COMMUNICATIONS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

International

CONFERENCE REPORT: RESCUING THE MEMORY OF OUR PEOPLES. From 29 September to 6 October, 2002, a joint International Association (IAMS) for Mission Studies and International Association of Catholic Missiologists (IACM) Archives and Documentation conference was held at the Center for Missionary Animation in Rome. Forty-two people representing twenty-five countries attended, as well as local visitors from Rome. The purpose of the conference was to bring together archivists and researchers and others with a common interest in church and mission archives, in and relating to Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America, to exchange knowledge, needs and skills, to develop training resources, and to link with supporting institutions and bodies.

A major feature was the preparation of an archives training manual by Martha Smalley and Rosemary Seton. This was made available in draft form and critiqued as part of the process of the conference. It is now being revised and will be distributed to conference members and made available for wider sale. It is intended that it be a resource for translation and adaptation to various cultural and economic situations. An accompanying video is also being prepared. Other keynote presenters included Andrew Walls, Kwame Bediako, Paul Jenkins, and Archbishop Marchisano. We were sorry that personal circumstances prevented Jean-Paul Wiest and Daniel Jeyeraj from attending.

An emphasis of the conference was on the participation of all attendees, and this was encouraged through situation reports, papers and presentations. Discussions are being held about publication of the papers in a special issue of Mission Today.

The workshops, visits to local archives including Propaganda Fide, the Vatican, St. Peter's Basilica and the Jesuits, together with an incredible setting, helped the group work well together. A particular highlight, arranged through the good offices of Archbishop Marchisano, was a visit to the excavations of St. Peter's.

The 2002 conference was a successor to the “Documentation, Archives and Bibliography” (DAB) consultations organized by IAMS, including a conference in Rome in 1980. The papers from the 1980 conference have now been photocopied and bound, and are available for U.S. $20. Contact John Roxborogh on the IAMS website.

Although “Project for Archives Documentation and Oral History” is a fair description of what the old DAB has become, the acronym PADOH causes people puzzlement. By contrast, a discovery of the conference was the resonance many felt with the phrase “Rescuing the Memory of Our Peoples.” Between now and the 2004
Assembly, therefore, we would like to explore retaining both “Rescuing the Memory of Our Peoples” and PADOH.

John Roxborogh
PADOH Coordinator

Africa

DATABASE OF AICs AND AFRICAN CHURCH LEADERS. Steve Hayes sent the following communication:

We are developing a database of African Independent Churches (AICs) and African Church leaders as a tool for researchers, especially church historians, missiologists, anthropologists and others who are studying religion in Africa.

There are more than 10,000 different independent Christian denominations in Africa. Some, like the Zion Christian Church in South Africa and the Kimbanguist Church in Congo, have millions of members, while others have one or two small congregations.

The database of African church leaders works in cooperation with the Dictionary of African Christian Biography project to gather and make available biographical information on African Christian leaders of all Christian denominations, and not just leaders of AICs.

For more information see: http://www.geocities.com/missionalia/aicdb.htm

The database is intended to be a collaborative effort by researchers, so we hope that scholars who are working in this field will be willing to contribute information as well as asking for it.

Steve Hayes—shayes@dunelm.org.uk
Website: http://www.geocities.com/Athens/7734/steve.htm
Phone: 083-342-3563 or 012-333-6727

Asia

ECCLESIA OF WOMEN IN ASIA: GATHERING THE VOICES OF THE SILENCED. Christine Burke, IBVM sent the following report about an important women’s theological gathering in Asia:

I was privileged to be the only Australian at the first meeting of Asian Catholic Women Theologians, held in Bangkok in late November, 2002. The theme was “Ecclesia of Women in Asia: Gathering the Voices of the Silenced.” Nearly sixty women participated: from East Asia (mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan); from South East Asia (Vietnam, Philippines, Malaysia,