

PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD
SPREAD THE KINGDOM OF GOD

"MARCH INTO THE BRIGHT DECADE",

PASTORAL EXHORTATION

INTERIM REPORT AND PROPOSALS

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PREFACE

On Pentecost in 1989, we promulgated the Pastoral Exhortation: "March into the Bright Decade" to set the directions and objectives for the next decade: "We hope that the whole People of God of Hong Kong will with one heart make every effort to follow this pastoral commitment in the coming ten years. In 1994 we shall carry out an evaluation and bring to a conclusion the five years of implementation, in order to make a more practical adjustment of direction and pace for the following five years."

Five years have passed. Have we made any progress in following the orientations and objectives set out in the Pastoral Exhortation? In view of the challenges facing us at the present stage, should we make any adjustments? What recent changes in Church and society should we pay special attention to, if we are to achieve our objectives more effectively? What plan do we have for the coming five years?

In order to answer the above questions, the Committee for Promoting the Cardinal's Pastoral Exhortation: "March into the Bright Decade" (hereinafter called the Committee for Promoting the Cardinal's Pastoral Exhortation) began a formal evaluation in March last year, and appointed the Catholic Institute for Religion and Society as consultant responsible for designing evaluation questionnaires, consultation methods and survey, collating information and writing reports.

In July last year, the Committee for Promoting the Cardinal's Pastoral Exhortation distributed a total of 744 evaluation questionnaires to the persons-in-charge of various communities / organizations in the Diocese according to the seven major spheres listed in the Pastoral Exhortation (that is, "formation of the laity", "small faith communities", "ongoing formation of priests, brothers and sisters", "mass communications", "education", "social services", "relations between the Diocese and China and the Church in China"), and received 377 questionnaires (51%) were returned before the deadline at the end of July. All the material was collated and sent to the subcommittees of the various spheres for study and consideration, and then submitted to the Committee for Promoting the Cardinal's Pastoral Exhortation for discussion and approval. The material was then prepared as a consultation paper for the Interim Report on the Cardinal's Pastoral Exhortation: "March into the Bright Decade".

The consultation paper was formally announced on 1st October 1994 and was published in two issues of the Kung Kao. Seven meetings were organized for public consultation to collect opinions. In addition, a survey was conducted by self-administered questionnaire at 12 sample parishes/mass centres to seek the opinions of adult Catholics. 2,035 questionnaires were distributed and 1,752 usable questionnaires (86.1%) were collected in this survey.

All the opinions collected during the consultation period, together with the results of the survey were collated and sent to the subcommittees of the various spheres as reference for amending the consultation paper. The various amended parts of the consultation paper were modified, and prepared as a discussion draft of the Interim Report on the Cardinal's Pastoral Exhortation: "March into the Bright Decade". It was presented to the Council of Priests and the Diocesan Pastoral Council for discussion. It was then submitted to the policy-making conference for discussion. This two-day conference was attended by members of the Committee for Promoting the Cardinal's Pastoral Exhortation, the Board of Diocesan Consultors, Deans, Chairperson of the Diocesan Pastoral Council, representatives of Hong Kong Diocesan Pastoral Sisters' Association, and a few lay people who had taken part in the evaluation work. They made important amendments to the discussion draft. The conclusions were forwarded to me for examination and were finally incorporated in this 'Interim Report on the Implementation of the Pastoral Exhortation "March into the Bright Decade" and Proposals': "Proclaim the Gospel of the Lord, spread the Kingdom of God".

The evaluation work went through different stages during the past year and the smooth completion is due to the leadership of the Committee for Promoting the Cardinal's Pastoral Exhortation, the assistance of the Catholic Institute for Religion & Society, and the active participation of Deans, parishes, religious congregations of men and women, various Diocesan committees, Laity Formation Centres, sponsoring bodies, Supervisors and Principals, organizations for mass communications, organizations for social affairs, and Caritas. We wish to express our sincere appreciation for their support and cooperation.

In what follow we shall first explain the general orientation of the Diocese for the coming five years, and then present a report on each of seven major spheres involving pastoral care and evangelization as listed in the Pastoral Exhortation, from the perspectives of reviewing the past and making recommendations for the future.

PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD SPREAD THE KINGDOM OF GOD

When the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong celebrated the 150th anniversary in 1991, Pope John Paul II sent us a letter of blessing and sincere exhortation. In this Letter, there is an important and inspiring paragraph which can be taken as the pastoral commitment and the general orientation of the Diocese for the future. Let us be encouraged by this quotation:

"Let nothing distract you from the mission entrusted by Christ to his Church: "Missionary activity renews the Church, revitalizes faith and Christian identity, and offers fresh enthusiasm and new incentive. Faith is strengthened when it is given to others!"
(Redemptoris Missio 2)

Evangelization takes its origin from God the Father, who is full of merciful kindness and shares the divine goodness with humanity. God carried out the design of our salvation progressively, first sending the Son into the world to share in the history of humanity. Jesus died but He rose again on the third day, thus reconciling us to God and proclaiming the Gospel of peace. After the ascension of Jesus, God sent the Holy Spirit to continue the work of our salvation and to sanctify our hearts. From the day of Pentecost onwards, the Holy Spirit gave impulse to the missionary spirit and guided the apostles' action. (cf. Ad Gentes 2-5)

After his resurrection, Jesus said to the apostles, "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." (Jn.20:21) Before his ascension, Jesus told the apostles, "Go into the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation" (Mk. 16:15) so as to "make disciples of all nations". (Mt. 28:19) Having received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the apostles proclaimed the Gospel and spread the Kingdom of God to the end of the earth, beginning from Jerusalem. (Acts 1:8) They were persistent in striving to be holy themselves and in sharing the Good News with others.

The command of Jesus to evangelize was given in their time to the College of Apostles with Peter as the head, and today it is given to the College of Bishops with the Pope as the head. All Christians are incorporated into the body of Christ through the sacraments of baptism, and share in the universal priesthood of Christ. (Lumen

Gentium 10) Hence proclaiming the Gospel can never be merely a matter of making the apostolate more effective. It is a right and duty by virtue of the privilege of our faith and the Sacrament of Baptism. (cf. Apostolicam Actuositatem 3)

All the people of God have an ineluctable duty to spread the Gospel, and this can be done in various ways: prayer and mortification, sacrifice and the witness of Christian life. The Lord also stirs up in the heart of some believers a special vocation to the religious life, wherein they make a complete sacrifice and full commitment of their lives. Many religious and others, both clerical and lay, also receive a special missionary vocation. During these two thousand years, there have been innumerable such vocations in the Universal Church, with missionaries leaving their own countries and travelling to distant places. During the last 150 years, the Catholic Church in Hong Kong has been served by many foreign missionaries, who came to proclaim the Gospel of Christ and to develop social services. They serve as an example to us and present us a challenge. (Redemptoris Missio 77-82)

Reviewing the past and looking forward to the future, we firmly believe that God is the Lord of history, Christ is the Saviour of all humanity, and the Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church. We are grateful for God's merciful design of salvation and our predecessors. In our gratitude we should be responsive, taking up our own historic mission and facing the challenges of the times. We should treasure our faith, undergo formation and renewal, proclaim the Gospel of the Lord and spread the Kingdom of God. We have to continue our work and strengthen our services so that Hong Kong and China will become a better and more human place, enjoying happiness, justice and peace - "a land flowing with milk and honey" blessed by the Lord.

"May God work in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever." (Heb. 13:21)

1. FORMATION OF THE LAITY

1.1 FIVE YEARS OF WORK

The Pastoral Exhortation proposed the need for the concerted effort to form the laity so as to renew their Christian life. During the past five years, the Diocese has put a lot of effort into his work of forming the laity through such initiatives as the establishment of the Diocesan Committee for the Formation of the Laity, the Laity Formation Fund and three Laity Formation Centres.

Most of the Diocesan formation organizations and parishes could not completely and systematically cover the essential aspects of laity formation listed in the Pastoral Exhortation. However, quite a number of their formation programmes were in line with the Pastoral Exhortation, so it can be said that they have made at least an indirect response to its desires. Among the parishes which were unable to realize the aspirations of the Pastoral Exhortation, the majority referred to insufficient economic and human resources, and the lack of leadership; and the minority explained that the Diocese had not directly asked parishes to follow the orientations of the Pastoral Exhortation.

1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

In recent years, the faithful have become more educated, but their ability to reflect on their faith has not improved accordingly. A small percentage of lay people have received training in theology/scripture, and some of them have considered working for the Church on a full-time or voluntary basis. Some lay people have asked the Church to respond to the signs in the times, to increase transparency, and to allow the faithful greater scope for participation in the Church.

Some people think that the Diocese and parishes have made inadequate investment in the formation of capable people. They hope that the Diocese and parishes will expend much energy in the formation of the laity as in the construction/renovation of churches. They desire that the clergy working in parishes give less time to administrative work and more time to laity formation, and allow the faithful greater scope of participation. They would like the Church to undertake a

more prophetic role when facing 'the 1997 transition' and other crucial social issues.

1.3 CONCRETE PLAN

Most member organizations of the Diocesan Committee for the Formation of the Laity held that, although the Committee had achieved its aim of greater exchange of ideas during the past five years, it had not yet been able to fully coordinate, support and promote the formation of the laity. In future, the Committee will pay more attention to the overall planning. It will cooperate with the Laity Formation Centres and Deaneries in response to the actual situation of the parishes. It will attach special importance to the following points in order to respond to the desire of the faithful for formation:

- 1.3.1 We reaffirm the proposals of the Pastoral Exhortation for the formation and renewal of the laity. We will also respond to the appeal of the Pope by enhancing the laity's awareness of their "mission to preach the Gospel". Thus there are five essential aspects to be cultivated: a deep faith, a sense of the Church, love for Hong Kong, concern for China, and the mission of evangelization. The various formation organizations will prepare formation courses which include these aspects. They will promote a greater response to the local situation in such areas as theology, liturgy, social teachings and spiritual formation.
- 1.3.2 Formation work will respond more to the needs of different sectors, e.g. youth, workers, the disabled and foreign labour.
- 1.3.3 As the Sunday eucharist is the centre and apex of laity formation, we will encourage pastoral personnel to make every effort to improve the liturgy and the homily. The homily at Mass, catechism classes and gatherings of small faith communities should be centered on Scripture, include a concern for our country and society, especially for the future of Hong Kong, and enhance the laity's awareness of their mission to preach the Gospel.
- 1.3.4 When the Diocese assigns priests to parishes, it will first assist them to understand the overall orientation and the development of the Diocese so that the pastoral work can follow this orientation in forming the laity.
- 1.3.5 The various Formation Centre will reorganize the themes of their courses, giving special emphasis to the central importance of Scripture, small faith

communities, and the laity's sense of mission in spreading the Gospel.

- 1.3.6 The Diocese will increase transparency in parish affairs, promote lay ministries, employ graduates of the Holy Spirit Seminary College of Theology and Philosophy and the Biblical Institute, allow the faithful greater scope for participation and cooperation, providing them with opportunities for greater participation in decision-making.

- 1.3.7 The Diocese will provide formation material. This will entail the establishment of a library and documentation centre, and a hotline facsimile service for checking information. The Diocesan communications organizations will play a more active role and cooperate with religious communications organizations run by religious to maintain to production of substantial and attractive formation material.

2. SMALL FAITH COMMUNITIES

2.1 FIVE YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Four years ago, we launched a three-year plan to develop small faith communities, with St. Vincent's Parish in Wong Tai Sin as the experimental parish. During these three years, we have had a certain degree of success in enhancing the laity's consciousness of small faith communities, in establishing communities, in training leaders for communities, and in exploring the orientations for the development of small faith communities. On the whole, however, we are still far from reaching our objective, so it is necessary to carry out an evaluation.

During the past five years, different formation organizations have worked at promoting the development of small faith communities, but there has unfortunately been only limited success. The main reasons for this have been a shortage of human resources and of basic membership. However, various organizations were very cooperative in providing places and resources, and in showing concern.

Parishes understood "small faith communities" in different ways and so acted differently. They were unable to promote the development of small faith communities vigorously mainly because of the lack of leadership and the great mobility of the laity. According to the evaluation data, most parishes did their best to support the idea of small faith communities.

2.2 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPT

On the basis of our experience over the past five years, we would like to clarify further some basic concepts of small faith communities:

1. It was stated in the Pastoral Exhortation that small faith communities can follow "a variety of forms and models". Thus, they can be Associations of the Faithful, Basic Christian Communities, neighbourhood Catholic groups, etc. However, they ought to satisfy the following conditions in order to be small faith communities:
 - A. "Maturity in faith and service of others".

- B. "Christ-centred"; "Nourished by the Word of God, the Sacraments, and Prayer"; "Acceptance of the mission of evangelization".
- C. "Real community life and certain basic characteristics".
2. When the Pastoral Exhortation stated that there should be "real community life", it meant to emphasize that there should be a community spirit and atmosphere, internal unity and dynamics, and common goals. Small faith communities should maintain communion with the whole parish, the Diocese and the Universal Church for mutual enrichment.
 3. The statement that small faith communities should possess certain "basic characteristics" has two major meanings:
 - (i) Small faith communities are the most basic units of the Church's existence within the parish structure;
 - (ii) Small faith communities are mainly composed of lay people. They should be natural and spontaneous, capable of being self-reliant and independent. They should accept evangelization as their mission, live their faith and bear witness to it.
 4. Small faith communities can serve as a good communication network for the parish. In addition, they can provide the body of the faithful with an effective formation instrument, enabling them to "grow in faith" and "serve the Gospel", thus preparing the Church for a new model of existence.
 5. In developing small faith communities, the whole parish will become a community of faith, enabling itself to fulfill the mission of evangelization, to develop the internal dynamics of faith, and to bear witness in society.

2.3 CONCRETE PLAN

During the next five years, the Diocesan Committee for the Formation of the Laity will cooperate with the various Laity Formation Centres and Deaneries in realizing the following work targets:

1. Give support to small faith communities (Basic Christian Communities, Associations of the Faithful, etc.) which have already been established.
2. Offer formation courses which integrate concern for our society and our country

into the consciousness of small faith communities.

3. Provide formation material and resources for the tutors of catechumenate classes and Sunday School, and for small faith communities.
4. Upgrade the formation for leaders of small faith communities, and provide them with scope of development and growth so that they will develop the internal dynamics of faith and bear witness in different social milieus.
5. Encourage the laity, especially the newly baptized, to join small faith communities.

During the next five years, deans and parish leaders will attach special importance to the status and value of small faith communities, incorporate their development into their annual pastoral plan, promote small faith communities in a pluralistic manner, and endeavour to provide them with scope of development and growth, including opportunities for serving the parish and self-development.

3. ONGOING FORMATION FOR PRIESTS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS

3.1 JOINT FORMATION

In order to renew the Church, proclaim the Gospel of the Lord and spread the Kingdom of God more effectively, we need a large number of pastoral personnel capable of promoting formation, endowed with holiness, with expertise and social awareness.

Five years ago, the Pastoral Exhortation proposed that "every promoter of formation also needs to be formed", and put forward a concrete recommendation: "For the formation of priests, brothers and sisters, we hope that the Diocese can draw up a plan for the combined formation of religious and Diocesan personnel, so that in groups, all clergy and religious will have an opportunity, every two years to receive one week's formation."

During the past five years, different religious communities have arranged formation for their own members. Religious communities of women have jointly provided formation for sisters with temporary vows. The Pastoral Sisters' Association arranged study days to meet its particular needs. The Diocese organized renewal camps or study camps for the clergy. Some of these formation programmes were open to other pastoral personnel as well. However, there had not been cooperation between the Diocese and religious communities in arranging joint formation for all priests, brothers and sisters in groups as recommended in the Pastoral Exhortation. Perhaps there was no such need.

3.2 FORMATION OF THE WHOLE PERSON

We shall encourage the communities and organizations which have organized formation programmes for priests, brothers and sisters in the past to continue such endeavours. We shall also encourage pastoral personnel to attend these activities on their own initiative, and select them according to personal interest and pastoral need so as to achieve the goal of reaching holiness, and of being equipped with expertise and social awareness. In other words, we proposed the following:

1. Through the integration of spiritual, psychological, theological, evangelical, pastoral, social, cultural and physical development, support the personal renewal and growth of pastoral personnel, and offer them a more solid foundation for the formation of the whole person.
2. Improve the expertise and skills of pastoral personnel (including the techniques of organizing and leading small faith communities); and train professionals (including professionals in the fields of mass communications and journalism).
3. Enhance pastoral personnel's knowledge of social and political changes, enabling them to reflect on the attitude to be adopted in face of these changes and on how to meet these challenges in their mission of evangelization.

3.3 CONCRETE PLAN

In the coming five years, the Committee for the Ongoing Formation of the Clergy will hold discussion with the Association of Major Superiors of Religious Men in Hong Kong and the Association of Major Superiors of Religious Women in Hong Kong to promote the following areas of work:

1. Plan and promote joint formation on the basis of different kinds of pastoral work (including parish pastoral work, school education, hospital pastoral care, social service, service for workers, service for youth, etc.). The contents of formation include rekindling the spirit of evangelization; securing a better grasp of Catholic doctrine, ethics, scripture and Catholic social teaching, improving homiletic skills; learning to proclaim the Gospel in contemporary language, improving human relations, recognizing the motivating force of social change and their influence on people, etc.
2. Organize camp for priests, brothers and sisters according to different kinds of pastoral work so as to enhance contact and cooperation between priests and sisters, and between religious and Diocesan personnel.
3. Cooperate with the Diocesan Vocation Commission in strengthening the awareness of the need for vocation promotion on the part of the pastoral personnel.

4 MASS COMMUNICATIONS

4.1 REAFFIRMATION OF ORIENTATIONS

We reaffirm the main objectives of the Church's involvement in mass communications: 1. Proclaiming the Gospel of the Lord; 2. Forming the laity; 3. Enhancing dialogue and contact between Church and society. In order to achieve these objectives, we shall continue to:

1. "open up new perspective for the public in matters beneficial to moral and ethical thinking, thus elevating the level of their spiritual life".
2. "present the Catholic viewpoint on human life, politics, economics, culture, social problems".

In the coming few years, the relations between China and Hong Kong will influence people, giving rise to inevitable uncertainties, and misgivings. From the standpoint of the Church, this challenge can deepen the Church sense of mission in facing social changes, strengthen her ability in responding to social changes, and improve the entire quality of religious life. This challenge will provide the Church's communication organ with a very concrete task.

4.2 ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIAL GROUP

Five years ago, it was stated in the Pastoral Exhortation that "in order to promote mass communications, the Diocese will set up a special group to examine Diocesan policy on communications and its plan of development".

In February 1990, the Diocese established the Catholic Co-ordination Committee on Communications. In April 1993, it was reorganized and became the Catholic Board of Communications. In order to distinguish the two different functions of formulating policies and implementing policies more clearly, the Committee was reorganized again in July 1994 and was separated into two, namely, the Hong Kong Catholic Board of Communications and Hong Kong Catholic Executive Board of Communications.

During the past five years, the committee at different stages had certain influence in scrutinising the development of the Diocese in communications, formulating policies and co-ordinating the communications work of the Diocesan organizations. However, the committees were slow in following up the various plans of developing media work as recommended in the Pastoral Exhortation.

4.3 CONCRETE PLAN

Among the various plans recommended in the Pastoral Exhortation, some were tried on a small scale, such as the development of the Catholic Video Magazine and cassette tapes of sacred music. Other plans, such as "providing programmes for future cable television". Are still at the exploratory and preparatory stage. Still other plans, such as "publishing a comprehensive monthly magazine", could not be implemented due to problems of organization and planning, so it was decided to shelve them for the time being.

In the future, we shall strive to achieve the following objectives through Hong Kong Catholic Board of Communications and the Hong Kong Catholic Executive Board of Communications (with the following organs which are under their jurisdiction: Catholic Centre, Catholic Truth Society, Kung Kao Po, Sunday Examiner, the Hong Kong Catholic Social Communications Office and Diocesan Audio-Visual Centre):

1. Review the present operation of Hong Kong Catholic Board of Communications and the Hong Kong Catholic Executive Board of Communications in order to find ways of improving the present structure, so that the communications work of the Diocese can be more effective;
2. Give substantial to the Diocesan Audio-Visual Centre to help it attain as soon as possible its goal of "providing programmes for future cable television";
3. We feel that during the past five years religious radio programmes have not yet achieved the desired results. We shall give support to the Catholic Social Communications Office in its participation in the work of designing and improving the quality of programmes, and in its exploration of other possible ways of having contact and dialogue with the general public

4. We recommend that Kung Kao Po and the Sunday Examiner take cognizance of social changes, and respond to them in more positive and appropriate ways. One example would be the response of Church media to the needs of over one hundred thousand domestic helpers coming from the Philippines.

5. There is a serious lack of high quality books in Chinese which can help to promote religious life and the values of the Kingdom of God. The Diocese will allocate more resources and urge the Catholic Truth Society to publish more Chinese books in response to the desires of the laity and young people of new generation for religious knowledge and an improvement in the quality of their spiritual life.

With rapid progress of modern times, social problems have become more complicated. Hence the Diocese will no longer assign a single Diocesan spokesman to answer all the questions raised by the public. In future, the Director of the Hong Kong Catholic Social Communications Office will be responsible for contacting special people or organizations in the Diocese on religious and ethical issues so as to offer a professional response.

5. EDUCATION

5.1 RESPONSES OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS TO THE EDUCATIONAL ORIENTATIONS OF THE PASTORAL EXHORTATION

During the past five years, most Catholic Schools have organised activities to implement the educational orientations of the Pastoral Exhortation. Active responses have been made especially in pressing for improvement in the local education system. Apart from the views expressed by the Diocesan Schools Council, the Religious Schools Council and some individual school principals, collective comments co-ordinated by the Catholic Board of Education have also been made on educational policies such as Target and Target Related Assessment (TTRA), Target Oriented Curriculum (TOC), Mother-tongue Education, School Management Initiative (SMI), Full-day Primary School -mixed mode, policy proposals in the Education Commission Report No. 5, and policy towards students affected by H.I.V.

Of all the educational directions in the Pastoral Exhortation, the one that has presented the greatest difficulties is the adoption of Chinese as medium of instruction. Among the main reasons for this are: the slow process of training teachers, the lack of high quality Chinese textbooks, opposition from parents, difficulties encountered by Chinese-medium school leavers in finding suitable jobs. The orientation concerning the establishment of small faith communities in schools has also had a relatively low degree of acceptance. According to feedback from school supervisors and principals, the main reasons for this negative response include: insufficient understanding and experience of the small faith communities, the heavy workload of teachers, the lack of interesting discussion materials; poor co-ordination.

5.2 CHANGES IN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

In recent years, there have been rapid changes in the educational environment in schools, families and society as a whole. These changes have seriously affected educators, parents and most of all, the students.

In schools: There has been an increase in the workload of principals and teachers, but with little extra support for them. The turn-over rate in managerial and teaching

staff has increased, with a concomitant tendency towards a lowering of professional standards. The increasing number of students with problem has also added burden to educators.

In families: Family ties are generally weakening. There is an increasing numbers of divorced parents, single parents and families in the process of emigration with parents living apart. There is an increasingly serious tendency either towards over-caring or towards insufficient caring for children. In some families, indeed, even the parental role is taken on by domestic helpers.

In society: There is an increasing number of new immigrants from China. Besides changes in social, economic and political structures, and in culture, there have also been major changes in value systems and morality. More and more young people tend to be self-centredness, they seek materialistic fulfilment and instant pleasure, abuse freedom and lack a goals in life. Respect for the elderly, parents, teachers is not recognized. There is frequently no respect for, and even a rejection of, authority of any kind. Many young people do not even know how to respect themselves and one another. The incidence of pre-marital sex and of unmarried mothers is increasing.

5.3 FUTURE PLANS

To cope with these changes in educational environment and with the needs of modern society, the following plans for our future Catholic Education are recommended:

5.3.1 TO DEVELOP EDUCATION IN ALL ASPECTS

A balanced development in the education of the whole person, with the purpose of evangelisation and the spread of Gospel values, has long been the principal orientation of our Catholic Education.

To help our students acquire Christian views of life and of the world, Catholic schools must strengthen Religious Education in parallel with all other subjects and use to advantage all available teaching material, providing all students, especially students, with an opportunity to receive a religious education, so that they can learn from Christ and become "salt of the earth" and "light of the world".

To help our students form responsible and positive attitude towards life and

society, Catholic schools should teach Christian morality in all its richness, Love and Life Education, Civic and National Education. Special care and attention must be given to students who have personal and family problems. We should treat them like little brothers and sisters in Christ.

5.3.2 TO DEEPEN THE RELIGIOUS ATMOSPHERE AND TO IMPROVE THE RELIGIOUS AND MORAL FORMATION OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS IN ALL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

To achieve the goal of "proclaim the Gospel of the Lord and spread the kingdom of God", Catholic Schools should integrate Catholic social teaching into the Moral Education curriculum. They should also provide formation programmes for their teachers. Supervisors and principals should support the establishment of small faith communities for Catholic teachers and students. It may be possible to let those who are responsible for Religious Education or Moral Education give more time and attention to the religious and moral formation of students. Some sponsoring bodies have already increased their human resources: they have hired pastoral workers and established a school programme, to assist in the religious and moral formation of students, in establishing small faith communities, or in counselling parents. These examples are much appreciated and others are encouraged to follow suit.

5.3.3 TO PROMOTE CHINESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE, AND AT THE SAME TIME TO ENCOURAGE PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH

Catholic Schools should strengthen in all aspects their connection and communication with the parishes, especially in establishing ecclesia basic communities, and in organising religious or moral formation activities. This will not only mean a more effective use of resources, but will also facilitate the sharing of experience and foster evangelisation. Moreover, through parishes, Catholic tertiary students' organisations and other such communities, Catholics who are interested in teaching can also be encouraged to enter Catholic schools to participate in the work of education.

5.3.4 TO PROMOTE CHINESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE, AND AT THE SAME TIME TO ENCOURAGE PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH

We believe that the culture of a people cannot be separated from its language. To help students become familiar with their national language and to have a better

foundation in their national culture, the Diocesan Secondary Schools have set the objective of having at least half of their teaching periods in Junior Forms conducted in Chinese within the coming two years. As a matter of fact, quite a large number of students will actually understand and learn better if the subjects are taught in Chinese. School superiors and principals should therefore help remove the public misconception about any link between the use of Chinese as medium of instruction and lower results in public examination. Mindful of their original ideas in education, all sponsoring bodies ought to be prepared to serve the community according to its need, and use the teaching medium which can help the students learn. They ought also to be ready to provide the resources necessary to help teachers, students and parents understand the function and meaning of Mother-tongue Education.

We realize, of course, that many Catholic Schools have in the past used English because of the needs of society. In the changeover from English to Chinese as the medium of instruction there are unavoidably various difficulties and hindrances to be overcome. Schools should use to advantage available resources, such as Government retraining programmes, and thus gradually implement the policy of Mother-tongue Education.

After its reversion to China, Hong Kong will continue to maintain its international status in economics and culture. It is anticipated that proficiency in both Chinese and English will be strongly demanded in all walks of life. In order to prepare students well to respond to the need of society, all Catholic Schools should take the initiative in promoting Chinese language and culture while at the same time maintaining or even improving the students' standard of English and their knowledge of foreign cultures. Bilingualism and multi-cultural education must be upheld.

5.3.5 TO STRENGTHEN CONTACT, CO-ORDINATION AND CO-OPERATION AMONG VARIOUS EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

We encourage that all Catholic sponsoring bodies to strengthen their relationship with their schools, provide them with clear directives and help them live out their sponsoring body's original ideal and spirit.

The Hong Kong Catholic Board of Education will, through the Catholic Education Office as its executive arm, have closer contacts with Catholic sponsoring bodies and Catholic schools, and plan together with them to upgrade their resources in

view of present and future educational needs.

These include:

- (i) Regularly evaluate the educational orientations and objectives and, through dialogue, deepen mutual understanding in search of a common stand.
- (ii) Carry out research and encourage discussion on local educational policies, and actively make comments and suggestions before policies are finalised.
- (iii) Provide financial and administrative support for all educational programmes and projects.
- (iv) Provide training for teachers, administrators and staff in Catholic Schools, so as to strengthen their professional spirit, sense of responsibility and sense of mission.
- (v) Provide appropriate teaching material for students in Religious Education, Moral Education, Civic Education, Love and Life Education and support the schools in their formation works in these areas.
- (vi) Encourage the sharing of views and experience among Catholic Schools, including formal or informal sharing among principals, teachers and students, so that they can learn from and support one another;
- (vii) Encourage schools to strengthen contact with students' parents.
- (viii) Support schools in the promotion of school-based management, and allow teachers, students and parents sufficient opportunity to share in school administration, so that they can exercise greater responsibilities in the formation of students.

As the executive arm to the Hong Kong Catholic Board of Education, the Catholic Education Office should be provided with more full-time staff including secretaries, clerical staff, researchers and so forth, in order to shoulder its responsibilities in the new era.

5.3.6 TO BE UNITED IN RESPONDING TO EDUCATION POLICIES

The Hong Kong Catholic Board of Education will upgrade its own internal organization and enhance internal communication and co-ordination among all Catholic educational institutions in order to form common views on all major educational matters, especially those related to Catholic education policies.

Besides following up the educational policies which we have commented on, the Hong Kong Catholic Board of Education should also study further the following

recommendations:

- (i) As far as is consonant with educational legislation, Moral and Civic Education be made integral parts of the curriculum in all Catholic primary and secondary schools.
- (ii) Study the possibility of requesting that Moral and Civic Education be made required subjects in the curricula of teacher training programmes.
- (iii) The student-teacher ratio should be improved.
- (iv) The student-guidance teacher/social worker ratio should be improved.
- (v) Floating classes should be abolished.
- (vi) Full-day primary schools should be promoted.
- (vii) That the Diocese offer specialized or higher level courses for the formation of parishioners and Catholic teachers.
- (viii) The Holy Spirit Seminary College of Theology and Philosophy and the Hong Kong Catholic Biblical Institute will be encouraged to seek such official Government recognition for their academic qualifications as would allow their graduates to be employed at least as Certificated Masters/Mistresses to teach Religious Education and Moral Education in secondary schools.

5.4 MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The re-structured Hong Kong Catholic Board of Education (CBE) which includes representatives of major sponsoring bodies of catholic schools, will ensure that all the plans recommended are seriously considered. Corresponding policies will be formulated as guidelines for all Catholic educational endeavours.

Under the CBE, a new Hong Kong Catholic Education Development Committee (CEDC) and other sub-committees, whose membership including front line educators, will be responsible for planning and implementing appropriate programmes and projects according to the policies laid down by the CBE. This CEDC will also present feedback and advice to the CBE, and make proposals for further development in Catholic education policies.

The Religious Schools Council (RSC) and the Diocesan Schools Council (DSC), which are represented on the CBE and the CEDC, should participate actively in formulating strategies as well as in the actual promotion and implementation of all the Catholic education plans.

Besides providing administrative and management support for the Diocesan Schools, the Catholic Education Office (CEO), which serves as the executive arm to the CBE, will help in whatever kind of work as required for strengthening contacts, co-ordination and co-operation among various Catholic educational institutions.

While making every effort to achieve unity among themselves, all Catholic educational organizations will respect each other's internal flexibility and autonomy.

6 SOCIAL AFFAIRS

6.1 FORMULATION OF A CONCRETE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Five years ago, we proposed: "In the future social service organizations ought to pay greater attention to their role as servant and prophet and take care to develop both in a more balanced way. Within a year, a more concrete plan should be elaborated." Up to the present, we have not been able to elaborate a concrete and comprehensive development plan, because we have had to consolidate the existing structure. This is an issue that we shall have to pay special attention to.

After five years, we now have this same feeling: "servant role", the "prophetic role" and "balanced development" of these are important concepts guiding us in our participation in social services and in bearing witness to the Kingdom of God. Assuming a servant role, we directly serve those who are in need so as to "bind up the wounds of our society". Assuming a prophetic role, we make every effort to "eliminate the social causes of these wounds". We must call attention to the ills of the age, especially the injustice underlying social structure and policies, and call for changes that society may follow the path of human dignity.

6.2 "SERVANT ROLE"

Although no comprehensive plan was not developed during the past five years, the awareness of our "servant" role still prompted the Diocese to appoint an Episcopal Vicar for Social Services. In order to promote the planning and development of various forms of social service, the Diocese established the Diocesan Commission for Hospital Pastoral Care, the Diocesan Commission for Pastoral Services to Filipino Migrants, the Diocesan Commission for Pastoral Services to the Disabled, the Diocesan Pastoral Centre for the Disabled, the Diocesan Commission for Pastoral Services to Vietnamese, the Hong Kong Catholic Commission for Labour Affairs, and the Hong Kong Catholic Pastoral Centre for Workers. Caritas also carried out internal reorganization to respond to the orientations for development set out in the Pastoral Exhortation.

Furthermore, in line with the orientation of the Pastoral Exhortation, different Diocesan social service organizations expanded existing services or introduced new services as necessary in response to the needs of marginalized youth, people preparing for marriage, married couples, single parents, unmarried mothers, the elderly, AIDS victims and cancer sufferers.

During the coming one to five years, we shall pay special attention to the development in the following four areas:

1. Assure and protect the family which is the basic unit of society, protect the rights of the family, appreciate and encourage healthy families. As Pope John Paul II said in the World Day of Peace Message in 1994, "The family remains the true foundation of society", "the family contains in itself the very future of society", and "the family, as the fundamental and essential educating community, is the privileged means for transmitting religious and cultural values".
2. Support the family in fulfilling its functions so that it can provide a milieu for members in need of special care (including children, adolescents, the elderly, women, the sick, the physically retarded, drug addicts and drug abusers) to learn, recover, grow up, and help and love one another.
3. Actively pay attention to and respond to certain social problems arising from the increasingly close relation between China and Hong Kong. Among these problems are: the adaptation of new migrants and their children, employment problems of Hong Kong workers arising from the importation of labour; the break-up of family relationship as more and more Hong Kong people go to work on a regular basis in China.
4. Increase services for adolescents so as to help them face challenges from different sources, including family, media, peer group and adults, and the challenges of consumerism and hedonism, and to grow up healthily in the course of facing these challenges.

6.3 "PROPHETIC ROLE"

In the past five years, the Justice and Peace Commission of the Hong Kong Catholic Diocese, Caritas, Hong Kong Catholic Commission for Labour Affairs,

parish social concern groups, Catholic Institute for Religion and Society, and the justice and peace groups of religious communities have endeavoured to respond actively to social and Church policies, and to certain events involving justice. However, we have to admit that on the whole the entire Diocese's concern for and influence on social policies was still weak, so that its prophetic role was not yet conspicuous.

In order to help us in future to assume both the prophetic and servant roles in a balanced way, we must make the prophetic role of the entire Diocese more conspicuous, with special attention to justice, human rights, labour, medical services, and the contributions of women and families to society. Accordingly, we shall also put more efforts in such areas as investment in human resources, the training of qualified personnel, and the promotion of awareness on the part of the faithful so that all the people of God can play a prophetic role in their own spheres.

6.4 SUPPORT FOR PARISH SOCIAL CONCERN GROUPS

The parish social concern group is an integral part of the entire parish community. Its main responsibilities are:

1. to introduce concern for society and the district community into parish life (including liturgical life) so as to integrate faith and social concern;
2. to prompt the parish community to respond to the needs of the district community and society.

During the past five years, Caritas, the Justice and Peace Commission and other communities have jointly arranged gatherings for parish social concern groups to raise their spirit, and organized training courses for members of some parish associations to promote leadership skills and social concern. Some parishes have also employed different methods to encourage the laity to pay attention to the affairs of the district community. About ten parishes without social concern group indicated that they would discuss or had made preparations for the establishment of the social concern group. Despite all these efforts, the parish social concern groups still encountered many difficulties in their development. These difficulties included: parishes had limited human resources, the laity were weak in district awareness, parish leaders did

not know how to concretely to organize a social concern group, or did not agree with the working methods of the Diocesan social concern organizations.

We encourage the Diocesan social concern organizations to give priority in the future to supporting the development of social concern groups; to assist the Diocese in formulating "Diocesan Guidelines for the Establishment of a Social Concern Group in Parishes"; to cooperate actively with parishes; to inspire the faithful to show concern for social affairs; beginning with their own district community, to assume the roles of servant and prophet.

6.5 CONCRETE PLAN

In order that during the coming five years the Diocese may respond more effectively to social needs and bear witness more clearly to the Kingdom of God, we have the following recommendations:

6.5.1 Promote the servant role --

1. The Episcopal Vicar for Social Services will regularly call a joint meeting of the relevant Diocesan communities to pursue the following objectives:

- (i) Increase mutual contacts and exchange.
- (ii) Explore the creation of a more effective Diocesan structure so as to enable the entire Diocese to respond to social needs, and to provide prompt and high quality service for the needy.
- (iii) When necessary, the relevant communities will be mobilized to organize combined formation programmes for workers so as to promote their professionalism and integrity, and to enhance their spirit of "servant" and/or "prophet".

2. The Diocese will establish a centralized young organization to respond to the development and growth needs of young people.

6.5.2 Promote the prophetic role --

The Episcopal Vicar for Social Services will regularly call a joint meeting of the relevant Diocesan communities to increase mutual contacts and exchange, and to

promote development in the following areas:

1. Explore the creation of a more effective Diocesan structure so as to enable the entire Diocese to respond to society, and to let the prophetic voice of the Church be heard promptly and accurately with reference to certain social problems.
2. Strengthen mutual support and cooperation with Protestant communities and other communities;
3. Encourage the establishment of more prophetic groups or faith communities, and support them in finding and creating in different opportunities of development.
4. Put more emphasis on social teachings and social concern in the catechetical courses and the refresher courses for the baptized.

7 RELATIONS OF THE DIOCESE WITH CHINA, AND WITH THE CHURCH IN CHINA

When the Diocese celebrated the 150th anniversary four years ago, "Hand in hand towards the future" was the theme, as a reminder all the people of God in Hong Kong to face the challenges of the times and to assume our historic mission. During these few years, the relevant Diocesan organizations, groups and individuals have, in accordance with this principle, constantly initiated or enhanced contact, exchange and cooperation with mainland China.

At the end of last year, I led a delegation to China at the invitation of the Director of the Religious Affairs Bureau of the State Council of the Chinese Government; the trip was my third visit to the mainland. The purpose of this visit was to increase understanding of the actual situation of China, to promote friendship and dialogue, and to establish the conditions of mutual benefit. We also visited seminaries and convents in Beijing, Wuhan and Xi'an to show pastoral concern and fraternity.

The relevant Diocesan organizations, groups and individuals assisted the Church in China in carrying out theological and liturgical renewal, introducing catechetics, and publishing missals and other religious material, in accordance with their needs and invitation. We also supported the formation work of seminaries, provided teachers, offered scholarships, arranged lectures for short periods, and helped to renovate churches and seminaries. Moreover, there were mutual visits to promote friendship and exchange, and to learn from each other. Their spirit of mortification and profound faith deserve our esteem. Their wish to be in communion with the Universal Church is encouraging to us.

Caritas - Hong Kong was invited to organize training courses in China. The courses became more and more diversified, ranging from English courses to administrative management, nursery service, service for mentally retarded children and service for the elderly. We made some contribution for the benefit of our compatriots. We ourselves got to know more about our mother country and our lives were enriched.

In the coming few years, it is inevitable that there will be differences between

Hong Kong and China, giving rise to uncertainties and misgivings. However, we are still determined to go "hand in hand towards the future", so will maintain an open and prudent attitude in showing concern for the development of China, and in strengthen contact and communication.

We know that the Catholic Church in China has been deeply wounded and has to be healed by love. In this critical situation, the Church must avail herself of whatever opportunity presents itself, and, undaunted by difficulties no matter how great, make good use of God's bountiful grace. For the Holy Spirit transcends everything and works unceasingly. The Holy Spirit is always with the Church and leads her unfalteringly forward.

When we have contacts with the Church in China, we should remember the teaching of St. Paul: "Exercise charity" and "practise the truth in love", and keep to the principle of St. Augustine: "Let there be unity in what is necessary, freedom in what is doubtful, and charity in everything." Only in this way can we fulfill our mission of a bridge church, and attain the goals of reconciliation and communion.

In the future, the scope of contact, exchange and cooperation between the Church in Hong Kong and the Church in China is likely to expand and developed continually. We must follow the spirit of the Gospel in showing special concern for the poor and weak, so that China may attain a comprehensive development on the material, spiritual and social levels. Moreover, we must reflect more on our own actions to see whether we have given priority to evangelization, and whether we have helped the Church in China to achieve reconciliation and communion within herself and with the Universal Church.

We reaffirm our desire to entrust all our future endeavours to the Lord of history, and prepare ourselves to fulfill the mission as a bridge church. We hope that the Holy Spirit Study Centre, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in union with the relevant Diocesan organizations, groups and individuals, will frequently conduct gatherings, to pray, to reflect and to give mutual support. We also desire, in union with all our compatriots wherever they may be, to discern the signs of the times, and grasp this opportunity to fulfilling the mission entrusted by Christ to us: "Proclaim the Gospel of the Lord, spread the Kingdom of God".

CONCLUSION

We have presented above a review of the seven major spheres involving pastoral care and evangelization as listed in the Pastoral Exhortation: "March into the Bright Decade" , together with the pertinent recommendations. For the coming five years the thrust of our Diocese will be **“Proclaim the Gospel of the Lord, spread the Kingdom of God.”**

During the past five years, all of you cooperated faithfully in carrying out what we have planned. On the whole, the Diocese has made considerable progress towards the objectives set out in the Pastoral Exhortation. I am gratified, and wish to express my sincere appreciation to all. In the coming five years let us exert further effort and cooperate actively in fulfilling our pastoral commitment with one mind and heart. “I am sure that the One who began a good work in you will bring it to completion”. (Phil. 1:6)

On Pentecost Sunday, the Universal Church celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit, and the Diocese of Hong Kong has chosen this day to announce its pastoral orientation. Pope Paul VI reminded us in “Evangelii Nuntiandi” (82) that the early Church started to evangelize on the morning of Pentecost with the power of the Holy Spirit and through the prayer of Mary. In view of our present situation, difficulties are inevitable but we are full of hope. The Church has always done the will of our Lord, constantly renewing herself and preaching the Gospel. May our heavenly Mother act as our Star of evangelization, and lead us all in the path of evangelization: **Proclaim the Gospel, spread the Kingdom of God.**

+ John B. Cardinal Wu
Bishop of Hong Kong

Pentecost Sunday
4th June, 1995