

# Perspectives in tourism

# 2



## *Spirituality in tourism*

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“The Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism is a Hong Kong based coalition of Regional Ecumenical Organisations and over seventy secular and faith-based groups. It seeks to unite people around collective efforts that negate the undesirable effects of modern tourism and, in its place, institute socially responsible and ethically oriented tourism. It believes that tourism must be based on justice and sustainability for host communities and that, therefore, tourism planning and practice must be democratised. ECOT advocates respect for the protection and dignity of the human rights of women, children, indigenous peoples and workers in the tourist trade. It opposes tourism projects that create environmental devastation.”

**ECOT has eleven principal aims:**

1. Focus on tourism and the effect it has on the lives of the people of the Third World and their natural environs.
2. Provide opportunities for the local people displaced and otherwise affected by tourism to express their views and concerns.
3. Work for gender justice and child protection in tourism.
4. Protect the rights of workers in the formal and informal sectors of the industry.
5. Denounce unfair practices in tourism and encourage action to change them.
6. Promote a good quality of tourist activity that is appropriate to the quest for a just, participatory, and sustainable society.
7. Empower indigenous peoples and support them in their attempts to get a fair price for their exposure to tourism.
8. Lobby against the violation of human rights related to tourism development projects at national and international level.
9. Provide research and information on the impact of tourism.
10. Engage in analytical study on the implications of globalization on the tourist trade and offer alternative paradigms for justice.
11. Advocate for just practices in tourist trade and to ensure that international trade mechanisms are in line with values of justice for the host communities.

**About the cover**

Sandals are a moving symbol of God’s liberating acts when Yahweh led the Israelites people on their journey to the Promised Land. Thus, worn out sandals, keeps on reminding people of faith about the purpose of their journeys. It is not for personal leisure and satisfaction. It is not to add to the misery and neglect of the marginalized and destruction of God’s creation. But to experience how God is leading our journey to be God’s instrument of peace and justice. Therefore, in every journey immersion with the life and struggle of the people from different cultures, faith and status would be necessary. This is the spirituality of tourism.” (*Joram H. Calimutan- DOV, CCA*)

*Cover picture: Credit Roselle Solomon*

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## **Introduction**

It has often been asked as to why the church must be involved in matters related to tourism? Isn't that a question for economic planners and business leaders to worry about, people ask?

The answers are distinct. To us in ECOT, modern day tourism is the story of distorted life-styles. It is the recital of stories of abused hospitality, of people deceived day-in and day-out by unscrupulous people whose only goal in tourism is to make profits with utter disregard for the social consequences to women, young girls and boys forced into prostitution simply because the alternative may simply be poverty or hunger. It is the narrative of people deceived by drugs, gambling, unconscionable consumerism, unrestrained and ruthless competition, and the eventual sense of powerlessness of the victims. Or, for that matter, the venal displacement of farmers, fisher folk, indigenous persons only to make way for the arrival of a tourist enterprise which could take the form of a five-star hotel, a golf course, or a new amusement park. Increasingly, there is awareness of the ecological violence against nature- the destruction of nature's most valuable and vital resources- water, land, wild life, mangroves, coral reefs, bird sanctuaries, etc, all in the name of tourism development and it's supposed promise of development and social advancement. And there is always the overworked, underpaid worker in the organized and unorganized sector. Tourism, as we have come to know it, so unflinchingly also reinforces sexist and imperialistic stereotypes.

Christians must of necessity be conscious of God's affirmation that we are all made in the image of God. Not one of the features of tourism just described would conform to this affirmation. To recreate humankind in the image of God is an invitation to engage in restoring the brokenness of people and communities caused by the recklessness of tourism. This, in turn, is the unambiguous call to intervene to restore God's justice to the victim and to transform tourism into a vocation centred on justice and human values. The sole motive of profit accumulation must be discarded and must give way to a value-based enterprise where the benefits of tourism are equitably shared between the various parts of the tourism equation- the tourist, the entrepreneur, and the host communities. This alone will reverse a trend wherein the hosts and their abodes are reduced to being commodities and objectified for the hedonistic pleasures of the traveller.

A new paradigm of tourism is, above all, the quest for a form of spirituality that acquires the traits of a pilgrimage. A pilgrim goes off in search of God and in the pursuit of truth. God's truth cannot be found outside the ambit of justice and true community. In a world torn asunder by economic divisions, a traveller can make the choice, or be encouraged to choose, to go out in search for people-to-people encounters as part of which each discover the other, understand each other, share with each other what they can and have. This is a pilgrim pathway that can lead to mutuality, solidarity, and to the real discovery of human community. It will be the trail to cessation of abuses of the previous ways of exploitation rooted in greed. It will symbolize the abandonment of the search for profit alone and, instead, instill stewardship values of God's world of people, the mountains, seas, islands, the air, the birds, the trees- indeed all of God's precious creation.

ECOT is a community of faith and views tourism as a spiritual question. Leisure-tourism is like all things of God- spiritual. It exists to serve God. And leisure can either be for self-aggrandizement or to advance something meaningful in a person's values in life in addition to self-regeneration. When the right relationship is established between self- fulfillment and social responsibility in tourism, then tourism would be an act of pilgrimage in the service of people and nature.

“ The person on horseback knows nothing of the toil of the traveler on foot”- so goes an ancient Chinese proverb! To travel through God's world is to join the pilgrimage to discover the truth about God's creation- Gods' people, their cultures, and God's nature. And where is the truth to be found in our world today? Truth lies in the ashes of injustice, degradation, disempowerment, decay, hopelessness and so on. Third World Tourism, in particular, has managed to dodge these questions. This pilgrimage, which you can call 'justice tourism', is a way to seek the truth as seen by the traveler on foot- and to seek God through this truth.

Until tourism becomes an encounter with the dominant injustice of this world, it will stay exploitative. And so, for the church and its agencies, the challenge is to bring to the tourism agenda alternative paradigms that have as their base values of justice, development, and respect for cultures, ecological sensitivity. When these things occur, tourism will become the theatre of opportunity for solidarity, sharing and caring, of desiring to return to the place visited not because it was exciting and good fun but because it was challenging and ethically correct to return to continue to support the people you visited and

because it was socially responsible to do so. Indeed tourism as a means of solidarity can be the path to justice and understanding. Tourism could thus be a vehicle for building human community, for understanding; for recognizing the many sided gifts of God.

ECOT remains an Ecumenical Movement and works with people across the religious divide on an inter-faith footing recognizing that the way forward in dealing with the great issues of our times requires bridging individuals and groups with shared concerns and commitments in building a common humanity. These networks and alliances are the place where each part brings to the rallying point their 'five loaves and two fishes,' their social capital as it were, to combine them for the larger good of human progress.

The two papers we have in this edition of '*Perspectives in Tourism*' were first presented at the VI World Congress on the Pastoral Care of Tourism (July 2004) on the theme 'Tourism at the service of bringing peoples together'. Both are from well-known Asian Church leaders from the Catholic Church. They are shared with a wider audience through this largely because the ideas and orientations contained in the papers, notably in terms of ethics, have the potential for import in a wide variety of circumstances.

We are grateful for their effort in tuning these papers to our particular needs and trust that their visions of a just tourism will inspire many people both within the church and outside of it.

L C D (Ranjan) Solomon  
Executive Director  
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# **Bringing People Together for Just Peace Challenges to Tourism in the 21st Century**

Anthony Rogers, FSC

## **Introduction**

Tourism at the service of bringing people together for peace is one of the greatest challenges for the people of Asia today. In order to do this we need to begin a process of dialogue that will bring people from all over the world to Asia – to build a new solidarity for the common good. We need to clarify for ourselves the various aspects of tourism in Asia today and how it can be at the service of bringing people together so that we can build together a world based on peace. How can Tourism in Asia be at the Service of Bringing People Together? In order to answer this question, it is imperative that we need to take a look at the various dimensions of this complex and diverse phenomenon. There is a growing awareness within the Churches in Asia that we need a more human kind of tourism. It is imperative that we have to rethink and restructure tourism in a new and more human way. It is not the way of just pointing out the negatives and positives or identifying the potentials and threats. We need a new creativity and a new paradigm based on the fundamental perspectives of the Good News for Jesus Christ as understood in the context of Asia. We cannot take for granted that it is the Market forces that determine for the future of millions of people all over Asia and in the other Continents. The guiding norms and principle can no longer be just the maximisation of profits or exaggerated materialism, self-satisfaction and hedonism. A New Evangelisation of the movement of People to be present to one another and to allow them to enter into a true encounters of cultures and traditions calls for a new and radical response of all the People of God all over the world and in dialogue with people of all faiths and traditions.

We need to develop the meaning of a joint responsibility with all the peoples of Asia so that we can move towards more holistic and integral understanding of the world of tourism. It is not just the movement of people from the financial rich world and the economically poor countries in Asia but encounters that will lay the foundations for a Just Peace. Tourism is an opportunity to enter into the world of one another to welcome our guests with respect and the host to have a greater participation in working for the common good.

## **The Challenges of a Dehumanising Globalisation**

Tourism today is not just the emergence of a new “borderless world”. It is also the gradual integral of the global market, trade and capital into the local levels. It is also the subtle adoption of a way of thinking and acting that makes people not just producers of goods and services and consumers but also participants in a particular way of life and its underlying values of a market driven economics. The impact is not just on the economic level but the insertion of cultural and moral norms that affects life style and consumption patterns, the education system, forms of recreation and entertainment as well as sexual and moral ethics. To put it bluntly, globalisation is part of the process that is rapidly making us an integral part of the global trading system. It is for this reason that it has made its way into the GATS negotiations and possibly make the tourism sector under a greater influence of big businesses and the multinationals. Multinationals and big businesses have seen its profit yielding potentials and want to control the levers of the tourism sector. The economics of tourism is at the root of the many issues that hurt multitudes of people, especially the vulnerable in the tourism sector. Trade liberalisation and the onslaught of information technology that makes the movement of capital and information, labour and goods truly make world one.

## **Challenges of Growing Poverty and Inequalities**

The world has never been richer in terms of technological developments in health, education and of course in terms of the ability to travel and to move from one part of the world to another. The rich have in grown numerically and are more productive. But as a proportion of the world’s population the rich, defined as those living in the industrialised and developed countries of North America, Western Europe and Japan make up a fairly small minority. It is estimated that they make up roughly around a billion of the world’s six billion people. Of the other 5 billion, 2.8 billion live on less than \$2 a day, according to the World Bank. Of those 1.2 billion live on less than \$1 a day. More than 40 per cent of those 1.2 billion are in South Asia – that is, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka; 23 percent are in East Asia, which includes China.

At the same time what is frightening is that in spite of all the progress and development the gap between richest and the poorest has not narrowed. According to a study initiated by the World Bank it was pointed out that in 1870 the world’s richest industrialised countries,

Britain and the United States had an income per head roughly 9 times that of the poorest country. In 1990 America's income per head was more than 45 times the income per head of Chad or Ethiopia. In 1870 the world's seventeen richest countries had an average income per head of 2.4 times as high as all the other countries, in 1990 the top seventeen countries were 4.5 times as rich as the rest. In 2000 the average income in the world's 20 richest countries is 37 times the average in the poorest 20 countries. The gap has doubled in the past forty years

Available data shows that although globalisation has accelerated the creation of wealth, it benefits the wealthy. Rich countries are becoming richer while poorer countries are becoming poorer. In 1965, the poorest 20% of other people in the world had a 2.3% share of the global income and the richest 20% had a 70% share. In 1995, the poorest 20% shared just a 1.4-% of global income while the share of the 20% richest had increased to 85%. Furthermore, just 385 billionaires have a combined income equivalent to that of 2.5 billion people and in the last 10 years the number of hungry people has increased from 500 to 840 million. Tourism today has to be placed in the context of massive poverty in the Third World. Tourism has one face in the world of the poor and another in the world of the rich.

### **Understanding the Faces of Tourism in the context of Globalisation**

Tourism is a "sunrise" industry worldwide. It provided employment for about 212 million people in 1995, and the figure is expected to increase to 338 million in the next 10 years. The gross revenue of the tourism sector has reached US\$3.4 trillion and is expected to more than double by the year 2005, to US\$ 7.2 trillion. The share of the Asia-Pacific region is US\$804 billion. The region is only third in ranking behind Western Europe at US\$1.5 trillion and North America at US\$956 billion. In the world today, one out of every 9 person is in tourism and that amounts to 278 million in 1996. 17% of world tourism comes to East Asia and the Pacific. Tourism grows 23% faster than the world economy. Between 1995-1997, travel and tourism grew 50 percent faster than world employment and 60% of all international air travel was related to tourism.

We note some of the characteristics and issues related to tourism in Asia today:

1. In evaluating the role and impact of the tourism industry we

need to take into account both the level of socio-economic development and the importance of tourism as a “Key-Player” in the national development plans. If tourism is a priority the governments should make higher allocations for tourism development compared to other sectors. Very often it is an option between tourism related infrastructure development and promotion and the production of basic goods provision for education and health and development of the agricultural sector etc. In some countries in Asia, governments give priority to the building of Golf Courses for the tourists and investors by taking away rice fields of the farming communities. We cannot therefore look at the development of the tourism industry in the Third World without taking a look at the choices that need to be made and the consequences on the people.

2. The rapid growth of the tourism industry in Asia is related to what we term the “Fast-Track Growth Oriented Development”. The 1997 financial crisis in Asia has shown very clearly the fragile nature of our economies and especially the tourism industry. The SARS scare in Southeast and East Asia kept away thousands of tourists from their destinations and the earnings of people have dropped drastically. Since 9/11 a series of violence in Bali, Indonesia and in Southern Thailand has also dramatically affected both the tourism industry as well as the rise of unemployment and the direct impact it has on the poor and marginalised. All these have to a large extent has had serious consequences for the tourism industry and the workers. It is clear that mass tourism as the means to boost the economy and alleviate the poverty of the people is being questioned and challenged.
3. The technological advancements in communications and transport and the incredible improvements in information technology and use of the mass media have made tourism the fastest growing industry today. What people see on the television screen, they want to experience in reality. They don't mind working longer hours to be given the opportunity to enter into another cultural world. They don't mind getting into debts (“Fly First, Pay Later” Schemes) to enjoy for the moment. There is the danger that it can become a status symbol or self-gratification due to the highly competitive advertising industry.
4. Tourism, understood in its full context is for the opportunity for the emergence of one humanity, able to fully experience the gifts of God given to the whole of humanity. But current experiences show that that much is to be desired when little respect is paid to the cultural heritage of the people and basic needs of the people

are neglected. Development has to respect the rights of other persons and communities. Tourism can be an opportunity to enter into the world of the “others” but not trampling on their “flower gardens”. The opening of territories owned and occupied by indigenous peoples, farmers, fishing communities have resulted in the forced eviction of communities and the loss of cultural identities. Burial grounds and sacred sites have been converted into luxury resorts and golf courses. Cultures are commercialised for entertainment and increasing the profits for the few, all in the name of development.

6. The instant nature of commercialised tourism moves people from one part of the world or a continent to another but it is often only a superficial encounter. It is only with the mere externals of a world of nature and culture. There is little opportunity to true experience with the day to day lives of the people. Overly commercialised tourism is often a purely artificial environment that lacks a certain sensitivity to the inner pains and realities of peoples. Because they are not able to get close enough to them they are not also closer towards a greater understanding of their lives and aspirations. Tourism sometimes does not reveal the real faces of our peoples and the cries of anguish and pains. Governments and Business often build walls and a facade to give the impression that those things are well in our countries and that poverty and inequalities can be eradicated by the incomes from the tourism industry. They sometimes fail to curb the various forms of corruption and illegal activities that do not do justice to the people and their demands for basic human dignity and rights. The gradual commodification of “culture and nature”, denies the deeper aspects of ones life and sharing the more humanising aspects of the culture from which one comes from. Examples can be cited in various countries, where family life has disintegrated; marriages are broken and threatened by the promotion of sex tourism. The influence on youth and high school students is devastating. Lured by opportunities to earn easy money within a few late evening hours, they lost interest in studies, games and other usual pastimes. They are immersed in the life of restaurants, shacks, beach-umbrella renting, vehicle hiring and as masseurs, quite a number in drug peddling, prostitute soliciting including children, and finally falling into the web of drug-taking and prostitution. HIV carriers and people with full-blown AIDS have been found and are increasing at an alarming rate.
7. We are aware that the tourism industry is a key economic institution in every single part of the world and is proposed as the panacea

for underdevelopment of the Third World today. We cannot deny the role of the mass media and the communication networks in bringing new information to prospective tourists looking for an escape from the drudgery of modern day life in a highly competitive and consumerist society. Highly marketed mass tourism entails higher financial costs for the traveller and become an exclusive privilege of the few in the developed and developing countries.

8. It is very debatable if the type of tourism being promoted in Asia today is for the integral development of the nation and people. Economic growth does not necessarily mean total human development, the creation of equitable structures and justice. The evils of drug abuse and prostitution cannot be the price one has to pay for economic growth and development.

Thus we have attempted to point out that tourism cannot be driven by only the market forces and solely motivated by profit. We need to look for alternatives that will bring new dimensions to humanity and to the world of nature.

### **Starting Afresh with a New Vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

We as Church are therefore being challenged to Start Afresh in the beginning of the new millennium. Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II for the 24<sup>th</sup> World Day of Tourism (27<sup>th</sup> September 2003) said “I warmly hope that tourist activity will be an effective means of alleviating poverty, of fostering the personal and social growth of individuals and peoples, and of the consolidation of participating and co-operation among nations, cultures and religions.” It is clear that we need both a new Vision and Pastoral Orientations in the area of tourism. Our Vision is born out of the awareness of the situations of grief and sorrow in the world of today. These move the People of God to recognise the need to respond with our joy and create situations of hope. We have been challenged to offer radical alternatives to society today founded on our faith as a People of God and in Jesus Christ. We cannot be satisfied with superficial responses to social problems but to work for the building of the Kingdom of God in a holistic way through our work and our lives as Church.

To bring more humane conditions to life and to act justly and with compassion begins with a clear option for new values of community and solidarity. A deeper understanding of a holistic vision makes us believe that the promotion of a sustainable and humane tourism is an

integral mission of the Church for a fuller humanity in harmony with nature and the universe. This is a process of coming to certain clarity of the nature of contributions to the transformation of the existing tourism industry. This can only be initiated with the formulation and implementation of programmes and activities that affect peoples' lives today. New possibilities are only possible with a new heart and new mind according to the ways of Jesus in our time and situations.

We therefore in this paper will Look at the World of Tourism, Listen to what the Lord is teaching us through the “signs of the times” and the official teachings of the Church, so that we will be able to Respond with Love.

### **Our Hope in the Flower Gardens of Asia – The Beauty and Fragrance of Cultures and Religious Traditions**

This approach is not new, looking back into our past assures us that Asia being the biggest land mass in the world has been over the centuries a continent where people have had the opportunity to move more and more both over the land and sea. From early times, there has been the movement to and from the West Asia to South Asia and South East Asia, Central Asia and to East Asia and in all directions. There is obvious evidence that Asia is not a watertight compartment. There has been over our long history a gradual assimilation of one another's ways of life and thinking and a cultural intermingling that has brought such benefits in the past. We realise that to have always learnt from one another and to benefit from the diversity of both the products of the land the inherent talents of the people that have brought innumerable benefits to all of us in Asia. . Although we differ from country to country and from one civilisation to another but deep within each one of us is the Asian psyche that intuition that we were created different so that we could complement one another in being at the service of life and creation. Our sense of the sacred and searching for the divine has resulted in producing layers of cultural exchanges and experiences that have become the foundations of our nations.

### **The Forging of A New Direction for the Whole of Humanity**

It is with this confidence in our history as nations and peoples with rich cultural and religious heritages and endowed with nature and environment that we see the importance of entering into dialogue with all peoples and with the Universal Church. Dialogue is not about talking and listening alone but about entering into each other's worlds

and moving towards a common perspective because we are truly committed to global solidarity. It is a firm and persevering commitment to the common good, for the good of each human person and the whole human family. It is this commitment to solidarity that confirms our belief that tourism can genuinely be at the service of the whole of humanity. The biggest industry linked to our natural desire to enter the world and other cultures, traditions and faiths is indeed the new megapolis of tourism. It is this confidence that will have to serve as the foundations for the development of more relevant and more creative pastoral initiatives in the area of tourism at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century calls for a radically new approach.

This new challenge is born out of our desire for a global Just Peace. There can be a clear shift if tourism is not just seen as an economic activity but as a whole new programme to bring people together to work for peace. We need to promote this new consciousness and awareness of tourism as the new force for a Just Peace. This is our response to the growing insecurities attached to fears of growing terrorism and the dangers of conflicts and violence in many parts of the world. Tourism can indeed become a force and a vehicle for bringing people together for peace. This can begin with making the focus of tourism the opportunity for the exchange of cultures. This can take a new direction with a greater commitment to a fuller and deeper understanding of the complexity of modern day tourism in the context of globalisation. We need to examine the web of intricate interconnectedness of all aspects of life today. Tourism has always been associated with the activity of the movement of people, but today it has become one of the most organised industries in society today that involves huge sums of money and utilisation of human and natural resources. Its impetus for rapid and extensive expansion is dramatically affecting the lives of people in Asia. There is the desire for people to reach out to other persons and cultures and at the same time find opportunities for rest and recreation. This movement of people and the bringing of people together is also the biggest “Dollar-earners” and the engine of the industry that drives nations to new levels of economic growth and with the promise that it is also the path to taking them out of situations of poverty and dehumanisation.

### **Our Path as Church in Dialogue with World of Tourism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

The reason for the greater involvement of both the Universal Church and the Church in Asia has to be anchored on our belief that we are

called anew to be at the service of the Gospel of Life in the context of Asia. It is our mission of evangelisation in Asia by being leaven, salt and light in the societies that we live and the world. It is this vision that serves to make our process of reviewing our lives and attempting to find new ways of responding with love in all our endeavours as Church. For us, the all-powerful forces at work within the Asian realities are what move us as Church to look for new and creative responses. In the living heritage of cultures and religious traditions of Asia we discern values and their expressions in symbols, stories and art forms, that embody a vision of life; while we are critically aware of the distortions that have entered into these traditions. In these cultural and religious traditions we also discover the responses to life given by past generations of Asian peoples, which in turn are sources for our contemporary response. We Asians are searching not simply for a meaning of life but for life itself. We are striving and struggling for life because it is a task and a challenge. But life is a gift too, a mystery, because our efforts to achieve it are far too short of the ultimate value of life. We speak of life as a *becoming*- a growing into, a journeying to life and to the source of life.

### **Steps to a Human Tourism for Just Peace**

In the rich diversity of ancient Asian cultures and faiths is a vision of unity in diversity, a communion of life among diverse peoples. In this context we seek to become persons of dialogue. Ours is a vision of holistic life, life that is achieved and entrusted to every person and every community of persons, regardless of gender, creed, culture, class or colour. It is the fruit of integral development, the authentic development of the whole person and of every person. We envision a life with integrity and dignity, a life of compassion for the multitudes, especially for the poor and needy. It is a life of solidarity with every form of life and of sensitive care for all the earth. It is thus a life that unites us Asians among ourselves and with the whole of creation into one community life. For us Life is to live with integrity and dignity in peace and Justice, in freedom and participation, in mutuality and complementarity. It is to live in simplicity and friendship.

It is interesting to note what the Asian Bishops shared with us in 1995. "At the heart of our vision of life is the Asian reverential sense of mystery and of the sacred, a spirituality that regards life as sacred and discovers the Transcendent and its gifts even in mundane affairs, in tragedy or victory, in brokenness or wholeness. This deep interiority draws people to experience harmony and inner peace and infuses

ethics into all of creation. Note worthy among them are the growing consciousness regarding human dignity and empowerment of the poor, the growing voices of groups and peoples for humanised development and the cries of marginalised groups for participatory and democratic governance. We dwelt on the movements for the protection of the environment and ecosystem linked to justice and the solidarity of committed groups and peoples especially in the struggle for the rights of women, children, especially the girl child, and those of indigenous peoples. Truly remarkable is the increasing number of young peoples moving towards solidarity and community, and seeking a deeper spirituality. We are consoled by efforts of many groups to foster dialogue with people of other faiths. (VI Plenary Assembly 1995 No. 10)

It is therefore this Integral Vision that has enabled us to articulate some basic principles that should be the foundation of our involvement and participation in the world of tourism.

## **Our Strategies for a Humanising and Sustainable Tourism in Asia**

### **1. Our priority for most Afflicted through Ministries of Compassion**

The negative side effects of tourism development can be avoided or minimised greatly through a holistic and integrated approach towards development. Tourism developers pay little attention to the wishes and desires of the local communities as well as the physical environment. We as Church need to be more conscious of the cultural and religious values of the people and look for ways to protect them. Their well being and interest should not be overlooked. We need to listen to their side of the story. It is by knowing their lives and situations more fully that we will be able to help them to confront some of these problems. We thus need to be more sensitive to their hopes and aspirations and examine concrete ways in which to work with persons and communities so that they can have an impact on society in general and the environment and ecology as well. Thus Pastoral ministry for tourism begins with some form of dialogue with the “disadvantaged” and “small people” resulting in negotiations and advocacy with the policy makers, in order to redress the negative impact of tourism on their lives.

## **2. Our Readiness to Participatory Involvement of the Marginalised**

It is not just knowing about their lives but entering into a process of dialogue with them. Our experiences have shown that the best way to lessen the negative impact of mass global tourism is to begin with positive actions at the micro-local levels. Our journey and struggle with the people has given us new insights into tourism so that we can come up with more creative ways to overcome some of the problems. What is truly new is not in concepts and words but in concrete lived experiences. Thus we can see that the process of globalisation of tourism can be arrested at the local level by new actions in behalf of justice and equitable structures. It is our responsibility to evaluate the impact of tourism on the lives of the people of Asia and promote the involvement and participation of the Church without reservations. This dialogue helps us to educate the members of the Church to a greater commitment. In our experiences it has been clear that to create greater awareness in the Church has to be through the communication of the heart. We need to share the stories of the people and what has feelings of hurt and discouragement have been felt and how, through the living out of their faith, were able to experience the hope and joy that comes with lives lived in love and service. We can be the main link between the people affected by the negative aspects of tourism and the Government and Business.

## **3. Our Dialogue with the “World of Tourism – Managers and Industry**

It is the result of our participation and involvement in the lives of people affected negatively by tourism that we are able to be familiar with the views and perspectives of the poor. It is then that we can enter into dialogue with the Government and agencies involved in the tourism industry. We listen to them and evaluate the criteria they employ to make plans in the area of economics, social development and environmental protection etc. There seem to be great opportunities for lay persons to take a more active role in the world of tourism and in their willingness in collaboration with others to set up tour agencies and invest in the industry especially in directly bringing people together.

It is in the context of this process of active involvement through

dialogue, participation and advocacy that the Church can find both long term, holistic and lasting solutions to the problems related to mass global tourism. We need to know enough of this phenomenon to be able to address the various new problems that are arising, or to make these new opportunities of encounters of peoples and cultures, religions and traditions to promote a more harmonious and just world for all people.

#### **4. Intercontinental Dialogue and Exchanges**

If our involvement is to be true it has to affect the lives of people and transform the situations that they live in. There seems to be a whole new set of opportunities for the Churches in different parts of the world to be involved more directly in addressing both the problems encounters in the industry today and to look for new ways to forge both an alternative tourism and a holistic tourism. We need not any longer sit on the margins and criticise others for what they are doing and move to do something that is in keeping with our basic beliefs. Thus new Pastoral Ministries are the result of a long process of “Dialogue-Discernment” resulting in deeds that transform. We cannot run away from the fact that our reflections on various aspects of life have to inevitably lead us to expressions of our Christian faith in our lives. Whatever touches our lives and that of human persons leads us to experience our faith in a new and renewed way. Our diverse experiences in the pastoral ministry of tourism in Asia and the other continents has been the basis for continuing the search make our responses ever more relevant and meaningful. It is in the light of the Gospel as enunciated in the Social Teachings of the Church that will have to influence our economic and social perspectives when it comes to formulating a new agenda in matters related to tourism.

#### **5. Pastoral Orientations and our Pastoral Responses**

The basic thrust of the Church is to promote the positive effects of tourism and reduce the negative aspects. It has been pointed out that we need to take a broader and holistic perspective of the real issues related to modern day mass tourism. This perspective has to be one that does not view tourism as only the means to promote a solely “Growth-Oriented Development” but one where the positive aspects of tourism are enhanced to ensure that tourism is Sustainable, Person and Community Centred and Environmentally Friendly. We can look for ways and means

through which more and more Catholic universities and educational institutions take more seriously their involvement in the tourism industry directly or indirectly.

There are therefore some basic principles that we would consider as central to our task in promoting new pastoral ministries in the area of tourism.

## **1. Community-Based Approaches**

In order for this to be possible, there has to be greater importance given to the role of the local community and government in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all tourists related projects. It is through this participation of the community that we will be able to help the local people to strengthen their current standard of living and to ensure that other social and cultural situations are given vital importance. It is essential that the authorities determine the rate of growth of the industry and this has to be in consultation with the people and in dialogue with all those who are interested in developing the tourism industry. This will go a long way in ensuring the economic criteria namely; profit does not become the sole criteria for determining the success of a tourist destination. The local population will be part of the labour force and thus strengthen the local economy. This has been our experience in many of the programmes and projects in various parts of India, in Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Indonesia. Various examples can be cited of local communities that campaign against the violation of their rights through education and awareness campaigns both at local and national levels.

## **2. Need for Exchange and Networking**

A greater and more effective exchange of information among people engaged in the tourism industry ensures the emergence of more healthy forms of tourism and the eradication of effects that negatively affect the lives of the local people. Sustainability seems to call for local solutions to problems. Bio-diversity and fragile Eco- systems can only be protected by a firm commitment to look for holistic solutions to modern day tourism. The information network created among the various countries in Asia both through the Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism and other networks have had enough impact on the work of the

local communities. It has helped to control the global forces, especially in the area of child prostitution and trafficking of women.

### **3. Inter-religious and Ecumenical Collaboration**

Response of the Church in Asia in the area of tourism resulted in more and more programmes involving other Christians and people of other faiths in Asia. This is the result of greater involvement of the laity, both in their professions and in their everyday lives. This is what will make our contributions truly be in keeping with our objectives of being at the service of a more humanising life for all our peoples. The vast majority of the people of Asia have very few opportunities to travel beyond the borders of our country. Those privileged have to be helped to enter into a meaningful and enriching experience with their neighbours. The people they visit have to be treated with respect and with justice and they have to be sensitive to their plight, the cultures and to ensure harmony and goodwill. We need to learn to walk on the sacred grounds of other religions and traditions.

### **4. Priority for Projects with the Poor**

In the context of commercialised tourism with its numerous dehumanising effects, it is a loud and clear call on the part of the Church today to respond with love and compassion to those who are victims of tourism. Our awareness that it does not matter who has caused hurt but the need to remedy the pain and the sorrow, the suffering and the humiliation is what has to move us to look into the well being of these vulnerable people. We need to get close enough to the “context” in which these People “survive” more than live. The Church as a sign of hope has not only to be a voice to bring comfort to these persons and communities but also speak with truth on behalf of justice, when the forces and institutions in society, continue to bring misery through damage to dignity and presented. We believe that this process of “Dialogue of Life” is also the process of evangelisation. We through our words, deeds and witness bring to reality the Kingdom of God and the Gospel of Jesus becomes visible among the people whom we live and work. When the Church gives new meaning to the lives of the downtrodden we become to them the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus. In the context of the crisis in our societies and the challenges posed by

mass tourism we cannot remain neutral and indifferent.

## **5. Pastoral Care for Tourism - Education and Awareness**

Pastoral Care for those engaged in tourism, has also to mean caring for those who have to face the harsh consequences of the negative effects of mass tourism as well as those who visit other lands. A process of awareness and education seems central to making tourism a humanising phenomenon. The vigilance over policy makers and business corporations seems central to make tourism a meaningful encounter of peoples and their cultures and to protect the environment. It is therefore in the context of integral and holistic vision that we need new and creative responses in the context of our countries and local situations. It is obvious that many Churches in Asia and especially with the active involvement of the Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism we will be able to work towards greater interventions at the national and diocesan and levels that have proved effective in the past.

## **Conclusion**

Thus we can conclude that whatever involvement the Church has in promoting a more just and equitable tourism from our experiences begin with involvement with those who are living in the world of tourism, especially the workers and the host countries. It is this involvement either in the form of offering direct services to them or educating them about their rights and responsibilities that enables us to work progressively to bring more 'just and humane dimensions to their lives and situations. We need to be at their service to ensure that the rights of the visitors and those of the visited are protected. This is only possible if we engender a deep respect for others. We need not exploit, oppress or deprive people of their freedom to enjoy the goods. We can share this with all peoples and the whole of humanity. Our Vision of tourism should be to ensure that whole human family has an opportunity to live life to the full. For us Christians this is possible by bringing the values of the Gospel to every strata of society and to its workings. For us is an integral aspect of our evangelising mission and thus the real challenge for all those who are involved in the world of tourism.

18<sup>th</sup> June 2004  
Kuala Lumpur  
Malaysia

# **New horizons for the Pastoral Care of Tourism**

*(from the horizon of the people visited in the Third World Countries)*

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## **PROLOGUE**

For several years now, particularly in forums or meetings organized by the Church or Church related institutions to deal with Tourism (as distinct from other categories of human mobility, such as Migrants, Refugees, etc.), the representative-proponents of the developed countries of the Western World — specially from Europe and the United States of America - would rightly defend and propound with vigour the theory of the right of the human person and of citizens to use and manage their free time for their benefit associated with rest, leisure, entertainment, socio-cultural interaction, etc. As a matter of fact, on such occasions the thesis proposed to the participants would be normally but forcefully based also on theological arguments and reflections.

On the other hand, the participants of the developing or poor countries of the Third World would not appear to be much impressed (and, much less, convinced) by the theories or thesis and arguments presented to them as they, belonging to the host countries had the sad experience of not only not enjoying the many benefits expected to improve their living human conditions but, on the contrary, of being deprived of their natural resources and made victims of deceit and exploitation due to Tourism seen and capitalized as an industry and commercial venture for market forces.

In these circumstances, what would be highly desirable at the present juncture is that all of us try to make sincere efforts to understand and appreciate the position and feelings of the other *side*. In this regard, would it be too much to plead for and expect greater understanding of and appreciation for the weaker and much exploited side in connection with or due to Tourism?

Let our Vision be: “A renewed Tourism World, wherein people enrich

their lives in encounters that safeguard the dignity of every person, respect diverse cultural heritages, protect and promote Earth's integrity and thus foster harmony and peace”.

May this presentation - with its analysis, proposals and suggestions - prove to be a small but positive effort in the right direction so as to contribute in some measure to a healthy process towards a genuine PASTORAL CARE OF TOURISM with the active participation and wholehearted cooperation of all in a spirit of communion and fellowship of solidarity. And let us look forward with optimism, specially as a Church alive with ecclesial communion, to a hope-filled Apostolate of Tourism in the years to come.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

It is apt to introduce this talk — a sharing of personal thoughts and reflections — on **Pastoral Care of Tourism** “from the horizon of the people visited in the Third World Countries”, quoting His Holiness Pope John Paul II in the Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Asia*, n. 7: “*Though a legitimate industry with its own cultural and educational values, tourism has in some cases a devastating influence upon the moral and physical landscape of many Asian countries, manifested in the degradation of young women and even children through prostitution. The pastoral care of migrants, as well as that of tourists, is difficult and complex, especially in Asia where basic structures for this may not exist. Pastoral planning at all levels needs to take these realities into account*”.

At this preliminary stage it would also be pertinent to draw attention to the **Guidelines for the Pastoral Care of Tourism** issued by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People in 2001, with strong statements like the following ones: “*We all know that in many cases tourist initiatives have caused grave damage not only to social life, culture and environment, but even to the country's economy through the illusion of instantaneous development. The necessary measures should be adopted to stop this process where it is under way, and to keep it from happening in the future*”. It is also acknowledged that “*a grave injustice is done when tourist centres are provided with services that the local community does not normally have. This is more reprehensible when these services have to do with means necessary for a dignified existence, such as the water supply or public health*” (n.12). Besides, the Guidelines make a pointed reference in n.13 to the process of globalization of the economy as related to tourism due to which “*the distance between rich and poor countries has been accentuated; and a new form of slavery and dependency for the weaker countries has been created, and the supremacy*

*of the economic order has been established that threatens the dignity of the person ”. In fact, it has drawn its inspiration from Ecclesia in Asia, n.39, in which Pope John Paul II forcefully speaks of “the aspect of cultural globalization... drawing Asian societies into a global consumer culture that is both secularist and materialistic ”.*

The above quotations clarify the following two inter-connected points keeping in mind that this talk has in view “the horizon of the people visited in the Third World Countries”:

1. Tourism, being recognized as an industry, can easily be considered and treated as a commercial venture for market farces. As a result of the economic and political forces and expectations involved in such tourism, the Tourist destination will be treated as a product, the local people marketed as a part of that product, and the tourist treated as a consumer
2. Consequently, the perspective appearing to be adopted by us — or, perhaps, being actually but unintentionally adopted by us — in this presentation to assess the forces under reference and to present our proposals and suggestions may be the perspective of victims under the forces in play. Hence, the analysis, proposals and suggestions being made will probably sound more negative and less optimistic, although the positive influence of the same forces, if any, is not ignored.

May this presentation be objectively unbiased without undue emphasis on the evil effects of tourism and, with the cooperation and involvement particularly of the participants of this Congress, the right balance may be struck with due consideration for the positive effects of tourism so that meaningful and practical conclusions may be drawn to promote the desired cause of a genuine **Pastoral Care of Tourism**.

## **2. THE REALITY OF TOURISM TODAY**

Tourism today is a transnational, multi-dimensional industry, an important component of the social, cultural, economic and political reality. Capital, in large amounts, is invested for leisure activities. Tourism has great influence on Society at large.

In the twentieth century, tourists were mostly from Western Europe and the USA. They visited certain preferred destinations like the Mediterranean Region, the Pacific Islands and such other places. Today,

hordes of tourists are also from countries like Japan, Russia and Israel. In the past few decades some Third World Countries too have developed and promoted tourist destinations, on a large scale. In these circumstances, both 'tourists' and 'hosts' have ceased to be predominantly Christian. Another noteworthy aspect is that a sizeable number of people from the Third World Countries themselves visit not only 'hotspots' in their respective countries but Europe and the Americas. What was termed as 'down under' part of the World — Australia and New Zealand — are also 'visited'. Sydney Harbour is a familiar landmark on Tourism Brochures.

Touring is a free decision, influenced by various factors, the primary one being holidaying: rest, relaxation and entertainment. The motivation and purpose for which the tour is undertaken will not only determine the choice of the destination, but the type of services expected.

Yet another important dimension is the accepted social convention to consider as a 'tourist' any individual who is away from his/her residence for a period of over 24 hours but less than a year. Hence, any individual travelling for Conferences, Workshops, Training Programmes, Business Meets is a tourist. A point of interest is that these activities are also combined with others commonly associated with a holiday, and consequently destinations suitable for both are selected. Those on tours for Study and Research of any nature and those visiting Medical treatment Resorts and Spas are also tourists, as also are those who travel for entertainment of a perverse nature like sexual gratification and pedophilia.

Two types of Tourism that merit attention are Pilgrimage Tourism and Ecotourism.

Pilgrimage (Religious) Tourism attracts a large number of people. Tourism Operators tend to exploit this situation. Very often, pamphlets, brochures and guides themselves give incorrect and/or exaggerated information

Ecotourism as defined by The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) is 'responsible travel to natural areas which conserves the environment and sustains the well being of the local people'. The Church must support and promote Ecotourism, which meets the afore quoted definition.

The phenomenal growth of the Tourism Industry, which keeps

expanding in volume as well as geographically, provides employment to millions of people the world over, as promoters, agents, operators, workers and all others occupied in ancillary activities. It also attracts others not still employed or not satisfied with the type of work they are engaged in or are tempted to explore new avenues for greater gains. This in turn opens floodgates of competition leading to creativity and innovations to satisfy the needs, desires and demands of the tourist. However, unfortunately, unethical trends creep in and deface the scenario.

Finally, there are those who reside in destination locations. They are perforce compelled to struggle with a much higher cost of living, deprivation of basic amenities in necessary measure and a degraded environment. In most cases, they do not derive benefits commensurate with what they sacrifice and are not partakers of the profits made from the use of their land and their resources. The major chunk of the profits is gobbled by the multinational chains of hotels and travel agencies.

### **3. IMPACT OF TOURISM ON HUMAN LIFE AND NATURE:**

The activity of Tourism has a very great impact on different aspects of human life and nature (the fragile eco-systems and Environment).

#### **In brief:**

#### **Beneficial effects of tourism:**

- o Provides employment to a large number of people with a potential for employing many more.
- o Foreign exchange earner, an important consideration for Third World Countries with weak currencies.
- o Affords an opportunity for interaction (social, cultural, intellectual, scientific) with people from different parts of the world.
- o Promotion and development of the Tourism destination.

#### **Adverse impact:**

- o Social Costs: Permissive life-style of foreign tourists, nudism and massage on the beaches, rave and acid parties lead local youth to experiment in drugs and sex. Women are imaged as sex symbols, projecting a totally false impression of women,

youth, specially young girls and children. Many of them are lured into a sophisticated sex trade. Pedophiles and sex tourists spread AIDS besides causing a host of moral and psychological problems. School drop-out rate is high in the tourism 'spots'. Noise pollution (specially during late night parties) causes great harm, disrespecting the rights and needs of the local population. On-shore and off-Shore casinos may ruin entire families. All these contribute largely towards a breakdown of personal and family values, and introduce moral permissiveness.

- o Ecological and environmental effects: Destruction of protective sand dunes, construction of *high rise* buildings in the ecologically fragile coastline, over drawl of underground water by the resorts. Piling up of non-biodegradable plastic waste, sewerage pollution of the porous coastal soil and wells — all of which constitute a serious health hazard.

**Excessive demands on local resources:**

- o Across the coastal belt acres of prime seaside land occupied by luxury resorts. Vast consumption of scarcely available water and electricity. High cost of essential food items. Displacement of sustainable economic activities like fishing, coastal plantations and ancillary industries resulting in displacement of traditional communities like fisher folk, farmers etc.
- o Commercialization of culture degrades the traditional folk-art: music, song and dance for profit and make of it a shallow and loud entertainment, giving a distorted image of the native culture.
- o Mass tourism governed by large business corporations and market forces cripples local small-scale enterprise. -
- o Short sighted and ambitious short term planning and half hazard, hurried implementation destroys “sustainable tourism” and introduces unhealthy competition and breeding of antisocial elements like touts to exploit tourists.

**4. FOCUS ON SOME ASPECTS:**

- \* Each Region or a smaller area of it *has a rich* diversity of Nature — a home of unique flora and fauna — a precious gift to the people, *which* possibly can become a tourist attraction. It needs to be respected seriously, protected jealously and promoted vigourously. This commitment must be projected very clearly through any Code enacted and norms adhered to. Paradoxically, this very bounty has been targeted in the eagerness to develop such places into tourist spots, resulting in their degradation. In the past

few decades, the situation in certain places which were 'favourable destinations' are now by passed. Through overdevelopment, disregarding ecological balance, sanitation and hygiene, and violating Rules and Regulations wherever they are in force, through corrupt practices; these places have not only reached saturation point, but have degenerated ecologically and environmentally. Worse, when mainstream tourism agencies "dump" such destinations the existing infrastructure is not viable for alternate occupations, so the service providers of the different sectors collude and resort to other income generating activities like gambling and sex trade.

- \* The distinct identity of the local Community must be witnessed through their various cultural forms of language, customs, dress, food, visual art, music and song, specially folklore. Heritage landmarks must be preserved to describe the past. This alone can inspire the visitors to know, understand and appreciate cultural forms different from their own. Sadly, with the pressure to please and compete, the manifold forms of entertainment offered disregard the authentic folklore and rich cultural traditions. What is offered in the name of modernism is a distorted presentation tangibly artificial, evoking a negative response and defeating the very purpose of cross-cultural exchange.
- \* Governments in most Third World Countries promote Tourism to profit from stronger Foreign Currencies. In Asia, the ideal tourist destinations are coastal areas where traditional occupations like fishing, farming and ancillary small scale industries flourished. These have proven to be economically sustainable as against the seasonal, fickle nature of Tourism. The cost of living in tourist destinations is significantly higher than in other parts of the region. Besides, the influx of tourists places a tremendous stress on basic amenities like water, ~rr electricity and public transport putting the local community to hardships.
- \* Hospitality a well-known and much appreciated trait of the orientals, turns into a saleable commodity in the grossly commercialised Tourism Trade. Consequently, there is erosion of the traditional value system of the 'host community' resulting in dishonest dealings in every sphere, including even medical services.
- \* Exposure of the "service providers" and residents to the luxurious and liberal life-style of the tourists disturbs the intrinsic value-systems of the former, luring them towards constumerism and

permissive behaviour. Those most affected are the youth.

- \* Unfortunately, in spite of the strenuous efforts of dedicated Organisations and the Church towards elimination of sex-trade in many tourism destinations exploiting the abject poverty of a large section of people in the Third World Countries, it continues to flourish. The victims are adolescents and youth, snared from their villages by beguiling them with offers of decent jobs and sold for sex trade.

## **5. A HOPE-FILLED FUTURE APOSTOLATE OF TOURISM**

Having re-viewed most aspects of the Tourism situation as it presently is, a legitimate question which may be asked is whether there has been anything new that is being expounded, proposed or suggested regarding the Pastoral Care of Tourism particularly from the point of view of the people visited in the Third World Countries. It must be admitted that not much that is significantly new has been conveyed in this paper. Definitely it is not an indicator of any type of negligence on the part of those directly addressing the issues of tourism. Much is being done by Volunteer Groups and Church Bodies to bring about awareness of the problems and motivate Society at large to take effective remedial action. However, the unlimited resources available to those in the Industry and the magnitude of its promotion eclipse the endeavors of the other less powerful Organisations and minimize the effectiveness of their Apostolate. This itself is a challenge that must be faced by the Church with wider and more persistent co-ordination and networking. Fortunately, among recent other documents of the Church, the Guidelines for the Pastoral Care of Tourism (2001) of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People appear to have taken into proper consideration the different realities and situations of specific significance and concern to the Pastoral Care of Tourism in today's world, with special reference also to the Third World Countries.

However, this paper — with its proposals and suggestions for concrete pastoral action on the part of the Church and its post-concliar structures or institutions specially at the local diocesan/parish level — is strongly motivated and inspired by the insistent and frequent call of John Paul II in recent years to look at the Church and ourselves in the Church as a Communion of Communities. While telling us that *“to make the Church the home and the school of Communion... is the great challenge facing*

*us in the millennium which is now beginning". To this effect, the Holy Father continues, we need "to promote a **spirituality of communion** making it the guiding principle ... (with) an ability to think of our brothers and sisters in faith as 'those who are a part of me' ... to see what is positive in others, not only as a gift for the brother or sister who has received it directly, but also as a gift for me' ... to know how to make room for our brothers and sisters hearing 'each other's burdens' ' (Gal 6:2) and resisting the selfish temptations which constantly beset us and provoke competition, careerism, distrust and jealousy " (Novo Millennio Ineunte, n.43). indeed, its need is highlighted by the Holy Father in the face of today's challenges for the Church in the Third Millennium, as "the spirituality of communion, by prompting a trust and openness wholly in accord with the dignity and responsibility of every member of the People of God, supplies institutional reality with a soul" (N.M.I, n.45).*

It is in this spirit and the Vision of the Church for the Third Millennium that an appeal is made and expectations raised that, particularly at the level of the local Diocesan/Parish Church, we shall accept the challenge to learn, appreciate and adopt the *Spirituality of Communion* which, with the help of God and the cooperation of all concerned, will enable us to take appropriate steps in order to help promote the process of a genuine *Pastoral Care of Tourism* among us. Some proposals are presented below:

**VISION: A renewed Tourism World, wherein people enrich their lives in encounters that safeguard the dignity of every person, respect diverse cultural heritages, protect and promote the Earth's integrity and thus foster harmony and peace.**

## **Objectives**

### **I. To sensitize the visitor/tourist to:**

1. Respect the cultural norms, beliefs and religious practices and places of worship of the host population.
2. Avoid display of wealth and extravagant living when in third world destination.
3. Uphold the human dignity of the 'host community' and refrain from exploiting any one for illicit gratifications.
4. Avoid wastage of water, food and other items generally in short supply in these regions.
5. Opt for alternative/eco tourism packages that do not degrade the local environment and harm the economy.

**II. To empower the service providers and their employees to resist the ill effects of tourism by:**

1. Preserving the region's ecological balance when setting up resorts and other structures.
2. Strictly adhering to all Regulations and norms in force.
3. Preventing environmental degradation through proper disposal of plastic and other waste, a bane of tourist destinations.
4. Resisting the temptation to compete at all costs on the principle that 'the customer is always right' and provide services like those of gambling, supplying illicit drug and sex (call-girls, gigolos and children).
5. Resisting the lure of imitating the consumerist culture of the 1-luxury tourists.
6. Upholding social justice in all aspects and at all levels.

**III. To actualise the preferential option for the powerless/poor by advocating the following for temporary, contract and daily-wage workers:**

1. Just service conditions and salaries.
2. Healthy environment, adequate basic amenities, fully operational safety equipment and provisional medical care on the premises.
3. In-service training in basic skills (with a Certificate on completion), if unskilled.
4. Facilities for rest and entertainment (with their families and other dependents).
5. Provisions for the future, including avenues of alternate employment, if retrenched.

**IV. To conscientize the leadership (political and administrative) in the countries of destination from the local village level to the highest policy making bodies of the State on the:**

1. Ill effects of mass commercial tourism vis-a-vis alternative tourism.
2. Need to protect sustainable traditional occupations from being displaced by tourism related economic ventures.
3. Need to control tourism related activities to prevent over-development that will kill the goose that lays the golden egg.
4. Need to regulate tourist inflow keeping in mind the region's carrying capacity so that the local population is not deprived of basic living amenities.

5. Need to promulgate and effectively implement legislative measures to protect the ecology and environment of the region, including noise pollution created by the entertainment industry.
6. Need to ensure that the authorities enforce relevant 'law and order regulations' to prevent drug peddling, sex trade and other criminal activities commonly associated with leisure tourism.

### **Suggestions For Promotion of Humane Tourism**

#### **A. At all levels:**

Appropriate *Paradigm Shifts* are to be accepted and adopted specially with regard to:

1. A healthy (Christian) *Preferential Option* for the poor, the marginalized and exploited sections of the people in our Society.
2. A comprehensive and humanizing *Counter-Culture* against the fast-spreading dehumanizing culture of individualism, materialistic consumerism, hedonism, greedy capitalism, cut-throat competition, politics of communalism, violence, etc., in order to promote a Culture that will be "person-oriented and other-centered".
3. Promoting a *Globalization of Solidarity* for the marginalized, about which Pope John Paul II has the following to say in *Pastores Gregis*, n.69: "When globalization is joined to the dynamism of solidarity, it is no longer a source of marginalization. Indeed, the globalization of solidarity is a direct consequence of that universal charity which is the heart of the Gospel".

#### **B. At The Ecumenical And Secular Level**

1. Network with Christian Churches of other denominations and like-minded volunteer Group/Organisations.
2. Enter into an Inter-Religious Dialogue on the Issue.
3. Organize programmes to create awareness and motivation of target groups (Tourists, Service providers and their employees, host population, policy makers). programmes will need to include talks, written information and exposure.
4. Lobby with government and other policy makers to legislate and implement provisions to protect the region's ecology and environment as well economic well being and social fabric of the host population.

#### **C. At the Diocesan and Parish Level:**

1. Dioceses which have Tourism destinations in their jurisdiction will

- need to conduct a socioeconomic analysis of the impact of Tourism in the locality. Such an analysis will have to be a detailed study. Other Dioceses could also conduct a limited survey of tourism movement.
2. Identify Parishes where the impact of Tourism is felt.
  3. Formulate a plan of action to meet the objectives given above.
  4. Organise training of priests and other religious/lay animators to attend to the pastoral needs of:
    - a) The Tourists.
    - b) Those adversely affected by Tourism.
    - c) The different categories of service providers.
  5. In places where Christian shrines/monuments are visited by Tourists whether in a spirit of pilgrimage or for their historical or architectural value, efforts should be made to present the region's Christian heritage. Such representation should be adapted to suit the mindset of the average tourist who expects any information in attractive packages like "sound and light" shows.
  6. Dioceses which have Tourist destinations in their areas should develop websites for information of the visitor. In these websites particular attention should be given to provide information with regard to:
    - i) The religious identity and purpose of Christian monuments/shrines that are Tourist attractions.
    - ii) The places and timings of Eucharistic celebrations conducted in different languages other than the local language.
    - iii) Addresses of the local Parish Cells dealing with pastoral care of Tourism.

These websites should be made available to all the Dioceses in the world for information of their flock who plan to holiday/tour.

### **Structures for Pastoral Care of Tourism**

The implementation of the Plans at various levels for effective Pastoral Care of Tourism calls for the establishment of suitable new structures at different levels, ultimately under the guidance, inspiration and competent responsibility of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People:

- A. Episcopal Conferences of each country could establish a Team/Commission comprising Clergy/Religious and Lay persons, if possible with representations of all stakeholders, to:
  - \* Co-ordinate Action Plans of the different Dioceses.
  - \* Network with like minded Groups at the National Level.

- \* Lobby with the Government Authorities and Agencies at the National Level.

**Each Diocese and Parish** could set up:

- \* A Diocesan Team to work independently or as part of the appropriate Diocesan Centre/Commission.
- \* A Diocesan Guild of Catholic Service Providers like Hoteliers, Travel Agents, Tour. Guides, Event Organisers and Organisers of Sports (Water-Sports, Golf, Trekking, Paragliding etc.)
- \* Parish Cells in Parishes which have tourist spots in their jurisdiction.

## **PASTORAL CARE OF CATHOLIC TOURIST'S**

### **At the Diocesan Level**

1. Establish a Chaplaincy Office at a centrally located place, where a Priest and/or at least one more trained person is/are permanently (during office-hours) available. These persons should know the national language, English and preferably another foreign language. Celebration of the Eucharist, administration of the Sacraments, counseling and any relevant service should be rendered to the visitors.
2. In highly favored 'tourism spots' an Office should be established, and a Chaplain appointed who will work in collaboration with the Parish Cell members.

### **CONCLUSION:**

The Mission of Jesus Christ was to liberate and humanise the World. This Message is very forcefully proclaimed in what is now known as the 'Jerusalem Manifesto' of Jesus of Nazareth. (Luke 4:16-21). Jesus said, *"I came to give them life and give it in all its,; fullness"*. (Jn.10:10) His plea to the Father was, *"May they all be one, Father, as You and I are one"*. (Jn.17: 21). The continuation of the redeeming Mission of Christ is entrusted to the Church. Enlightened by the Holy Spirit and emboldened with His courage we, the Church must become the instrument of reconciliation and communion. The Pastoral Care of Tourism is one of the important Missions of the Church. The commitment of those involved in the Apostolate should be for a concerted effort at all levels (as suggested above) so that the right to rest, recreation and interaction with other communities becomes more fulfilling physically, mentally, socially and most of all spiritually, bringing all of humanity closer in a true Communion of Communities, so that God's everlasting love is a living experience.

**Bro Anthony Rodgers, FCS**, Executive Secretary of the Office for Human Development, Federation of Asian Bishop's Conferences (FABC). The FABC is an association of Episcopal conferences in South, South East, East, and central Asia established



with the approval of the Holy See. Bro Anthony Rodgers serves on the Executive Committee of the Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism and is a widely acknowledged thinker, writer and trainer on issues of social justice, development, and human rights. He is also a consultant for the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People.

**Archbishop Emeritus of Goa and Daman, Raul Nicolau Gonsalves**, is member of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, Holy See. He is widely known to be a person of great charisma and courage who led his



church with distinction for 25 years. During that period, he not only strengthened the church in its mission dimensions and became the 'shepherd' of his widespread congregations; he also challenged the church to look beyond its compound walls and work as an active proponent of justice for the peoples of Goa. He took to the streets, when required, to lend the weight of his office to peoples struggles and led people by example.



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