Behind the facades, much misery is hidden, unsuspected even by the closest neighbours; other forms of misery spread where human dignity founders: delinquency, criminality, abuse of drugs and eroticism..." (OA 10)

"...it is in fact the weakest who are the victims of dehumanizing living conditions, degrading for conscience and harmful for the family institution. The promiscuity of working people's housing makes a minimum of intimacy impossible....youth escape from a home which is too confined and seek in the streets compensations and companionships which cannot be supervised. It is the grave duty of those responsible to strive to control this process and to give it direction...." (OA 11)



“ To build up the city, the place where men and their expanded communities exist, to create new modes of neighbourliness and relationships, to perceive an original application of social justice and to undertake responsibility for this collective future, which is foreseen as difficult, is a task in which Christians must share. To those who are heaped up in an urban promiscuity which becomes intolerable it is necessary to bring a message of hope. This can be done by brotherhood which is lived and by concrete justice. Let Christians, conscious of this new responsibility, not lose heart in view of the vast and faceless society; let them recall Jonah who traversed Niniveh, the great city, to proclaim therein the Good News of God's mercy and was upheld in his weakness by the sole strength of the word of Almighty God. In the Bible, the city is in fact often the place of sin and pride - the pride of man who feels secure enough to be able to build his life without God and even to affirm that he is powerful against God. But there is also the example of Jerusalem, the Holy City, the place where God is encountered, the promise of the city which comes from on high. ” (OA 12)

“ . Urban life and industrial change bring strongly to light questions which until now were poorly grasped. What place, for example, in this world being brought to birth, should be given to youth? Everywhere dialogue is proving to be difficult between youth, with its aspirations, renewal and also insecurity for the future, and the adult generations. It is obvious to all that here we have a source of serious conflicts, division and opting out, even within the family, and a questioning of modes of authority, education for freedom and the handing on of values and beliefs, which strikes at the deep roots of society...” (OA 13)

“...in this immense field much remains to be done. Further, reflection, research and experimentation must be actively pursued, unless one is to be late in meeting the legitimate aspirations of the workers, dwellers.....Egoism and domination are permanent temptations for men.....The Church directs her attention to these new “poor” - the handicapped and the maladjusted, the old, different groups of those on the fringe of society, and so on - in order to recognize them, help them, defend their place and dignity in a society hardened by competition and the attraction of success....” (OA 15)

“...With demographic growth, which is particularly pronounced in the young nations, the number of those failing to find work and driven to misery or parasitism will grow in the coming years unless the conscience of man rouses itself and gives rise to a general movement

of solidarity through an effective policy of investment and of organization of production and trade, as well as of education..." (OA 18)

"...In no other age has the appeal to the imagination of society been so explicit...If man lets himself rush ahead without foreseeing in good time the emergence of new social problems, they will become too grave for a peaceful solution to be hoped for..." (OA 19)

***1971: Justice in the World, Synod of Bishops***

"...a vain hope in underdeveloped areas and in pockets of poverty in wealthier areas, because of the rapid growth of population and of the labour force...rural stagnation and lack of agrarian reform...massive migratory flow to cities... these stifling oppressions constantly give rise to great numbers of "marginal" persons, ill-fed, inhumanely housed, illiterate and deprived of political power..." (Justice in the World 10)

***1973: Directory for the pastoral ministry of Bishops, Congregation for the Bishops***

"...The great city is a community rather complex...in it there are different social classes, suburbs and slums and many marginalized people.. Even culture in a big city is influenced by the socialization and secularization, being quite alive for the presence of pluralism of doctrines and opinions...From the ecclesial point of view, there are some areas with sufficient number, and sometimes too many, of places of cult and religious houses, while in other areas are insufficient or lacking completely. This complex situation has to be present to the bishop for an efficient pastoral care and requires from him special forms of apostolate..." (Direttorio 161)

"...the megapolis, in fact, more than one city is a complex of cities, and requires rather a missionary work.....It is the task of the bishop to equip the organic pastoral work of the city of structures which allow organization, co-ordination and the efficacy of the pastoral activity of the vicars and the assembly of the urban clergies..." (Direttorio 190)

***1980: The collaboration among the Local Churches, Congregation of clergy***

"...even the ecclesiastical structures should be adapted to the new reality. New phenomenon like the migrations of people from rural areas to industrial areas, urbanization....such

phenomenon requires a new presence of the priests, who in this new situations have to face a specialized pastoral work... ” (17)

**1980: John Paul II's pronouncement to the elite - Ivory Coast May 11<sup>th</sup> 1980**

“...I am thinking for example of the large towns of Abidjan and Bouake, where a considerable number of newcomers have arrived from the country and also immigrants from neighbouring countries: how to make the church present in these new districts and these new environments? There are poor people of all kinds, the uprooted, the humble people to whom we owe a special presence and solicitude, like Christ. There is also an elite, the executives, who need a deeper Christian reflection at the level of their culture and their responsibilities.....”

**1987: The Church and the housing problem, Commission Iustitia et Pax**

“...A thousand million people, that is one fifth of the human race, do not have decent housing. One hundred million quite literally do not have a roof over their head. In Western Europe...more than a million people are seeking adequate lodging. In Latin America, it is estimated that 20 million children sleep in the street. In 1986, more than 600 million people - 45% of the total urban population of the world - lived in zones of misery around big cities, in shantytowns or in slum neighbourhoods....” (2)

“...all of these settlements are more or less similar: improvised constructions of low grade material or cast off (tin, cardboard, plastic, bamboo etc.) not part of any regulatory plan, lacking the necessary infrastructure, often built illegally on public or private land. The inhabitants of other zones of the city hold these settlements in fear and distrust, considering them to be, not human settlements which everyone has a responsibility to improve and develop, but as the source of many ills: alcoholism, drugs, crime, etc.....” (3)

**1987: Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, John Paul II**

“...the lack of housing is being experienced universally and is due to the growing phenomenon of urbanization....should be seen as a sign and summing-up of a whole series of shortcomings, economic, social, cultural or simply human in nature....”(SRS 17)

**1989: Formation of the priests, Synod of Bishops**

“...everywhere in the world, urbanization is growing. It requires the breaking of communitarian links and the development of relationships and groups. Formation must build a

solid interior spirituality and to give a right sense of Ecclesial Communion and of the Mission... ." (Enchiridion Vatic. Suppl. 1412)

***1990: John Paul II's pronouncement to religious men and women***

***Burundi, 6th September 1990***

"...today there are forms of large-scale poverty experienced by individuals or endured by whole societies: hunger, ignorance, sickness, unemployment, dependence on questionable governments, limits placed on basic freedoms, exclusion based on membership in a certain social group. Faced with these conditions, religious are urged to draw nearer to the poorest and the neediest, those very persons whom Jesus has always given preference to and with whom He identified. That nearness leads them to adopt a personal and community life style consistent with their commitment and to follow the poor and humble Christ more closely. This "preferential option" by religious implies inner detachment and simplicity in their community life...."

***1991: Redemptoris Missio, John Paul II***

"...The rapid and profound transformations which characterize today's world, especially in the southern hemisphere, are having a powerful effect on the overall missionary picture....urbanization and massive growth of cities, especially where the demographic pressure is greatest. In not a few countries, over half the population already lives in a few "megapolises", where human problems are often aggravated by the feeling of anonymity experienced by masses of people....Today the image of missio **ad gentes** is perhaps changing: efforts should be concentrated on the big cities, where new customs and styles of living arise together with new forms of culture and communication, which then influence the wider population. It is true that the "option for the neediest" means that we should not overlook the most abandoned and isolated human groups, but it is also true that individuals or small groups cannot be evangelized if we neglect the centres where a new humanity, so to speak, is emerging, and where new models of development are taking shape. The future of the younger nations is shaped in the cities... (RM 39b)

***1991: Centesimus Annus, John Paul II***

"...allured by the dazzle of an opulence which is beyond their reach, and at the same time driven by necessity, these people crowd the cities of the Third World where they are often

without cultural roots, and where they are exposed to situations of violent uncertainty, without the possibility of becoming integrated.....(CA 33)

***1994: Ethical and pastoral dimensions of Populations (Trends), Pontifical Council for the family***

"...another important trend is population geography. There is a growing urbanization, above all in developing countries, as an effect of rural emigration and international migrations, almost always directed towards urban regions. It is true that certain policies, notably in the area of finance and/or agriculture, arising from national and/or international pressure, have the effect of discouraging rural development. Urbanization is further explained by the evolution of structures of production and by the desire to have access to the greatest possibilities for employment, to manufacturing markets, shopping, educational institutions, health facilities, recreational activities and the other advantages offered by the city..." (6)

***1995: The Church in Africa, John Paul II***

"...All the preparatory documents of the Synod.. clearly showed that issues in Africa such as increasing poverty, urbanization, the international debt, the arms trade, refugees..... figure among the fundamental challenges addressed by the Synod..." (51)

"...the rapid evolution of society has given rise to new challenges linked to the phenomena notably of family uprooting, urbanization, unemployment, materialistic seductions of all kinds, a certain secularization and an intellectual upheaval caused by the avalanche of insufficiently critical ideas spread by the media..." (76)

"...the economic situation of poverty has a particularly negative impact on the young....with less hope to a future which to them seems sad and sombre. That is why they tend to flee the neglected rural areas and gather in cities which in fact do not have much more to offer them...." (115)

**KENYAN CATHOLIC MAGISTERIUM ON URBANIZATION**

Here below there are some quotations limited to the pastoral letters of the Kenyan Episcopal Conference where this problem is only shallow quoted and not developed at all.

***1979: Family and responsible parenthood***

"...families living in towns are often under severe strain because of the lack of housing, or the conditions of the housing. It is obviously not easy to provide sufficient and suitable housing for all who are now flocking to the towns. However, every effort should be made to try to accommodate families properly. They should not be at the mercy of unscrupulous landlords who charge exorbitant rents, and evict at will. The high rents and the difficulties families find in acquiring their own houses are the cause of a lot of suffering and conflict in families..." (Family d)

***1989: Centenary of Evangelization in Kenya***

"...How to deal with the increasing rural migration of youth to towns? All these questions go hand in hand with the alarming crisis of the family, including the Christian families, which are often disrupted by the loss of ethical and traditional values and the tough economic conditions of poverty..." (18)

***1990: On the present situation in our country***

"...the existing and widening gap between the rich and the poor needs everybody's attention. Great contrasts coexist in Kenya today and the real problem of tribalism is not only based on ethnic origins, but also on the basis of two opposed "economic tribes", namely, the tribe of the rich...and the tribe of the poor. The latter are the majority of our people most of them living in slums, or as squatters, in semi-desert areas..." (12)

***1995: Message of the AMECEA Bishops to the religious***

"...in Africa there are the needs of the people in the refugee camps, the uprooted and homeless people displaced because of war and ethnic violence, the great number of AIDS sufferers, the abandoned children on the streets of our big towns and cities, to name but a few....requires that religious take the new pastoral initiatives in order to be with Christ in his suffering people. These new pastoral challenges need the response of well prepared and generous religious men and women. The institutes of consecrated life are invited to review and evaluate their charisms in view of taking on new apostolates in respond of these new needs...(16)

## **SOME PROTESTANT REFLECTIONS**

### ***1989: Summary of the Nairobi Church Survey, Daystar University College***

"...City life is different from country life. The challenges and opportunities of ministry in the city are different from those in the villages. The church needs to respond to the growth of cities in Africa with Spirit-led study, preparation and action..."

### ***1991: A Kairos for Kenya, NCKK reflections***

"...Urban poverty is the most fertile source of crime, disease and instability in any country. The council observes that the programmes to ameliorate the effects of urban poverty have not been very effective and that the government has tended to leave it to NGOs and other institutions to combat indecency ...Local authorities have been left to deal with this most intriguing matter with the result that they have tended to resort to demolition of shanties and other residences of the urban poor without providing alternative accommodation. ...." (13.1)

### ***1991: The right time for change, What hope for Crisis-Stricken Africa?, AACC, May 1991***

"...when we seriously consider the courage needed by both rural and urban populations in their day in, day out struggle for survival, often in the most precarious conditions, we discover a genius and a creativity which has never really been put to good use. In their struggle, people give evidence every day that they will not shrink from sacrifices and difficulties....In towns, for example, several people accept to live together on a bare minimum in order to share with their extended families; a very strenuous form of solidarity. The survival of such solidarity among the urban and the rural populations equally hit by the crisis is ample proof that together, these two types of community represent a basis for hope that future desirable changes can occur...."

(3d)

**Table 1. Size and Growth of Total Population, 1975 - 2050**

	Estimates and Projection (thousands)						Annual Growth Rate (%)					Population by Sex (%) 1995	
	1975	1990	2000	2010	2025	2050	1975 1990	1990 2000	2000 2010	2010 2025	2025 2050	Male	Female
	1975	1990	2000	2010	2025	2050	1975 1990	1990 2000	2000 2010	2010 2025	2025 2050	1995	1995
<b>WORLD TOTAL</b>	<b>4076985</b>	<b>5284832</b>	<b>6158051</b>	<b>7032294</b>	<b>8294341</b>	<b>9833208</b>	<b>1.73</b>	<b>1.53</b>	<b>1.33</b>	<b>1.10</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>50.4</b>	<b>49.6</b>
More Developed Regions	1044186	1143358	1185536	1212865	1238406	1207504	0.60	0.36	0.23	0.14	-0.10	48.6	51.4
Less Developed Regions	3032799	4141474	4972515	5819430	7055935	8625703	2.08	1.83	1.57	1.28	0.80	50.8	49.2
<b>AFRICA</b>	<b>413988</b>	<b>632669</b>	<b>831596</b>	<b>1069378</b>	<b>1495772</b>	<b>2140844</b>	<b>2.83</b>	<b>2.73</b>	<b>2.51</b>	<b>2.24</b>	<b>1.43</b>	<b>49.9</b>	<b>50.1</b>
Algeria	16018	24935	31158	37489	45475	55674	2.95	2.23	1.85	1.29	0.81	50.6	49.4
Angola	6110	9194	13074	17660	26619	41182	2.72	3.52	3.01	2.74	1.75	49.4	50.6
Benin	3033	4633	6266	8300	12252	18649	2.82	3.02	2.81	2.60	1.68	49.4	50.6
Botswana	759	1276	1718	2226	2980	3996	3.46	2.97	2.59	1.94	1.17	49.0	51.0
Burkina Faso	6202	8987	11708	14974	21654	33365	2.47	2.64	2.46	2.46	1.73	49.5	50.5
Burundi	3680	5503	7339	9488	13490	19065	2.68	2.88	2.57	2.35	1.38	49.0	51.0
Cameroon	7526	11526	15245	20163	29173	43100	2.84	2.80	2.80	2.46	1.56	49.6	50.4
Cape Verde	278	341	448	565	735	959	1.36	2.73	2.32	1.75	1.06	46.9	53.1
Central Africa	2057	2927	3731	4666	6360	8907	2.35	2.43	2.34	2.06	1.35	48.4	51.6
Chad	4030	5553	7307	9319	12907	18450	2.14	2.74	2.43	2.17	1.43	49.4	50.6
Comoros	316	543	778	1079	1646	2484	3.61	3.60	3.27	2.82	1.65	50.7	49.3
Congo	1447	2232	2970	3853	5677	8774	2.89	2.86	2.60	2.58	1.74	48.9	51.1
Cote d'Ivoire	6755	11974	1676	3058	36817	61441	3.82	3.36	3.19	3.12	2.05	50.7	49.3
Djibouti	205	517	645	801	1055	1403	6.17	2.21	2.17	1.84	1.14	49.4	50.6
Egypt	38841	56312	6946	81490	97301	117398	2.48	2.05	1.64	1.18	0.75	50.9	49.1
Equatorial Guinea	225	352	452	574	798	1144	2.98	2.50	2.39	2.20	1.44	49.2	50.8
Eritrea	2089	3082	4025	5153	7043	9613	2.59	2.67	2.47	2.08	1.24	49.6	50.4
Ethiopia	32221	47423	63785	85078	126886	194203	2.58	2.96	2.88	2.66	1.70	50.3	49.7
Gabon	637	1146	1517	1924	2697	3975	3.92	2.80	2.38	2.25	1.55	49.3	50.7
Gambia	548	923	1291	1611	2102	2762	3.48	3.36	2.21	1.77	1.09	49.4	50.6
Ghana	9831	15020	20172	26594	37988	54868	2.83	2.95	2.76	2.38	1.47	49.7	50.3
Guinea	4149	5755	7759	10301	15088	22607	2.18	2.99	2.83	2.54	1.62	50.2	49.8
Guinea-Bissau	627	964	1192	1473	1978	2766	2.87	2.12	2.12	1.97	1.34	49.2	50.8
Kenya	13741	23613	32577	43552	63360	92194	3.61	3.22	2.90	2.50	1.50	50.1	49.9
Lesotho	1187	1792	2338	3012	4172	5856	2.75	2.66	2.53	2.17	1.36	49.1	50.9
Liberia	1609	2575	3565	4829	7240	10997	3.13	3.25	3.03	2.70	1.67	50.5	49.5
Libya	2446	4545	6347	8724	12885	19109	4.13	3.40	3.12	2.60	1.58	52.1	47.9
Madagascar	7787	12571	17259	23326	34419	50926	3.19	3.17	3.01	2.59	1.57	49.6	50.4
Malawi	5244	9367	12144	15299	22348	33658	3.87	2.60	2.31	2.53	1.64	49.3	50.7
Mali	6169	9212	12559	16733	24575	36817	2.67	3.10	2.87	2.56	1.62	49.2	50.8
Mauritania	1371	2003	2580	3283	4443	6077	2.53	2.53	2.41	2.02	1.25	49.5	50.5
Mauritius	892	1057	1179	1306	1481	1654	1.13	1.09	1.02	0.84	0.44	49.9	50.1
Morocco	17305	24334	29637	34196	40650	47858	2.27	1.97	1.43	1.15	0.65	50.0	50.0
Mozambique	10498	14187	18991	24704	35139	52145	2.01	2.92	2.63	2.35	1.58	49.4	50.6
Namibia	900	1349	1752	2239	3049	4163	2.70	2.61	2.45	2.06	1.25	49.7	50.3
Niger	4771	7731	10805	14751	22385	34576	3.22	3.35	3.11	2.78	1.74	49.4	50.6
Nigeria	62770	96154	128786	168370	238397	338510	2.84	2.92	2.68	2.32	1.40	49.6	50.4
Réunion	483	604	697	783	901	1029	1.49	1.43	1.16	0.94	0.53	49.0	51.0
Rwanda	4384	6986	9048	11545	15797	21755	3.11	2.59	2.44	2.09	1.28	49.4	50.6
Sao Tomé & Príncipe	81	119	146	174	215	294	2.56	2.04	1.75	1.41	1.25	—	—
Senegal	4806	7327	9495	12241	16896	23442	2.81	2.59	2.54	2.15	1.31	50.0	50.0
Seychelles	59	70	77	85	95	106	1.14	0.95	0.99	0.74	0.44	—	—
Sierra Leone	2931	3999	5069	6366	8690	12090	2.07	2.37	2.28	2.07	1.32	49.1	50.9
Somalia	5471	8677	10787	14470	21276	32062	3.07	2.18	2.94	2.57	1.64	49.5	50.5
South Africa	25669	37066	46215	56398	70951	90129	2.45	2.21	1.99	1.53	0.96	49.7	50.3
St. Helena	5	6	6	7	8	11	1.22	—	1.54	0.89	1.27	—	—
Sudan	16012	24585	32079	41534	58388	84829	2.86	2.66	2.58	2.27	1.49	50.2	49.8
Swaziland	482	744	980	1253	1647	2176	2.89	2.76	2.46	1.82	1.11	47.9	52.1
Togo	2285	3531	4818	6427	9377	13704	2.90	3.11	2.88	2.52	1.52	49.5	50.5
Tunisia	5611	8080	9694	11209	13290	15607	2.43	1.82	1.45	1.14	0.64	50.5	49.5
Uganda	11182	17949	24618	32308	48056	72131	3.15	3.16	2.72	2.65	1.62	49.5	50.5
Tanzania	15900	25600	34074	44154	62894	91132	3.18	2.86	2.59	2.36	1.48	49.6	50.4
Western Sahara	117	230	342	467	627	796	4.51	3.97	3.12	1.96	0.95	—	—
Zaire	23251	37436	51136	68876	104639	164433	3.18	3.12	2.98	2.79	1.81	49.4	50.6
Zambia	4841	8150	10754	13657	19130	27173	3.47	2.77	2.39	2.25	1.40	49.4	50.6
Zimbabwe	6143	9903	12514	15260	19631	26622	3.18	2.34	1.98	1.68	1.22	49.6	50.4

Source: United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), Global Report on Human Settlements, Statistical Annex, (Draft) 1995.



**Table 2. Urbanization Trends, Size and Growth of Rural and Urban Population, 1975-2025**

	Level of Urbanization (% of total population in urban settlements)			Urban Population (thousands)			Annual Rate (%)		Rural Population (thousands)			Annual Rate (%)	
	1975	2000	2025	1975	2000	2025	1975	2000	1975	2000	2025	1975	2000
							2000	2025				2000	2025
<b>WORLD TOTAL</b>	37.73	47.52	61.07	1538346	2926444	5065334	2.57	2.19	2538638	3231608	3229007	0.97	
More Developed Regions	69.84	76.28	83.98	729285	904288	1040049	0.86	0.56	314901	281249	198357	-0.45	-1.40
Less Developed Regions	26.68	40.67	57.05	809062	2022156	4025286	3.66	2.75	2223737	2950359	3030649	1.13	0.11
<b>AFRICA</b>	25.15	37.30	53.77	104123	310158	804239	4.37	3.81	309865	521438	691534	2.08	1.13
Algeria	40.33	59.65	74.05	6460	18586	33675	4.23	2.38	9558	12573	11800	1.10	-0.25
Angola	17.79	36.17	55.59	1087	4729	14799	5.88	4.56	5023	8345	11820	2.03	1.39
Benin	20.45	33.88	51.78	620	2123	6344	4.92	4.38	2413	4143	5908	2.16	1.42
Botswana	11.95	33.31	55.42	91	572	1651	7.35	4.24	668	1146	1328	2.16	0.59
Burkina Faso	6.35	37.46	66.39	394	4386	14376	9.64	4.75	5808	7322	7279	0.93	-0.02
Burundi	3.22	9.01	21.15	118	661	2853	6.89	5.85	3562	6678	10637	2.51	1.86
Cameroon	26.87	49.33	66.86	2022	7521	19504	5.25	3.81	5503	7724	9669	1.36	0.90
Cape Verde	21.42	62.59	78.94	60	280	581	6.16	2.92	218	168	155	-1.04	-0.32
Central Africa	33.67	41.60	58.88	693	1552	3745	3.23	3.52	1364	2179	2615	1.87	0.73
Chad	15.57	22.84	38.51	627	1669	4970	3.92	4.36	3403	5638	7937	2.02	1.37
Comoros	21.24	34.08	53.43	67	265	879	5.50	4.80	249	513	767	2.89	1.61
Congo	34.85	63.27	76.58	504	1879	4347	5.26	3.35	943	1091	129	0.58	0.79
Cote d'Ivoire	32.09	46.95	64.13	2168	7869	23611	5.16	4.40	4587	8892	13206	2.65	1.58
Djibouti	68.49	84.25	89.75	140	543	947	5.42	2.22	65	102	108	1.80	0.23
Egypt	43.45	46.36	62.20	16877	32054	60519	2.57	2.54	21964	37092	36782	2.10	-0.03
Equatorial Guinea	27.06	48.35	68.51	61	218	547	5.09	3.68	164	233	251	1.40	0.30
Eritrea	12.24	19.02	35.66	256	766	2511	4.38	4.75	1833	3259	4532	2.30	1.32
Ethiopia	9.50	14.92	29.89	3061	9516	37929	4.54	5.53	29159	5470	88957	2.48	1.98
Gabon	30.61	53.77	69.58	195	815	1877	5.72	3.34	442	701	820	1.84	0.63
Gambia	16.58	28.92	48.63	91	373	1022	5.64	4.03	457	918	1080	2.79	0.65
Ghana	30.06	39.17	57.74	2955	7901	21934	3.93	4.08	6876	12271	16053	2.32	1.07
Guinea	16.30	33.56	53.28	676	2604	8039	5.39	4.51	3473	5155	7049	1.58	1.25
Guinea-Bissau	15.95	25.16	44.59	100	300	882	4.39	4.31	527	892	1096	2.11	0.82
Kenya	12.92	31.76	51.48	1775	10347	32616	7.05	4.59	11966	22230	30744	2.48	1.30
Lesotho	10.80	27.05	47.28	128	633	1973	6.39	4.55	1059	1706	2199	1.91	1.02
Liberia	30.35	48.05	64.55	488	1713	4674	5.02	4.02	1121	1852	2567	2.01	1.31
Libya	60.95	88.35	92.75	1491	5643	11951	5.32	3.00	955	744	934	-1.00	0.91
Madagascar	16.09	30.76	50.49	1253	5308	17378	5.77	4.74	6534	11951	17041	2.42	1.42
Malawi	7.66	15.60	31.69	402	1894	7083	6.20	5.28	4842	10250	15265	3.00	1.59
Mali	16.21	30.42	49.96	1000	3821	12277	5.36	4.67	5169	8739	12298	2.10	1.37
Mauritania	20.30	58.98	73.25	278	1522	3255	6.80	3.04	1093	1058	1189	-0.13	0.47
Mauritius	43.44	41.67	57.82	388	491	856	0.94	2.22	505	687	625	1.23	-0.38
Morocco	37.68	50.94	66.22	6520	15096	26917	3.36	2.31	10785	14541	13733	1.20	-0.23
Mozambique	8.62	41.07	61.09	905	7800	21468	8.62	4.05	9593	11191	13671	0.62	0.80
Namibia	20.61	42.93	63.59	186	75	1939	5.59	3.79	715	1000	1110	1.34	0.42
Niger	10.63	19.24	36.45	507	2078	8160	5.64	5.47	4263	8727	14225	2.87	1.95
Nigeria	23.38	43.29	61.64	14676	55751	146948	5.34	3.88	48094	73034	91449	1.67	0.90
Reunion	49.13	71.18	81.91	237	496	738	2.95	1.59	246	201	163	-0.81	-0.84
Rwanda	4.00	6.74	14.98	175	610	2367	4.99	5.42	4209	8438	13430	2.78	1.86
Sao Tome & Principe	27.94	50.55	67.24	23	74	145	4.67	2.69	58	72	71	0.86	-0.06
Senegal	34.18	45.07	62.17	1643	4280	10505	3.83	3.59	3163	5215	6391	2.00	0.81
Seychelles	33.26	58.88	73.85	20	46	70	3.33	1.68	40	32	25	-0.89	-0.99
Sierra Leone	21.14	40.21	59.10	620	2038	5136	4.76	3.70	2311	3031	3554	1.08	0.64
Somalia	21.27	27.85	45.87	1164	3004	9760	3.79	4.71	4308	7783	11516	2.37	1.57
South Africa	47.97	53.12	68.60	12314	24550	48673	2.76	.74	13355	21665	22278	1.94	0.11
St. Helena	19.98	30.65	50.39	1	2	4	2.77	2.77	4	4	4		
Sudan	18.94	27.25	46.37	3033	8742	27075	4.23	4.52	12979	23337	31313	2.35	1.18
Swaziland	14.01	36.12	56.61	67	354	933	6.66	3.88	414	626	715	1.65	0.53
Togo	16.32	33.66	52.32	373	1622	4906	5.88	4.43	1912	3196	4471	2.06	1.34
Tunisia	49.85	59.89	73.62	2797	5806	9784	2.92	2.09	2814	3888	3506	1.29	-0.41
Uganda	8.34	14.23	28.76	933	3504	13818	5.29	5.49	10250	21114	34237	2.89	1.93
Tanzania	10.08	28.20	48.25	1602	9608	30344	7.17	4.60	14298	4467	32550	2.15	1.14
Western Sahara	45.79	63.14	76.07	54	216	477	5.55	3.17	64	126	150	2.71	0.70
Zaire	29.50	31.03	49.82	6860	15865	52129	3.35	4.76	1639	35271	52509	3.07	1.59
Zambia	34.84	44.70	59.94	1686	4807	11467	4.19	3.48	3155	5947	7664	2.54	1.01
Zimbabwe	19.56	35.97	55.39	1202	4502	10874	5.28	3.53	4942	8012	8758	1.93	0.36

Source: United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), Global Report on Human Settlements, Statistical Annex, (Draft) 1995.

**Table 3.1 The growth of cities with more than 1 million inhabitants, 1960-2025**

	Number of "million" cities			"Million" cities as % urban population		
	world	dev.ed countr.	dev.ing countr.	world	dev.ed countr.	dev.ing countr.
<b>1960</b>	114	62	52	29.5	27.3	28.4
<b>1980</b>	222	103	119	34.0	33.4	34.6
<b>2000</b>	408	129	279	40.8	34.0	44.2
<b>2025</b>	639	153	486	43.2	32.6	46.4

*Source: United Nations, Estimates and Projections of Urban, Rural and City Populations 1950-2025: The 1982 Assessment (New York, 1984).*

**Table 3.2 The growth of cities with more than 4 million inhabitants 1960-2025**

	Number of "4 million" cities			"4 million cities as % urban population		
	World	Dev.ed Countr.	Dev.ing Countr.	World	Dev.ed Countr.	Dev.ing Countr.
<b>1960</b>	19	10	9	13.4	14.2	12.5
<b>1980</b>	35	13	22	15.8	14.1	17.2
<b>2000</b>	66	16	50	19.9	13.4	23.2
<b>2025</b>	135	21	114	24.6	12.8	28.2

*Source: United Nations, Estimates and Projections of Urban, Rural and City Populations 1950-2025: The 1982 Assessment (New York, 1984).*

**Table 4. Status of Global Mission, 1995, in Context of 20th and 21st Centuries**

<b>Year:</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>mid-1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>WORLD POPULATION</b>					
1. Total population	1,619,886,800	3,697,849,000	5,759,276,000	6,228,254,000	8,472,446,000
2. Urban population (urbanities)	232,694,900	1,352,449,000	2,603,193,000	2,964,649,000	5,185,137,000
3. Rural dwellers	1,387,191,900	2,345,400,000	3,156,083,000	3,263,605,000	3,287,309,000
4. Adult population (over 15 yrs.)	1,025,938,000	2,311,156,000	3,922,067,000	4,291,267,000	6,362,807,000
5. Literates	286,705,000	1,479,980,000	2,510,123,000	3,038,217,000	5,202,867,000
6. Nonliterates	739,233,000	831,176,000	1,411,944,000	1,253,050,000	1,159,940,000
<b>WORLDWIDE EXPANSION OF CITIES</b>					
7. Metropolises (over 100,000)	300	2,400	3,800	4,200	6,800
8. Megacities (over 1 million population)	20	161	380	433	650
9. Urban poor	100 million	650 million	1,650 million	2,000 million	3,050 million
10. Urban slum dwellers	20 million	260 million	900 million	1,300 million	2,100 million
<b>WORLD POPULATION BY RELIGION</b>					
11. Christians (total all kinds)	558,056,300	1,246,173,000	1,939,419,000	2,119,342,000	3,051,179,000
12. Muslims	200,102,200	564,320,000	1,057,599,000	1,153,871,000	1,709,679,000
13. Nonreligious	2,923,300	556,275,000	937,185,000	984,962,000	1,284,707,000
14. Hindus	203,033,300	477,115,000	777,372,000	836,421,000	1,089,018,000
15. Buddhists	127,159,000	237,308,000	341,096,000	359,387,000	452,734,000
16. Atheists	225,600	169,309,000	242,590,000	232,088,000	236,370,000
17. New-Religionists	5,910,000	78,303,000	128,587,000	143,667,000	216,502,000
18. Tribal religionists	106,339,600	90,220,000	99,246,000	96,174,000	76,738,000
19. Sikhs	2,960,600	10,870,000	20,550,000	21,410,000	28,264,000
20. Jews	12,269,800	13,605,000	13,543,000	14,082,000	15,100,000
21. Non-Christians	1,061,830,500	2,451,676,000	3,819,857,000	4,108,912,000	5,421,267,000
<b>GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY</b>					
22. Total Christians as % of world	34.4	33.7	33.7	34.0	36.0
23. Affiliated church members	521,563,200	1,159,341,000	1,791,227,000	1,959,825,000	2,850,000,000
24. Practicing Christians	469,259,800	905,526,000	1,291,602,000	1,371,978,000	2,280,000,000
25. Pentecostals/Charismatics	3,700,000	74,366,000	463,741,000	560,474,000	1,140,000,000
26. Great Commission Christians (active)	50 million	300million	750million	990million	1,500million
27. Average Christians martyrs per year	35,600	230,000	157,000	165,000	300,000
<b>MEMBERSHIP BY ECCLESIASTICAL BLOC</b>					
28. Anglicans	30,573,700	48,714,000	57,401,000	59,119,000	83,289,000
29. Catholics (Non-Roman)	276,000	3,211,000	4,076,000	4,198,000	5,915,000
30. Marginal Protestants	927,600	11,094,000	21,121,000	23,349,000	32,895,000
31. Nonwhite indigenous Christians	7,743,100	60,130,000	173,033,000	197,688,000	278,509,000
32. Orthodox	115,897,700	146,891,300	189,617,000	193,541,000	272,668,000
33. Protestants	103,056,700	239,102,000	354,705,000	373,873,000	526,724,000
34. Roman Catholics	266,419,400	688,673,000	1,052,116,000	1,108,056,000	1,561,066,000
<b>MEMBERSHIP BY CONTINENT</b>					
35. Africa	8,756,400	118,744,000	307,235,000	366,427,000	811,178,000
36. East Asia	1,763,000	10,295,000	116,652,000	141,024,000	230,393,000
37. Europe	273,788,400	406,768,000	416,906,000	415,178,000	413,342,000
38. Eurasia (formerly USSR)	97,002,000	88,105,000	119,503,000	128,673,000	194,058,000
39. Latin America	60,025,100	268,402,000	451,175,000	489,251,000	675,205,000
40. Northern America	59,569,700	173,364,000	200,784,000	202,773,000	225,629,000
41. Oceania	4,311,400	15,026,000	19,236,000	19,814,000	24,015,000
42. South Asia	16,347,200	78,638,000	159,099,000	196,683,000	327,240,000
<b>CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS</b>					
43. Service agencies	1,500	14,100	23,000	24,300	40,000
44. Foreign-mission sending agencies	600	2,200	4,400	4,800	8,500
<b>CHRISTIAN WORKERS</b>					
45. Nationals (all denominations)	1,050,000	2,350,000	4,207,000	4,500,300	8,500,000
46. Aliens (foreign missionaries)	62,000	240,000	332,000	400,000	500,000
<b>CHRISTIAN FINANCE (in US \$, per year)</b>					
47. Personal income of Church members	270billion	4,100billion	10,760billion	12,700billion	26,000billion
48. Personal income of Pentecostals/Charismatics	250,000,000	157billion	1,267billion	1,550billion	9,500billion
49. Giving to Christian causes	8billion	70billion	187billion	220billion	870billion
50. Churches' income	7billion	50billion	92billion	100billion	300billion
51. Parachurch and institutional income	1billion	20billion	96billion	120billion	570billion
52. Ecclesiastical crime	300,000	5,000,000	1.4billion	2billion	18billion
53. Income of global foreign missions	200,000,000	3.0billion	10.2billion	12billion	60billion
54. Computers in Christian use (total numbers)	0	1,000	180,212,000	340,000,000	2,500,000,000
<b>CHRISTIAN LITERATURE</b>					
55. New Commercial book titles per year	2,200	17,100	24,000	25,000	70,000
56. Christian periodicals	3,500	23,000	29,000	35,000	100,000
57. New books/articles on evangelization per year	500	3,100	13,000	16,000	80,000
<b>SCRIPTURE DISTRIBUTION (all services)</b>					
58. Bibles per year	5,452,600	25,000,000	60,436,000	70,000,000	180,000,000
59. New Testaments per year	7,300,000	45,000,000	92,883,000	110,000,000	250,000,000
60. Scriptures, including gospels, selections, per year	20million	281million	1,702million	2,050million	4,000million
<b>CHRISTIAN BROADCASTING</b>					
61. Christian radio/TV stations	0	1,230	3,000	4,000	10,000
62. Total monthly listeners/viewers	0	750,000,000	1,743,835,000	2,150,000,000	3,800,000,000
63. over Christian stations	0	150,000,000	523,950,000	600,000,000	1,300,000,000
64. over secular stations	0	650,000,000	1,469,461,000	1,810,000,000	2,800,000,000
<b>CHRISTIAN URBAN MISSION</b>					
65. Non-Christian megacities	5	65	175	202	280
66. New non-Christian urban dwellers per year	5,200	51,100	119,000	140,000	360,000
67. Urban Christians	159,600,000	660,800,000	1,240,774,000	1,393,700,000	2,448,800,000
<b>CHRISTIAN EVANGELISM</b>					
68. Evangelism-hours per year	10billion	99billion	40billion	480billion	4,250billion
69. Disciple-opportunities per capita per year	6	27	70	77	500
<b>WORLD EVANGELIZATION</b>					
70. Unevangelized population	788,159,000	1,391,956,000	1,143,614,000	1,038,819,000	600,000,000
71. Unevangelized as % of world	48.7	38.6	19.9	16.6	7.1

Source: David, Barret, *Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 1995. International Bulletin of Missionary Research, January 1995: 24-25.*

**Table 5. NAIROBI 1990****Population by Religion**

Total Population:	1.800.000 = 100% Annual increase: 7% Country-wide: 3,5%
Christians:	1.500.000 = 83% (All people professing to be Christians)
Non-Christians:	300.000 = 17% (Muslims: 150.000 = 9%, Hindus etc.: 50.000 = 2%, African Traditional Religion = 100.000 = 6%)

**CHRISTIAN POPULATION BY DENOMINATION**

Catholics:	600.000 = 33% of Population, 40% of all Christians <sup>1</sup>
Non-Catholics:	900.000 = 50% of Population, 60% of all Christians (80.000 Anglicans, 425.000 Protestants, 380.000 Indigenous, 15.000 Orthodox).

**CATHOLIC POPULATION BY ETHNIC COMPOSITION**

<u>Ethnic Group</u>	<u>Population</u>		<u>Catholic Population</u>		(in group)
Gikuyu	600.000	33%	225.000	41%	37%
Luo	300.000	18%	70.000	13%	23%
Luhya	290.000	16%	75.000	14%	26%
Kamba	215.000	12%	90.000	16%	42%
<b>Total: 4 large</b>	<b>1.405.000</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>460.000</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>33%</b>
Others	400.000	21%	85.000	16%	21%
<b>Total population</b>	<b>1.805.000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>545.000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>30%<sup>2</sup></b>

**CHURCH ATTENDANCE**

	<u>Regular<sup>3</sup></u>	<u>Occasional</u>	<u>All Church-goers</u>
Catholics	130.000=22%	5-10%	27-32%
Non-Catholics <sup>4</sup>	270.000=30%	5-10%	35-40%
All Christians	400.000=27%	5-10%	32-37% <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The figure for Catholics includes 60.000 "nominal Christians". All figures are rounded estimates based on census and polls, projected to the year 1990.

Sources: Summary of the Nairobi Church survey, Daystar University College 1989. Kenya Churches Handbook, 1973. Government Census 1962 & 1978. Catholic Directory of Eastern Africa, 1981 (& previous). Catholic Directory of Kenya 1989.

<sup>2</sup> This estimate may be compared with the estimate that Catholics form 22% of Kenya's population. The difference is partially explained by the different ethnic composition of Nairobi compared with that of Kenya in general. The four large tribes forming 78% of the population of Nairobi are 33% Catholic there, whereas in Kenya they form 56% of the population with 28% Catholics. The other tribes forming 21% of the population of Nairobi are 21% Catholic there, whereas in Kenya they form 42% of the population with only 14% Catholics. The remaining Christians form 44% of the population of Kenya, and 50% of the population of Nairobi.

<sup>3</sup> Regular Attendance = 1 - 4 times monthly.

<sup>4</sup> Protestants include 44 Denominations with 330 churches (1986). Indigenous include 128 Denominations and 320 churches (1986). Catholics had 94 churches, Anglicans 48, Orthodox 8. Total 800.

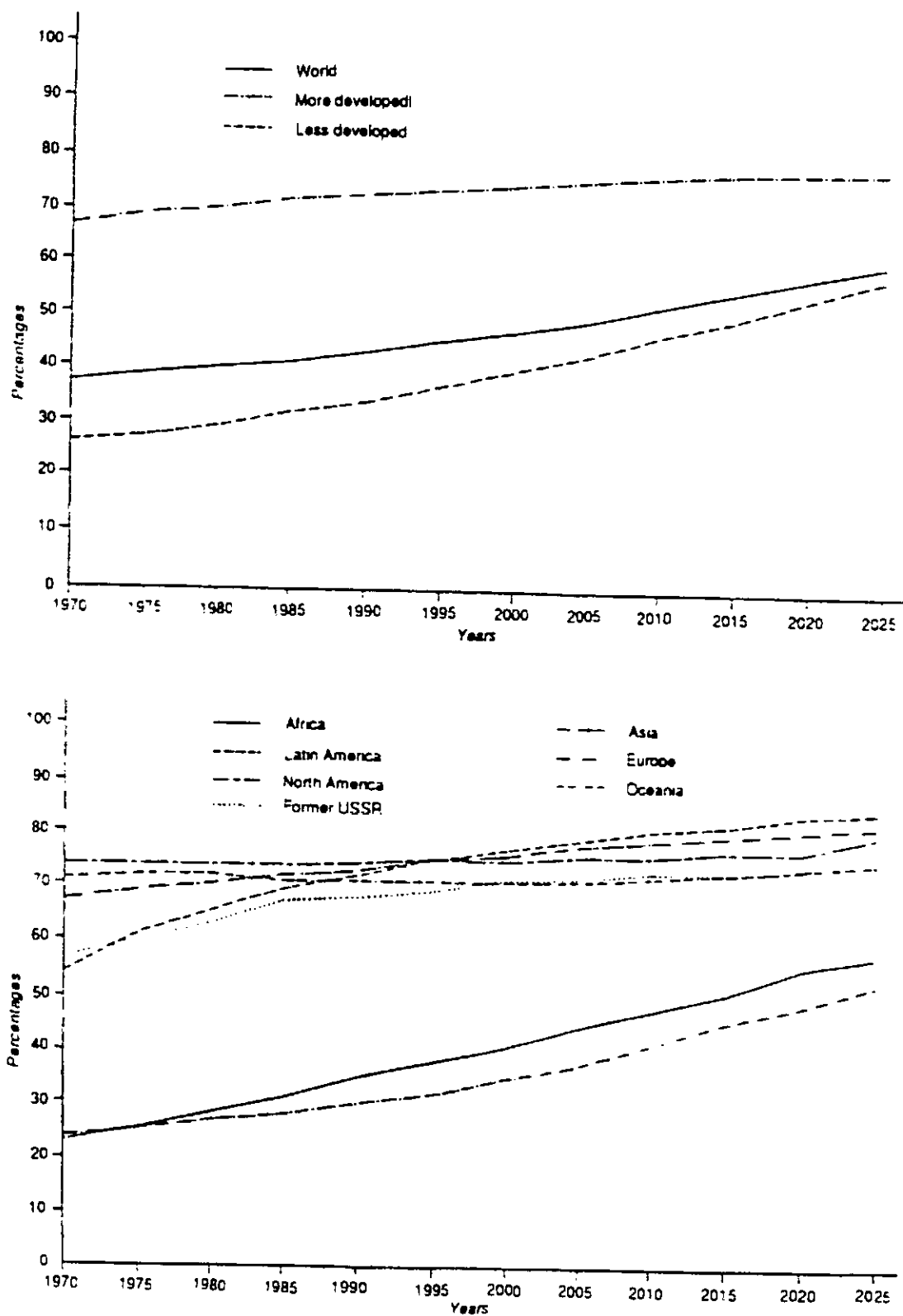
<sup>5</sup> This estimate may be compared with the percentages of church attendance for ethnic groups: Gikuyu 27%, Luo 30%, Luhya 45%, Kamba 31%, others 18%.

**Table 6. Personnel of the Catholic Church in Africa**

<b>Population:</b>	<b>639,721,000</b>
<b>Catholics:</b>	<b>88,599,000</b>
Bishops:	494 (local 383)
Diocesan priests:	10,287
Missionary priests:	10,112
Permanent deacons:	275
Local & Missionary brothers:	5,963
Local & Missionary sisters:	42,429
Lay Missionaries:	1,329
Catechists:	256,903
Catholics per priest:	4,358
Cardinals:	12
Diocesan Seminarians (phil./theol.)	14,363
Religious Seminarians (phil./theol.)	2,965
Minor diocesan/religious seminarians	40,478
Parishes with diocesan parish-priest	4,145
Parishes with religious parish-priest	3,395
Total parishes with parish-priest	7,540
Parishes without parish-priest:	
- administered by other priest:	945
- administered by deacon:	21
- administered by religious non-priest:	15
- administered by religious sister:	82
- administered by lay-people	236
- totally vacant:	128
Total parishes without parish-priest:	1,427
Total number of dioceses:	428

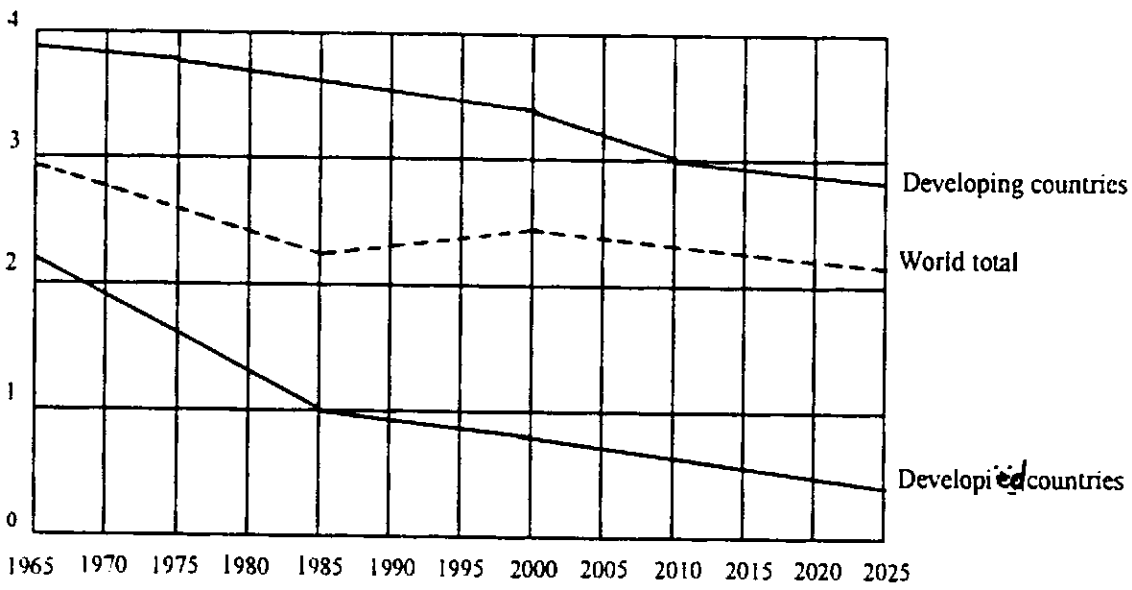
Source: *Alfazeta, Speciale Sinodo, Supplemento n°33, Marzo 1994.*

Figure 1. World urbanization trends by regions, 1970-2025

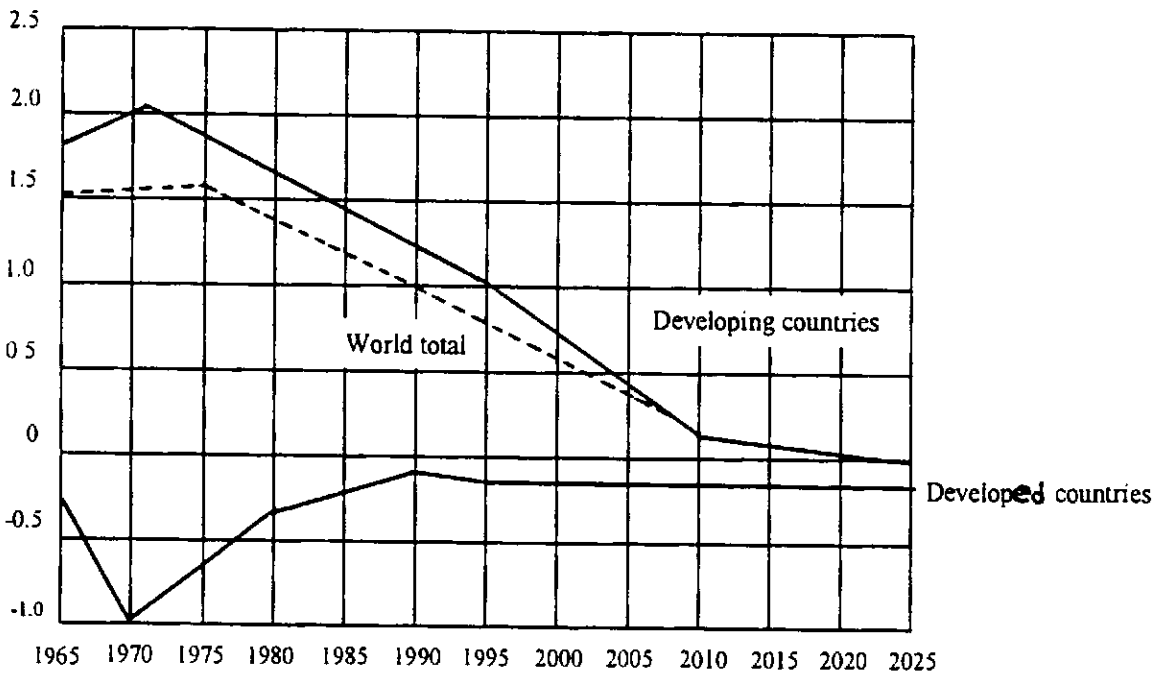


Source: World urbanization prospects 1990, (New York, United Nations 1990).

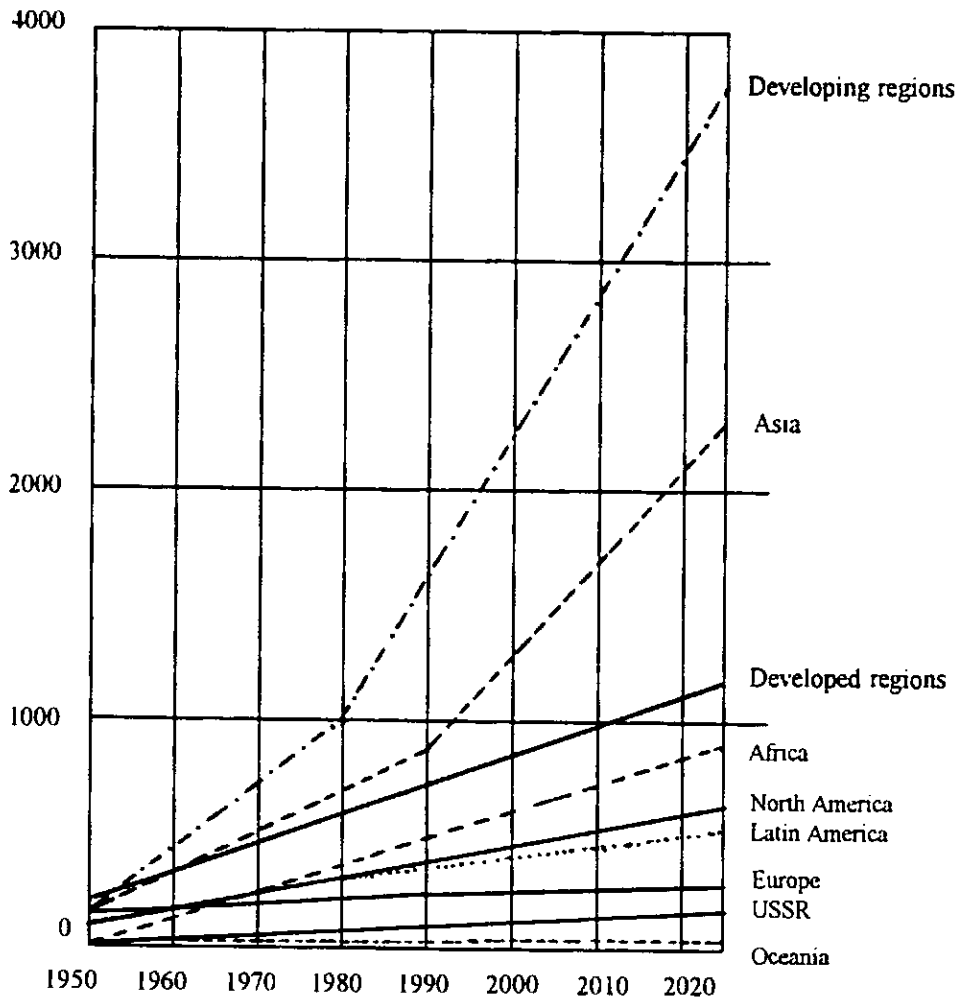
**Fig. 2.1      Annual average urban population growth rates, by areas, 1965-2025**



**Fig. 2.2      Annual average rural population growth rates, by areas, 1960-2025**



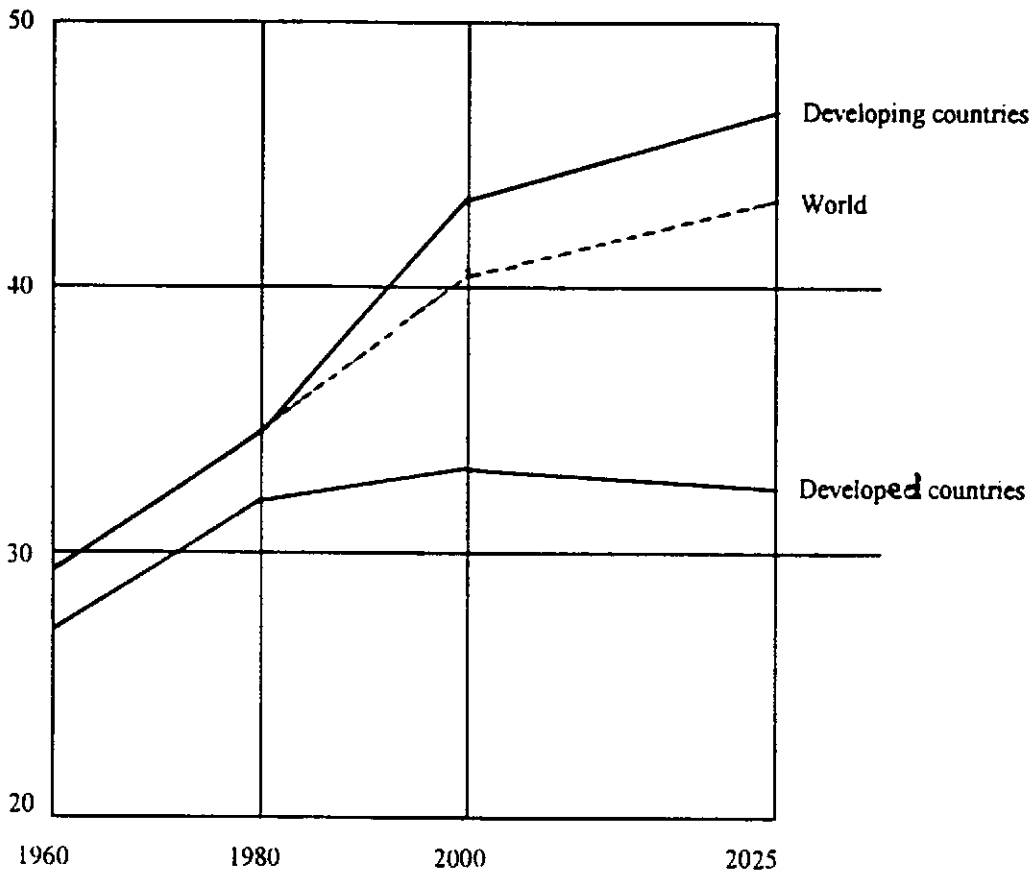
**Fig. 3.1      Urban Population Trends by region, 1950-2025 (in millions)**



*Source: United Nations, Urban and rural population projections 1950-2025: the 1984 Assessment (New York, 1986).*

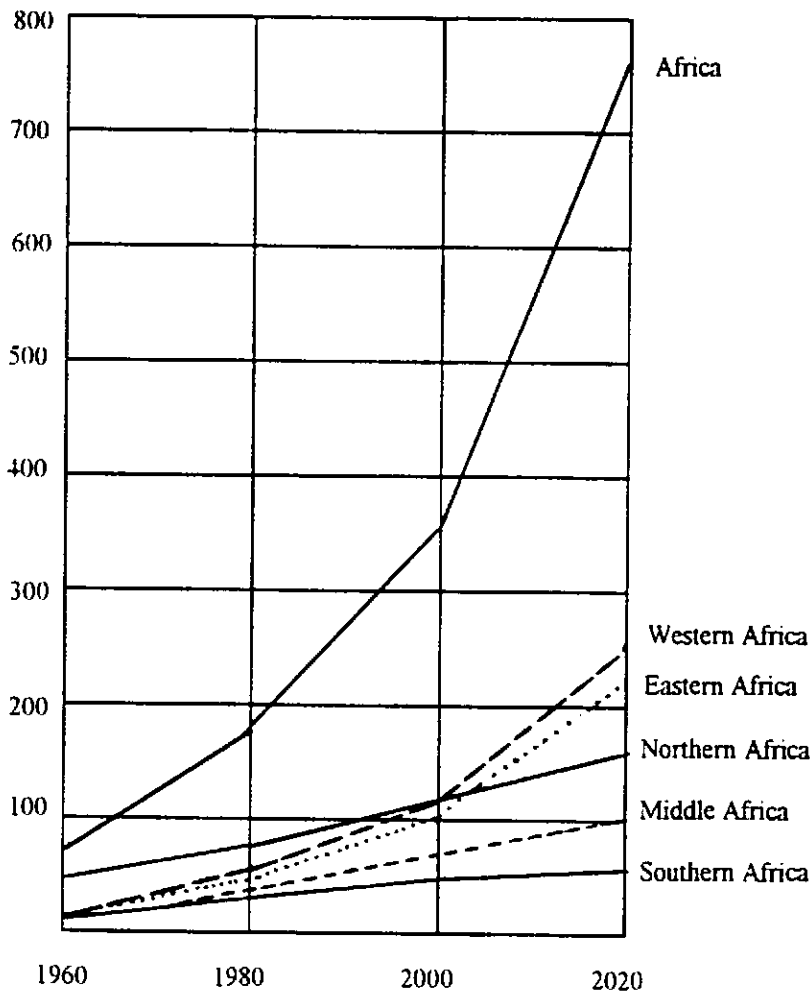


**Fig. 3.2**      **Percentage of urban population in 1+million cities,**  
**1960-2025**



*Source: United Nations, Estimates and Projections of Urban, Rural, and City Populations 1950-2025: The 1982 Assessment (New York, 1984).*

**Fig. 4 Urbanization trends in Africa, by subregion, 1960-2020**  
**Population in millions**



*Source: United Nations, Urban and Rural Population Projections 1950-2025: the 1984 Assessment (New York, 1986).*

**Map 1. Urban agglomerations in the world (1995)**  
(over 1 million)

**URBAN AGGLOMERATIONS (1995)**



*Urban agglomerations with population over 1 million in 1995*

*Source: United Nations, Global Report on Human Settlements, 1995 (draft).*

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**PSALM OF OUR TIMES**

**PSALM 121**

**GREAT IS MY JOY, ALLELUIA,  
AS I GO TOWARDS THE HOUSE OF THE LORD  
TO THAT CITY WHERE ALL ARE ONE!**

We are millions, Lord, in search of your Holy City, Where you will welcome  
those after their long journey, Where you guarantee us peace and happiness,  
In the house of unity and solidarity among all.

But now our city, where we are camped by the thousands, Is an eyesore of  
promiscuousness, with everyone out for himself. Peace! A doorway to sleep!  
And a first-fight for a slice of bread.

With only brute force in place of solidarity!  
And the only visible sign of unity everywhere:  
the misery and abandon of our shanty-towns.  
Our house? A corrugated hut of rifferaff wood.

**A CITY WHERE ALL THE TRIBES WILL GATHER  
WHERE ALL WILL GIVE THANKS TO THEIR LORD  
IN THE PLACE OF ALL MIGHT AND POWER!**

Our rights are scoffed at, and the mighty never visit our cities  
Except in their bullet-proof cars, or to chase us even further away,



Towards other unknown places, far from their palaces and pleasures, Their  
wealth and ever-present security measures. What unites us? At most the  
violence of our daily battle to survive!

**GREAT IS MY JOY, ALLELUIA!!**

Oh yes, you know it Lord!

The weeks I've been looking for work, Alleluia!

But empty-handed, I return to my solitude, Alleluia!

With an empty stomach I go back to my shanty, Alleluia, Alleluia!

But maybe, Lord, it is another house and another city?

Maybe, Lord, it means finding peace in our hearts?

Maybe, Lord, a home less among us and more with you?

A city, Lord, where you are the light, where water flows in abundance,  
With no threat of eviction or expulsion hanging over our heads, Where no one  
asks us for our ID cards...

A city of brotherhood for the sharing of bread and wine,

Where children sing of your goodness,

Where the young trust in the future,

And where the aged live peaceful in their memories.

But Lord, where is this city? Show us the path to follow...

It is the path which leads to the heart of my fellow-man, There where You are  
all in all.

It is the city where united we stand against hate and egoism, It is the home in  
our heart, open by your love to all, Where each thinks first of his neighbour  
and his fellow-human.

**GREAT IS MY JOY, ALLELUIA!!**  
**BECAUSE I AM GOING TOWARDS THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.**

*(R. Stager - C. Grange)*