

## **C: A PARTICIPATORY CHURCH**

### **C\2**

## **SENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MISSION OF CHRIST**

### **TOPICS OF ASIPA TEXTS:**

**A** : GOSPEL SHARING (7 steps)

**B** : SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

**C** : A PARTICIPATORY CHURCH

**D** : TRAINING FOR PARISH TEAMS

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AsIPA Desk, FABC  
34, Lane 32, Kuangfu, S.Road,  
Taipei, Taiwan (1052)  
Tel/Fax: [886]- 2-577 2007

ASIPA C: A PARTICIPATORY CHURCH  
Programmes for Training the Christian Community

## C\2

# SENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MISSION OF CHRIST

### Prepare beforehand:

- A picture or a drawing of Christ for the celebration in step D
- Write the following words on different slips of papers.  
 Give each paper a number to facilitate their use in step D:
  - (1) "I send you!" (2) "Be merciful!" (3) "Die for your friends!"
  - (4) "Accept the outcasts!" (5) "Create unity!"
  - (6) "Serve one another!" (7) "Feed the hungry!"
  - (8) "Heal the sick!" (9) "Overcome evil with love!"
  - (10) "Be faithful!" (11) "Do all in the Kingdom way!"

## INTRODUCTION

Our Bishops say that the faithful should take an active part in the life of the Church. Our question, however, is:

WHAT should the faithful take an active part in? Are they expected to join still more action groups, committees and organizations? This cannot be the real answer.

In our session today we try to dig deeper.

## A. "PARTICIPATION" IN BUILDING A CHAPEL

### 1. The story

The Christian neighbours of Riverside lived far away from Church in a remote valley. However, they met every week in one of their homes. They celebrated gospel sharing and discussed their lives. In one of their meetings the suggestion was made by Mr. Marc:

"I think we need a little chapel. Those who cannot go to the parish Church on Sundays could gather in this chapel. Just think of the old and sick people and the little children."

After some discussion, all found it a good idea and agreed to this plan. They were determined to build this little chapel themselves. Mr. and Ms. Baker were asked to organise the work and collect some money from those who could afford it. The builders in the community volunteered to make the walls. Others helped in bringing stones and sand. The youth carted water and the children accompanied the activities with great excitement.

After some weeks the little chapel was completed and a joyful feast was organized.

**Question:**

*What different ways of participation do we find in the life of this small community of Riverside?—*

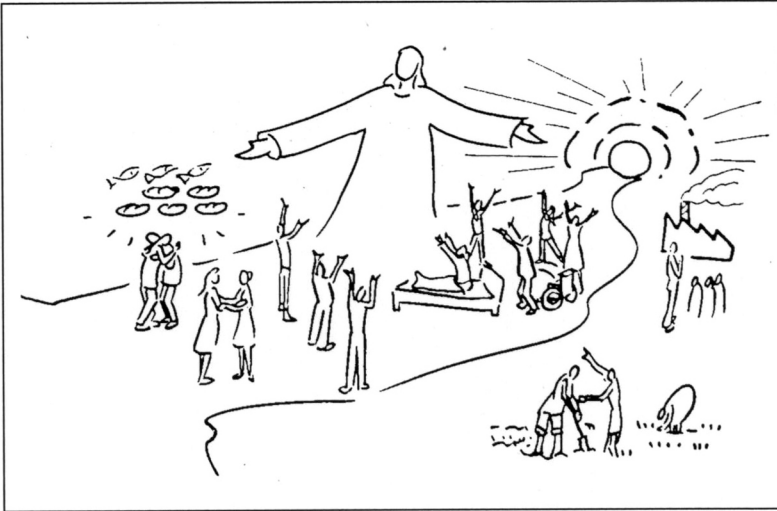
**Supplement:**

*(All read the supplement silently. Then share on the question, “What other points do we find in the supplement which are additional to our own findings?”)*

- The community was worried about people who could not come to the parish Church on Sundays. In this way they took part in the deep concern for one another.
- They all took part in discussing the plan to build a chapel.
- They all took part in deciding on the proposal of Mr.Marc.
- They all took part in the work itself, each one according to his or her ability.
- They all took part in the joy of the feast.

## B. CALLED TO PARTICIPATE IN GOD'S PLAN

### 1. God, too, has a wonderful plan for the world.



- Look at the drawing and discuss in the whole group:

#### *Question:*

*What do you think is God's plan for the world?—*

#### **Supplement:**

- God sent our Lord Jesus to bring us and the whole world home to God.
- By healing the sick, feeding the hungry and sharing his love with us Jesus revealed God's plan.
- Jesus expects us, his disciples and friends, to take part in his work. He says:  
"As the Father sent me, so I send you." (John 20,21)

## **2. Small groups of 2/3**

- Each group receives one of the following texts
- Discuss the questions
- Report after 10 minutes

### ***Questions:***

- ***What does this text tell us about the work (mission) for which Jesus himself was sent into the world?—***
- ***Find examples of how we can continue this mission of Jesus today.—***

- |                      |                                      |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| (1) Matthew 9,11-13  | [Jesus eats with sinners]            |
| (2) Luke 23,33-34    | [Jesus prays for those who kill him] |
| (3) John 13,12-15    | [Washing of feet]                    |
| (4) John 17,21       | [Prayer for unity]                   |
| (5) Luke 22,19-20    | [The Last Supper]                    |
| (6) Luke 10,1-9      | [The mission of the 72 disciples]    |
| (7) Matthew 28,16-20 | [The mission to the world]           |

### **Summary:**

It was the mission of Christ to show us a new way of life, to do things in a new way, the “Kingdom Way”. For example:

- Jesus accepted even “bad people” and outcasts. (1)
- Jesus overcame evil with love for his murderers. (2)
- Jesus, the Lord, served even the least of his friends. (3)
- Jesus created unity. (4)
- Jesus gave his life, his body and blood for his friends. (5)

- Jesus sent his disciples to bring the joy of God's Kingdom .(6)
- Jesus sends his friends to continue his mission. (7)

In short:

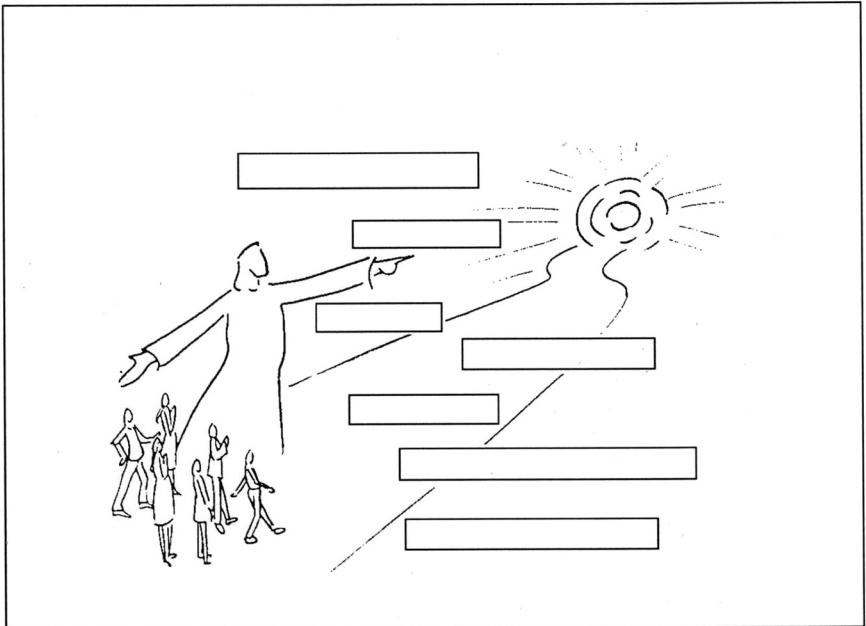
**Jesus invites us, his friends, to participate in this mission of changing the world through love.**



## C. WE CELEBRATE OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE MISSION OF CHRIST

### 1. Remember before we start the celebration:

- *The texts for the celebrations on the following pages should be proclaimed by different persons.*
- *After each proclamation, the appropriate strip of paper will be displayed around the picture or a drawing of Christ:.*



## 2. The celebration

- **We gather around a picture of Jesus.**  
(Picture of Jesus or a drawing as the one above)
- **We make ourselves aware of the Lord's promise:**  
"Where two or three meet in my name, I am there among them." (Mat 18,19)
- **We listen to Christ's call:**

1. (Jesus:) **"As the Father sent me, I send you!"**



(All:) Send us Lord, to do the same!  
(Display No.1: "I send you")

2. (Jesus:) **"I was sent to bring you all the mercy of my Father!"**

(All:) Send us Lord, to do the same!  
(Display No.2: "Be merciful")

3. (Jesus:) **"I was sent to lay down my life for you, my friends!"**

(All:) Send us Lord, to do the same!  
(Display No.3: "Die for your friends!")

4. (Jesus:) **"I was sent to accept the outcasts and the lowly people!"**

(All:) Send us Lord, to do the same!  
(Display No.4: "Accept the outcasts!")

5. (Jesus:) **“I was sent to bring peace and make people one!”**  
(All:) Send us Lord, to do the same!  
(*Display No.5: “Create unity!”*)
6. (Jesus:) **“I was sent to serve, not to be served!”**  
(All:) Send us Lord, to do the same!  
(*Display No. 6: “Serve one another!”*)
7. (Jesus) **“I was sent to feed the hungry!”**  
(All:) Send us Lord, to do the same!  
(*Display No.7: “Feed the hungry!”*)
8. (Jesus:) **“I was sent to heal the sick!”**  
(All:) Send us Lord, to do the same!  
(*Display No.8: “Heal the sick!”*)
9. (Jesus:) **“I was sent to overcome evil with good!”**  
(All:) Send us Lord, to do the same!  
(*Display No. 9: “Love your enemies!”*)
10. (Jesus:) **“I was sent to show you God’s faithfulness!”**  
(All:) Send us Lord, to do the same!  
(*Display No.10: “Be faithful!”*)
11. (Jesus:) **“I was sent to change this world into the Kingdom of God!”**  
(All:) Send us Lord, to do the same!  
(*Display No. 11: “Do all in the Kingdom Way!”*)

### **3. Closing prayer**

***(1st person:)***

Lord Jesus, we have heard your call:  
*"You are my friends.  
 As the Father sent me, so I send you!"*

***(2nd person:)***

We thank you, Lord, with all our heart  
 that you made us your friends.  
 You trust in us.  
 You call us to participate in your great mission :  
 to change this world.  
 We thank you, friend Jesus!

***(3rd person:)***

Give us strength, Lord, to continue your mission  
 in our families,  
 in our parishes  
 and in every corner of our country.

***(4th person:)***

You know, Lord, that we are weak and miserable.  
 We want to promote our own little kingdoms.  
 We want to do everything our own way, not your way, the  
 Kingdom way.

***(5th person:)***

Therefore, Lord, we ask you:  
 Supplement and complete what we do in faith.  
 Make perfect what we have already begun now together  
 with you.

***(6th person:)***

This we ask, Lord Jesus, in your own name,  
because yours is the power, the Kingdom and the glory,  
now and forever.

***(All:)***

Amen.

**Sing or pray the Our Father**



# METHOD OF ASIPA TEXTS

ASIPA TEXTS are compiled for Christian men and women at grass root level of the parish. They can be conducted most fruitfully in Small Christian Communities, Neighbourhood Communities, Parish Pastoral Councils or any other small groups in the parish.

ASIPA TEXTS can also be used with larger groups, e.g. in the parish hall - provided the “participatory method” is maintained in smaller working groups.

## **Features of the “ASIPA approach”**

1. ASIPA TEXTS adopt a “**participatory approach**” in which all participants of a group search and discover for themselves as far as they are able to.
2. The texts are compiled in such a way that the facilitator can use them with a **minimum of preparation**.
3. The facilitator is requested to **follow the text** as closely as possible and allow the participants to contribute when indicated in the text.
4. The facilitator is not content with one answer to a question but he/she encourages as many participants as possible to search for an answer. “**Buzz groups**” of 2/3 are helpful to achieve maximum participation.
5. The **SUPPLEMENT** can help add to the findings of the participants and summarize them.
6. The **SUMMARY** is meant to be used as ‘input’.

# **ASIPA:**

**As-ian -I-ntegral -P-astoral -A-pproach**

The Asian Bishops declared in the Final Statement of their Fifth Plenary Session in Bandung: The Church of 1990s has to be a "Participatory Church", a "Communion of Communities", a Church that "witnesses to the Risen Lord" (*FABC5,#8*).

The question was, how to promote this "new way of being Church". Therefore, late in 1993, jointly sponsored by the FABC Offices of Human Development and of Laity, a consultation meeting was held in Malaysia. It was during this consultation that the pastoral process for promoting a "Participatory Church" in Asia was termed ASIPA: Asian Integral Pastoral Approach.

ASIPA TEXTS (training programmes) follow this directive:

## **ASIAN**

They want to implement the vision of the Asian Bishops and help Asian Christians face Asian life in the light of the gospel.

## **INTEGRAL**

They aim at achieving a balance between the "spiritual" and the "social", between the individual and the community, between hierarchical leadership and the co-responsibility of the laity.

## **PASTORAL**

They train the laity in their pastoral mission in Church and world.

## **APPROACH**

The process of ASIPA TEXTS can be described as a pastoral approach which is "Christ- and Community centred". It involves the participants of workshops to search for themselves and allows them to experience a "New Way of Being Church."

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