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Missionary Prayer Intention - The Pope's Missionary Intention for July 2006 - That in the mission territories, different ethnic and religious groups may live in peace and together build a society inspired by human and spiritual values
Comment by Cardinal Telesphore P. Toppo, Archbishop of Ranchi, India

Ranchi (Agenzia Fides) - Diversity is the fundamental phenomenon that runs through the entire creation. It characterises the human society in an unparalleled way. The Asian continent lives this reality in a very significant manner. The Indian sub-continent is all the more singular in this regard. Thanks to the modem times of globalisation, most of the cities and towns of the world are of cosmopolitan nature. Communities of diverse ethnic origins, religious persuasions, ideological affiliations, professional engagements, social traditions and other differences exist overlapping one another. The mission territories are living examples of such a composite culture. The diverse communities of the society can no longer remain cut off from each other, like islands. They cannot afford to travel in isolation. Capacity for social relations with the other is the real criterion of the maturity of their individual culture. Collaborative effort for advancing the human civilisation is the test of the relevance of the singular values they cherish. Commitment to superior concerns defines the worth of their education and spiritual pursuit. 'The whole human race has a common origin and a common destiny. The human being is the image and likeness of God. All human beings together form one community', highlights Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (Nostra Aetate), p.653. Therefore, living in peace and harmony with one another is the sign of one's inner peace. It is the proof of one's communion with God, as well. Whatever is done to one's sister or brother is what is really being offered to God (Mt 25.40). Being spiritual would mean being humane to the other.

'Building a better society' is the common concern of all men and women of good will. A society that is inspired by human and spiritual values, that is a better society, in the right sense of the word. The religious communities have to elicit a consolidated focus to the universal values that are inherent in all of them. That is what the great Pope John Paul II meant when he addressed the Leaders of Religions in New Delhi in 1999 thus: 'Religious leaders in particular have the duty to do everything possible to ensure that religion is what God intends it to be—a source of goodness, harmony and peace'. Mission territories have to radiate the humane attitude of mutual complementariness among the diverse ethnic, religious and other social communities. Christian missionaries have to be overwhelmed by the singular spirit of Jesus: 'love one another, as I have loved you' and have to initiate a culture of universal love among those whom they serve. The faith traditions and other well-meaning ideologies and movements of the area have to be facilitated towards a joint effort in living in relation with each other and towards leading the society together to a brighter tomorrow. Such a noble effort could certainly be an anticipated celebration of a society that is inspired by human and spiritual values, par excellence. Cardinal Telesphore P. Toppo (Agenzia Fides 26/5/2006; righe 44, parole 637)

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