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**The Black Pope – Part Two**

**By Robert Bruce Baird**

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For, as we are increasingly aware, the structures of human life in common are of different kinds, not only economic and political, but also cultural and religious; all of them condition human life, all of them can weaken or destroy it, and all of them are capable of being impregnated by the Gospel and of embodying a greater justice and charity. So it is worth paying unflinching attention to the different aspects of the contexts in which we find ourselves, lest we end up oblivious of the changes developing or out of touch with them.

7. These are some reasons why, after GC34, the social apostolate began a world-wide examen. It was deemed necessary to organise the 1997 Naples Congress in an effort to give new impetus within the Society to the social apostolate as a sign of our full commitment to the social dimension of our mission. Among some promising results of the process, programmed for 1995–2005, the following seem especially significant.

One is the importance of elaborating the characteristics of the social apostolate at the level of the universal Society and of adapting them at the local level. Such characteristics provide the framework for continually discerning, in creative fidelity to the social dimension of our charism, what the Spirit calls us to in the ever different poverties and injustices of the world. Some of the many insights and questions needed in this sense find expression in the working draft Characteristics of the Social Apostolate. Since the current draft is taking much longer to revise than foreseen, everyone is encouraged to send in comments and suggestions towards a definitive edition of these Characteristics, after study and discussion in communities and groups.

While each commitment can and must be very specific, we need to keep in mind the various levels of action and reflection which are involved, as the well-known expression "local/global" suggests. These levels go from the apparently simplest contact with and service to the poor at the grass-roots, through every sort of human development and promotion, to working for far-reaching change in structures nationally and internationally.

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As we keep working at different levels, we also want to become aware of and remain up-to-date on how complex and changing are the injustices and the socio-cultural structures in today's world. This requires bringing a plurality of viewpoints to bear on problems and employing multiple ways of reading society and doing things there.

Finally, experience has taught us to ground our social commitment squarely upon the foundation of our Ignatian spirituality and our Jesuit tradition, both of which 'place us joyfully with the Son and with those among whom the Son wants to be, the poor and neglected of the earth.' We recognise that it is not possible to call oneself a companion of Jesus if one does not share His love for those who suffer.

8. These same elements suggest the direction in which to continue going and indicate some concrete measures to support the process currently underway. An endless pluralism of approaches and variety of methods and organisational models constitute, without a doubt, an enormous richness of the social

apostolate; but, in order to fulfil this potential and grow as an apostolic body, it very much needs adequate co-ordination. Accordingly, we need to make good use of the forms and structures of co-ordination already available and indeed strengthen them. I would like every Province, Region and inter-provincial body like Conferences of Major Superiors to have a co-ordinator of the social apostolate, supported by an appropriate commission, and with sufficient capacity, resources and time to play their role.

At the same time, a greater flow of useful and up-to-date information is needed in the social apostolate within Provinces and beyond them. Such exchange of information should encourage those involved, propose questions or instruments of reflection, and help networks to grow and function effectively. Much greater benefit can be drawn from the Church's social teaching and the social apostolate's experience accumulated since the Instruction of Father Janssens. I count on the Social Justice Secretariat at the Curia to continue its work of co-ordination and to strengthen communications throughout the social apostolate.

Compared with the work of other groups and organisations active in the social field, the social apostolate of the Society is notable for its presence at all the various levels from the grassroots to international bodies, and in all the various approaches from the direct forms of service, through working with groups and movements, to research, reflection and publication. In this typically multiple presence, a great but little realised potential of the universal Society lies hidden, which we owe it to the poor and to the Church to make better use of. Let us actively look for ways of combining competencies in social analysis and theological reflection, with experience of closeness to the poor and work with those who suffer injustices of every sort, and of better exploiting all the possibilities that are given us as a universal and international apostolic body.

Finally, the perseverance and the development of the social apostolate cannot take place without the availability of qualified Jesuits and co-workers. Therefore, I encourage Jesuits involved in the social apostolate and those responsible for formation to co-operate in setting up well-designed programmes, within a Province or inter-Provincially, such as GC34 asks: 'Young Jesuits should be in contact with the poor, not just occasionally, but in a more sustained manner. These experiences must be accompanied by careful reflection as part of the academic and spiritual formation and should be integrated into

training in socio-cultural analysis.' The normal formation should provide scholastics and brothers with the social studies and apostolic experiences that will help all to grow in social-mindedness, allowing some to encounter in the social apostolate the sector in which they can fulfil their own personal and priestly vocation to the Society.

Our non-Jesuit co-workers, too, should be assured really good access to the Society's spiritual heritage and apostolic experience, wherefrom they can draw as they integrate their personal background and gifts. Opportunities for learning, reflection, prayer and on-going formation need to be offered our co-workers with, always, the greatest respect for their religious convictions. Some experiences already show the Characteristics to be a useful resource for these purposes.

9. 'Christ came to unite what was divided, to destroy sin and hatred, and to reawaken in humanity the vocation to unity and brotherhood.' The crying needs of the poor, the radical demands of the Gospel, the insistent teaching of the Church, and the prophetic calls of our General Congregations, leave us far from complacent with our response. 'The commitment of the Society to a radical life of faith that finds expression in the promotion of justice' has been, is and will be a great grace for us all. Much fine work is already being done and much renewal is already underway. With profound gratitude we appreciate the work done in the name of the whole Society by social works great and small, by the Jesuit Refugee

Service and many Jesuit Volunteers.

These few pages suggest why and how to strengthen the social apostolate, locally and beyond, so that the social dimension of the Society's universal mission may find ever more concrete and effective expression in who we are, what we do, how we live. 'How much the Society will accomplish' – declared Father Janssens at the end of his Instruction - 'if only we unite our forces and, in a spirit of oneness, gird ourselves humbly and resolutely for the work before us!' May the Lord Jesus, with the intercession of Mary our Mother of the Magnificat, enlist us ever more fully and radically as servants of His mission. Fraternaly yours in Christ," (5)

JIDDHU KRISHNAMURTI: – After all that 'stuff' it is hard to write about a man of spirit and perhaps one of the true messiahs. At this juncture in my writing I have placed a great deal of information in front of anyone who would have read the previous dozen and more books. This information seldom states exactly what is going on with the likes of Jefferson or Krishnamurti for a good reason or two. One of those reasons is - I do not know exactly what influenced their lives and to what extent. I do know they both had esoteric teachers connected to the Hermetic and ancient knowledge. The other reason has to do with how much I do know about all this stuff because I have studied it for decades. I know few people could possibly grasp the full potential or meaning of these things and even in the area of politics and their social inputs this is true.

None

**Holy Mantrimony**

**By Gary Whittaker**

## The Black Pope – Part Two

In the last couple of weeks, the catholic war machine has been running on all cylinders to oppose the legitimacy of homosexual marriages. I would invite the pope to take a look behind him and see just where he was less than a year ago with the Church itself was mired in controversy. Apparently, the pope has no problem with sexual intercourse between a man and a boy, as long as he is at least a priest and can conduct his "affairs" discreetly. But when two people of consenting age decide to share their lives together in love and with commitment, it is a crime against GOD? And for them to forget about adoption because of what it might do to the child! The pope seems to be in such contact with his omnipotence that he is oblivious to the world around him. Children today already have 2 fathers: the one they look nothing like but takes care of them, and the one they go see every 2nd weekend. 1 out of 2 marriages in North America end in divorce and children who have 2 parents at home are walking into schools with guns.

I for one am not homosexual, nor do I wish to see two man embracing each other on billboards, or on the street. That does not give me the right, however, to enforce my beliefs on anyone. Not as an individual and most assuredly not as an organisation. 2 same-sex individuals are of no threat to me. My values and my standards are my own and cannot be endangered by the love of 2 people. If we were to listen to the Pope, and take action that force homosexuals to stay in the closet, we are the ones inflicting pain to others. And let's be clear. We will not just be hurting homosexuals, but their friends and family and I will tell you why:

Homosexuality is a fact. It is a not a state of mind but a state of being. Most of us know who they are. It is just obvious in a lot of cases, like the colour of skin. Homosexuals are coming out of the closet in greater numbers, leaving their wives and children behind to be who they are. We must open our society so that they can be "freed" before they are forced to assimilate into our "normal" lifestyle. They must be allowed to live. and love without fear of repercussion. And most importantly, they must be allowed to care for their loved ones as we do ours. They must be allowed to grieve at the loss of their loved ones like we do ours. A homosexual must be treated as an equal. I should not have to argue that fact. Women and fro-Americans have a long documented history of struggle, pain and finally triumph. Why must we force yet another "minority group" to suffer?

Gary Whittaker is the Editor of T.E.N Magazine. You can view more articles through their website

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