

2. In order to fulfil his mission of reconciliation, Jesus spent a lot of time with the sick. Is there enough room in your ministry for the pastoral care of the sick, the aged, the lonely? Who are the real needy in your area?
3. Jesus was often involved in controversies with the Pharisees, because he saw that man must be given priority over customs and structures and laws. Is there, in your diocese or area, a problem of laws, structures, or customs that oppress man? Does the Church in some ways maintain such laws and customs?
4. What is the place of the ministry of the Word in your life? What forms does this ministry take? What do you preach about most often? What is the place of Jesus Christ in your teaching and preaching?

CHRISTOPHER MWOLEKA

Trinity and community

I am dedicated to the ideal of Ujamaa because it invites all men, in a down to earth practical way, to imitate the life of the Trinity which is a life of sharing.

The three Divine Persons share everything in such a way that they are not three gods but only One. And Christ's wish is: "That they (his followers) may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me, may they be completely one..."

Have you ever considered why Christianity is different from all other religions? All great religions believe in one God. It is only Christianity which believes that this one God is three Persons (God is not just one person).

Why should God have revealed this Mystery to us? Christ referred to it very many times. It is a pity that many people find it very difficult to understand what this mystery is all about. Many Christians do not know what to do with it except that it must be believed. It is a dogma they cannot apply to their daily life. So they push it aside to look for interesting devotions elsewhere.

Not an intellectual puzzle

The school children in a catechism class find the Trinity interesting because it is to them a riddle to play with. Teachers look for examples

Bishop Christopher Mwoleka ordinary of Rulenge Diocese, Tanzania, gives a Christian interpretation of 'Ujamaa', the Tanzanian policy of socialisation. Bishop Mwoleka is well-known for his personal commitment to the 'Ujamaa' way of life, and he here gives some reflections on how the mystery of the Blessed Trinity must be lived out in our community life, in our attitudes to our fellow-men. With acknowledgements to AMECEA Documentation Service, 5/75/5.

to illustrate this mystery without success. The theologians have made the Trinity a kind of intellectual exercise, speculating on it until their heads get dizzy. We are told that St. Augustine almost lost his head trying to grasp what the Trinity was all about until the angel came to his rescue at the sea shore, which really means that he gave up!

I think we have problems in understanding the Holy Trinity because we approach the mystery from the wrong side. The intellectual side is not the best side to start with. We try to get hold of the wrong end of the stick, and it never works. The right approach to the mystery is to *imitate* the Trinity. We keep repeating the mistake that Philip made by asking: "Rabbi, show us the Father!" Christ was dismayed by the question and rebuked Philip: "Philip, have I been with you so long and yet you don't know me? He who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say: show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me?" Then Christ continued to say: "He who believes in me will also do the works that I do, and greater works than these will he do."

On believing in this mystery, the first thing we should have done was to imitate God, then we would ask no more questions, for we would understand. God does not reveal Himself to us for the sake of speculation. He is not giving us a riddle to solve. He is offering us life. He is telling us: "This is what it means to live, now begin to live as I do." What is the one and only reason why God revealed this mystery to us if it is not to stress that life is not life at all unless it is shared?

If we would once begin to share life in all its aspects, we would soon understand what the Trinity is all about and rejoice.

A way of life together

If in the Catholic Church there is something faulty with our methods of presenting the message of the Gospel, the Good News, it is this: we have not presented religion as a sharing of life. All that people know about religion is the carrying out of commandments — ten of God and seven of the Church — reducing Christianity almost to the same category as the natural religions. We have behaved as though God had not revealed His inner intimate life to us. What we should do is to put the Trinity before men, not in abstract ideas, but in concrete facts of our human earthly life: present the life of the Trinity as shared and lived by us Christians here and now.

Why did God upon creating men not put us straight into heaven, but instead put us here on earth? The reason why we should first have to wait here for a number of years before going to heaven would seem to be that we should practise and acquire some competence in the art of sharing life. Without this practice we are apt to mess up things in

heaven. So we are here for practice. And for this practice, God has given us toys with which to practise as children do. Before children grow up and build real houses, own real farms, rear cows or drive cars, they first pass through a period of practising with toys those things which they see their parents doing. For toys, God has given us material things. Material things, therefore, are not accidental. They are necessary for our condition here on earth. We cannot do without them. Material things must not be despised or ignored, but must be used as training equipment for the job that we have to do eternally. All I want to say is this: it is by sharing the earthly goods that we come to have an idea of what it will be like to share the life of God.

As long as we do not know how to share earthly goods, as God would have us do, it is an illusion to imagine that we know what it is to share the life of the Trinity which is our destiny. If you cannot manage with toys, nobody is going to entrust you with the real thing.

Do we reveal the true face of God?

The question is: Have we imitated the Holy Trinity in sharing earthly goods? Have Christians tried to do this in all earnest? Could I truthfully say: "All mine are thine, and thine are mine", to each and all? This is what we are supposed to imitate (John 17, 10). Then in what sense can we be said to be practising to live the life of God? How can we dare to profess the religion of the Trinity? The Fathers of the Vatican II Council rightly made a confession: "We Christians have concealed the true face of God and of religion more than we have revealed it." (Church in the Modern World. No. 19)

You know how those who deny God and religion define life. Let us quote the extremists — the Marxists. They try to figure out what life should be at its best and dream of a society in which "each will give according to his capacity and receive according to his needs." We know that they have made fantastic efforts and that they have not succeeded. They have used methods that we do not and cannot approve. But their vision and their dream could be said to aim at a transformation from "*cupiditas*" to "*caritas*" (from self-centred love to other-centred love). It could be a Trinitarian life expressed in human and material terms. If the Marxists fail to achieve their goal, the main reason would seem to be that they try to impose the ideal from the outside upon men without the necessary corresponding interior dispositions. If we Christians claim to possess these interior dispositions of charity by the grace of Christ, then we should be able to express them in a concrete material way in a manner that would make the Marxists wonder at our success. Would this not constitute a meeting point between us and them, or at least a point of dialogue?

Tanzanians are not Marxists, nor do they deny God. Ujamaa is aimed at sharing life in as many of its aspects as possible. The Government is trying to set up social structures that are viable for this kind of life. I think it is the duty of Church members to supply the interior dispositions needed for this kind of life, as Vatican II exhorted us: "The Church admonishes her own sons to give internal strength to human associations which are just." (G.S. 42)

So in Tanzania, Providence has already provided a new horizon for the apostolate that would bring all men under the rule of Christ.

This is why I shall not let this chance slip out of our hands.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. 'We approach the mystery (of the Blessed Trinity) from the wrong side.' How does the author justify this statement?
2. Does the Blessed Trinity mean more in your life than would be the case if you simply believed in a One-Person God?
3. Why does the author see the mystery of the Trinity as the heart of the Christian idea that religion is a 'sharing of life'?
4. Can you think of any reasons for initiating a dialogue with Marxists? Would such a dialogue not be dangerous to faith?
5. Do you agree that socialism gives a better basis for Christian living than does capitalism? — or is this question too political?

LAURENTI MAGESA

Young people and liturgy

As a newly ordained priest, one thing greatly worries me. It is the absence of young people from our liturgical worship. Whenever I mention this concern of mine to some of my colleagues, I am confronted with the same anxiety. The others, notably, a few of my elder co-workers, advise me not to be overly perturbed. They say in their lifetime they have seen many such situations straighten themselves out. And in any case, they add with a note of a *fait accompli*, it is too early for you to worry: you will see worse things.

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