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CHILDREN AND MEDIA, THEME FOR WORLD COMMUNICATION DAY 2007

Archbishop John Foley, president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communication, announced September 29 the theme chosen by Pope Benedict XVI for the 41st World Communication Day 2007: "Children and the Media: A Challenge for Education." Archbishop Foley said that the theme "underlines the need for parents and educators to realize the important formative influence of the media in the lives of children."

World Communication Day, the only worldwide celebration called for by the Second Vatican Council (*Inter Mirifica*, 1963) is

celebrated in most countries on the recommendation of the bishops of the world, on the Sunday before Pentecost, which falls on May 20 in 2007. The Holy Father's message for World Communication Day is traditionally published in conjunction with the Memorial of St. Francis de Sales, patron of journalists, on January 24, to allow bishops' conference, diocesan offices and communications organizations sufficient time to prepare audiovisual and other materials for national and local celebrations. (VIS)

HONGKONG: ONLINE CATECHISM COURSE IS ONE YEAR OLD

The Online School of Evangelization launched by The Friends of Jesus' Passover is one year old. The virtual school accessible at www.evschool.net has paved the way for use of the Internet in Catholic evangelization and provided the means for many Chinese youth to press ahead with their catechism. PIME Father Giovanni Giampietro set up the school in May 2005 offering a two-year evangelization course in both English and Chinese. To date, over 200 youth of Hong Kong have completed the first year of the course and are preparing to start "practical training" that will take place in parishes across the territory. All over the world, more than 700 students mostly Chinese have enrolled in the online school. (ASIANEWS)

PHILIPPINES: BISHOPS AND MEDIA

Archbishop Leonardo Legaspi of Caceres shared his view on the relationship between the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) and secular media. The former CBCP president (1987-1991) said the media lack an "understanding of how bishops are thinking or acting." Media's "interest come into play in questions that are controversial, for instance, on news implying division between Church and the government." Further, the media "do not really understand the operations of the CBCP. Every diocese remains free to do what it wants according to what their faith tells them. So a statement of one bishop is not necessarily a statement of everybody," the prelate said. (CBCP MONITOR)

KOREA: SEOUL'S OLDEST CATHOLIC PUBLISHING HOUSE CELEBRATES 120 YEARS

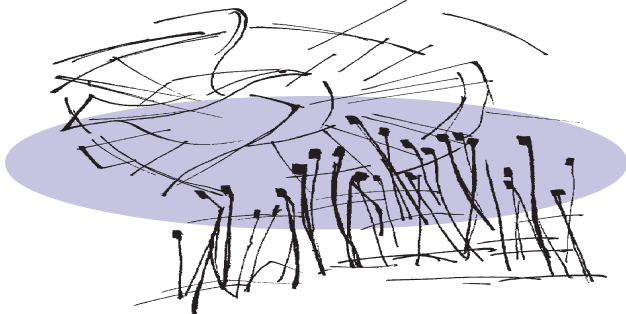
Seoul archdiocese's Catholic Publishing House (CPH) celebrated its 120th anniversary with a symposium titled "Catholic Publication Culture of Yesterday and Today" August 28 in Seoul. Some 100 priests, religious and lay people involved with Church-publishing took part, while six scholars presented papers. The scholars urged the publishing house to help cultivate theologian-authors and expert Bible translators in view of the need highlighted by the participants for more competent translation of sacred Latin or Hebrew texts into Korean. Other topics discussed were the history of CPH, books on the Bible, spirituality and theology. (UCANEWS)

MALAYSIA: COMMUNICATION COMMISSION MEETS IN KENINGAU

The nine members of the Regional Commission for Social Communications of Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei (RCSCMSB) bishops' conference met for their annual meeting in Keningau, East Malaysia June 26-27. A new set of officers were elected helmed by John Lainsin, 49, as head, replacing Church-communications pioneer in Malaysia, Mr. E. Samson. Lainsin, who is an expert in catechism and Church music, will be assisted by Pauline Sister Anna Yap as secretary. Present at the meeting were RCSCMSB President Archbishop Murphy Pakiam of Kuala Lumpur, and Bishop Cornelius Pong of Keningau. (CATHOLIC SABAH)

PHILIPPINES: INTERCONFESSIONAL E-BIBLE LAUNCHED

The Philippine Bible Society (PBS), an interconfessional Christian organization, has launched the first E-Bible for digital technology users in the country. The Bible can be read in seven different languages spoken in the country, has a mini-dictionary, a reading plan for the whole year and notepad for typing notes when doing research or preparing a homily. It comes in CD format and installed in a user's computer. PBS is chaired by Bishop Efraim Tendero of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches. Vice-chairman of the organization is Divine Word Bishop Arturo Bastes of Sorsogon, chair of the Philippine Catholic bishops' Bible commission. (ZENIT)



INDIA: MISSIONARIES OF ST. THOMAS ISSUES 'GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICATION MINISTRY'

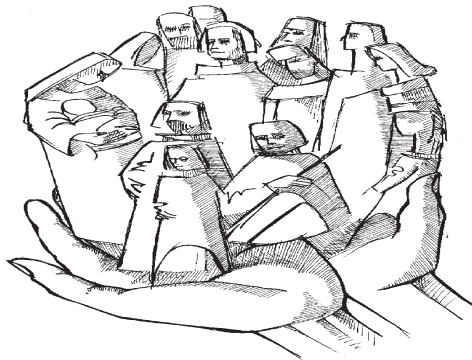
The Missionary Society of St. Thomas the Apostle (MST) of the Syro-Malabar Church has issued "Guidelines for Communication Ministry" for members of the congregation. The 25-page document available at <www.mstworld.org/Subpages/DC/Guidelines.pdf> outlines the theological vision, formation strategy and administrative norms for communication ministry in the missions fine-tuned to the charism of MST, namely, *mission ad gentes*, or communicating the Gospel to all peoples. MST was founded in 1968 by former Palai Bishop Sebastian Vayalil. It has regional houses in Ujjain, Mandya, and Sangli in India as well as missionary units across the country, North America, Europe and Oceania. (L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO/MST)

PHILIPPINES: STUDY BARES YOUTH'S TECHNOCENTRIC LIFESTYLE, FALLING MORAL STANDARDS

The 2006 Inter-generation Study of McCann Erickson highlighted the technocentric life of the young with text messaging soaring to 40% compared to 12% in the 2000 study of the international advertising group. Playing computer or video games increased to 38% in 2005 from 17% in 2000; Email, surfing, chatting on the Net rose to 27% in 2005 from 13% in 2000. On the youth's value systems, the 2006 study yielded disturbing results particularly on moral standards. Critics say some factors for the plunging moral standards of the young may be readily blamed, among others, to the influence of media, teens deprived of parental supervision due to labor migration, and their technocentric life. The influence of media as reason for youth's eroding moral standards was already proven by McCann-Erickson's 2000 study when it found that the media are considered by the youth as an authority on "what is right, wrong and important." (CBCP MONITOR)

SIGNIS-ASIA MEETS IN HYDERABAD

About 100 Catholic communicators from 16 Asian countries met in Hyderabad, India September 22-23 for the Signis-Asia assembly with the theme "Social Marketing: Marketing Moral, Human, Social and Cultural Values." Speakers discussed social marketing, which they defined as employing commercial marketing techniques to promote values and value-based products. They agreed that the main problem with Church media centers is their inability to successfully market their products. The participants, meanwhile, touted their successes in producing programs for their respective audiences in the region. The organization is the Asian arm of Signis, the worldwide Catholic association for broadcast, electronic and new media professionals as well as academics in the field of communications. Signis-Asia assemblies are held every two years in a country selected by its members. (UCANEWS)



JAPAN: KYOTO GATHERING URGES TO SPEAK AGAINST MISUSE OF RELIGIONS

More than 800 religious leaders from over 100 countries attended the eighth World Assembly of Religions for Peace (WCRP) August 26-29 in Kyoto. The theme "Confronting Violence and Advancing Shared Security" was expounded by speakers like the Venerable Eshin Watanabe, patriarch of the Tendai sect of Buddhism, and Bishop Kim Hee-jong of Kwangju, Korea, chairperson of the Korean bishops' Committee for Promoting Christian Unity and Interreligious Dialogue. Stephen Cardinal Fumio Hamao, former president of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples, read a special message from Pope Benedict XVI. The Kyoto Declaration, adopted at the close of the assembly, said that "religious communities must play a central role in identifying and confronting violence. They must stand up, speak out and take action against the misuse of religion." Further it said, "We are determined to mobilize our religious communities to work together and with all sectors of society to stop war, struggle to build more just communities, foster education for justice and peace... and advance sustainable development for future generations." The full text of the Kyoto Declaration is available at <www.wcrp.org/files/KyotoDeclaration.pdf> (SE)

PHILIPPINES: MIGRATION-A NEW WAY OF EVANGELIZATION

A recent meeting of Catholic Chaplains and Pastoral Workers overseas in Tagaytay City, south of Manila, reiterated that modern day evangelization can be achieved by migrant workers. Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) President Archbishop Angel Lagdameo said that more than contributing to the work force in some 193 countries, Filipino migrant workers offer "our Christian faith" and this is "more important." Filipinos in search of livelihood "could be equipped with the disposition and skills of lay missionaries, who will not preach necessarily, but live the Gospel of Jesus in dialogue with other cultures and religions." The meeting was organized by the CBCP-Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (CBCP-ECMI). (CBCP MONITOR)

SINGAPORE: PAULINES' 12 YEAR MINISTRY

The Singapore community of the Daughters of St. Paul was established in 1994 and marks its 12th anniversary this year. Now with five Sisters (four Singaporeans and one Italian), the Pauline community has set up a Media Centre at the Church of the Risen Christ, participated in the Singapore Book Fair, and organized many parish book and media missions. The sisters also reach out to schools and church groups with media literacy sessions for both young and adults. To the marketplace, the sisters bring Christ through their yearly outreach at Jurong Point shopping mall, making available religious media on a pushcart. (CN)

SRI LANKA: CHURCH LEADS MARCH AGAINST VIOLENCE

Caritas Sri Lanka organized a peace rally and march early September in Chilaw north of Colombo to oppose the recent fighting between government and rebel forces. More than 7,000 people from different religious backgrounds marched through the streets wearing white clothing to symbolize peace. Only three days after the rally, local media reported that both the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam reiterated their commitment to a cease-fire agreement brokered by Norway in 2002. Caritas has held a peace rally every year since the 2002 cease-fire, but this year's rally came amid political killings, sporadic retaliations and accusations of cease-fire violations. (SE)