

R E P O R T S A N D I N F O R M A T I O N

HUMAN DIGNITY JOURNAL
Number 2 – 2015-2016

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18290/rt.2016.63.10-20>

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PARTICIPATORY INTERNATIONAL VIDEO-CONFERENCE:
IS AFRICA A MISSIONARY CONTINENT?
SUMMARY

Conference attended by:	FACULTY: STUDENTS:
Date:	November 17, 2014
Time:	2:13pm-3:55pm
Academic Coordinator	Rev. Dr. Robert Lezohupski, OFMConv.
Project Facilitator:	Mr. Radosław Malinowski
Opening Introductions:	– Fr. Robert Lezohupski, TUC
Opening Prayer:	– Fr. Felix Phiri, TUC
Invitation to Participate and Greetings:	– From prof. dr hab. U. Piotrowska vice-rector KUL for International cooperation
Presentation of both Sides:	– respectively Fr. Robert Lezohupski, TUC, Fr. Dr. Stanisław Grodz, KUL
Purpose of the Conference:	– Mr. Radosław Malinowski
Opening Remarks:	– Fr. Robert Lezohupski, TUC

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<p>Action Items:</p> <p>Opening remarks: Rev. Dr. Robert Lezohupski made some introductory remarks, introduced the TUC faculty and other members present. He invited the Vice Rector from KUL to address the people. She expressed her happiness for the second meeting, the cooperation and the growing group of students attending the conference. She asked there is need for other areas of cooperation apart from the media.</p> <p>Purpose of the Conference: Mr. Radoslaw Malinowski introduced the topic which is the purpose of the conference. He noted that the conference is a part of an international, interdisciplinary bilateral academic research program between TUC and KUL—“Human Dignity Project” He posed a challenge that led us into the main presentation. In many parts of the word every Sunday, there are collections made for the missions in Africa. Is Africa a self-sustaining Church? Is Africa still a Missionary continent?</p> <p>Main Presentation: Rev. Dr. Patrick Mwanja gave the presentation on the topic “Is Africa still a Missionary Continent?” a theme he termed provocative. He noted that a similar question was raised 60 years ago in Europe (Germany and France) He answered the question with an affirmation. He notes that the term “Mission” is ambiguous to define. He notes that it is the tasking of announcing the Gospel to all people resulting from the mandate in Matthew 28:19–20. Often synonymous with the term “Evangelisation”</p> <p>Theologically, the term takes 3 major dimensions according to John Paul II (1. Mission <i>Ad Gentes</i> or Primary Evangelization directed to those who do not yet know Christ, 2. Re-evangelization New Evangelization directed to those who have lost a living sense of faith, 3. Mission in established Churches addressed to those fervent in their faith.</p>	
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<p>Citing <i>Ad Gentes</i> 7, he noted that the Church still has an obligation to carry on the missionary mandate. There is a continued necessity of mission and proclamation that Christ is the savior of the world.</p> <p>The Church and Mission are closely linked according to Vatican II. Mission is the major pre-occupation of the Church. The Church cannot exist without mission. Mission is the meaning of the Church. Where the Church is, there mission is. Based on this assertion, Africa is still a missionary continent in two ways: 1. Passive recipient of the deposit of faith, 2. Active agent in bringing the Gospel to the ends of the earth. He noted that these two apply to Africa.</p> <p>The question he noted should be: What kind of mission is the Church in Africa undertaking?</p> <p>He notes that there are five areas of urgency for mission today in Africa and these include: Reconciliation, Proclamation of the Gospel (to the 620 Million who are not Christians), Evangelization of the society (secularism and modernism greatest challenges today), Pastoral care of the already baptized to strengthen their faith and Inculturation to make the African Church Truly African, Truly Christian. Dr. Mwanja noted that the current realities in Africa call for a change of paradigm.</p> <p>He concluded the presentation with an insights from Benedict XVI's Encyclical <i>Spe Salvi</i> and St. Paul "In the Lord Jesus, there is neither Jew, Gentile . . . Be reconciled to God".</p>	
<p>Acknowledgement: Fr. Robert Lezohupski acknowledged Dr. Mwanja's presentation and gave room for Questions and comments from both bodies.</p>	
<p>Action Items: Many different ideas were raised from both parts. Question from Lublin—Are the statistics presented credible? Response was that these are recent statistics and as a scholar, he can find out.</p>	

How can the Gospel be truly African bearing in mind the fact that Africa is such a vast and diverse continent? Dr. Mwanja pointed out that the research that has been done by reputed scholars like Prof. Laurenti Magesa point to the fact that Inculturation is the way to go.

When Africans talk of evangelizing Europe, isn't like teaching the teacher? The response was that the only teacher is Christ, we are all agents and there is need for openness.

Is Africa more on a receiving side? Dr. Mwanja answered that Africa is both a recipient and active agent of the Gospel.

Is it possible to overcome divisions along ethnic lines? Dr. Mwanja responded that the Gospel is meant to bring about unity.

What is the cause of poor attendance in Africa and won't the sending of missionaries outside Africa leave local Churches without pastors? Dr. Mwanja noted that it is true that charity begins at home but advised that reserving them only for the local Church would be a contradiction to Jesus' missionary orientation.

What went wrong- There are many baptized who are not practicing their faith in Africa? Fr. Mwanja observed that the challenge lies in the way the Gospel was preached- it was wrapped in a European paper with no dialogue. He also quoted John Paul II that faith that has not become culture is not faith.

Reactions from TUC.

Fr. Fabian asked whether there is any moral dimension to mission- Is there a relationship between mission and morality. Fr. Mwanja responded that mission targets people and thus there is a moral dimension to mission.

How could the Christian Church work with all for re-evangelization? Dr. Mwanja noted that re-evangelization is needed and ecumenism is an urgent call.

<p>Vincent Mutebi asked whether we are prepared for these new realities of mission among all people. Fr. Mwanja responded that Tangaza has a number of missionary congregations that send their young people to be prepared for mission. The tools given are a preparation for mission and ministry.</p> <p>To amplifying what a participant from KUL had asked regarding the divisions along ethnic lines, Zagore wondered whether the blood of culture is greater than the blood of Christ and whether the waters of culture is stronger than the waters of baptism. To this Fr. Mwanja noted that the waters of baptism and the blood of Christ are not weaker. Saying the opposite would be heretical.</p>	
<p>Closing Remarks</p>	<p>– Rev. Dr. Stanisław Grodz, KUL.</p>
<p>Action Items:</p> <p>Rev. Dr. Stanislaw Grodz noted that he sees prospects for future collaboration. He thanked Dr. Mwanja for his presentation because what he presented is applicable to the universal Church.</p> <p>He says there is need to reformulate the three dimensions. 1. Africans have been preachers from the very beginning, 2. There is maturity of Christian communities in Africa, 3. There is need for primary evangelization in Europe and there is a need to stop dividing continents on receiving and sending- is continent is a missionary continent.</p>	
<p>Plans for future</p>	
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Respectively, Rev. Prof. Jerzy Palucki KUL highlighted on plans for future which included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Is the Church losing its Missionary identity? ◆ Dignity of the human person. ◆ There is need for concrete items for the program. ◆ Establishment of a centre for monitoring, tolerance and religious freedom. 	<p>Next Scheduled Meeting: No specific Date, Time, or Venue</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Need to remember the past through training archivists.◆ Education to the convicts. <p>Rev. Dr. Robert Lezohupski reiterated the call of Rev. Prof. Jerzy Palucki of the need for concrete items for the program.</p>	
Final Prayer:	Dr. Paddy Roe