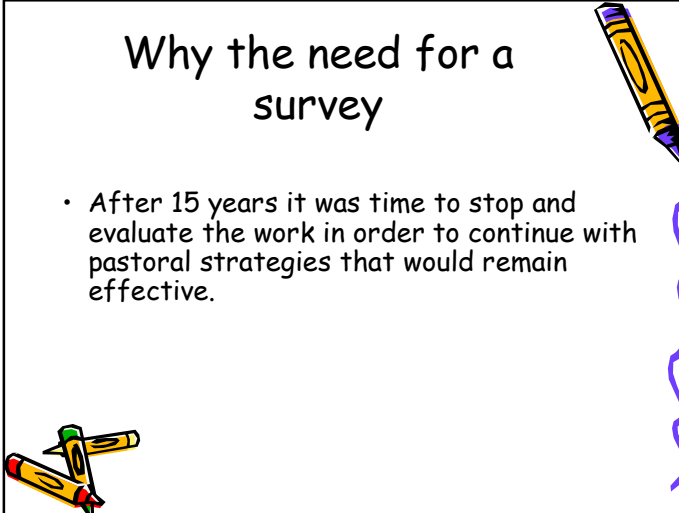




A research project

Commissioned by AsIPA Desk and carried out by East Asian Pastoral Institute (Manila)
Dec 2008 - July 2011

1



Why the need for a survey

- After 15 years it was time to stop and evaluate the work in order to continue with pastoral strategies that would remain effective.

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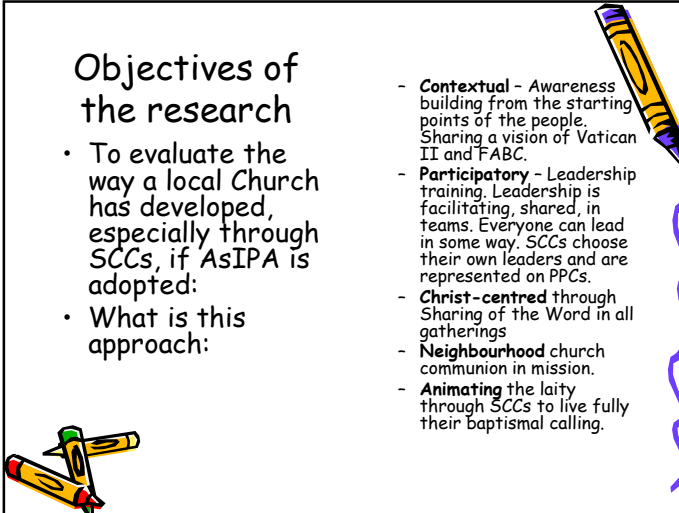


Why the need for a research project?

We asked ourselves:-

- Can we continue doing all that we do or should we do something different and differently?
- Are we really building a participatory church with this approach?
- How well is the "Christ-centred, Communitarian Church on Mission" growing with this approach?

3



Objectives of the research



- To evaluate the way a local Church has developed, especially through SCCs, if AsIPA is adopted:
- What is this approach:

- **Contextual** - Awareness building from the starting points of the people. Sharing a vision of Vatican II and FABC.
- **Participatory** - Leadership training. Leadership is facilitating, shared, in teams. Everyone can lead in some way. SCCs choose their own leaders and are represented on PPCs.
- **Christ-centred** through Sharing of the Word in all gatherings
- **Neighbourhood** church communion in mission.
- **Animating** the laity through SCCs to live fully their baptismal calling.

4

Objectives of the research continued



- To determine what factors contribute to the building of communities.
- To discover the impact that SCCs/BECs have on family life, the neighbourhood and society as well as on the renewal of the Church.



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Who did the research?

- Fully funded by Missio Aachen.
- A partnership between the AsIPA Desk of FABC OLF and the Director of the EAPI - Fr Jeyaraj Rasiah SJ, who put together a team of four other researchers from the Philippines:
 - Dr Jose de Mesa; Dr Manny de Guzman; Fr (Dr) Manny Gabriel; Fr Ando Macalinao SJ. Dr Estela Padilla of ART as consultant.



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Why did we select these five dioceses



- Jeju Diocese, South Korea
- Kurunegela Diocese, Sri Lanka
- Mangalore Diocese, India
- Nueva Segovia Diocese, Philippines
- Tharae-Nongsaeng Archdiocese, Thailand



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Choice of dioceses

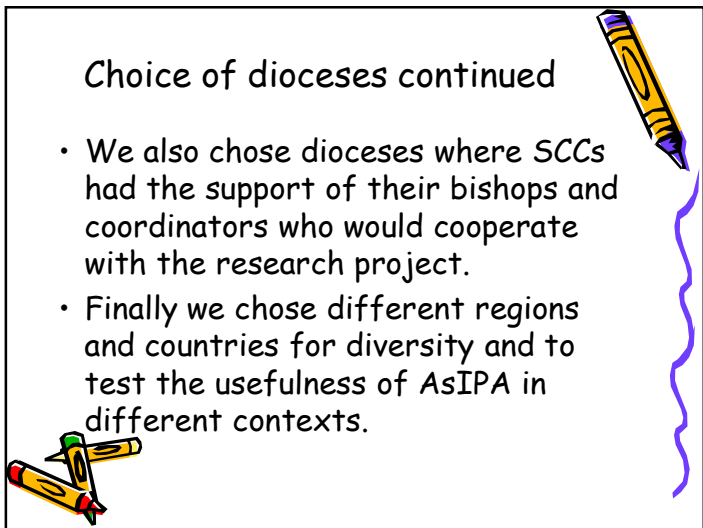
- We needed dioceses where we were assured of access to parishes and SCCs for data collection and focus group discussions.
- We needed to have dioceses where we were reasonably sure that they had used AsIPA as a basic process and resource for three to five years.



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Choice of dioceses continued

- We also chose dioceses where SCCs had the support of their bishops and coordinators who would cooperate with the research project.
- Finally we chose different regions and countries for diversity and to test the usefulness of AsIPA in different contexts.



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The research process

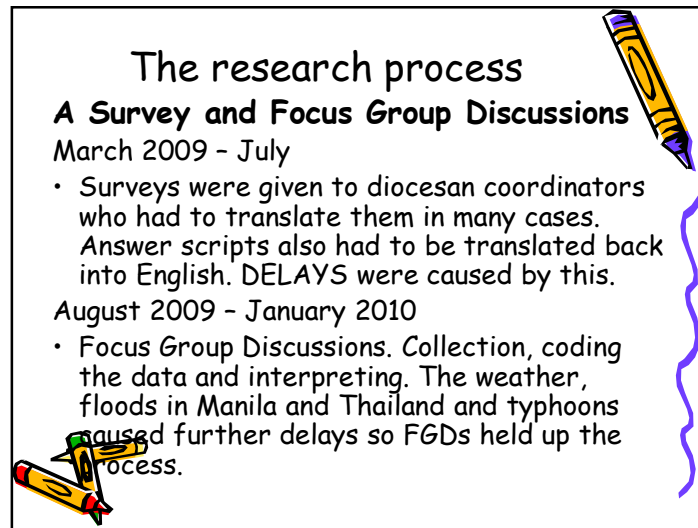
A Survey and Focus Group Discussions

March 2009 - July

- Surveys were given to diocesan coordinators who had to translate them in many cases. Answer scripts also had to be translated back into English. DELAYS were caused by this.

August 2009 - January 2010

- Focus Group Discussions. Collection, coding the data and interpreting. The weather, floods in Manila and Thailand and typhoons caused further delays so FGDs held up the process.

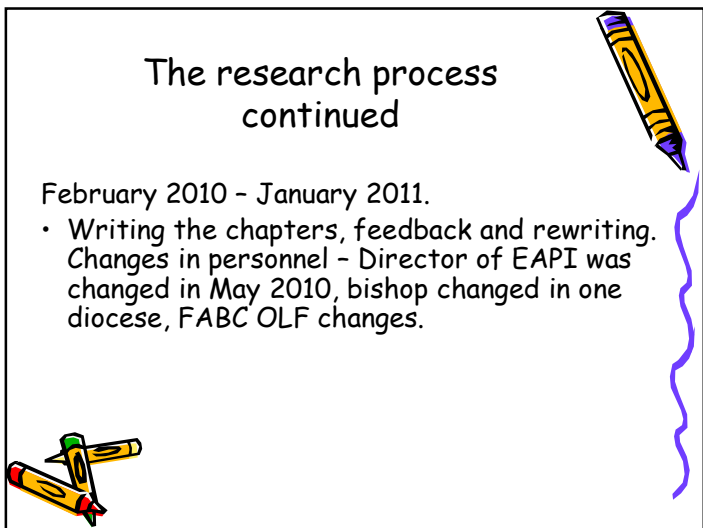


10

The research process continued

February 2010 - January 2011.

- Writing the chapters, feedback and rewriting. Changes in personnel - Director of EAPI was changed in May 2010, bishop changed in one diocese, FABC OLF changes.



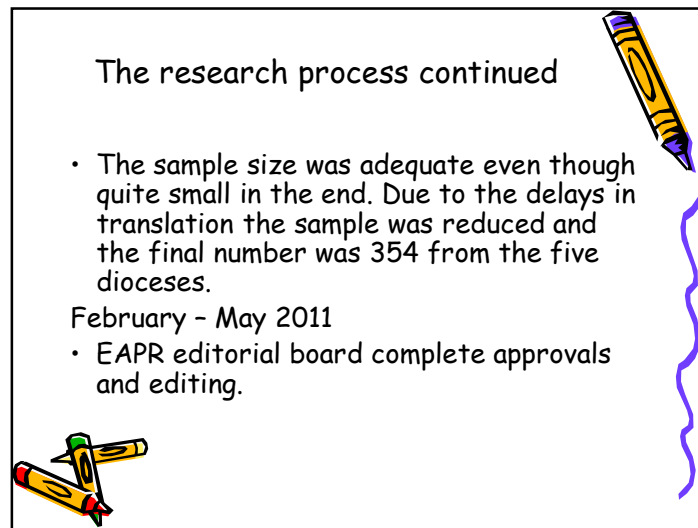
11

The research process continued

- The sample size was adequate even though quite small in the end. Due to the delays in translation the sample was reduced and the final number was 354 from the five dioceses.

February - May 2011



- EAPR editorial board complete approvals and editing.



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The results

- Results were collated under two broad headings of *COMMUNION* and *MISSION*.
- *COMMUNION* included Gospel Sharing (mainly 7 steps and the structures that created unity - PPCs having SCC leaders, Leadership training.
- The SCC members own understanding of the reasons for belonging to SCCs
- The links they experienced with the SCCs, the parish, diocese and wider church.






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The results continued

MISSION

- Included aspects of ministries, outreach, social projects and
- the members own understanding of their mission as baptized persons and members of SCCs.



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Communion

Impact of Gospel Sharing

What was significant? Were there any surprises?

- Not really.
- The research confirms beyond any doubt the central importance of doing Gospel Sharing for communion and mission across all cultures. We were convinced already but very much assured by the impact of Gospel Sharing in the SCCs/BECs.






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Impact of Gospel Sharing continued

- personal reading of the bible,
- the prayer life of members,
- family prayer and improving family communication.
- the more meaningful participation in Eucharist.
- In developing a sense of mission in the neighbourhood.



This was true for every diocese with small variations.

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Communion - Relationships

- "Unbelievable reconciliation took place due to this SCC gathering" (Kurunegela)
- "there are common activities of SCCs to create networking and communion..." (Jeju)
- "no distinction between the rich and the poor" (Nueva Segovia)



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Communion - Relationships continued



- (I learnt the) Art of listening...learn when to talk, empathize...(Mangalore, India)
- My whole family feel closer to God. (Tharae-Nongsaeng, Thailand)



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Mission - service & outreach



- Many are much more active serving in liturgical functions and some dioceses the SCCs take turns to prepare the liturgy (Neu-Seg).
- Th-Nong: started BECs among prisoners and students;
- reach out to people of other faiths to build unity - mutual harvesting etc.
- Fight against corruption and prostitution (Neu-Seg).



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Mission - Service and outreach continued



- This was the main area of weakness. The outreach was sporadic and not systematic or coming from their own initiatives in many cases - more about joining parish initiatives and projects.



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Mission cont.

- The Asian Churches in the study, except for NS live in societies that have generally promoted faithfulness as church-going, personal goodness and prayer. Catholics being concerned with social, economic or political questions is slow to develop.
- The sole use of 7-step Gospel Sharing does not provide opportunities for the SCCs to discover God's will for them in their participation in transforming the temporal order.






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Conclusions

AsIPA stands for
 ASIAN - did we find evidence of inculturation and building up of the local cultures and church?

- Yes, but this is still not easy to discern without more research. It is obvious that inculturation of the Gospel can happen when people read the word in their own languages and interpret it for their lives. The next step to transform or adopt cultural practices is more difficult and needs more time.






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Conclusions

AsIPA stands for:
 INTEGRATED - what do we find is integrating?



- Integration of life and faith was shown in the way that people grew both personally and socially in their daily lives and relationships as a result of the relationship with Christ and their neighbours
- Integration of parish life - Parish Pastoral Councils and Small Christian Communities

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Integrated

- Integration of leadership roles and ministries was still a weak aspect and not seen enough. Leaders are still the one who holds many roles as well as coordinating with the parish.
- Integration of faith, life and Eucharist



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Conclusions

- AsIPA stands for Pastoral

The Pastoral training team in most places was strong. The witness of shared leadership and shared mission is given.

- pastoral care of parish members is shared with many leaders.
- The role of leaders as facilitating means that many more people are enabled to carry out their mission.
- SCC members represented in the Pastoral Council means that concerns and initiatives of the SCCs are raised and addressed.
- Weakness in the way ministries are still mainly on a project basis and parish or leader led.
- Care of the bereaved and sick is shared and more effective.



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Conclusions



AsIPA stands for
APPROACH

The approach which is contextual, gradual, participatory and builds from the sharing of a vision seems to work best if leaders all know their roles:

- Bishops - to share vision and encourage
- Priests - to form teams and sustain them with spiritual and skills formation, training, prayerful liturgical celebrations and retreats.
- Lay leaders - to facilitate and animate the gifts of the community.

The research proved that sustained leadership training and rotating of leaders are keys to sustaining SCCs.

The dioceses chosen had such bishops and priests. Lay leaders were often not able to stand down from their roles. Renewal of leadership in some places was difficult.



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