

SYMPOSIUM 2019: CONTEMPLATION – MISSION – MARTYRDOM

Stephan Rothlin: The contemplative dimension of mission: towards a new concept of mission.
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The General Congregation 34 of the Society of Jesus has requested a new approach to missiology. This request remains an unaccomplished open challenge which does not limit itself to a Catholic order but to the whole community of the Church as the sense of what “mission” actually entails has been significantly weakened. The paper limits therefore its scope to explore how “recovering a Contemplative Spirit” as advocated by Pope Francis in his Encyclical Letter “*Evangelii Gaudium*”, “The Joy of the Gospel” (no.264) focused on the mission of the Church may reveal key points that the Gospel of Jesus Christ may more fully take root in local cultures while a new understanding of the impetus to go beyond the boundaries of one’s own culture in order to share the Gospel with people of all cultures.

The paper aims to analyse the crisis of the term “mission” from a philosophical perspective and explains how the process of “Recovering a Contemplative Spirit” may be a decisive element in the attempt to reach a new and more adequate understanding of the meaning of “mission” and “martyrdom”. More specifically, the paper takes into consideration the vision of Pope John Paul II articulated in his Apostolic Letter “*Ecclesia in Asia*” (1990) that the cultures of Asia will be privileged drivers of mission in the third millennium. Therefore it is argued that the contemplative treasures of Asian wisdom tradition may be one of the decisive factors in the struggle to get the faith in the Crucified and Risen Lord rooted in local cultures.