

Martin CONWAY

A Tradition for Tomorrow: WSCF One Hundred Years On

We should rejoice in the way in which, for one hundred years now, the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) has lived as a movement in which students and others around them – can test out hunches and hypotheses about God's purposes for the world. That testing, in both thought and practice, has often (indeed, characteristically) led to commitments in faith and obedience that have built up into an impressive tradition of Christian witness that has not only contributed much to the XXth century now fading, but also has much yet to contribute to – along with no little more to discover in –the challenges of the XXIst century.

One Hundred Years of WSCF

I am writing here primarily about the *tradition* which WSCF has built up and incarnated rather than about the *organisation* itself. Not that the organisational form is unimportant – as we shall see, the WSCF and its member Student Christian Movements (SCMs) have a proud and important record of struggling to make the shapes and ethos of their organisations reflect their central purposes and goals, not least in the hope of serving as an anticipation for the Christian Church more generally – indeed for humanity as a whole.

It is all too easy to approach and judge an organisation from the *outside*, and give attention to its various changes, its numerical ups and downs or its financial health. Those are all secondary things. By focusing rather on its tradition, I want to help you who will read this to look at the inheritance of these hundred years from the *inside*, and to bring to bear such criteria as the truth, the penetration, the freshness of WSCF's activities, on your evaluation of what has been going on. For it is my fundamental presupposition that the tradition of WSCF remains very much the business of all who in any way serve and represent the Good News of Christ in the academic world.

To speak of this tradition must be first and foremost to speak of the *persons* who have created and contributed to it. As I was vividly reminded at a gathering in

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Edinburgh of several generations of members of the British SCM, the most heart-warming, joyful and constantly renewed truth of the tradition is the experience of persons growing in *friendship* and acting in *community* in order to share in the exploration of faith in God in Christ.

If I seem to speak more of distant history than of recent, it is partly because it is better documented, partly to avoid talking too much of what I have myself played a part in; *not* because I judge WSCF to have strayed away from its true tradition. Indeed, my contemporary experience strongly reinforces my conviction that if we shall only give today's and tomorrow's generations the chance to make their own discoveries and act out their own explorations, the tradition will go on growing to the lasting benefit of us all.

For the chief actor in this tradition is not the head staff member of the WSCF, not the popular speaker at SCM meetings, not the effective university chaplain – useful as all these can and should be – but God the Holy Spirit, constantly bringing to mind in unpredictable ways the things that are of Jesus Christ, and inspiring new faith and fresh commitment in new generations of students. To spell out some of the ways She has built up over these hundred years a dynamic and creative tradition, I shall pick out five of its main features, and mention some of the episodes that have given rise to these, while trying also to point to features in the WSCF experience that deserve to be carried through into the century ahead.

I. Student Evangelism: Discovering Truth to Live By

Earlier generations might have expected a centenary review to focus on the slogan “Make Jesus King,” which, when telegraphed from Kyoto by a gathering of five hundred students in 1889 to the Northfield conference of the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM) in North America, proved a spark to light commitment to world-wide evangelism in several countries. Quite a number of different beginnings fed into the awakening that produced local SCMs in a number of European countries and North American universities; in particular, leaders of the “second evangelical revival” such as the American Dwight L. MOODY, the Scot Henry DRUMMOND and the English brothers C. T. and J. E. K. STUDD, played important parts in the 1880s and 1890s.

It was at the conference MOODY convened at Mount Hermon, Massachusetts, in the summer of 1886 that Robert WILDER evoked the seed of Christian faith in the heart of John R. MOTT, and that a “Meeting of the Ten Nations,” including the “American Indian,” addressed by people belonging to those nations (as natives or missionaries), convinced MOTT and ninety-eight others to sign the pledge that created the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM) for Foreign Missions.

Typical, as we can see with hindsight, of the enthusiasm of the young MOTT that, when invited to record on the pledge card the area to which his service was to be devoted, he wrote “The World”! For that is precisely what his leadership in WSCF was to enable.

The decisive step came nine years later, at a conference of students from the four Scandinavian countries in 1895, called by Karl FRIES, a Swede who had been at the Northfield conference – in a castle uninhabited for two hundred years and where the light bulbs had to be fixed *outside* the windows to dispel the darkness within! that John R. MOTT could bring his ideas of a world-wide movement to birth, in partnership with five others, one of them being John Rutter WILLIAMSON, a medical student from Edinburgh.

It was and remains all too easy for sophisticated Europeans (and Chinese and Indians, etc.) to sneer at the “simple faith” of these founders, to judge them theologically naive and to dismiss the value of their commitment. The subsequent history amply shows how wrong such judgments would be.

KUPISCH reprints from the year 1911 a quite fascinating, and still marvellously acute, open letter written from Geneva in the *Zentralblatt des schweizerischen Zofingervereins* in March 1911 by the twenty-five-year-old Karl BARTH, discussing John R. MOTT’s visit.

Its seven very full pages witness alike to BARTH’s fluency with the pen and to a characteristically European disdain for much that comes from the United States (“Humbug!” he says at one point).

Yet his account of MOTT’s speech to a student audience works through to a most generous and fair assessment of what MOTT (and no doubt others like him) could and did bring to that generation: “We have listened to a prophet’s call. It came from far away, and sounded to our ears not exactly melodious. But it was the call of one who is born to see, and called to interpret what he sees. It was the call of a true prophet. Now it is up to us to make that call fruitful in our own lives, to let it call us into action and obedience.”¹

Above and beyond any judgment on MOTT’s theology or strategy, what has been already from the very first days all-important to the WSCF tradition is the centrality of speaking about God’s action in Christ in such a way that students can be seized with it, think it over with their friends, test it out in thought and in practice, and come to their own discoveries and commitments in their own time and their own way.

The SCM has never insisted that all those who share in its meetings, or even its leadership, must be card-carrying Christians; but it has insisted that the meetings exist in order to give students occasion to hear that faith, in order that they may explore and test it for themselves.

The miracle, of course, is that so many – and precisely in the midst of the social and intellectual pressures of a college or university – have discovered a faith to live by and by which their lives have undoubtedly been graced.

The story develops far beyond MOTT’s eloquence. Another characteristic episode in WSCF history came in the early 1930s when Willem VISSER T’HOOFT, newly appointed WSCF general secretary, called for a discussion in the pages of *Student World* about the essential heart of the Christian Message – being himself under the spell of the way Karl BARTH was calling Christians beyond the easy

1 KUPISCH Karl, *Studenten Entdecken Die Bibel – Die Geschichte der Deutschen Christlichen Studenten-Vereinigung* (DCSV). Hamburg, 1964. 304.

aspirations of a merely “liberal” Christianity and set up a Message Commission including Pierre MAURY and Reinhold NIEBUHR to lead that debate.

The result? According to DE DIETRICH: “The years 1930–31 marked a turning point in the history of the ‘Message’ of the Federation. Henceforth it moved resolutely from apologetics to affirmation, from the defensive to the offensive. It took a stand on the debates of the day, and rediscovered its missionary spirit.”²

At its best the WSCF tradition has always known in many different theological contexts – that its central concern is for a *truth* that deserves to shape the totality of human living, and has found that truth – again, in all sorts of diverse form in what God has done with and for humanity in the person Jesus of Nazareth.

Simple, *yes*, but never to be taken for granted, and something that no one of us can ever discover or determine for someone else. The Holy Spirit has to be given room to do Her refreshing work in each new time, place and context.

II. Universal Truth Creating a World-wide Community

A second theme that goes right back to those first days in 1895 at Vadstena is that the Christian faith is nothing if not universal. MOTT had been grasped by this at Mount Hermon. From Scandinavia he set out in 1895 on a two-year world trip that was to take him to twenty-two countries; by the time the officers of WSCF next met in 1897, he could report the founding of eleven Student Christian Movements in virtually every quarter of the globe: Asia, Australasia, the Pacific, the Middle East, Africa, Europe and North America.

All of these have had their ups and downs; in city after city small groups of students, then and now, have been amazed to find themselves entrusted with the leadership of a Movement whose nature and purposes they hardly know!

Nevertheless, WSCF has continued to “unite student Christian movements or organizations around the world” and to “enlist students in the work of extending the kingdom of Christ throughout the whole world” (as was laid down among the first “Objectives of the WSCF” at Vadstena).

A splendid sign of its success in doing so is that the WSCF Assembly in the hundredth year of its life could be held in Africa; for the names of Nelson MANDELA and Desmond TUTU ring out from Africa across today’s world without rival as the outstanding statesman and saint of our day.

By a wonderful quirk of African faithfulness to history, I learned at the Edinburgh meeting from Vasco SELEOANE, its General Secretary then, that the Student Christian Movement among the black students in South Africa, which has had for many years to find its way through an incredible thicket of at first oppressive, ideologically-based reorganisations, and now of muddling denominationally and socially-based competitors, still treasures as its motto the 1889 message, and in the Latin they must have received from their Afrikaaner colleagues: “*Fac Iesum Regem*”!

2 DE DIETRICH Suzanne, *Fifty Years of History* (tr. ABRECHT Audrey). Geneva, 1993. 61.

One of the near-miraculous gifts John R. MOTT brought to the infant WSCF was the awareness that each local SCM, and still more each national movement, needed to have the freedom to grow in its own way and to be deeply rooted in its own situation and culture.

It would have been so easy for him to impose the pattern of “Student YMCA” all around the world – as his U.S. YMCA colleagues had already done in China and Japan. But he was already aware, presumably from his early contacts with Europeans, that unity in Christ needs to respect cultural diversities; WSCF has stuck to that down the years, to its own great credit and that of the faith it seeks to commend.

For MOTT also knew, and has bequeathed to countless others in and through WSCF, that if the significance of what God has done in Jesus is not true for all humanity equally, then it does not deserve to be called true at all.

In our postmodern context that probably sounds a hard saying. By it I do *not* mean that any one of us has the right in the name of evangelism to impose her or his particular understanding and practice of Christian faith on another person or group.

It is a faith any one person or group can do no more than to explore, test out – and then, if and as we are convinced and committed, serve others by. Indeed, already in his 1900 study book for members of the Student Volunteer Missionary Union, *The Evangelization of the World in This Generation*, MOTT could end his opening chapter with this typically rotund (while also amazingly perceptive) sentence:

“While the missionary enterprise should not be diverted from the immediate and controlling aim of preaching the Gospel where Christ has not been named, and while it should have the right of way as the most urgent part of our task, this must ever be looked upon as but a means for the mighty and inspiring object of enthroning Christ in the individual life, in family life, in social life, in international relations, in every relationship of humankind; and, to this end, planting and developing in all non-Christian lands self-supporting, self-directing and self-propagating churches which shall become so thoroughly rooted in the convictions and hearts of the people that if Christianity were to die out in Europe and America, it would abide in purity and as a missionary power in its new homes and would live on through the centuries.”

Christian faith is not truly grasped if felt to be a European, or Western, or white-man’s faith; it is a universal faith, giving rise to a world-wide web of community-in-obedience, and therefore to a constantly amazing network of friendships, which has become for me and many others in the modern ecumenical movement probably the single most convincing piece of evidence you and I can point to today to demonstrate in our world the continuing truth and importance of what happened in Palestine two thousand years ago.

III. Life to be Lived as a Whole

I well remember being told by one of my forebears in the British SCM that in his day the local SCMs always made sure that in the autumn term they were offering good meetings on sex and politics – not only in order to recruit a crowd of impressionable first-years, but because these are always key topics for people seeking to shape their own lives.

Similarly, if more soberly, it was a standing slogan that in the SCM one learned to read the Bible with the newspaper in the other hand, and vice versa. For the WSCF tradition is centred on a faith that engages and enriches *every facet of human life*: it is not just dealing with “religion” (however that most slippery of words is understood!), nor with any limited sphere of life – the domestic sphere, for instance, or the professional in isolation.

For all the same reasons that make it essentially a faith for all humanity, it must also be tested out – and, once accepted, lived out – as a truth which provides the overall criterion and horizon for the entire compass of life, alike for an individual, a community, a nation and for humankind as a whole.

There are all sorts of ways in which this could be illustrated from the history of the WSCF. One that I particularly appreciate comes from the early experience of the British SCM. In the early 1900s the majority of undergraduates in British universities were from affluent, indeed upper-class families.

Yet they were open-minded enough to notice that there was much unrest, even injustice in British society. So in 1909 an SCM conference was held in Matlock to discuss the “social problem”; the future Archbishop William TEMPLE, then a young teacher at Oxford, was among the participants. The history of the British SCM records the participants as reaching the key conclusion that, “*We are the social problem!*”

Let it not be forgotten that the record of many early XXth century Western missionaries, not least those who came from the SCMs, includes devoted service in regard to social injustice of many kinds. In China, for instance, it was the Christian missionaries who struggled – successfully – to banish the custom of binding the feet of baby girls (resulting in injuries which would, it was held, prevent the adult woman from running away from her husband’s house), while C. F. ANDREWS and others earned their glowing reputations by leading campaigns against the use of indentured Indian and other labour in plantations in Fiji, South Africa and elsewhere.

Already in 1906 – only a few years after the imposed peace that “ended” the Anglo-Boer war – John R. MOTT and Ruth ROUSE were in South Africa trying to find an acceptable way ahead for the SCM(s) in that racially divided land. Since then, South Africa has seldom been far from the prayers and attention of WSCF.

A now oft-forgotten, but at that time vitally important, episode for discovering how Christians can best respond to war between nations arose with the hostilities between Japan and China that poisoned the atmosphere in the Far East from 1931 onwards.

SCM members from both nations journeyed one to the other, in the hope of finding some way of persuading the Japanese to draw back. Given the tiny proportion of Christians in Japan, this was probably a hopeless cause, but WSCF members around the world followed it with eager hope, later contrasted with anger and protest when the war was taken a step further. For many SCMs it was the failure of the League of Nations to take any effective action that made this episode at the other end of the world so crucial.

In Europe, WSCF soon became engaged heart and soul around the ideological struggles within Germany in the HITLER period. Thanks particularly to VISSER T'HOOF'T's close link with Karl BARTH and to his friendship with Dietrich BONHOEFFER, the WSCF head office remained closely informed, and there were more than a few visits paid to Germany by SCM people from other European countries which made those movements vividly aware – if with hindsight we must say, not strongly enough – of the importance of resisting the power of the nationalist ideology that had overrun the universities and almost all other social institutions, including the churches.

After 1945, that same concern to find a true and creative response to a dominant ideology moved to the Marxism-Leninism that had overrun Central and Eastern Europe. No Christians should in any way boast that our friends and colleagues, still less those of us outside the situation, found as full and effective a response in or outside those “Communist” states as we would have wished to.

But we may hope that we have begun on the long-term learning from having had to face up to such ideologies in the name of a Lord who deliberately shunned the seizure of power and whose greatest strength is shown in weakness.

The concern that is probably foremost at the moment, in regard to seeing Christian faith as giving a distinctive stance for life as a whole, is that of relations between rich and poor, whether between the richer nations of the North and the poorer of the South, or within so many nations between those who are doing rather nicely and those who are being increasingly marginalised – a division whose causes are anyway often linked with those operating at the international level.

The WSCF tradition stands four-square with the struggles of the South for economic and cultural “liberation” – for the sake of real peace and harmony worldwide; it is therefore lastingly critical of the self-concerned attitudes of the richer North, and all the more so when such attitudes are justified by reference to Christian faith.

Here too none of us dare speak of “solutions,” as if we were able to point to simple ways beyond tensions and situations which seem to have become all too firmly established. Yet the ways of God are not our ways, and no Christian should give up hope that God can find ways of re-opening even the most toughly entrenched of injustices.

In all such areas, two vital contributions that WSCF has enabled its members to offer into the tangles are: the faith that God reigns, and has set the person Jesus Christ at God's right hand as Lord, so that all earthly powers will finally have to

bow to God; and the reality of friendship between SCM people in different parts of the world which can reach across even the most heavily guarded frontiers. Both give actual, daily reminders of the promise that our world will not always have to be as cruel, wasteful and downright stupid as humanity so often makes it!

IV. The University Question

A fourth area in which the WSCF tradition has set distinctive markers, not just for Christians but for humanity as a whole, has to do with the understanding and patterns of the “higher” education in which SCM members are by definition engaged. In the early years, it seems that this kind of questioning played no major role.

University life usually left a fair amount of time and energy for other concerns and activities beyond one’s immediate studies or exams, and so did not call for any close attention on the part of SCM groups.

At the end of World War I, however, WSCF leaders (not least Ruth ROUSE) became aware of the extent of poverty, indeed destitution that was affecting thousands of students and their universities throughout the war-torn lands of central and eastern Europe.

Their appeals led to a movement of support and sympathy that was channelled into an offshoot of WSCF, European Student Relief (ESR), which as the worst crisis passed became International Student Service (ISS), sponsored by WSCF in partnership with other relevant bodies; and then after World War II, World University Service (WUS). This work is clearly in the sphere of mutual service and support, useful, sometimes crucially so, but not often directed at the re-shaping of the central purposes of the university.

Yet in the aftermath of World War II, perhaps because HITLER had found the German universities so readily compliant, WSCF took up the investigation into the proper nature and purpose of university education that remains alive and important today.

The person whose name is most closely linked with this on the international level is the Canadian John COLEMAN, who in the late 1940s produced a small but widely influential book, *The Task of the Christian in the University*.

The same strain of thinking was taken up strongly in my country by a group of university teachers gathered by the SCM and led by Walter MOBERLEY, later chairman of the University Grants Committee, who published *Crisis in the University* (London, 1949), a book which remains important, indeed increasingly far from having been duly heeded. And in Germany the Evangelische Akademikerschaft, with its journal *Radius*, has provoked much useful and important work over the years.

In Asia both M. M. THOMAS of India and U Kyaw THAN of Myanmar (Burma), one of his successors as WSCF Asia secretary, have published studies of developments in Asian universities, calling these to serve wider human purposes than those of immediate economic advantage, whether of the students or of the nation.

In several countries SCMs have encouraged and enabled groups of university

teachers to form permanent associations for the study of higher education, one of the most important in the 1960s being that in the United States, which was led for many years by the Yale professor Ed DIRKS. The questions most in view in this area are not so different from those upon which I have already touched:

- Questions of *truth*: are university people only interested in their individual disciplines, or is there some encompassing criterion of truth to which they should be giving complementary heed? Is the learning which the university imparts and pursues designed only for pragmatic use, or is there a value in it over and above the uses to which it can be put?

- Questions of *universality*: is the university by definition studying towards scholarship that will be accepted and recognised in every different culture, or is it a tool of a particular part of humanity that is not expected to be appropriated by others? To what extent is higher education properly at the service of national interests when these come into competition with those of other nations?

- Questions of *cultural diversity*: is university learning inherently an outcrop of the Western/Christian traditions of Europe, only to be shared by other parts of the world as they mould themselves into that originally Western mould? To what extent can the universities of Asia, for instance, serve and develop the distinctive languages, heritages, outlooks and aspirations of Asian peoples and religions, without losing the universality of their work?

- And questions dealing with *living as whole people*: is the university really interested in the people it receives as students and teachers, or are they incidental, the “tools” for learning and scholarship who only matter insofar as they achieve what the university wants to have achieved? To what extent is a commitment to community between teachers and learners essential for the university to do its work well, and how is that best encouraged and supported?

These questions can easily seem too general, too idealistic to cut much ice in the highly pragmatic, success-oriented universities we know today. Yet, is it not true that whenever we allow ourselves to look as Christians in this sort of direction we become urgently aware of new ideological pressures that are liable seriously to distort not only much of the learning being pursued, but also much else in our apparently successful societies?

The consultation held by WSCF and the Christian Conference of Asia at Bangkok in April 1995, for instance, raised a series of biting questions that deserve long-term attention. They include the following:

- Is the traditional model of the university as *a community of scholars gathered together in the pursuit of truth and the common good* giving way to a “service-station” or “cafeteria” or “revolving door” model of higher education?

- Given the huge increase in the number of students entering higher education, and the growing unwillingness and inability of governments to fund these increases (especially where “structural adjustment programmes” hold sway), is the *quality* of higher education suffering? Is access becoming increasingly difficult for the vulnerable sectors of society, especially women and minorities?

- Is the principle of “commercial viability” becoming so dominant in higher

education that this is instilling *individualism, materialism and competition as the controlling values* no less in the university than in wider society? What future is there for academic freedom when the “profit-motive” is forcing universities to be open to control by politicians, large commercial corporations and even the military-industrial complex?

– Are the changes in the financial patterns of higher education contributing to a serious *fragmentation of both knowledge and community* in the university? Is knowledge suffering from a loss of a sense of coherence, a disdain for truth, community, the common good, a loss of respect for the humanities or life-affirming values? Is the search for community being affected by a depersonalisation of staff and students, and by a loss of civility which in some places leads to violence? Is the pressure on staff to “publish or perish” preventing them from any lasting interaction with their students, and discouraging them from developing a person-centred style of education?

Christians (this section of the report concludes) must proclaim an alternative and larger vision of the university: a vision of wholeness which is central to the Christian understanding of salvation. Christians in universities must press for an education which produces people who are concerned for the good not only of themselves but of others; they should also be concerned for justice, peace and love: in short, for the marks of the reign of God in the university. The report goes on to suggest positive actions that deserve to be pursued. For the WSCF tradition is never satisfied with raising critical questions, but always pushes further into a commitment to do what one – still more one’s group and community – can do to work for a better future, in Christ’s name.

V. A Passion for Unity in Christ

I take this dangerously simple phrase, “Unity in Christ,” as the way to explore what I believe to have been deservedly the most important and lastingly meaningful emphasis in the WSCF tradition. Certainly for WSCF members of my generation (I speak as one who will turn seventy in 2005), it will be familiar as the ‘organising priority’ of almost all the SCM has stood for.

Yet it must never be forgotten that it is a classic case of a “contested concept” – that is, of a concept whose exact meaning and implications can never be taken for granted, but which needs always to be open for re-exploration and re-menting.

Moreover, it is not an emphasis which should be taken as inherently different from (still less opposed to) either the characteristic emphasis on *evangelism* in the early stages or today’s more characteristic singling out of *justice* as the key theme (often in the phrase the World Council of Churches has made its own since 1983: “Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation”).

As I try to set out more fully in a second article, both of these concerns belong intimately to the concern for unity in Christ as the WSCF has helped to explore it. All three of these emphases, a WSCF person like myself will say, need to be held closely together in an integrity that cannot allow any of them to be neglected.

The Freedom of a Lay Movement

Following essentially the same pattern as the YMCA, whose world body had been established in 1855, the WSCF understood itself from the beginning as a “lay movement,” grouping Christians of different national and denominational backgrounds in the common faith of all Christians, and in common action for the spreading of that faith.

As a lay movement, it has always known itself free to experiment with fresh methods of obedience, with new arguments about the faith such as the changing world may throw up, with the new leadership the local and national movements may develop.

Its General Secretary during World War II, the Scot Robert MACKIE, used to remark during his time as British SCM General Secretary that if a student conference was proceeding exactly as the comparable one had done the year before, something must be wrong. The capacity for freshness and experimentation is one of the WSCF’s most precious gifts.

Precisely because from the earliest days its members have sought to put before their fellow-students the *Christian faith* – not this or that particular version, and not the ideology of any particular nation or denomination – the WSCF has all along been passionately concerned to promote, indeed to experiment with, realistic steps on the way to that unity which Jesus prayed for among his followers, especially in the prayer recorded in John’s Gospel, chapter 17.

Growing directly out of the demand in any true evangelism to demonstrate the relevance of what one is seeking to witness to, and meshing today directly with the crying demand for full-scale acceptance of the “other” across unjust and hurtful barriers, of gender or poverty alike, the search for unity in Christ, often scorned as unrealistic or inner-churchy, reappears again and again as a vital field for experimentation and obedience.

Suggested Reading

- ADLER Elisabeth (ed.), *Memoirs and Diaries, 1895–1990*. Geneva, 1994.
- DE DIETRICH Suzanne, *Cinquante Ans d’Histoire, la FUACE 1895–1945*. Paris, 1947.
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- LEHTONEN Risto, *Story of a Storm. The Ecumenical Student Movement in the Turmoil of Revolution*. Helsinki, 1998.
- MCCAUGHEY J. Davis, *Christian Obedience in the University*. London, 1958.
- POTTER Philip – WIESER Thomas, *Seeking and Serving the Truth. The First Hundred Years of the World Student Christian Federation*. Genève, 1997.
- ROUSE Ruth, *Rebuilding Europe*. London, 1925.
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Martin CONWAY:

Une tradition pour demain: la FUACE cent années après

Cet article, originellement écrit pour une Conférence Européenne des Aumôniers Universitaires, montre comment la conception apparemment simple de l'évangélisation des premiers MECs, comme l'exprimait leur slogan d'alors "Faire de Jésus Roi", a rapidement crû et est devenu aujourd'hui une conscience fertile de la vaste perspective du projet de Dieu pour l'humanité entière. Dans les universités, les membres des MECs ont toujours lutté pour explorer, expérimenter et témoigner pour la singularité de toute vérité, comme étant le cœur de la lutte intellectuelle, accompagné d'une lutte pour la recherche de l'équilibre entre le caractère universelle de toute vérité et la diversité des cultures et des situations à l'intérieur de laquelle cette vérité est à être poursuivie ceci pour l'émergence des citoyens membres d'une famille humaine unique engagés dans la découverte des sentiers de la justice et de l'amitié, qui nous permettra à la fin de vivre pleinement dans l'égalité et le respect mutuel. Dans cette tradition, même le vaste danger de l'oppression économique des riches sur les pauvres, les défis écologiques dus au changement climatique, la surexploitation de l'ordre créé par un nombre croissant de la population humaine, aussi bien que le gouffre menaçant entre les fois religieuses divergentes, peuvent être affrontés et traités sur la base d'un engagement construit à partir du modèle de l'acceptation et l'amour active tel que manifesté dans la vie, la mort et la résurrection de Jésus Christ.

Martin CONWAY:

Una tradición para el mañana: FUMEC, cien años y más

El presente artículo, escrito originalmente para una conferencia Europea de capellanes universitarios, muestra cómo el evangelismo aparentemente ingenuo de los primeros MECs, así como su lema "Que Jesús sea el Rey", evolucionó rápidamente para convertirse en una productiva consciencia de los vastos horizontes de los propósitos de Dios para con la Creación entera. En las universidades, los miembros de los MECs han estado luchando una y otra vez por explorar, probar y testificar de la singularidad de toda verdad como el corazón de la lucha intelectual, junto con el equilibrio entre la inherente universalidad de la verdad y la propia diversidad de culturas y situaciones en las cuales esa verdad ha de ser buscada, y hacia la promesa de convertirnos en ciudadanos de la gran familia humana comprometida con el descubrimiento de las sendas de justicia y amistad, las cuales nos permitirán a todos vivir en total e igual respeto y equidad. En esta tradición, aún los grandes peligros de la opresión económica infligida por los ricos a los pobres; los retos ecológicos del cambio climático, y la sobreexplotación del orden creado por una creciente población humana; así como los amenazantes golfos entre las diferentes creencias religiosas; pueden ser enfrentadas y combatidas sobre la base de un compromiso con los patrones de aceptación y amor eficaz que encontramos en la vida, muerte y resurrección de Jesucristo.