

MKR-SAK 23/01

OPPFØLGING AV SAKER I DE ØKUMENISKE ORGANISASJONER**Saksbehandler:** Generalsekretæren og Ørnulf Steen

- Dokumenter:**
- Referat fra styremøte i Norges kristne råd 21.02.01 [redacted]
 - Referat fra styremøte i Norges kristne råd 20.03.01 [redacted]
 - Churches Say "NO" to Violence against Women [redacted]
 - Høringsuttalelse fra Den norske Kirke (LVF) [redacted]
 - De nordiska og baltiska kyrkonas representation i CECs centralkommitté (KEK) [redacted]
 - Representant fra Norge i Kirkenes Verdensråds økumeniske lederutviklingsprogram for kvinner (KV) [redacted]
 - Forslag til nomineringer fra Norden til WCC central- og executivekomite (KV) [redacted]

LVF-saker**Evaluering av LVFs Department for World Service (DWS)**

Gjennom flere år har særlig de nordiske kirkers nødhjelpsorganisasjoner bedt om en gjennomgang og vurdering av Det Lutherske Verdensforbunds bistands- og nødhjelpsavdeling, Department for World Service (DWS). Bakgrunnen har vært misnøye med DWS' evne til å svare på utfordringer som følger av endrede rammebetingelser for bistand og nødhjelp, for liten fleksibilitet, for dårlige tilbakemeldinger om prosjekter og programmer, manglende økonomistyring og for liten evne til å følge opp i den økende konkurransen som det faktisk er, særlig på nødhjelpsfronten.

På bakgrunn av initiativ fra de nordiske nødhjelpsorganisasjonene ble det på siste Rådsmøte (juni 2000) vedtatt å opprette en Standing Committee for DWS og det ble igangsatt en kapasitetsundersøkelse som nå har resultert i en Capacity Assessment Report (CAR). Rapporten er nå til behandling i Standing Committee for DWS. Rapporten vil sannsynligvis bli omtalt på Rådsmøte i Geneve i juni, men den endelige oppfølging vil trolig bli behandlet på et senere tidspunkt.

CAR foreslår følgende alternative former for organisering av LWS:

- DWS omgjøres fra å være en avdeling integrert i LVFs sekretariat til å bli en uavhengig stiftelse i det lutherske fellesskap.
- DWS omgjøres til et spesialprogram innenfor LVF

For begge alternativens vedkommende gjelder det at de gir en større frihet i forhold til LVF-hovedkontoret og dets strukturer. Ikke minst dette siste er det uenighet om hvorvidt er ønskelig og nødvendig. De kirkelige nødhjelpsorganisasjonene har bl.a. pekt på dette som en nødvendig ordning for å få den tilstrekkelige fleksibilitet og mulighet for å kunne handle raskt i akutte situasjoner samt for å kunne utvikle den administrative kapasiteten til DWS.

MKR-sekretariatet har i møte med representanter for Kirkens Nødhjelp, før møte i Standing Committee for DWS understreket følgende forhold som viktige utfra vårt ståsted: Det lutherske fellesskaps nødhjelps- og bistandsarbeid er en kvalifisert diakonal tjeneste. Relasjonen til det kirkelige fellesskapet må derfor være tydelig. Det må i DWS' arbeid og organisering tas hensyn til de mindre lutherske kirker i nedslagsfeltet for DWS. Dette bør være del av føringene for arbeidet med organisering av DWS, uten at dette skal benyttes som argument for status quo. Vi er kjent med de gode erfaringene fra den økumeniske organiseringen av nødhjelpsarbeidet gjennom ACT (Action by Churches Together), og ser at dette er en god modell. Det er helt nødvendig at arbeidet i DWS utføres profesjonelt, både nødhjelps- og bistandsfaglig og når det gjelder administrative rutiner som for eksempel økonomistyring.

LVFs Rådsmøte i Geneve, 12.-19. juni

Årets Rådsmøte var planlagt avholdt i Betlehem/Jerusalem. Pga. den urolige situasjonen i området besluttet generalsekretær i samråd med lokal arrangør å flytte møtet til Geneve. I skrivende stund foreligger ikke sakliste og sakspapirer til Rådsmøtet. Det vil bli sammenkalt til et forberedelsesmøte for Den norske kirkes deltakere i Rådsmøtet.

Forslag til vedtak:

MKR tar orienteringene til etterretning.

Kirker sier nei til vold mot kvinner

Forslag til vedtak:

Mellomkirkelig råd ber sekretariatet oversende vedlagte uttalelse til LVF som Den norske kirkes høringsuttalelse til dokumentet "Kirker sier nei til vold mot kvinner".

Rådet vil uttrykke takk til Nemnd for kvinne- og likestillings spørsmål for et godt forarbeid med uttalelsen.

KEK-saker

Det vedlagte forslag "De nordiska og baltiska kyrkornas representation i CECs centralkomite - Överväganden och förslag" er utarbeidet på oppdrag av det nordiske økumeniske sekretærmøtet av generalsekretær Tord Ove Thordson i Sveriges kristne råd. Dokumentet ble presentert på det økumeniske sekretærmøtet på Djursholm i Sverige 22.-24. mars og fikk tilslutning fra gruppen av økumeniske sekretærer. Thordson og den KEK-ansvarlige i det Mellomkirkelige råd i Danmark

fikk i oppdrag å sørge for at forslaget oversettes, og at de baltiske medlemskirkene konsulteres om forslaget. Det er ennå ikke gjort. Dessuten vil forslaget bli presentert for KEKs generalsekretær Keith Clements når de økumeniske sekretærene møter ham en gang i løpet av sommeren for å drøfte generalforsamlingen i Trondheim med ham.

Forslag til vedtak:

Mellomkirkelig råd slutter seg til de fremlagte forslag angående nordiske og baltiske kirkers representasjon i KEKs sentralkomite. Da andre kirkers offisielle standpunkt ikke er kjent på det nåværende tidspunkt, ber rådet om at saken kommer tilbake for endelig godkjenning før det gjøres offisielle henvendelser til KEK i sakens anledning.

KV-saker

KVs ledertreningsprogram for kvinner

Forslag til vedtak:

Mellomkirkelig råd oppnevner til å delta i KVs ledertreningsprogram for kvinner.

Nominasjon fra Norden til KVs sentral- og eksekutivkomité

Det vedlagte forslag er utarbeidet på oppdrag av det nordisk økumeniske sekretærmøtet av generalsekretær Ane Hjerrild i det mellomkirkelig råd i Danmark. Forslaget ble presentert på det nordiske økumeniske sekretærmøtet og fikk oppslutning .

Det understrekes at forslaget er laget med henblikk på at situasjonen allerede etter neste generalforsamling i 2006 er slik at Norden har 5 (som i dag) eller mindre seter i sentralkomiteen. Fortsetter Norden med 5 plasser, vil Den norske kirke alltid ha én plass. Blir det mindre enn 5, vil vi være uten representasjon i komiteen i den perioden hvor vi står på plass nr. 5.

Det understrekes videre at det er enighet om å vise fleksibilitet kirkene imellom. En situasjon som vil kreve dette, er dersom det er en nordisk kandidat til moderator eller vise-moderator fra et land som ikke står for tur til å sitte i Eksekutivkomiteen.

Forslag til vedtak:

Mellomkirkelig råd slutter seg til de fremlagte forslag til nordisk turnusordning for sete i KVs sentral- og Eksekutivkomite . Da andre kirkers offisielle standpunkt ikke er kjent på det nåværende tidspunkt, ber rådet om at saken kommer tilbake for endelig godkjenning.



STYREMØTE I NORGES KRISTNE RÅD

Tid og sted: Kirkens hus den 21.2.01

Tilstede: Billy Taranger, Marie-Anne Sekkenes, Kari Lorentzen, Else-Britt Nilsen, Arnfinn Løyning, Odd Hjertås, Stig Utnem og Øyvind Helliesen

Meldt forfall: Olav Skjevesland,

Administrasjonen: Ingrid Vad Nilsen, Lars-Erik Nordby. Knut Refsdal deltok på sak nr. 3/10.01.

Bjørg Haugstulen på sak nr 3.3/01 og 3.4/01.

Odd Hjertås innledet møtet med andakt.

Referatsaker:

1.1/01 Påskehilsen

Det forelå forslag til tekst til økumenisk påskehilsen i forbindelse med at Øst- og Vestkirken har felles tidspunkt for påsken i år.

Vedtak: Det arbeides videre med påskehilsen for utsendelse i god tid før påsken.

1.2/01 Kirkeledermøtet

Kirkeledermøtet den 28.5. blir på Lysebu etter Bibelselskapets representantskap. Invitasjoner sendes ut.

Vedtak: Til etterretning.

1.3/01 Salmebaseprosjektet

Det er søkt midler fra Norsk kulturråd. Det ventes på svar derfra.

Vedtak: Til orientering.

1.4/01 Referat fra AU-møte NKR/NFR

Referat fra felles AU-møte Norges Frikirkeråd/Norges kristne råd den 19.12.00

Vedtak: Til orientering.

1.5/01 Kirke-Stat tre delrapporter
Administrativt/Juridisk utvalg har avgitt uttalelse.

Vedtak: Til orientering.

1.6./01 Møte med feltprosten
Dette møtet ble utsatt.

1.7/01 Møte med Kirkens Nødhjelp
Styret hadde invitert Kirkens Nødhjelp til en samtale om forholdet mellom KN og NKRs medlemssamfunn. Gen.sekr. Atle Sommerfeldt og Ass. Gen. sekr. Stein Villumstad møtte styret.
I samtalen ble blant annet følgende spørsmål berørt:

- Kirkenes representanter i KNs styrende organer og hvordan disse er "accountable" begge veier.
- Forståelsen av KNs mandat sett fra KN og fra kirkene og hvordan dette kan tydeliggjøres og forankres i kirkene.
- Lanseringen av "Rettferdig handel" hvor frikirkene gjerne ville vært synlige
- Arbeidsfordeling mellom KN og Kirkene/kirkenes misjonsarbeid særlig aktualisert ved katastrofer
- Arbeidsfordelingen mellom KN og de internasjonale hjelpeorganisasjonene som er en del av kirkenes struktur eller som de er knyttet til.
- Arbeidsfordelingen mellom KN og kirkene/NKR aktualisert ved Norsk økumenisk prosjekt for konfliktforebygging, freds- og forsoningsarbeid (NØFF) og pastoralbesøkene til Sudan, Rwanda og Burundi.

Vedtak: Til orientering.

1.8/01 Besøk i Midtøsten
Stig Utnem orienterte fra besøk i Midtøsten. Situasjonen får tydeligere og tydeligere preg av en okkupasjon i de palestinske områdene.
Det blir viktig å investere i fremtiden ved å styrke skolevirksomheten.

Vedtak: Til orientering.

Rapporter

Det forelå ingen rapporter til dette møtet.

Saker

3.1/01 Rådsmøtet 2001

Årsmelding

Styret gikk gjennom sekretariatets forslag til årsmelding. Denne er for hele år 2000.

Vedtak: Styret godkjenner årsmeldingen med de endringer som fremkom i møtet.

3.2/01 Rådsmøtet 2001

Virksomhetsplan.

Styret gikk i gjennom sekretariatets forslag til virksomhetsplan.

Vedtak: Styret anbefaler at virksomhetsplanen godkjennes av Rådsmøtet med de endringer som fremkom i møtet.

3.3/01 Rådsmøtet 2001

Regnskap 2000

Styret gikk gjennom sekretariatets forslag til regnskap.

Vedtak: Styret anbefaler under forutsetning av revisors godkjenning at regnskapet for år 2000 godkjennes av Rådsmøtet med de endringer som fremkom i møtet.

3.4/01 Rådsmøtet 2001

Revidert budsjett 2001

Styret gikk gjennom sekretariatets forslag til revidert budsjett.

Vedtak:

1. Reiseutgiftene for styret dekkes for fremtiden av Norges kristne råd.
2. Styret anbefaler at det reviderte budsjett godkjennes av Rådsmøtet med de endringer som fremkom i møtet.

3.5/01 Rådsmøtet 2001

Rådsmøtet

a) Dagsprogram

Styret gikk gjennom sekretariatets forslag til dagsprogram for rådsmøtet.

Vedtak: 1. Styret godkjenner programmet for dagen med de endringer som er gjort i møtet.

b) Dagsorden

Styret gjennomgikk sekretariatets forslag til dagsorden.

Vedtak: 1. Styret godkjenner forslaget til dagsorden.
2. Det lages et dokument om rasisme som legges frem for Rådsmøtet.
3. Det lages en resolusjonstekst om de vanskelige forhold for trossamfunn i Kina. Se punkt 3.12.1\01

c) Kontingent

Vedtak: Kontingenten for 2001 foreslås opprettholdt på samme nivå som tidligere.

d) Rådsmøtet

Vedtak: Styret foreslår at Rådsmøtet 2002 blir fredag 15. og lørdag 16. mars inkludert et åpent seminar om et økumenisk tema.

e) Økumenikkprisen

Flere mulige kandidater til økumenikkprisen ble gjennomgått.

Vedtak: Vinneren av økumenikkprisen blir som avtalt. Navnet offentliggjøres på Rådsmøtet.

3.6/01 Kirkefamilier /Valgregler

Det har ikke kommet innsigelser på utsendte valgeregler.
Det må arbeides videre med kirkefamilieprinsippet.

Vedtak: Styret fremmer forslag til valgeregler i statuttene for Norges kristne råd på årets Rådsmøte.
Spørsmålet om kirkefamilieorganiseringen tas opp på neste styremøte. Gen.sekr. Thord-Ove Thordson inviteres til å dele erfaringer fra Sverige.

3.7/01 Tilknytning til KEK/KV/WEF

Det ble fremmet forslag om at Norges kristne råd søker assosiert medlemskap i Konferansen av europeiske kirker, Kirkenes Verdensråd og World Evangelical Fellowship.

Vedtak: NKR søker assosiert medlemskap i KEK, KV og WEF.

3.8/01 Personalsaker

a) Lønn ansatte

Saken ble fremmet av Billy Taranger og Stig Utne.

Følgende forslag på lønns plasseringer forelå:

Generalsekretær lønns penn som for sogneprester: Ltr. 43-56

Nåværende generalsekretær: Ltr 52 (kr. 343.00)

Konsulent som 1. konsulent i Statens regulativ, lønns penn 32-50, kode 1067

Nåværende konsulent: Ltr. 42 (kr 288.100)

Kontorleder som 1. konsulent i Statens regulativ, lønns penn 32-50, kode 1067

Nåværende kontorleder: Ltr 35 (kr. 257.700)

Vedtak: Stillingene plasseres i ovennevnte kategorier og lønns penn. De ansatte plasseres i ovennevnte lønns trinn fra 1. januar 2001.

b) Permisjon generalsekretær

Søknad fra generalsekretæren om permisjon april måned for å vikariere som sogneprest i Lebesby prestegjeld i Finnmark.

Vedtak: Permisjonen innvilges

c) Engasjement Lars-Erik Rikheim

Forslag om å engasjere Cand. Theol Lars-Erik Rikheim i 3 måneder for å utføre

- studieprosjekt for ungdom om tro
- innsamling av materiell til Jubileum 2000
- skrive Bønneuken i Norges historie
- forefallende arbeid i sekretariatet

Vedtak: Lars-Erik Rikheim engasjeres i 80 prosent stilling i perioden mars-mai. Arbeidsbeskrivelse utarbeides av generalsekretæren.

3. 9/01 Takt og tone–dokumentet.

Dokumentet bør sees sammen med Charta Oecumencia som nå er ferdig og kommer tilbake til kirkene i løpet av sommeren for lokal tilpasning og resepsjon.

Vedtak: Saken sees i sammenheng med Charta Oecumenica og fremmes på på nytt i forbindelse med respsjonsprosessen av dette.

3.10/01 Det økumeniske tiåret mot vold: Bygg freden!

Det ble orientert om Det økumeniske tiåret mot vold: Bygg freden!
Målsetting: Arbeide frem en tydelig kirkelig holdning til og handling mot vold – i kirkene – blant kristne – i samfunnet.

Knut Refsdal ble presentert. Han skal arbeide i en 3. måneders prosjektstilling for å samle materiell og bistå i etablering av Hovedkomiteen og arbeidet med en strategi og søknader om midler.

NKR har tre representanter i Hovedkomiteen. Generalsekretæren møter ex officio.

Vedtak: Sekretariatet arbeider videre med å rekruttere medlemmer fra NKR til Hovedkomiteen etter de retningslinjer som styret har gitt.

3.11/01 Høring om NOU 2000:26 ”...til et åpent liv i tro og tillit”

Det forelå en høringsuttalelse fra Samarbeidsrådet for tros- og livsynssamfunn og NKR/NFR om forslaget til trosopplæring/dåpsopplæring.

Vedtak: Styret slutter seg til forslaget til høringsuttalelse til NOU 2000:26 ”....til et åpent liv i tro og tillit.” Styret ønsker å gå i dialog med Den norske kirke om samarbeid i kristendomsopplæringen i samarbeid med den offentlige skolen.

3/12.01 Eventuelt.

1. Kina

Arnfinn Løyning redegjorde for at det for tiden er økende vansker for ulike trossamfunn i Kina.

Vedtak: Administrasjonen forbereder en resolusjonstekst til rådsmøtet.

2. Ekstraordinært styremøte

Generalsekretærens åremålsperiode går ut ved utgangen av dette året. Det må settes i gang en prosess for rekruttering av ny generalsekretær.

Vedtak: Det kalles inn til ekstraordinært styremøte på Betanien (Akersbakken 37) den 20. mars kl 0830 til 1000.

Billy Taranger
leder

Ingrid Vad Nilsen
generalsekretær

Lars-Erik Nordby
sekretær

Styremøte i Norges kristne råd den 20.3.01

Sted: Betanien Oslo

Tilstede: Billy Taranger, Stig Utnem, Arnfinn Løyning, Else-Britt Nilsen, Marie-Anne Sekkenes, Øyvind Helliesen.

Fra de ansatte: Lars-Erik Nordby.

Sak 3.13.01 Rekruttering av ny generalsekretær.

Styret gikk gjennom kriteriene for rekruttering av ny generalsekretær.

- Vedtak:**
- 1. Det utarbeides en arbeidsbeskrivelse til bruk i rekrutteringsprosessen for ny generalsekretær på grunnlag av samtalen i styret.**
 - 2. Det lages en annonse med utlysning av stilling som ny generalsekretær i Norges kristne råd fra 1/1-2002 på grunnlag av arbeidsbeskrivelsen. Denne rykkes inn i avisene før påske med søknadsfrist 1. mai 2001.**
 - 3. Billy Taranger, Else-Britt Nilsen og Stig Utnem foretar intervjuer av aktuelle kandidater og kommer med en innstilling til neste styremøte.**
 - 4. De ansattes representant får anledning til å uttale seg etter at intervjuene er foretatt og før innstillingen skrives. De ansattes representant har stemmerett i styret ved ansettelse av ny generalsekretær.**

Lars-Erik Nordby
referent

MKR-SAK 23/01

**OPPFØLGING AV SAKER I DE ØKUMENISKE
ORGANISASJONER**

- **LVF:
Dokumentet "Kirker sier nei til vold mot kvinner"**

Vedlagt følger dokumentet "Churches Say "NO" to Violence against Women".

LVFs medlemskirker ble i et brev av 13. desember 2000 bedt om å gi sin respons på dette viktige dokumentet. I forbindelse med at rådet behandlet Kjell Nordstokkes rapport fra LVFs programkomite for Mission and Development i Bratislava juni 1999 (rapport nr. 29/99), sa MKR at man ville drøfte saken når det kom en formell henvendelse fra LVF om å gjøre dette. LVFs frist er ca. 1. mai, og kirkenes reaksjon på dokumentet vil bli presentert på LVFs rådsmøte i Genève i juni.

Generalsekretæren har bedt Nemnd for kvinne- og likestilling behandle dokumentet. Dette skjedde første gang 26.2., og en høringsuttalelse er under utarbeiding. Denne vil bli oversendt MKR-møtet til behandling sammen med et saksdokument som sekretariatet utarbeider og ettersender.

Churches Say "NO" to Violence against Women

Forslag til kommentarer fra Den norske kirke ved Mellomkirkelig Råd

Den norske kirke har mottatt og er invitert til å kommentere LVFs planutkast "Churches Say 'NO' to Violence against Women".

Den norske kirkes utgangspunkt

Allerede på begynnelsen av 1980-tallet startet vår kirke et arbeid med problemet kvinnemishandling. Ved utredninger, uttalelser, tiltak for utsatte kvinner og skolering av kirkelig personell, har kirka forsøkt å møte problemet med vold i parforhold. Etter hvert kom også problemet med seksuelle overgrep i kirkelige sammenhenger til syne. I 1992 ble den første solidaritetsgudstjenesten med og for personer som på en eller annen måte var rammet av seksuelle overgrep arrangert av Kirkerådet i samarbeid med en lokal menighet i Oslo. Bispemøtet har uttalt at det er kirkas fremste oppgave å forsvare den utsatte i overgrepssaker. Det har vedtatt retningslinjer for hvordan saker der det har blitt rettet anklage mot kirkelig personell om seksuelle overgrep skal behandles, og har opprettet et apparat i alle bispedømmene for å sikre best mulig saksbehandling og støtte til den utsatte. Svært viktig i dette bildet er også Kirkens Ressurssenter mot vold og seksuelle overgrep, som ble opprettet i 1996. Erfaringen med arbeid mot vold og overgrep er paradoksal og smertelig: Vår kirke som i utgangspunktet ønsket å gjøre noe for kvinner som var fanget i voldelige parforhold, har nå måttet konsentrere store deler av sin innsats på dette området om seksuelle overgrep i egne sammenhenger.

Med dette som noe av vår kirkes erfaringsbakgrunn har vi lest LVFs plan "Churches Say 'NO' to Violence against Women" med stor interesse. Planen er sendt til alle bispedømmeråd, til Norsk Kvinnelig Teologforening som har vært en pådriver i arbeidet mot kvinnemishandling og seksuelle overgrep, til Presteforeningen, komiteen for Det økumeniske tiåret mot vold og Kirkens ressurscenter mot vold og seksuelle overgrep. Nemnd for kvinne- og likestillingsspørsmål under Kirkerådet har behandlet planen blant annet på bakgrunn av synspunkter og nyttige innspill som er kommet fra enkelte av disse andre organene.

Vurdering

Vi verdsetter dokumentets klare profil og helhetlige syn på vold og overgrep. Dette er et godt, oversiktlig og allsidig planutkast som ikke skulle ha behov for noen prinsipiell kursjustering eller vesentlig omarbeiding. Når det gjelder helhetsvurderingen av planutkastet ønsker vi å gjøre Kirkelig Ressurssenter mot vold og seksuelle overgrep sine ord til våre:

Hovedinntrykket – og den viktigste kommentaren – er at dette er meget bra. Dokumentet behandler problematikken omkring vold mot kvinner grundig og seriøst på en god måte. Vår opplevelse er at volds- og overgrepssproblematikk settes inn i sin rette ramme, dokumentet representerer en gjennomarbeidet og etter vår oppfatning veldig riktig måte å forstå overgreps- og voldsproblematikk og setter fingeren på sammenhenger og helhet omkring problematikken som er helt nødvendig for å kunne forstå og handle i møte med problemfeltet. [...]

Også når det kommer ned på konkret nivå, beholder dokumentet dette gode og riktige grepet, og beskrivelsene av skjulte maktmetoder kvinner utsettes for er etter vår oppfatning meget relevante. Dokumentet går dypere i sin analyse enn den overflatiske påpekning av synlige problemstillinger som vi ofte ser. I forhold til arbeidet ved Ressurssenteret og hvordan vi strever med å gi blant annet kirkelige medarbeidere forståelse for "hvordan er det mulig", "hvorfor gikk hun bare ikke" og liknende, ser vi dokumentet som meget relevant. Mekanismene og maktmetodene som binder kvinner i voldsstrukturer og anerkjenner og underbygger videre voldshandlinger, er ryddig påpekt og problematisert.

Planen unngår å omtale kvinner som rammes av vold og undertrykkelse som stakkarslige ofre som dermed lett kan objektiveres og passiviseres. Tvert imot legger planen vekt på utsatte kvinners verdighet, samtidig som deres behov for støtte i kampen mot overgrep og undertrykkelse understrekes.

For ytterligere å få fram kompleksiteten i problemet med vold og overgrep, kunne kanskje dokumentet synliggjøre i enda større grad at også gutter er utsatt for vold og overgrep, og at kvinner kan være overgripere. Også dette er forhold som må forstås i perspektivet kjønn og makt. I tråd med ett av våre bispedømmer vil vi også understreke at i det minste indirekte, får vold mot kvinner alltid negative, skadelige konsekvenser også for disse kvinnenenes barn.

Som spesielt gledelig vil vi påpeke at LVF i sin plan mot vold og overgrep har satt søkelyset på teologiens betydning og våget å problematisere kirkenes patriarkalske strukturer og tradisjoner. Teologisk refleksjon er en nødvendig del av det arbeidet kirken må gjøre for at de skal kunne møte problemene med vold og undertrykkelse av kvinner på en mer adekvat måte. Dette er imidlertid et arbeid som vil komme kirken som helhet til gode. Å prøve vår teologi på erfaringer med overgrep kan resultere i teologi og praksis som gir grunnlag for et fellesskap med større grad av likeverd mellom kvinner og menn og som tegner et rikere og sannere bilde av hvem Gud er.

Kvinnens erfaring med vold og overgrep aktualiserer for eksempel det problematiske med et ensidig maskulint gudsbilde og en overbetoning av Gud som allmektig. Et annet tema som også har vært aktuelt i vår kirke er problemene i noen kristne miljøer med å anerkjenne vold og overgrep som skilsmissegrunn. Når det gjelder incestutsatte påpeker for eksempel Kirkens Ressurssenter at bildet av Gud som far kan være svært vanskelig. I første omgang kan det være en hjelp "å si 'jammen Gud er ikke en sånn far', men allikevel vil sammenhengen mellom Gud og far ligge i bakgrunnen og gjøre gudsforholdet utrygt". Om de andre problemstillingen sier Ressurssenteret følgende:

På samme måte fungerer bildet av den allmektige Gud som det viser seg ikke griper inn og hindrer det vonde selv om hun ber om det, slik at hun regner det vonde som Guds vilje. Eller det kan handle om den Gud som foreskriver underordning under en voldelig ektemann, og "nekter" en kvinne skilsmisse, eller Gud som er mest opptatt av skyld og synd i en struktur som fører til at kvinner lider under feilplassering av skyld.

Denne type problemstillinger representerer vesentlige utfordringer til kirkenes undervisning, forkynnelse og liturgi. Om en våger å løfte fram og synliggjøre overgrep mot kvinner vil denne type problemer komme til syne. I et av planens vedlegg påpekes nettopp dette. Vår kirkes erfaringer bekrefter at det er tilfellet.

”Churches Say ‘NO’ to Violence against Women” er preget av at perspektivet er internasjonalt. Ved analyser som går i dybden og anlegger et helhetssyn på vold og overgrep gjør dokumentet det mulig å identifisere fellestrekk og underliggende årsaksforhold. Selv om omfanget av og de konkrete utslagene av vold mot kvinner kan variere noe fra kultur til kultur, er det grunnleggende misforholdet i makt og status mellom kvinner og menn i kirke og samfunn et gjennomgående hovedproblem. Utfordringen til oss som kirker er å gi rom for kvinners smertelige erfaringer og ta dem inn over oss. Undertrykkelse, vold og overgrep mot kvinner er i aller høyest grad et globalt problem, som verdens kirker må stå sammen for å møte. Det kreves både evne og vilje til å avsløre problemer i egne sammenhenger, til å se selvkritisk på holdninger og praksis og til å være initiativrike og utholdende når det gjelder konkrete tiltak for å møte problemene. LVFs plan er en særdeles god hjelp til dette, og vi tror kirkene representerer et stort potensiale i denne kampen.

Vi er glad for at LVFs plan har så mange, konkrete forslag til tiltak, ikke minst rettet mot det lokale plan. Alle vil her kunne finne noe som det vil være mulig å ta utgangspunkt i sin sammenheng. Ett av våre bispedømmer framhever for eksempel behovet for å utarbeide forslag til liturgier til gudstjeneste med vold mot kvinner som tema. Et annet bispedømme nevner blant annet at det må rettes søkelys mot seksuell trakassering i jobbsituasjonen, spørsmålet om manglende likelønn i forhold til typiske ”kvinneyrker” og nødvendigheten av at også menn engasjerer seg mot kvinnediskriminering, pornografi og sexreiser. Når det gjelder punktet om globale strukturer vil vi i tillegg til de tiltak som er listet opp i planen, foreslå at arbeid i forhold til politiske myndigheter framheves i sterkere grad. I de aller fleste sammenhenger vil det være behov for et engasjement i forhold til myndighetene som tar sikte på å gjøre lovverk og håndhevingen av loven bedre i stand til å fange opp vold og overgrep mot kvinner og barn.

Avsluttende bemerkninger

I et vidt perspektiv er alt engasjement med kvinnespørsmål og likestilling viktig for arbeidet mot vold og overgrep mot kvinner. Det er da også karakteristisk at det er fra kvinnegrupper som arbeider for likestilling at initiativene og drivkraften er kommet til å få disse problemene fram i lyset. I vår kirke vil vi spesielt framheve arbeidet på generell basis med inkluderende språk i gudstjenesten og lederutvikling for kvinner som aktuelt og relevant i et slikt videre perspektiv. Når det gjelder det siste vil noe ressursstoff foreligge på engelsk om ikke altfor lenge. Vi vedlegger ellers relevante uttalelser fra Den norske kirke i engelsk oversettelse som et mulig ressursstoff i LVFs fortsatte arbeid mot vold og overgrep.

På bakgrunn av det foreliggende planutkastet fra LVF har Nemnd for kvinne- og likestillingsspørsmål under Kirkerådet utfordret den nasjonale komiteen for Det økumeniske tiåret mot vold til å utarbeide et enkelt bibelmateriale som kan brukes av grupper i menighetene som ressursstoff for samtale om vold og overgrep mot kvinner. Dette kan kanskje også være en utfordring til LVF.

LVFs plan slik den nå foreligger er svært god. Den gir både innsikt og oversikt. Det vil selvsagt være aktuelt for vår kirke å få den oversatt til norsk og distribuert til menigheter og andre aktuelle instanser. Planens tema er vanskelig og kan aktivere fordommer og forsvarsmekanismer. Vi imøteser imidlertid den endelige planen med forventning, og håper at den vil være minst like klar som det foreliggende utkastet når det gjelder den grunnleggende forståelsen av problemet vold mot kvinner.

**The Lutheran World Federation
Department for Mission and Development
Women in Church and Society**

A Draft Paper

**Churches Say
“NO”
to Violence against Women**

Action Plan for the Churches

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PREFACE

“Not another document on violence against women!” Such might be a first reaction to this initiative. Painful though it is, violence against women is neither a new issue nor an easy subject to grapple with. Prolonged global activism has helped us to name the many evil dimensions of violence against women and how they affect quality of life for everyone. The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has highlighted the issue in several of its recent Council meetings for further action in and through the member churches (Appendix 1). Some churches have taken an admirable lead in extensive educative and policy formulating processes. The *Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration* that came out of the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women identified violence against women as one of the priority concerns of the international community and one particularly deserving urgent response.

The “Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women,” firmly emphasized “the elimination of all violence in various forms (sexual, religious, psychological, structural, physical, spiritual, military) and the Culture of Violence, especially as they affect the life and dignity of women. And we declare our readiness, to confront any attempts to excuse, cover up, or justify violence. We declare as Festival women and men, that its presence in the church is an offence against God, humanity and the earth.”¹

In response to this challenge to the churches, the 1999 LWF Council meeting resolved

- to encourage all member churches to face the painful issue of violence against women in all its manifestations particular to their context; and
- to ask the Desk for Women in Church and Society to propose ways to accompany the churches in their efforts to address the issue.

(cf.: *LWF Documentation* No. 44, “The Gospel Transforming Cultures,” September 1999, p. 158)

The purpose of this document is:

1. to encourage the churches to open up ways to see how violence against women pervades our daily living not only in overt ways but often in insidious and covert ways that may not even be recognized or even accepted as violence;
2. to use this document as a discussion starter in the congregation, among special interest groups and in church-based seminaries and educational institutions;
3. to analyze, acknowledge and understand local manifestations of violence;
4. to discover resources from within oneself, through the church, communities and networking, for ways and means to reduce violence and find possibilities of offering services to those who are affected;
5. to record and share with the communion, the affirmative policies and actions taken through this process, that would serve as guidelines for others seeking such remedial measures, and
6. to offer this “document in the making” to serve as a comprehensive guide to congregations.

¹ “From Solidarity to Accountability.” Letter from the Decade Festival – Churches in Solidarity with Women” in *Together on the Way*, Official Report of the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, edited by Diane Kessler. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1999, p. 243.

Some may say that violence against women is a private family affair and therefore should be dealt with at that level. Global activism has brought to light that this is no longer a private issue of individuals but a global issue from which women all over the world suffer, whether from the north, south, east or west, whether affluent or impoverished, highly educated or illiterate, holding high positions or working as daily wage earners, from high society or lowly slums. Violence against women cuts across all these barriers and looms as one big issue to women of all ages worldwide. They are crying out for strong, affirmative steps to be taken. The cries of these women should no longer be silenced or stifled within the four walls of their homes for the sake of family pride, honor, security, stability or the children, and so on, because violence against women is a sin.

Others may say they feel this is a women's issue that should be dealt with by women themselves. Many women are doing just that: struggling for justice through awareness raising, lobbying for changes in structures and policies and by rendering services to the victims to show them how to make their way from victim to survivor. But this does not stop the perpetuation of violence. Many nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and United Nations bodies insist that violence against women is a human rights issue and should be treated as such. Working in that light might bring greater relief through regulations and policy formulations holding governments accountable. This is a slow process and policies, at best, are but good intentions and subject to the interpretation of the executing bodies such as the judiciary, the police, and so on, who may not be sensitized or convinced executors of policies and laws.

It has been clearly identified that religion could be used as a tool for oppressing women. The task of people of faith, therefore, is to affirm the liberating potential of religion as expressed in the Beijing *Platform for Action*. "Religion, thought, conscience and belief may and can contribute to fulfilling women's and men's moral, ethical and spiritual needs and to realizing their full potential in society." Further, we need to live out this expression and take measures to correct the theologies, policies and practices that may give indication to the contrary. One way to begin is to specify to readers of the Bible that Scripture is too reflective of, and a product of, particular contexts, culture and ages. If the church is to transcend the vicious cycle of violence, it needs to prepare a transformed and transforming community of men and women.

There is no doubt that violence against women is an extremely painful reality that women see and experience on a day to day basis. It is also to be confessed, however, that violence against women is an extremely sensitive and painful issue for some men to face! The topic brings to these men a sense of shame, anger, frustration and guilt as they feel they stand collectively accused. Some male reaction could be to deny the very existence of it in their lives, or to reject having anything to do with it. In a few extreme cases, it might even be claimed that this is their right as a father, husband or brother! It is also true that some men have been subjected to violence from women.

Women cannot hold only men responsible for violence. Women have also been led to hide or deny the fact of violence in their lives due to a sense of shame and humiliation. Some have become apathetic and have learned to treat it as an inevitable fact of life for fear of further violence and the impossibility of leaving their homes. Both women and men are part of a system that moulds and conditions them, and demands of them certain roles and behaviors that are prescribed as norms by religion, culture, tradition and patriarchy. If violence against women and girls is to stop, men as well as women must work together against it. "Just as the

women's movement appeals for a new model for women—empowered actors not victims—new models of masculinity are needed, ones that do not include or depend on dominance over women.”² Similarly, new models of women's ways of being need to be explored, one that would not suffer in silence any amount of oppression but one that would speak out against oppression and one that believes in dignity and self-esteem.

Therefore, instead of women and men looking at each other from opposite sides with mutual suspicion, hostility, fear, doubt and insecurity, they should discuss the issue together to forge an alliance, a true partnership that would struggle to rout out this sin. It can be learned from the women's movement that “Women have not been good in appealing to male solidarity whereas fundamentalists have been”³ which has given rise to some backlash against women, further compounding the problem. 2

The need to bring women and men together to work toward building healed, and healing, shalom communities makes the issue of violence against women not only a life issue but also a faith issue. As a faith community, the church begins this task with the affirmation of the image of God in women and men, their co-responsibility and co-privilege as stewards of all creation. It looks at Jesus and his solidarity with women as a model for all to emulate. It sees the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on women, men and children as a sign and gift from God for mutuality and equality. This is received with faith in and through baptism. Our justification by grace through faith proclaims that no one is to be excluded or downgraded through patriarchy and hierarchy. Therefore, the church sees violence against women as a sin against life, which should be named and condemned, as it disregards the image of God in the person affected, be it man or woman, boy or girl. “Violence does not only injure the physical, emotional and psychological integrity of the victim but also damages the humanity of those perpetrating violence. [The church believes that] each act of violence against women within the church injures the body of Christ and makes it impossible to be a community of women and men in a very fundamental way.”⁴

As a community called to liberate all who are oppressed, the church's imperative is to be involved in the liberation of men and women from a culture of violence to a celebration of the fullness of life and communion with one another. As a community enabled to play a prophetic role, the church needs to disturb the comfortable, and comfort the disturbed.

This requires enormous and concerted initiatives in awareness raising, value orientation, referral services, alternative options for victims and a great deal of determination and discipline. The church can no longer deal with women's issues as a distant topic “out there,” or as some external topic with no relevance to the church. As a faith community, the church should analyze what motivates a man to be violent, why women are unable to get out of the cycle of violence and how the church, as an instrument of God, could stop the perpetuation of violence. As a value-influencing faith community, the church has to make efforts to equip both men and women with values, so that they value not only themselves but also God's image in each other.

The church as a hope-sharing, care-giving, as well as value-influencing instrument of God, needs to offer hope and options for new life to victims, and opportunities for violators to

² “Needed: A New Model of Masculinity to Stop Violence against Girls and Women” by Ruth Finney Hayward, senior advisor, UNICEF, Katmandu, July 1997.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Gewalt gegen Frauen. Ein Bericht in zwei Teilen. Vorgelegt im Auftrag des Rates der EKD; Teil II, Gewalt gegen Frauen. Theologische Reflexion; Hannover, 1999, p. 3.

repent, reform and make amends. It also needs to ensure that future generations grow up to be a true communion of not only listeners to the word but also “doers” of the gospel! The global Lutheran communion can play a dynamic and leading role in addressing this issue.

The church as a global communion struggling to face this issue must also open itself to a self-analysis of its structure, policies, theology and the practices that govern it, so that its commitment to be a transformed and a truly transforming, witnessing community can be fully realized.

The Problem at a Glance

Violence affects women throughout their lives. In childhood, girls may be subject to child marriage, sexual abuse and female genital mutilation. Throughout their childhood, adolescence and adult life, women may be denied education, health care and even food, restriction of mobility, choice of education, job and life partner. Throughout the course of their lives, women may be subject to forced pregnancy, emotional, physical or sexual abuse by relatives, partners, spouses, or non-family members, or subjected to sexual harassment, trafficking or rape.

Domestic violence, i.e. violence occurring within the household, is the most widespread form of violence against women. Studies in thirty-five countries suggest that one-quarter to one-half or more of all women have been physically abused by a current or former partner or husband. It is the leading cause of injury to women that, for some, recurs almost every day leading, in some cases, to death.

Adolescent girls and young women experience violence disproportionately. Forty to 58 percent of sexual assaults are committed against girls aged 15 and younger, usually by family members or someone the victim knows.

Violence can have numerous negative consequences not only to women’s psychological well being, but also on women’s sexual and reproductive health, such as unwanted pregnancy, miscarriage, pelvic inflammatory disease, chronic pelvic pain, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS and infertility. Fear of domestic violence often prevents women from using contraceptive devices or asking their partners or husbands to use them.⁵

How Is Violence against Women Defined?

The term violence against women means

“Any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life.”⁶

This document tries to name and explore the overt as well as the covert forms of violence against women. It provides information on the accompaniment needed by victims to move

⁵ cf.: “Sexual and Reproductive Health Briefing Cards.” *Family Care International*. New York, 2000.

⁶ “Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration.” *Fourth World Conference on Women*. Beijing, September 1995, par. 113-115, pp. 73-74.

from victimization to survival and to full humanhood. It offers some positive responses that could be made to reduce violence. These are not prescriptions but open invitations to explore the process of naming the sin, affirming the fullness of life for the violated and opening up opportunities for education leading toward transformation. The appendices provide additional resources and information to those who suffer, and to those who want to help them.

Let us begin the process by asking: "Is there violence within the church?"

Priscilla Singh
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Department for Mission and Development
The Lutheran World Federation

Geneva, November 2000

1. NAMING THE SIN

Sin is a state of bondage that rules over and distorts human life. Sin is a turning away from God, which leads to sinful acts of control over, abuse of and violence against other people. Such acts are justified by the assumption that some are intended to dominate over others. For example, Gen 3:16b "...your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you" is often used to justify the control of men over women. But it should be remembered that this domination came after sin entered the world. It is a fallen state from which we need to redeem ourselves. We should not think that this is what God had intended as a consequence of sin! The churches often do not point out the two differing accounts of creation. Through popular interpretations of selected passages like Gen 3:16, the church has often been complicit with violence against women by either ignoring or condoning it. The church, therefore, must begin by confessing that violence against women is not only a sin out there in the world but that members within the church have at times themselves committed such sinful acts. So the church should begin with the confession that violence is a sin, and that we have sinned both in our actions and in our failure to act.

The church as a healing community has made attempts to deal with the issue of violence against women however sporadic, insignificant or inadequate they may have seemed. Some of them run safe, short-term shelter homes for women, counseling centers for violated women, or at least handle the issue in private as a problem within the family. Almost all of these activities of healing and affirmation are initiated by women and carried out as a voluntary service. These are signs of hope for all women who have, for so long, remained voiceless out of fear!

Open denouncement of violence against women from the pulpits, and by other educational instruments of the church, confession from the church of its inability to contain it, or to some extent of its complicity through its apathy and practices have not yet been forthcoming. The church, more often, has dealt with it "by minimizing, trivializing, invisibilising, or externalizing it."⁷ "...the churches and theology have to face the question today as to whether they might have preached the gospel, for centuries, in a way that contributed to men's proneness to violence, the powerlessness of women and girls, and society's tolerance of violence in the family."⁸ The church can begin this by explaining the plurality of contexts in the Scriptures and by emphasizing the need for us to transcend these limitations to elevate the centrality of the gospel message. Most importantly, it has to be confessed that there is also violence within the church, not only because of certain theological interpretations that are unjust to women and some policies and practices that do not allow for women's leadership but also because there is the reality of clergy abuse, the reality of abuse and control of a few women workers and the lack of will to deal with these issues in sensitive and just ways.

→ *Positive Action That Could Be Taken*

- *Express in public statements that all forms of violence are a sin that disregards the image of God both in the perpetrator as well as in the victim and that this should never be tolerated or excused.*

⁷ "The Context for Feminist Theologizing: Violence Against Women/Women Against Violence," by Corinne Scott, in: *Feminist Theology: Perspectives and Praxis*. Edited by Prasanna Kumari. Gurukul 1998, p. 349.

⁸ Gewalt gegen Frauen. Ein Bericht in zwei Teilen. Vorgelegt im Auftrag des Rates der EKD; Teil II, Gewalt gegen Frauen. Theologische Reflexion; Hannover, 1999, p. 5.

- *Inform members of the congregation about the reality of the various forms of violence against women in church and society, particular to the contexts.*
- *Develop policies and practices for holding perpetrators of abuse accountable in church and society.*
- *Set up a specific focus on the issue at a prescribed time each year, e.g., observe a "solidarity Sunday" with women.*
- *Appoint staff to address, redress and monitor violence against women, e.g., open up a full-time, well-funded women's cell in the church.*
- *Create vigil groups in congregations that inquire into reports of violence in their communities.*
- *Include the issue of "violence against women" in sermons, catechetical instructions and theological curricula.*
- *Initiate discussions on this issue in church's educational/vocational institutions.*
- *Make the church a safe place to which victims of violence can turn for support and healing.*

→ Additional Resources

Suggested Reading

No Longer a Secret. The Church and Violence against Women, by Aruna Gnanadason. 2d revised ed. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1997.

Women, Violence and Nonviolent Change, edited by Aruna Gnanadason, Musimbi Kanyoro, Lucia Ann McSpadden. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1996.

The Cry of Tamar, Violence against Women and the Church's Response, by Pamela Cooper-White. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.

***Your comments and suggestions are invited:
(see forwarding address at the end of the document)***

2. ACCOMPANIMENT OF VICTIMS

From Victimization to Survival and to Full Humanhood

Before coming to the aid of violated women, it is important to understand the different dimensions of violence. Personal violence is often treated as private and something to be dealt with within the family. Reality proves otherwise. Apart from affecting women physically and psychologically, it also affects their spirituality. When abused women seek alternative solutions, counseling or solace from spiritual leaders and institutions, the inadequate, ineffectual treatment meted out to them causes them to feel alone, betrayed and angry. They ask, "Where is God in my pain and what is the church for?"

PERSONAL VIOLENCE

Personal violence affects not only the women who endure it but also those around them in varied ways. Women often carry out the triple role of income earner, household manager and nurturer. Expectations of these roles mean they have to work long hours with less than the normal requirement of food, sleep and medical attention until they suffer from sheer exhaustion. If these women also become their spouses' punching bags, their lives become one of endless misery.

There are different forms of personal violence. The most obvious forms are physical and sexual abuse. But emotional or psychological abuse often can be equally, or even more, damaging with long lasting consequences.

- **Physical Abuse** - is harm inflicted in any way that leaves a physical mark or bruise on the body, e.g. beating with the hand or with objects, pulling out hair, causing cigarette burns, throwing the woman against a wall or down stairs, kicking, and so on, forced sterilization, forced abortion and female genital mutilation.
- **Sexual Abuse** - consists of any action, which uses a person for another's sexual gratification without their free consent. It can be of a person under someone's supervision. It can be with physical contact such as rape, incest, misconduct and harassment of colleagues or subordinates through touching, fondling, kissing, caressing, sexual intercourse (vaginal, anal or oral) or any activity that degrades the woman in order to sexually stimulate the perpetrator. It also can be without contact, through suggestive looks, obscene or flirtatious remarks, forcing women to view pornography or be the object of pornography, exposing genitals, obscene or anonymous telephone calls or stalking someone, and so on.
- **Emotional or Psychological Abuse** - Human beings need relationships for their sense of identity, belonging, and for a meaningful life. This need for relations, for mutuality and shared responsibility leads them to seek, sustain and invest in relationships. But if women are objectivized or manipulated into a situation of powerlessness this need is exploited and abused.

Such abuse could take the following forms:

Ignoring - pretending the woman does not exist—usually expressed through body language, e.g., in committee meetings, suggestions or proposals from women are ignored.

Rejection - expressing the wish that the woman did not exist, e.g., "I wish you were not my wife (my partner)."

Isolation - not being allowed the support of, or to have contact with, another person. Some marriages take young women out of supportive families to live with unsupportive in-laws, deny them information about their families, keep them locked up or confine them to limited areas.

Criticism - nagging, harassing, name calling, ridiculing, blaming and putting the woman down while alone or in front of others.

Threats - threatening to hurt or desert the woman, or hurting someone she loves, e.g. her children or other family members.

Corruption - using the woman to do something illegal, e.g., prostitution or selling drugs.

Re-victimization - blaming the woman for the hurt she experiences, e.g., blaming a widow for being the indirect cause of her husband's death through lack of prayer, not taking good care of him or being the "bad omen" that brought about his death. It is also blaming a victim of rape that it was her fault or that somehow she had asked for it through the way she was dressed, by being in the wrong place, or by not struggling and shouting enough. It also could be in the form of ostracism, or of forcing the victim to marry the rapist, and so on.

→ Positive Action That Could Be Taken

- *Establish and maintain short-term shelters for violated women in collaboration with congregations and specialized NGOs.*
- *Offer or initiate special training for the judiciary, medical personnel and police in not treating the victimized woman as a disgrace but seek justice as well as provide opportunities for rehabilitation to women and their children.*
- *Alert women to:*
 - *the psychological process they might go through—finding excuses for the violator; withdrawal of their complaint against the violator, or preferring to return to the abusive situation;*
 - *alternative solutions available, and through networks of solidarity; and*
 - *how to be effective communicators about their situations and/or as witnesses in legal proceedings.*
- *Open a "hot line" to respond to reports of violence.*
- *Create policies that would give directives to the clergy and laity and formulation of rules for stringent disciplinary actions against the perpetrator.*
- *Plan and allocate resources for training in counseling for lay as well as ordained women and men.*

→ Additional Resources

- “What You Can Do to Protect Yourself.” See **Appendix II a.**
- “Steps to Take When Someone Tells You Her Story of Victimization.” See **Appendix III D.**

Suggested Reading

Women and Rape, written in cooperation with Women’s Solidarity and the Law Society of Namibia.
Windhoek: Federation of Namibian Women, 1992.

Your comments and suggestions are invited:

3. TRANSFORMING CHURCH AND SOCIETY

3.1 STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

Human beings find meaning, purpose and a sense of identity through belonging to structures like family, community, ethnicity and religious institutions. These structures sometimes can become instruments of violence themselves. Despite this, women are expected to be the guardians of, and play roles in, these very same structures. Men also feel restricted by the roles they play therein. Structural violence often goes unnoticed and is collectively maintained and validated for the sake of order and stability. Characteristics of structural violence are:

- Victims can be individuals as well as groups or collectives.
- Law enforcers change but the structures remain the same.

Violence against women is deeply rooted in power relations between women and men.⁹ Power becomes abusive when a choice is made to use it to control women. Women "are socialized to believe that women are powerless and have no right to 'own' power. It has strong images of authority and we (women) do not like to be seen as authoritarian persons. It is sometimes distorted through church theology that upholds 'powerlessness' as a virtue of humanity and it contributes to the creation of a victim mentality in women."¹⁰ "Women are taught and often believe that violence may be deserved. In addition, many societies do little to stop or reduce violence or punish perpetrators, e.g., even where explicit laws against domestic violence exist, the problem is often neglected or trivialized by police and the courts."¹¹

This double standard perpetuated in and through the church is also a point of concern. The church holds on to moralistic principles that condemn and ostracize women if they are separated, divorced, single, unwed mothers, or prostitutes, without analyzing the system that contributes to these situations. On the other hand, men are not condemned even though they can also create or contribute to these situations.

Sexism perpetuates the belief that persons are either superior or inferior to one another on the basis of their biology. "Historically, sexism has maintained that persons of the male sex are inherently superior to persons of the female sex by nature, that is by the very order of things and it has acted in discriminatory ways to enforce this order. In a pattern analogous to racism, this prejudice classifies a group of human beings as deficient, ordains subordinate roles for them and denies them certain rights on the basis of personal physical and/or psychological characteristics alone. Just as racism assigns an inferior dignity to people on the basis of their skin color or ethnic heritage, so too on the basis of biological sex and its attendant functions, sexism considers women essentially less valuable than men, and labors mightily to keep them in their 'proper' social 'place.' In both *isms* bodily characteristics are made to count for the whole essence of the human being, so that the fundamental dignity of the person is violated."¹²

⁹ cf.: Gewalt gegen Frauen. Ein Bericht im Auftrag des Rates der EKD; Teil I, Hannover 1997, p. 14.

¹⁰ "Recognising and Naming Power," by Ranjini Wickramaratne-Rebera in *In God's Image*, Journal of Asian Women's Resource Centre for Culture and Theology, Vol. 17, No.1. Kuala Lumpur, 1998.

¹¹ "Sexual and Reproductive Health Briefing Cards," *Family Care International*, New York, 2000.

¹² *She Who Is, the Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*, by Elizabeth A. Johnson. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1998, p. 23.

Sexism is a multi-dimensional factor that fixes stereotyped roles for men and women. Particular role expectation denies girls or women the opportunity to study or choose their subject of study or work, confining them to limited jobs, specific roles or to a small geographical area. Both women and men are socialized from childhood into thinking this is normal and necessary to maintain order and stability in family and society. But gender division of labor assumes that men should have control over resources and decision making which leaves women with no power to negotiate. Sexism can be of different types.

1. **Androcentrism** (viewing the world from a male perspective). Women become objects rather than subjects. This can result in the following:
 - a. **Gynopia** - which is female invisibility. The absence of women's stories can be seen in the Scriptures, e.g., the Gospels quote Mary Magdalene as the only, or one of the women, who saw the resurrected Jesus. But when Paul talks of it he says in I Cor 15:5-6. "...and he [Jesus] appeared to Peter and then to the Twelve. After that he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time!" The first appearance to women is completely erased!
 - b. **Misogyny** - Women are often hated for being the cause of sin. For example, a quote from one of the church fathers, "Women are the gateways for evil." Androcentrism reveals itself in the form of sexism in language, e.g., the term mankind is used instead of humankind, chairman instead of chairperson, brethren instead of brothers and sisters. It also sets rules that exclude women from leadership roles, e.g., ordination only for men as the apostles were all men.
2. **Overgeneralization**. This occurs when a study uses all male subjects or all female subjects but presents the findings in general terms, e.g., in the French language, even if 10 million women are gathered, if a baby boy is in their midst, they would be referred to in the masculine rather than the feminine gender. In French, the term human rights is still "droits de l'homme" i.e. man's rights! The church still names the miracle "The Feeding of the Five Thousand" even though the text reads, "The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children" Mt 14:21.
3. **Gender Insensitivity**. A man is considered head of the household even though he is unemployed or unproductive and it is the woman who provides the main means of support to the family.
4. **Double Standards**. The term man and wife is used in marriage ceremonies instead of husband and wife or man and woman. If a man is married, he becomes the head of the household. He is called "the primary earner" and the woman is often considered as a supplementary earner.
5. **Sex Appropriateness**. People who differ from the prescribed gender roles are seen as deviants or problematic people. If a mother goes to work, the question often asked is "How will the children adjust and manage if you go to work?" It is never asked of the father! The assumption is that child-care is a maternal responsibility and not a paternal responsibility.

6. **Familism.** Giving primacy only to women's traditional roles within the family is termed familism. It is taken for granted that family is the smallest unit rather than a collection of individuals and that family is the prime and sole responsibility of women. All adjustments have to be made by her to give utmost priority to her family.
7. **Sexual Dichotomism.** Treating the sexes as two distinct groups with different human attributes is sexual dichotomism. For example, the strong emphasis on men as rational beings and women as emotional beings, men as strong and women as weak beings define the expected nature of men and women.
8. **Tokenism.** This is when for the sake of appearance or in the name of gender representation, a token gesture is made in order to be politically correct. For example, one woman is ordained in the church or elected to the church bodies. Most of the time, due to lack of presence or support from other women, the woman tends to be withdrawn, careful rather than challenging, often adapting herself to the male system and even behaves like men in order to be accepted by them.

→ *Positive Action That Could Be Taken*

- *Initiate discussion in church institutions using gender as an analytical tool to understand the issues of role stereotyping, establishment of hierarchy and patriarchy, undervaluation of women, and the issue of power in gender relationships;*
- *Lead discussions on the concept of power and authority as a vehicle for change and renewal and not for control over others, e.g., Jesus' way of power sharing, power giving, relinquishing of power and authority for salvific action on the cross are strong models of power for, power within and power in community. Understanding and modeling these would empower women, generating shared wisdom and action;*
- *Train women to be released from concepts of self-sacrifice, to own power that would lead to commitment to action;*
- *Revise constitutions to be "gender just"; bring gender into the agenda of all planning and activities and not treat gender issues as only women's issues;*
- *Make policy resolutions that enable women to study theology with the same provisions offered to male students be it scholarships, opportunities for higher studies or for specialization;*
- *Allocate job opportunities equal to men's with equal remuneration;*
- *Provide fair and equal chances for upward mobility in the leadership of church institutions;*
- *Offer gender-training sessions for youth to work in their youth groups to deal with issues of violence, to reflect on and reevaluate social and traditional patterns;*
- *Create a men's network for discussing the new models of male image:*
 - *by deconstructing the macho image and emphasizing the need for accepting the expressions of emotions of love, pain and tears and for sharing in nurturing roles as a good human response and not something that men should be ashamed of;*
 - *by deconstructing the feminine image of humble, obedient self-giving, sacrificial mother model to that which accepts selfhood, affirms one's dignity, seeks self-actualization and clear articulation of thinking; and*
 - *by enabling discussions dealing with male anger through non-violent means.*

- *Create discussion groups in theological seminaries:*
 - *to analyze and prepare for the challenges of new life and faith experiences, and*
 - *to reflect critically on their own cultures, traditions, assumptions and modes of behavior.*

➔ **Additional Resources**

Suggested Reading

The Cry of Tamar, Violence against Women and the Church's Response, by Pamela Cooper-White. Chap. I, "Power and Violence against Women." Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995, pp. 17-42.

The Power We Celebrate, Women's Stories of Faith and Power, edited by Musimbi Kanyoro and Wendy S. Robins, Geneva: LWF Publications, 1992.

- How Men Could Assist in Ending Male Violence against Women. **Appendix IV**
- Example of a Young Lawyer Who Works against Girl Trafficking. **Appendix IV A.**
- The "White Ribbon Campaign." **Appendix IV B.**

Your comments and suggestions are invited:

3.2 CULTURAL VIOLENCE

“The persistence of cultural and social norms, traditional beliefs and negative gender stereotypes was the most frequently cited obstacle to the achievement of gender equality.”¹³

Culture is the sum of values, attitudes, beliefs, gender relations, child-rearing practices, ways of governing, norms, and so forth. It is the economic, political, social, and spiritual organization of a people's existence. But our contemporary cultural lens negates all this. Today, the concept of culture has been loosened from its moorings and invested with meanings that are problematic at the very least.

Some cultures have evolved from living in a context over a period of several years, some through migration, trade, colonization and, lately, globalization. In the context of the church, the Deuteronomical Code reinforces local cultures that are detrimental to women, e.g., the concept of purity, pollution, and of women being unclean because of the issue of blood (Lev 15:19-31). Different treatment of boys and girls is strengthened. Cultural motives or systems can cause violence, e.g., female feticide and female infanticide, conscious neglect of the health and education of girl children, female genital mutilation and so on. Further, the colonization that took place in 85 percent of the world brought Christianity in western form and has erased many healthy local cultures. Biblical texts are still used by a few to perpetuate the ideologies of racism, sexism, and classism.

→ *Positive Action That Could Be Taken*

- *Although a tremendous task, analyze the anomalies that exist in local cultures, imposed cultures and biblical cultures as well as their interpretation, which is puzzling for those who want to be faithful and obedient to the Scriptures.*
- *Lead Bible-study discussions with feminist interpretations on 2 Kings 4:1-7, Num 27:1-11, 1 Cor 14:33-36, 1 Tim 2:2-12.*

a) **Ritual Abuse**

Ritual abuse is any abuse carried out as a traditional practice, occult belief or Satanic worship, e.g., temple prostitution, sacrifice of infants, and so on. In some regions, widows are obliged to follow rituals, life-long procedures, specific dressing and code of conduct that are harmful to their psyche. In India, for example, women have to stop wearing “sindhors,” red marks on the parting of their hair and bindis (dots) on their foreheads, or turmeric paste and flowers (all symbols of their auspiciousness). When women are widowed, they have to remove necklaces tied at the time of marriage by their husband and they are socially ostracized from actively participating in auspicious ceremonies even in their own families. Widowed women are also prevented from inheriting their husband's properties, possessions and dues from their workplace. In some cultures, it is expected that they be inherited along with their husband's properties by his brothers, having life-long dependence on others without any freedom of self-determination.

¹³ “Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action,” Report of the Secretary General, E/CN.6/2000/PC/2. New York: United Nations. 19 January 2000, p. 13.

b) Female Genital Mutilation

Excision of the female sex organ is supposed to protect women against being oversexed, to avoid temptation, suspicion of disgrace and to preserve their chastity. "Two million girls a year are mutilated through female genital mutilation (FGM). Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia and the Sudan account for 75 percent of all cases."¹⁴ Besides the shock and pain it causes, the consequences of FGM are even greater. Severe loss of blood, blood poisoning and tetanus could be immediate aftereffects. Inflammation of the urinary tract and kidneys, inability to control urination, accumulation of menstrual blood internally as a result of sealing off the private parts with scar tissue also is possible. Formation of kidney and bladder stones resulting in infertility, the formation of cysts and benign tumors can also occur. Sexual dysfunction can result from severe pain and trauma during intercourse. There is abnormally prolonged and obstructed labor during childbirth which might result in stillborn babies.

Research on the psychological and sociological effects on women as well as the effect on the newborn child is still insufficient. Most women are made to believe that FGM is a religious obligation, though the Holy Scriptures do not mention it. The cultural pressure on parents to have their children circumcised is so great that even the most enlightened and educated women subject their girl children to unnecessary pain and torture through FGM. Traditionally, it is rationalized as a rite of passage and an initiation ceremony into womanhood. It is misconstrued that this would increase fertility, protection of the uterus, cleanliness and purity of the genitalia. FGM is an important source of income for professional circumcisers and augments the dowry of a girl. All these justifications work against its abolition.

c) Honor Killing

Honor is a person's self worth in his/her own eyes and that person's value in the eyes of his or her social group. "Honor becomes honor only when the claim from inside and the reputation from outside coincide."¹⁵ "The purpose of honor is to serve as a sort of social rating which entitles a person to interact in specific ways with his/her equals, superiors and subordinates, according to the prescribed cultural cues of the society."¹⁶ More than the honor of the individual, it is the collective honor of the community that is held more important.

The honor of the male is based on the sexual exclusiveness and sexual purity of the women related to him (mother, wife, daughters and sisters) not on his own sexual purity. Women, therefore, are expected to be submissive, passive, timid, dependent and docile and are honored if they are so. Hisako Kinukawa calls it a "culture of shame" rather than the "honor culture" because honor is gained by avoiding disgraceful conduct. Women are punished if they stray from expectations of their role or societal norms. They are tortured or killed to redeem the honor of the family, clan, caste group or community. They also are punished to teach others a lesson not to cross the lines of control set by the society that controls them. Since the Taliban took over power in Afghanistan in 1996, for example, women have to wear burqua (clothing to cover their bodies except their eyes) and have been beaten and stoned in public for not having dressed properly, even in the simple case of not having the mesh over

¹⁴ "The Progress of Nations," p. 7, Sources FGM: Nahid Toubia, January 1996 update from her study, *Female Genital Mutilation: A Call for Global Action*. Revised ed. New York: Women Ink, 1995. Population: United Nations Population Division, *World Population Prospects: The 1994 Revision*. 1997

¹⁵ *Women and Jesus in Mark: A Japanese Feminist Perspective*, by Hisako Kinukawa. New York: Orbis Books, 1994, p. 11.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

their eyes. One woman was beaten to death by an angry mob of fundamentalists for accidentally exposing her arm while driving. Another was stoned to death for trying to leave the country with a man who was not a relative. Women are not allowed to work or even go out in public without a male relative.

→ Positive Action That Could Be Taken

- *Lead Bible-study discussions on the story of Tamar (2 Samuel 13).*
- *Prohibit the misuse of religious arguments to perpetuate FGM, honor killing and ritual abuse.*
- *Commit ourselves to clarify the misinterpretation of religion and to teach the true principles of Christianity with regard to FGM, honor killing and ritual abuse.*
- *Establish a family tribunal comprised of women and men to settle family disputes.*
- *Review family laws in the light of Christian principles and human rights.*
- *Initiate dialogue between religious leaders and medical personnel on religious and medical viewpoints concerning FGM and ritual abuse and formulate strategies to address these issues.*
- *Encourage religious leaders and scholars to emphasize that these practices are not an injunction found in the Holy Scriptures.*
- *Exchange women's desk reports, share experiences and monitor instances of FGM, honor killing and ritual abuse as an ongoing task of the church.*

d) Sexuality and Marriage

Marriage is viewed as a holy, God-ordained institution. This view is valid and effective if both persons involved in marriage treat it that way. But many men still defend male leadership in marriage rather than mutuality. Marriage vows and the sermons in marriage ceremonies in most cases are reflective of these characteristics which form the basis of an unequal relationship. The view that women's bodies are for men's enjoyment, that women's primary responsibility is to procreate and nurture the family, despite all odds, lays a heavy burden on women's shoulders. The taboo that sex should not be discussed in public, women's illiteracy and lack of knowledge of their own bodies, add to these problems. Moreover, unclear ethical implications of unwanted pregnancy, abortion, female infanticide and family-planning methods leave women with guilt, shame, societal disapproval and severe punishment.

→ Positive Action That Could Be Taken

- *Develop a theological approach to the concept of marriage, family and sexuality by taking into consideration the changing reality of life situations.*
- *Arrange a one-day retreat in all congregations in the LWF communion to include dialogue on mutuality and respect for people's dignity.*
- *Enable pastors to discuss the concept of marriage, family, sexuality, relationships, and premarital and extramarital relationships in contemporary contexts.*
- *Lead Bible-study discussions on Gen 2:24, Mt 19:5-6, Mk 10:7-8, Eph 5:30-31, I Cor 7:1-4.*

The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children

Children who witness violence in the home are as much affected by it, as are the women who endure it. They might even accept the situation as normal. In this way, boys learn to use violence as a method of conflict resolution and to get what they want by imitating a violent father. Children often learn abusive behavior from their own family and become violators leading to the perpetuation of a culture of violence. "Children of abused mothers are six times more likely to attempt suicide and 50 percent more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol. More than half of abused mothers beat their children. Fifty percent of all homeless women and children are fugitives from domestic violence."¹⁷

Disturbing research shows that 100 percent of serial killers either were abused physically themselves or had witnessed it. Girl children tend to accept battering as part of what women have to go through. They may equate love with pain and violence and tend to become involved with abusive men. A history of family violence is one of the greatest predictors of ulterior juvenile delinquency. Cycles of violence are self-perpetuating, grow through children, multiply and further escalate.

Your comments and suggestions are invited:

¹⁷ "Ties that Bind: Domestic Violence against Women," by Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, in *Women Resisting Violence: Spirituality for Life*, edited by Mary John Mamanzan, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Elsa Tamez, J. Shannon Clarkson, Mary C. Grey and Letty Russell. New York, 1996, p. 39.

3.3 EFFECTS OF ECONOMIC GLOBALIZATION AND MODERNIZATION

Economic globalization is intensifying the world's disparities. The transfer of financial and natural resources, local expertise and knowledge is escalating. The transfer of power and decision making from nation states to multinationals is creating more losers than winners at a speed never seen before. Globalization of production has increased the feminization of jobs particularly sectors such as food processing, garment manufacturing and assembly-line work. Such jobs do not equip women to develop any particular skill, resulting only in the routine mass production of parts, devoid of creativity. Women work for long hours in what are called "sweat shops." Subcontracting leads to deregulation, giving rise to jobs that offer no fixed incentive or income. Together with these disadvantages, women have to deal with the extremes of poverty in which they live while fending for their family. As a community, their vulnerability to further exploitation increases.

The changing economic system has expanded the role of women as providers. The migration of men to cities in search of a livelihood has left women to fend not only for themselves but also for entire households with no hope of respite. Women and single parents now lead many households. But women still are expected to continue voluntary work in church and the public sphere. Inadequately trained women, with no bargaining capacity, are misled by visions of better prospects and enter the labor market as migrant laborers of their own free will, or are forced into it in their role as family provider.

In this vulnerable situation, women often are traumatized, sexually abused, held in bondage in the countries they migrate to with no access to the outside world and without the adequate remuneration formerly agreed on. Their vulnerability, lack of knowledge about procedures, lack of outside support, and their employer's power keep them in abject misery and fear. They often have to put in long working hours. They are denied time off and are deprived of proper food, travel documents, money and outside contact. They are left unregistered with the appropriate authorities in an alien land, unable to understand the local language. They live in constant fear of arrest, fines, imprisonment, or deportation to a worse situation.

Transformation of agricultural land into industrial areas has displaced the labor of peasant and indigenous women. Mass displacement of people with inadequate or no compensation and no guidance or knowledge to invest money for a sustainable livelihood leads to women bearing the brunt. Less access to traditional and natural resources and lack of training in appropriate technologies marginalize them further from seeking new job outlets.

→ Positive Action That Could Be Taken

- *Encourage congregations to develop an analytical tool to understand how economic globalization affects local communities and become involved in campaigns calling for the cancellation of debt.*
- *Intensify training for women in locally appropriate technologies.*
- *Keep supportive structures in place for single mothers, divorced and separated women and widows to help them with employment.*

a) Trafficking of Women and Girls

Trafficking of women has become the third highest income earner after the illegal arms trade and drug trafficking. This is done either through forced abduction or with the knowledge of "middle men," the family or even individuals themselves who are forced by circumstances to seek better economic opportunities for themselves and their families. Women and girls frequently are treated by officials as offenders, are charged with illegal entry or given no reason for their arrest. They are fined and, if unable to pay, are imprisoned or sent to an unspecified detention center for an indefinite term without judicial hearing and with no access to counsel. Alternatively, they are left at the border of a foreign country with no means of returning safely to their homeland. This leads to re-arrest, detention and possible torture by certain officials.

Statistics show that more and more children are becoming involved in this insidious Mafia-controlled industry that often colludes with local police. Anyone trying to intervene places himself or herself in a life-threatening situation. Ten million children worldwide are affected. Two million are trafficked across borders each year. Every day, one million in Asia alone are abused. Trafficking is carried out clandestinely or with legitimate travel documents, a three-month tourist visa or through bogus marriages.

b) Sex Tourism

Sex tourism also has become a booming industry. "In 1999, 8.5 million tourists came to Thailand. It is commonly estimated that 70 percent of the tourists are men travelling alone, 49 percent come specifically for sex with children. If this is true, approximately 49 percent of tourists come for sex."¹⁸ They come mostly from East Asia, the United States of America and Europe. A few travel agencies, working together, offer this type of inexpensive tour. Economic deprivation in countries made poor through political and ethnic upheaval leave women with little option but to sell their bodies and those of their family for survival. But their own families and societies stigmatize them even further for it.

c) Rape as a Weapon

"Rape is the forcible entry into the most private, most vulnerable and arguably most sacred parts of the human body, and, as such, it is a spiritual crime as well as a physical one."¹⁹ "Rape is all the hatred, contempt and oppression of women in this society concentrated into one act."²⁰ Even if it is not followed by physical battering there is a death threat attached. This message, that women are objects to be controlled by those who have the brute strength, position and social status, or who are considered of a higher class or race, is terrifying.

Rape is increasingly being used as a weapon of war and in situations of conflict, as a political weapon of repression and in the torture of prisoners. It is also used for gratification and dominance. It is considered an effective method to defile women, who are seen as men's property, and to defile the purity of the race thereby producing offspring so conquerors might multiply. "Gang" rape, or community rape, is a particularly brutal form of sexual abuse. It does not always take place as a one-time event and often leads to re-victimization. In some countries, marital rape is now considered to be violence punishable by law.

¹⁸ Newsletter of *Rahab Ministries*, Bangkok, March 2000.

¹⁹ *The Cry of Tamar, Violence against Women and the Church's Response*, by Pamela Cooper-White. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995, p. 82.

²⁰ *Against Rape*, by Andra Medea and Kathleen Thompson, New York: Noonday Press, 1974, p. 11.

→ Additional Resource

- “Understanding Rape.” Appendix III C

→ *Positive Action That Could Be Taken*

- *Churches, NGO's and government officials in the countries concerned need to collaborate to highlight these issues, monitor governments taking punitive action against the perpetrators, and hold them accountable.*
- *Highlight the issue in local newspapers to build up a “resistance” network.*
- *Make statements that there is absolutely no excuse for rape, be it alcoholism, drug abuse, temptation or temporary loss of control.*
- *Follow up on instances of rape to ensure that legal action takes place, and the victim receives adequate support to overcome the trauma.*

d) Invasive Technologies

Because of the preference for male children, sex pre-selection through genetic manipulation is used. Harmful pills are distributed. Birth-control methods are tested on ignorant and innocent women in poorer countries, with or without their knowledge, in order to control population or to test the efficacy of new methods and drugs. Women's bodies are put under the control of partners, families, states and religious teachings, even though it is women themselves who bear the burden of unwanted pregnancy, abortion, having to live with pain, guilt, and whatever its outcome for the rest of their lives.

→ *Positive Action That Could Be Taken*

- *Women must be educated and given the privilege to make informed choices about pregnancy, birth control and how many children they have.*

e) Media

Negative images of women and stereotyped portrayals of them have increased in some places. There is a lack of coordinated effort to improve and change the status of women within the media and information industry. Much exposure to violence through the media has not only desensitized humankind to the horrors of violence but has also created a culture of violence. Children from affluent societies not only imbibe this culture through television, they are actively initiated into committing hundreds of symbolic acts of violence every hour playing video games. “The use of the Internet to traffic women and sell pornography has aggravated the exploitation of women. The lack of mechanisms to regulate the use of the Internet has worsened this situation. While the issue of pornography and exploitation of women has always been there, it is now more difficult to monitor and curb these activities. The targeting of women and girls through pornography, sex tourism and the sex trade has been exacerbated by electronic communications. The sex trade can now use Web sites for their portrayal of women, with capacity to reach many more people.

In the UN European region, the result is an increasing number of women-hating Web sites; this, and the use of flaming and stalking, tend to dissuade women in these parts of the globe from using the Net."²¹ Of the 3.5 million Web sites, 23,000 have already been detected as advocating sex with children.

→ Positive Action That Could Be Taken

- *Monitor Web sites periodically as a cooperative initiative of local communities and congregations.*
- *Develop a critical approach as part of women, men and youth group activities to the stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.*

Your comments and suggestions are invited:

²¹ "Alternative Assessment of Women and Media Based on NGO Reviews of Beijing Platform for Action," pp. 38-39, coordinated by Isis International-Manila on behalf of *Women Action 2000*.

3.4 ASSUMPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF THE CHURCH

a) Patriarchal Characteristics of the Church

The structure of the church is modeled on hierarchy and patriarchy within which it is difficult to experience the fullness of life offered by Christ to all. Patriarchy is a controversial term. It is a complex system maintained by religion, politics, economics and society allowing "male supremacy that supports male dominance in every unit of society and engenders a hierarchical power structure and rule of 'elite males.' This means the subordination of non-elite males too but non-elite males are superior to non-elite women and subjugate them. It is also true that elite women can subordinate non-elite men but 'elite' women, if there can be such, can never be equal or superior to elite men."²² Because of this ideology, there is the possibility and reality that even women can be dominant and segregational. It would be good for men and women to understand this mechanism to avoid misconceptions of each other.

b) Church Practices

- **Language about God shapes the thinking and life orientation** not only of the corporate faith community but also of the individual members. "As the focus of absolute trust, the holy mystery of God undergirds and implicitly gives direction to all of a believing person's enterprises, principles, choices, system of values and relationships.... While officially it is rightly and consistently said that God is spirit and so beyond identification with either male or female sex, yet the daily language of preaching, worship, catechesis and instruction conveys a different message." The images of God used by the church are mostly male: father, king, lord, and so on. "Therefore each and every word about God must be analyzed to see if it speaks of God and not of the one who speaks and interprets God; whether it speaks of the attributes and the Divine Mercy of God or of the power of the one who uses the language. Effort needs to be made however difficult it might prove to be, to move beyond gender, toward the divine mystery of God."²³
- **The maleness of Jesus and the preference of the male disciples** have been set as standards for male clergy, apostolic succession and leadership in church. This needs to be reviewed.
- **The concept of Jesus as victim/sacrifice** lays a heavy burden on women's shoulders. This burden "...becomes even heavier through a tradition of discipleship focussing on self-sacrifice, self-denial, willingness to suffer, humility and service. Some women socialized in Christianity who suffer from violence tend to identify with Jesus as sacrificed victim. In their suffering, they can feel close to him renouncing the possibility of actively resisting their suffering. ... An unquestioned following of instructions leading to self-denial, service and submission to men by women, further encourages the perpetrators to continue to inflict violence and strengthens the structures that continue to create new victims."²⁴ Therefore, "thinking of Jesus as victim/sacrifice can reinforce structures of violence and tie the victim to their role as victim."²⁵ "Jesus' crucifixion does not sanctify suffering. It remains a witness to the horror of violence done to another...."

²² *Women and Jesus in Mark - A Japanese Feminist Perspective*, by Hisako Kinukawa. New York: Orbis Books, 1994, p. 10.

²³ *She Who Is. The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*, by Elizabeth A. Johnson. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1992, pp. 4-5.

²⁴ "Gewalt gegen Frauen. Ein Bericht in zwei Teilen. Vorgelegt im Auftrag des Rates der EKD; Teil II, Gewalt gegen Frauen. Theologische Reflexion; Hannover 1999, p. 20.

²⁵ *Ibid.* p. 21.

It is not a model of how suffering should be borne but a witness to God's desire that no one should have to suffer such violence again. The resurrection, the realization that the Christ was present to the disciples and is present to us, transformed but never justified the suffering and death experience."²⁶

- **Paul, more than Jesus**, has become the norm setter in fixing roles and demarcation for women's code of conduct. It is Paul's stricture for women to be silent that is used as the norm rather than Jesus giving the woman with the issue of blood the option to speak in public. Further, preferred texts have not been put in the context of the time nor have the persons they were addressing been defined. They have been used out of context to be made normative.
- **Biblical literalism** is adopted by most Christians as the only way they could remain faithful to God's calling. This makes it difficult to explain the "texts of terror" in the Bible like that of Tamar, the androcentric translations, the androcentric composition of texts, the patriarchal formation of the Canon and tradition texts, patriarchal history of effects and theological attenuation of misogynist effects.²⁷ Church teachings should analyze how to deal with the theological inconsistencies and theological frozenness that does not thaw to accommodate the changing contexts in which people live, the diverse cultures' change in values and focus, and the particular expectations of people in need.
- **Theology**. Some aspects of traditional theology tend to condition women to a life of suffering, sacrifice and servitude. This has led to an understanding of suffering as a God-sent blessing for personal edification and for atonement of other's sins. "A misrepresentation of God sending his only son to suffer and die has been used to justify any unjust suffering as permissible, since this was the reward given to the Son of God."²⁸ Such a theology has silenced the victim forcing them to endure their pain. "We know that projecting the cross is not true to its Christian origins unless it means a commitment to an Easter of new and life-bearing beginnings, an Easter of dignity and strength, an affirmation of life and a heritage of bonding and community."²⁹ The model of servant leadership has not been well taught in the churches. We have among the leadership, therefore, good leaders who understand power and who use it effectively as well as those who are authoritarian and who abuse power, or servants who only want to serve others, or pseudo servants who refuse to claim their own power. Women tend to fall into the final two categories. From the perspective of violated women and children of sexual abuse, the concept of God as omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient also raises faith problems. They feel guilty because God has seen everything, they feel angry and betrayed because the all-powerful God did not come to their aid. So either they denounce God or feel betrayed. The church has to bear in mind all these dimensions of difficulties before offering an appropriate accompaniment to victims.
- **Lectionary**. The church's lectionary focuses more on the central actors and major themes of the Bible that do not highlight women's leadership and that have already been

²⁶ "The Transformation of Suffering: A Biblical and Theological Perspective" in *Christianity, Patriarchy and Abuse*. Ed. Joanne Carlson Brown and Carole R. Bohn, New York: Pilgrim, 1989, p. 145.

²⁷ *Feminist Interpretation - The Bible in Women's Perspective*, by Luise Schottroff, Silvia Schroer and Marie-Theres Wacker. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1998, pp. 153-160.

²⁸ *Women Resisting Violence: Spirituality for Life*. Edited by Mary John Mannarzan, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Elsa Tamaz, J. Shannon Clarkson, Mary C. Grey and Letty M. Russell. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1996, pp. 167-168.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

minimized in the biblical narratives. This may even indirectly increase the marginalization of women, "Without access to the stories, however ambiguous, the church is poorer. We don't have all the stories we need to make our lives, as individuals and as churches. All of us, women and men, may begin to believe that women have always been silent in and marginal to the story of God's relationship with people, and that the present and the future can only either continue this pattern from the past or make a dramatic and wrenching break from it."³⁰

➤ Liturgies

"Women have been and continue to be strengthened by the Gospel freedom and equality embodied in the liturgy and by the hope of triumph of life over death it proclaims. At the same time, women know that the Church in its liturgy has usually promised more than it has delivered. While affirming the baptismal unity and equality of all Christians, the liturgy has often recognized only leadership gifts of men."³¹ Our liturgies need to give room for the sharing of life experiences, often considered as emotional and therefore of less importance. Women, being considered as "emotional" beings are not in a position to contribute their rich and diverse liturgical expressions for use in main worship services. Their use has been confined to their own groups. This rich resource, if heeded, certainly would enhance the worship experience for all.

Besides the nature of church structure, theological understandings and teachings that create and validate male supremacy, the church also has often been silent over, or kept private, the issue of violence against women. It has, thereby, unwittingly colluded in its perpetuation:

- by letting interpretations and teachings persist that have often made women the cause of sin, legitimizing their downgrading, and denial of the mandate to be equals;
- by adopting a male-centered, patriarchal and hierarchical model that is detrimental to the full use of the God-given potentials of women to be co-partners in the mission and ministries of the church;
- by prescribing to women how they should dress, behave, what their appropriate roles are, thereby confining them to limited and specified roles;
- by not being appreciative of the gifts that women, the largest worshipping community, bring to the church: their time, talents and tithes. Instead, the church has denied them equal opportunities for leadership, decision making and ordination.

The church clearly has to confess to women and men that they are created in the image of God with co-responsibility and equal privilege of stewardship of all creation. The clear solidarity of Jesus with women from all walks of life, and especially his concern for those who were marginalized, his going out of his way to affirm women, transcending traditions and norms, gives us the mandate to be in solidarity with women, like Jesus! The fact that women were in solidarity with Jesus not only in his life and ministry but also in his suffering and death and even beyond that, resurrection, emphasizes women's faithfulness that needs to be affirmed and commended. The first appearance of the resurrected Jesus to women also is

³⁰ "Foreword: Telling Stories," by Marjorie Procter-Smith, in *Remembering the Women*, compiled and annotated by J. Frank Henderson. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1999, p. viii.

³¹ *Women Invisible in Church and Theology*, by Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Mary Collins. Concilium: 182 (6/1985): Feminist Theology. Edinburgh: T&T Clark Ltd., pp. 51-52.

proof that Jesus wanted women to share in the good news! The fact that Paul commends women's contribution and calls them "co-workers" enables us to encourage women to be part of the diverse ministries of the church.

→Positive Action That Could Be Taken

- *Include women's perspectives in theology highlighting the leadership of women in biblical times and offering alternative interpretations of the biblical texts, e.g., by:*
 - *reclaiming and renaming the image of God from a patriarchal God-Father-Judge image to other models in the Scriptures as well as from diverse cultures and one's own experiences, e.g.:*
 - *Images of God as mother: Num 11:12-3, Deut 32:18, Ps 131:2, Isa 42:14, 46:3-4, 49:15, 66:9. As midwife: Ps 22:9-10, Jer 49:15. As lover, friend, woman who cooks: Mt 13:33, Lk 13:20-21. As a mother bear: Hos 13:8. As one who shelters humanity under a warm wing: Mt 23:27, Lk 13:34-35, Ruth 2:12; Ps 17:8-9, 36:7, 57:1, 61:4, 91:4;*
 - *rediscovering the gender-neutral term for God like YHWH and the "I am" sayings to find grounding in faith. Women and men in ministry: Acts 18:1-28; 1 Cor 16:19, Rom 16:3-5.*
- *Highlight Jesus' empowerment of women to speak and witness in public transcending norms and boundaries, the positive part women played as a financial source, their brave solidarity with, and their faithfulness to Jesus.*
- *Highlight Paul's commendation of women as co-workers and Gal 3:28, which emphasizes the end to differences and our oneness in Christ.*
- *Reinterpret and review Bible texts in the light of our present contexts.*
- *Offer theological grounding of Jesus not only as a victim/sacrifice but also as the one who rose victorious contributing to the overcoming of violence. One way would be to highlight the fact that God identified God's self with Jesus Christ, as victim and a sacrifice and therefore is on the side of those victimized and oppressed. The fact that Jesus' resurrection was a victory over his victimization can free women from a one-sided identification with the suffering Jesus Christ. They can, instead, identify with the victorious Christ! It encourages them to step out of the vicious circle of violence, fear, thought patterns and habits related to their role as victims. According to Paul, Christ freed human beings to be free, not to suffer.*
- *The fact that God wants life for the crucified and makes this possible would give the message to women who suffer from violence that God also wants them to have life, a good life. The biblical understanding of life is not restricted to mere survival but to life in all its fullness, a good life together with the other creatures in freedom, peace, joy, love and justice.³²*
- *Include in our baptismal and catechetical instructions the issue of violence so as to equip women and men to handle real-life situations.*
- *Revise the lectionary. "To come to a clearer sense of the future as a church, we need all the stories we can gather, the painful and difficult ones as well as the beautiful and inspiring ones. Only when we have all the stories can we the church begin to see ourselves as a whole people."³³ This would help women, men, youth and children to live*

³² cf.: Gewalt gegen Frauen. Ein Bericht in zwei Teilen. Vorgelegt im Auftrag des Rates der EKD; Teil II, Gewalt gegen Frauen. Theologische Reflexion; Hannover 1999, p. 26.

³³ "Foreword: Telling Stories," by Marjorie Procter-Smith, in *Remembering the Women*, compiled and annotated by J. Frank Henderson. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1999, p. viii.

and witness in the midst of the challenging contexts of the world. "The interpretative principles guiding the choices of the lectionary must consider, fundamentally, the biblical texts about women which are included and those which are excluded, where in the Church year they are found, and what the convergence of the three texts seems to imply."³⁴ Often, direct references to women in biblical texts are there either to describe women as a problem that humankind should be aware of, e.g., Eve, and the Samaritan woman. Or they are an exemplary exception, like Mary, the mother of Jesus.

- *The lectionary could be revised by:*

- *uplifting the first creation story (Gen 1:27-28) which signifies not only equality in creation but co-privilege and co-responsibility as stewards of all creation, instead of the second story where woman is seen only as a helpmate to man (most often interpreted as a subordinated position and also as the cause of sin and suffering and therefore to be subordinated);*
- *including exemplary leadership like that of Miriam, Deborah, Esther and Abigail to highlight the need and relevance of women's leadership;*
- *rediscovering the image of Mary, the mother of Jesus, not only as a pious, obedient, submissive young woman but also as a young woman who could consent to God's call without permission from her betrothed or her family, submitting herself to play the key role in God's saving action. She could be portrayed as someone who could understand and analyze the socio-political context and as someone who could sing a radical revolutionary song.*

- *Revise liturgies by:*

- *incorporating in our liturgical commemorations of the passion of Jesus the liturgical act of the woman disciple who gives Jesus a Messianic anointing with precious oil (Mt 26:6-13, Mk 14:3-9). "Over the protests of the male disciples, Jesus praises the woman's act, and promises that it will be told in her memory wherever the gospel is proclaimed. However, by the time the gospels were written down, the woman's name had already been forgotten. It is important to note that the context and the content of the story are thoroughly liturgical—she performs a significant and readily recognizable liturgical act, that of anointing. And Jesus' promise to her is a liturgical one, involving proclamation and remembering."³⁵ It is important to take care not to confuse her identity with that of Mary of Bethany or with Mary Magdalene and to see that the church keeps the promise that Jesus made to this woman that she would be remembered;*
- *including feminine as well as other images of God in liturgy, hymns and other church publications;*
- *revising the liturgy and hymns and the language to be gender-just;*
- *giving equal importance to and incorporating creative liturgies of women/children;*
- *allowing the liturgies to be reflective of the rich and diverse local cultural contexts;*
- *developing a flexible basic form of Christian worship that allows for a shared experience of a living spirituality that includes body, mind and soul.*

³⁴ *Women Invisible in Church and Theology*, by Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Mary Collins. Concilium: 182 (6/1985): Feminist Theology, Edinburgh: T&T Clark Ltd., p. 52.

³⁵ *In Her Own Rite: Constructing Feminist Liturgical Tradition*, by Marjorie Procter-Smith. Abingdon: Nashville, 1990.

c) Resurgence of Religious Fundamentalism

The rise in extreme fundamentalist movements accentuates the violence that women endure in many ways. Women find it difficult to admit to enduring domestic violence in their homes because they are made to feel that it denies the presence of God in their lives by making private issues public such as physical abuse. Many women from some charismatic groups even justify family violence because they say they feel that "the devil is tempting them or their men" who abuse them. Emphasis is put on forgiving the husband because he is perceived to be violent only under the influence of a spirit of violence. They try to hide the problem because it is bad testimony, also out of fear of the pastor or fear of criticism from other believers.

Their theology creates feelings of shame and inhibition while they suffer any form of violence. It is a suffering spirituality based on a theology of resignation, the idea being that they are born to suffer, that women should feel that their lives are an expiation of their sins. Between feelings of guilt, demonic temptation and sacrifice, domestic violence finds a suffering complicity in women that fears social or congregational punishment.

→ Positive Action that Could Be Taken

The church could initiate and offer dialogues and interfaith discussions on:

- *Human rights and its relations with religious freedom*
- *Safeguarding religion from fanaticism.*
- *Availing resources from scientific fields such as psychology to understand fanaticism, its identification, manifestations and ways to contain it.*
- *Leading discussions on whom has the right to interpret and speak on behalf of religions.*
- *The concept of secularization as an ideal model for nations to follow.*
- *Church traditions, other religious traditions and their implications for present contexts*
- *Understanding of individualism and selfhood over community orientation*
- *The situation of killing in the name of religion*
- *Responding to radicals in religious movements with the understanding that they are not satanic people but religious people who are not only believers but also thinkers.*
- *Examining the aggressive behavior of the "self" which wants his/her needs to be met regardless of others' need, which is incapable of sharing and refuses to respect the selfhood of others.*

→ Additional Resources

- A Prayer for those who Suffer from Rape and Assault. **Appendix V. B.**
- Jesus Heal Us. **Appendix V.C.**

Suggested Reading

Women's Prayer Services, edited by Iben Gjerding and Katherine Kinnamon. Mystic, CN: Twenty-Third Publications, 1987.

Did I Betray the Gospel? The Letters of Paul and the Place of Women, by S. Wesley Ariarajah. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1996.

Feminist Interpretation. The Bible in Women's Perspective, by Luise Schottroff, Silvia Schroer and Marie-Theres Wacker. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1998.
She Who Is. The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse, by Elizabeth A. Johnson. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1998.
Women and Jesus in Mark. A Japanese Feminist Perspective, by Hisako Kinukawa. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1994.

CONCLUSION

This document is an invitation to the churches to take positive, affirmative steps to bring life in all its fullness to women and to make use of their diverse, God-given gifts to enrich the life and strengthen the witness of the church. Women have always been faithful to the church. How much the church proves its solidarity with women in return, as Jesus did in his life and ministry is a challenge to the church. The church has always been involved in, and has pioneered many liberating actions. Eliminating violence against women would be one of the greatest attempts at witness the church could make!

Your comments and suggestions are invited:

APPENDICES

I. Responses from Previous LWF Council Meetings on the Issue of Violence against Women

1992 LWF Council Meeting, [Madras] Chennai, India

After identifying violation of women's rights by men (and also by women) as a program priority of the LWF Department for Mission and Development desk for Women in Church and Society (DMD-WICAS), the following strategies were recommended as listed in the DMD-WICAS publication, *A Clear Plan of Action*, pp. 19-20:

“Exposure of the **violation of women's rights** by men, by social, political and economic structures, and by women themselves:

“The church can play a crucial role in bringing healing and wholeness to injured women and to the entire society by:

- overcoming the conspiracy of silence on questions of violence and sexuality ;
- initiating in-depth studies on specific forms of violence in order to better understand how they are planned and executed and what factors contribute to their perpetuation;
- recognizing that violence against women is a reality and not a myth and that women are frequently not believed when they relate their painful experiences;
- giving sermons and creating learning experiences to reflect on the question of violence (from Sunday School programs through Baptism and Confirmation classes and in all Christian education events of the church);
- organizing workshops for men and women to collectively identify all kinds of violence, to explore their root causes and to take steps to eliminate them;
- creating safe and secure space for women to discuss their experiences;
- enabling victims of violence to find refuge and to seek sustainable solutions;
- forming committees to monitor violence in the media and designing methods of protest actions;
- calling for changes in laws, traditions and practices that discriminate against women and becoming a force for transformation.”

1993 LWF Council Meeting, Kristiansand, Norway

On the basis of the points raised in the DMD director's report about the worldwide issue of violence against women, and "since violence permeates the whole of society, including the churches, the Council

"VOTED to urge the member churches:

- to engage in study and provide education about violence against women, as encouraged by the LWF Seventh Assembly, particularly involving clergy and laymen in educational programs which focus on all forms of violence against women (sexual, domestic, racial, reproductive, psychological and institutional);
- to re-evaluate and review their concept of education, particularly Christian education, for both children and adults;
- to provide social support and practical assistance for victims/survivors and those working with such persons and the perpetrators;
- to engage in advocacy work for social policies and legislation which will protect women;
- to develop policies and procedures which are to be used in instances of sexual abuse and harassment within the church and create a forum where sexual abuse might be discussed openly;
- to support the many women's organizations actively involved in the issue of violence against women; and, furthermore,
- to request appropriate LWF departments to develop a coordinated action plan for communicating the Council action to the member churches and for providing resource materials which will assist the churches in addressing the issue of violence, taking into consideration the recommendations from the International Consultation of Lutheran Women (Mexico, July 1989) and related actions of churches, the United Nations and other organizations."

(cf.: *LWF Documentation* No. 33, "People of God – People of Nations," September 1993, p. 120)

1994 LWF Council Meeting, Geneva, Switzerland

“The Council VOTED

- to oppose all acts and forms of violence against women, regardless of any custom, tradition or religious consideration that may be invoked to sanction such violence and, in particular, female genital mutilation;
- to urge member churches to take deliberate action to stop all forms of violence against and exploitation of women in their societies and their churches;
- to support the aims of the 1993 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, including its stance that trafficking in women is a form of violence;
- to underscore the importance of the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) convened by the United Nations General Assembly which includes these and other issues of concern to women on its agenda, and welcome the participation of the member churches of the Lutheran World Federation in this conference.”

(cf.: *LWF Documentation* No. 35, “An Agenda for Communion,” September 1994, p. 95)

1999 LWF Council Meeting, Bratislava, Slovak Republic

“Human Rights for Women

“The Ninth Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation said, “Women’s rights are human rights. Women are disproportionately affected by the unequal sharing of resources; in marginalized groups of refugees, indigenous and prison populations women are the most vulnerable. In many places women are blocked from inheritance and property rights and are less able to gain skills and education. Violence against women is widespread in society and happens also in the church and Christian homes. Violence is silenced, ignored, indirectly accepted and sometimes backed by biblical interpretations. We must confess and acknowledge the sin of the church in tolerating violence against women, especially the abuse of women within the church.

“The Desk for Women in Church and Society of the Department for Mission and Development addresses all forms of violence against women and works towards a community of solidarity in which the respect for the human being reigns for women and men alike.

“The Council VOTED

- to encourage all member churches to face the painful issue of violence against women in all its manifestations particular to their context; and
- to ask the Desk for Women in Church and Society to propose ways to accompany the churches in their efforts to address the issue.”

(cf.: *LWF Documentation* No. 44, “The Gospel Transforming Cultures,” September 1999, p. 158)

II. Aid to Victims

A. What You Can Do to Protect Yourself³⁶

1. Talk with a friend or relative you trust about what’s going on. They may be a good source of support.
2. Contact your local domestic violence program to find out about laws and community resources (i.e., shelters, counseling, legal assistance) before you need them. They can help you plan ways to stay safe.
3. Ask your health-care provider or a friend to take photographs of your injuries (i.e., bruises, scratches, black eyes, etc.) and make sure that they are put in your medical records, or in a safe place with a written description of what happened. This information will make it easier for you if you decide to take legal action in the future, such as getting a restraining order, pressing criminal charges, or obtaining child custody if you need to do this.
4. Arrange a signal with a neighbor to let them know when you need help (i.e., turning a porch light on during the day, or pulling down a particular window shade).
5. Keep some money stored in a secret place so that you have access to it in an emergency or, if you decide to leave, be sure to include some coins so you can make calls from a public phone if you need to. You can also pack a change of clothes (and personal-care items, an extra set of glasses, important legal papers, etc.) for yourself and your children and ask a neighbor and/or friend to keep it, along with an extra set of keys, in case you need to leave quickly.
6. If you decide to leave, take important papers with you (i.e., birth certificates, passports, health insurance documents, photo ID/driver’s license, immunization records, checkbook, medication, food stamps, Social Security cards, etc., for both you and your children).

B. Biblical Texts That Would Offer Solace

Ps 7:1-4, 6, 8-11; 10; 16:7-9, 11; 17; 55:1-8; 12; 13; 20; 23; 25:1-5; 27:1-3, 7-9;
30:1-5; 31:14-16; 35:22-28; 38:6-10; 43; 46:1-7a; 62:2-7; 70; 77:1-4, 6-9, 11-14;
103:6-8, 11, 12; 116:3,4, 8-11,15,16; 121; 139:1-24; 143:4-8; 145:13-21
Isa 40; 41:10-13; 43:1-3a; 49:15
Job 21:7,9, 14-16

³⁶ “If You Are Being Abused at Home... You Are Not Alone,” by the *Family Violence Prevention Fund*.

Mt 11:28-30
Lk 11:5-13
Rom 8:18-25, 29a
Jn 14:27; 16:21-24

III. Aid to Counselors

A. Identifying Battered Women

Though any woman has the potential to become a battered woman, they may not be able to disclose or expose the violence they undergo because of the social stigma and shame attached to it. They may also hide it to avoid further victimization. However, a trained eye can detect the following characteristics in a battered woman that would also help them to understand their difficulties and be of positive support to them:

A diminished self-esteem; being anxious to please, being uncertain, inability to plan and look ahead into the future, depression, suicidal tendencies, mood swings, jumpiness, nervousness, irritability and inability to concentrate are some indicators of the traumatic stress they undergo. They may also have self-destructive tendencies like drug or alcohol abuse or reckless driving, and might inflict wounds on themselves or have eating disorders. They would have extreme bouts of dependency and independence, blaming it on others or on themselves. They would, on the one hand, want revenge, then recant and want to rescue the abuser. They would also ask questions of identity and meaning: "What is it all worth any way? Who really cares?"

B. Identifying the Batterers

There are two general categories:

1. The antisocial batterer who has very little self-control, and who is highly irritable and violent in all situations.
2. The classic batterers who are violent only with intimate partners and their children.

Men belonging to the second category will have explosive tempers that might be limited to their private sphere. In public, they are perceived as nice gentlemen, quite humble and courteous. But they suffer from low self-esteem and a need to control the people and objects in their immediate environment. They are afraid of being losers and so are very possessive. They might imagine that their spouses are having affairs, accuse them of dressing in a "sexy" way and would beat the women for even talking to service providers such as the milkman, postman, or salesman. They might be very suspicious and would constantly check on women in very simple ways like often calling them by phone or through devious ways like checking their personal belongings such as handbags, wardrobes and papers for evidence of "misbehavior."

Batterers have very strict traditional ideas about women and their roles. They would be anxious to prove their masculinity by beating their partners. They are usually highly dependent on their partners and do not know how to have others meet their needs. They do not form friends easily, do not express their feelings or communicate

freely. They may have witnessed their fathers beat their mothers or might have been beaten as children. They do not want to accept responsibility for their negative behavior and so would minimize or deny their violent acts.

C. Understanding Rape

1. Rape can never be mistaken for an impulsive act of passion. It is often premeditated and meticulously planned. It is not an expression of an uncontrollable sexual urge but an act of aggression motivated by the need to express one's power, authority revenge, hatred of women and a desire to humiliate them.
2. Alcohol and drug intake cannot be held as a cause for rape but they do lessen inhibition.
3. It is not only beautiful young women who are raped but little babies, children and very old women. A man might rape whoever is vulnerable, accessible and within his reach.
4. Women do not want to be raped. Most frequently, they are not raped by unknown strangers, in a dark, desolate place. One third of rapes occur at home and one third during the daytime. More than 50 percent of rapes are committed by someone known personally by the victim.
5. The recovery of a victim takes place in several stages taking long years of intervention and support.
 - The first stage is called the "rape trauma syndrome" in which the victim goes through disorientation and "disruption of normal coping mechanisms, shock, fear (including fear of retaliation), anxiety, withdrawal, crying, unexpected outbursts, self blame, intrusive reliving of the events of the rape and other classic post-traumatic symptoms such as nightmares, sleep problems, startle responses and hyper-vigilance and physical symptoms such as nausea and headaches."³⁷
 - The second stage is the "recoil or pseudo-adjustment stage."³⁸ This stage might last for several months or years in which the victim appears to be coping and can assume normal activities. In this stage, the victim needs the assurance that the counselor is not bored or annoyed with the victim's preoccupation with the crime.
 - The third stage is the stage of "integration." But any reminder of the past act might revoke the horror.

D. "Steps to Take When Someone Tells You Her Story of Victimization"³⁹

1. **Create an atmosphere of safety and welcome** for victims-survivors to speak. Victims know very well when they are not welcome. If you put up posters, announce information, talk about violence women experience, they will begin to come to you.

³⁷ *The Cry of Tamar: Violence against Women and the Church's Response*, by Pamela Cooper-White. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995, p. 82.

³⁸ *Rape Victims in Crisis*, by Ann Wolbert Burgess and Lynda Holstrom. Bowie, Md.: Robert J. Brady Co., 1979.

³⁹ "Women and Development: Crisis and Alternative Visions." Bossey Seminar, June 4-14, 1992.

2. **Believe the story.** Many victims are threatened with worse abuse if they tell. Sometimes the abuser may be someone you know and trust, and they may fear that you will not believe them. Give praise and encouragement for telling you. To tell takes courage and strength, and it may be important to say so to the victims.
3. **Validate the feelings.** Victims are afraid, often ashamed, and sometimes afraid also that they are going crazy if they are having bad nightmares or flashbacks. These feelings are normal to someone who has been through such a crisis.
4. **Emphasize safety.** Victims often minimize and deny the pain they are experiencing, and the threats to their well being. If you use the word "safety" when speaking with them, it can help them to make their own safety a priority for them.
5. **Affirm that the victim is NOT to blame.** Many cultures tell victims that the violence is their own fault. Abusers also often tell victims this. You may wish to say firmly, "You do not deserve abuse" or "I do not believe that you are to blame."
6. **Respect, support and empower.** You may have strong ideas about what the victim should do. You may want a battered woman to leave her husband, for instance. But if you give her orders or tell her what to do, in a way you are doing to her just what her abuser has done. Instead, inform her of resources and options in your community; she may not be aware of agencies available to help her. Support the decisions that she makes, even if you do not always like [them] or agree with her. (Your support now may help her to make different choices later.) Help her to expand her choices, in however small a way. You may be able, together, to imagine some creative possibilities she might not see by herself. If a battered woman chooses to stay where she will surely be abused again, she might be afraid that you would abandon her. It may be useful to say, "If you stay with him, I will be concerned for your safety. But I will still be here for you if you need me." You may be able to help her think of new ways in which she can be safer while remaining at home and working on her other resources, so that at some later time, she may be more ready to leave.
7. **Remember the other family members and friends.** When abuse happens to someone, there are other victims besides the one who is directly hurt. Children who witness family violence, for instance, are also harmed by what they see. Those who love rape victims also suffer with them. In incest families, the distorted family dynamics harm everyone. Sometimes, women are helped to make new choices if they understand that their children are also being harmed by the violence the women experience directly.
8. **Victims may have spiritual crises as a result of their abuse.** Theological empowerment is as important as social and economic empowerment. Listening to the faith connections that are made by victims may be important learning to you. Provide good information about the many strong role models in the Bible, as well as about the ways in which sexism affected the tradition. Offer some new options. Of a loving God rather than a judging God. There may be questions we need to be well prepared for like "Why did God allow this to happen or where was God when I was suffering?" Be aware that grace is present in healing and in the support of the community for the one who is harmed. God calls us to "bring liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound" (Isa 61:1).

IV. Men's Solidarity Networks

A. How Men Could Assist in Ending Male Violence against Women

1. **Read, discern and understand yourself.** Read about the process of socialization in family, society and church, about masculinity and femininity, gender inequality, role stereotyping, concept of power and power relationships, the root causes of violence, the connections between structures, systems and social forces that create conflicts between women and men.
2. **Analyze** your own attitudes and actions that might perpetuate sexism and violence, and work toward changing them.
3. **Confront** sexist degrading, trivializing remarks and jokes on women.
4. **Do not buy** magazines, books, videos, posters, music or any objects of art that portray women as sex objects or objects of violence. Monitor the Internet and report on any pornographic materials.
5. **Support candidates** for leadership positions who are committed to the full social, economic and political equality of women. Actively oppose candidates who are known to be abusers of women.
6. **Advocate** for increased investment for battered women's shelters and rape-crisis centers. Volunteer where men are needed to lobby, in public schools, youth outreach centers and political groups.
7. **Organize** or join groups of men, in church and society to work against sexism and violence. Support women's movements that work toward ending violence against women. Commend men who set new models of affirmative and solidarity action toward women.

B. "Example of a Young Lawyer Who Works against Girl Trafficking"⁴⁰

One simple example is that of Mr. Joshi a young lawyer in Nepal who works against girl trafficking. Once on a visit to the village, Mr. Joshi saw a man beating his wife. He asked the man to stop. The man said that he could beat his wife as he liked because she was his property. "Are you stronger?" the lawyer asked. "Yes" was the answer. "Then what kind of a man are you if you beat someone weaker?" asked Mr. Joshi. The man said, "O.K., I see what you mean and stopped beating his wife. Mr. Joshi was questioning the model of masculinity in the village, getting the men to think about it in a new light.

⁴⁰ "Needed: A New Model of Masculinity to Stop Violence against Girls and Women," by Ruth Finney Haywards. Katmandu: UNICEF/ROSA, July 1999.

C. The "White Ribbon Campaign" ⁴¹

Another model is the "White Ribbon Campaign" which lists ten "do's" on what every man can do to help end men's violence against women:

1. Listen to women...learn from women.
2. Learn about the problem.
3. Learn why some men are violent.
4. Wear a white ribbon.
5. Challenge sexist language and jokes that degrade women.
6. Learn to identify and oppose sexual harassment and violence in your workplace, school and family.
7. Support local women's programs.
8. Examine how your own behavior might contribute to the problem.
9. Work toward long-term solutions.
10. Get involved with the "White Ribbon Campaign's" educational efforts.

V. Spiritual Accompaniment

A. Scripture as a Helpful Guide for Those in Crisis

Reciting passages that assure the presence of God in our trials, fears, doubts and terrifying situations are powerful accompaniments.

Reading of Ps 22:1-2, 14-15; Ps 23; Ps 27; Ps 55:1-8; Isa 52:2; 7-10; Rom 8:31-39.

B. A Prayer for Those Who Suffer from Rape and Assault ⁴²

God of Love, hear my prayer. I come to you bruised and weary, angry and sad. Hold me and wipe away my tears. Help me to see that this insanity was not my doing. Walk with me through this long valley of darkness. Stay with me when I feel lonely. Sit with my heart for at this moment your gift of life to me is beyond my own feeling—even my own knowing.

Show me how to accept the care of those who love me and who pray for me, especially when I cannot find the word to pray myself. Pour out your healing spirit upon me, Gentle God, so that my spirit may again breathe and then revive to feel hope and love once more. All this and all that you see I need, I ask of you. Amen. *Anonymous*

C. *Jesus Heal Us* ⁴³

Leader: Jesus, lover of humanity, you healed the daughter of the Syrophenician woman, a foreigner who came to you, a Jewish teacher. By your gift of life you showed us that we are one people, all worthy to be loved. Now we come to you, as mothers in spirit, praying for the healing of the world, saying:

All: **Jesus, heal us.**

⁴¹ Pamphlet by the *White Ribbon Campaign*, 1600-365 Bloor St. East, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

⁴² "Sing Out Our visions. Prayers, Poems and Reflections by Women." An ecumenical collection produced in cooperation with the *Justice for Women Working Group of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA*, edited by Jean Martensen. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1998, p. 53.

⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 64.

For this country, suffering from the self-inflicted wounds of racism, greed, the genocide of its native people, and the oppression of the poor, teach us that greatness can only be found in justice, generosity, and compassion. We pray:

Jesus, heal us.

For peace among all nations, that the dry bones found in battlefields and the mass graves dug by tyrants rise up as a resurrected humanity, committed to peace and the well being of all on earth. We pray:

Jesus, heal us.

For you Church divided, blundering, often intolerant, we rub our eyes, hoping to clear our vision and keep it ever on you. But we lose ourselves in the mists of delusions, fears and doubts. Send us the guiding light of your wise spirit, the healing of your love. We pray:

Jesus, heal us.

For all we name now in this assembly who need healing and our prayers:
(those assembled offer names...)

And so today as we celebrate the feast of redemption we lift up all the living for your mercy, and thank you for the lives of all our loved ones who now celebrate your glory in heaven.

by Irene St. Onge, San Francisco, California, USA

D. Litany for Healing from Sexual Harassment⁴⁴

Leader: In the name of God in whose image men and women are created.

All: **Amen.**

We confess that by our thought, word and deed we have not honored your image in each other, we have limited you as we have demeaned each other, we have turned away from the source of wisdom and trusted our own foolishness.

Set us free today.

From the need to conceal at all cost, from the need to hide behind the safety of the Church.

Set us free.

From the temptation to compromise convictions for the sake of diplomacy and to trade lies for our self-gain.

Set us free.

We trust that beyond our pain

There can be healing.

Beyond the brokenness

There may be wholeness

Beyond the hurting

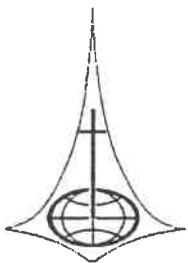
There may be forgiveness

That beyond the silence

There may be understanding. And that through understanding, there is love.

Ecumenical Center Chapel Service, 3 November 1994, Geneva, Switzerland

⁴⁴ "Sing Out Our Visions. Prayers, Poems and Reflections by Women." An ecumenical collection produced in cooperation with the Justice for Women Working Group of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, edited by Jean Martensen. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1998, p. 65.



THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

LUTHERISCHER WELTBUND - FEDERACIÓN LUTERANA MUNDIAL - FÉDÉRATION LUTHÉRIENNE MONDIALE

Department for Mission and Development – Women in Church and Society

P.O. Box 2100 - Route de Ferney 150 - CH - 1211 Geneva 2 Switzerland

Telephone Direct +44-22-791-6439 – Fax +41-22-791-6401 – E-mail prs@lutheranworld.org

**AD MKR-SAK 23/01: OPPFØLGING AV SAKER I DE ØKUMENISKE
ORGANISASJONER**

**Representant fra Norge i Kirkenes Verdensråds
økumeniske lederutviklingsprogram for kvinner**

Saksbehandler: Synnøve Hinnaland Stendal

Kirkenes Verdensråd ved Office of Church and Ecumenical Relations vil arrangere et økumenisk lederutviklingsseminar for kvinner 2. – 7. nov. dette året i Bossey. Bakgrunnen for initiativet er at det har vist seg at kvinner er i et betydelig mindretall blant dem i kirkene som er ansatt for å arbeide med økumenikk. Programmet har som mål å synliggjøre det kvinner kan bidra med i det økumeniske fellesskapet og å stimulere til at kvinner går inn i økumeniske lederroller. Dette vil en oppnå ved å utvikle et økumenisk nettverk, ved studieturutveksling mellom ansatte i ulike kirker og ved å arrangere det ovenfor nevnte seminaret. Seminaret med kvinner fra hele verden vil i neste omgang bli fulgt opp på regional basis. Den norske kirke er invitert til å utpeke ei kvinne til dette lederutviklingsprogrammet.

Det er kvinner med ”significant ecumenical responsibilities som er målgruppe. I invitasjonen uttrykkes det forventning om at deltakerne skal være med i det økumeniske nettverket og bidra i sine kirker til å stimulere ungdom til økumenisk engasjement.

Nemnd for kvinne- og likestillingsspørsmålet drøftet aktuelle kandidater for KVs økumeniske lederutviklingsprogram for kvinner på sitt møte i februar dette året (sak NFKL 9/01), og gjorde vedtak om å foreslå en av følgende personer (i alfabetisk, ikke prioritert rekkefølge):

- Siri Magnussen
- Kristine Sandmæl
- Gro Elin Vinnes
- Anne Weider Aasen

Aktuelle opplysninger om deres bakgrunn er som følger:

Siri Magnussen: 29 år, menighetsprest med ansvar for undervisning i Skedsmo prestegjeld, medlem av NØKK og NØKKs styre, Den norske kirkes representant i MELUSA-komiteen, medlem av tenkegruppa og styret i Emmaus – senter for dialog og spiritualitet i Oslo, tidligere medlem av Norsk økumenisk ungdomsforum under NKR, tidligere representant/styremedlem/leder (97 – 99) i Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe, har organisert økumenisk lederkurs for ungdom i regi av NKR.

Kristine Sandmæl: 31 år, sokneprest i Vågan prestegjeld, varamedlem for Den norske kirke i NKR, medlem av Presteforeningens stiftsstyre i Sør-Hålogaland, deltaker i Presteforeningens prosjekt Joint Pastoral Reflection, tidligere medlem av Borg bispedømmeråd og MKR, var representant for Den norske kirke ved LVFs generalforsamling i 1997 og ved Yought Pre-Assembly, tidligere deltaker i Nordisk-tysk kirkekonvent.

Gro Elin Vinnes: 28 år, kontorleder i NKR, sosionom med kristendom, pedagogikk og mediafag som tillegg, medlem av NKRs Sudankomite, medlem av Alfa-lederteam i Storsalen, bakgrunn fra ungdomsarbeid tilknyttet Indremisjonen og Misjonssambandet, tidligere prosjektarbeider/leder i Jubileum 2000, skal overta som NKRs representant i Norsk økumenisk komité for lokal økumenikk.

Anne Weider Aasen: 27 år, journalist i TV 2, politisk avdeling, medlem av NØKK og NØKKs styre, Den norske kirkes representant i NKR og i Dialogen om tro og livssyn, tidligere leder av Norges Kristelige Studentforbund, var observatør for MKR ved FNs 55. generalforsamling.

Kopi → Finn Wagle ✓
Bent Franke
MKA/AY

De nordiska och baltiska kyrkornas representation i CECs centralkommitté Överväganden och förslag

Bakgrund och problembeskrivning

Under åtminstone de två senaste generalförsamlingarna i CEC har valen till centralkommittén lett till uppsplitande diskussioner och misstämningar inom den nordiska resp. den nordisk-baltiska gruppen. Två huvudproblem har aktualiserats:

- **Majoritets- och minoritetskyrkoperspektivet**

Vid generalförsamlingen i **Prag 1992** stod fem platser till den nordisk-baltiska regionens förfogande. Samtliga fem platser gick till lutherska kyrkor: i Danmark, Finland, Litauen, Norge och Sverige. Ingen av de frikyrkliga deltagare som nominerats blev vald. Med undantag för Litauen innebar utfallet att enbart kyrkor som har majoritetsställning inom sina länder blev företrädare i centralkommittén. En diskussion pågick under hela processen inom den nordiska gruppen i generalförsamlingen och besvikelsen och irritationen från företrädarna för de frikyrkliga minoritetskyrkorna i Norden var påtaglig.

En informell överenskommelse träffades om att överläggningar måste äga rum mellan kyrkorna i god tid före nästa generalförsamling för att undvika en upprepning.

Nästa generalförsamling ägde rum i **Graz 1997**. Då hade antalet platser i centralkommittén utvidgats från 35 till 40. Varje subregion i Europa fick därmed en plats ytterligare – den nordisk-baltiska regionen fick alltså sex platser.

Trots erfarenheterna från Prag hade man inte heller inför Graz lyckats med någon förpliktande ekumenisk samordning i förväg inom den nordisk-baltiska gruppen. Efter intensiva och delvis uppsplitande diskussioner gick fem av de sex platserna till lutherska kyrkor – i Danmark, Finland, Litauen, Norge och Sverige – och en till Finlands ortodoxa kyrka. Inte heller denna gång valdes någon av de frikyrkorepresentanter som nominerats. Trots att antalet platser utökats blev utfallet alltså återigen att alla platser utom en – som gick till Finlands ortodoxa kyrka – gick till lutherska majoritetskyrkor. Det är uppenbart att dessa val varken speglar den konfessionella balansen, balansen mellan majoritets- och minoritetskyrkor eller den ekumeniska dynamik som i övrigt finns inom regionen.

Återigen skildes den nordisk-baltiska gruppen med en uttalad gemensam förpliktelse att i god tid före nästa generalförsamling utveckla ett system som bättre kan spegla CECs medlemsbas inom den nordisk-baltiska regionen och den ekumeniska dynamiken inom regionen.

Att nå en sådan fungerande överenskommelse är nödvändigt för det ekumeniska klimatet inom regionen och för ett fortsatt samarbete kring de europeiska ekumeniska relationerna.

Frågan togs upp i den nordiska ekumeniska sekreterarsamlingen i Kirkenes i februari 1999 och Ane Hjerrild och Thord-Ove Thordson fick uppdraget att bereda frågan och komma med förslag.

- **Rätten att nominera**

Ett annat problem med CECs valregler är att det inte är bara medlemskyrkorna som kan nominera till centralkommittén utan också generalförsamlingens medlemmar i övrigt. Generalförsamlingen består av dels delegater från medlemskyrkorna, dels den avgående centralkommitténs ledamöter (jmf nedan).

Det innebär att medlemmar i den avgående centralkommittén kan omväljas på förslag direkt i generalförsamlingen utan att vara nominerade av sin medlemskyrka. Detta betyder att centralkommittén har en viss möjlighet till självrekrytering oberoende av kyrkornas nomineringar vilket är ekumeniskt olyckligt och oacceptabelt utifrån CECs självförståelse som kyrkornas gemensamma organ. Detta har skapat problem inom den nordisk-baltiska regionen vid båda de senaste generalförsamlingarna.

Beskrivning av CECs valsysteem

Följande huvudregler gäller:

Generalförsamlingen består enligt stadgarnas artikel 5(2) av två kategorier:

- delegater från medlemskyrkorna (enligt regler i Bye-Laws § 7)
- centralkommitténs ledamöter.

Generalförsamlingen beslutar om antal ledamöter i centralkommittén - stadgarnas artikel 6(3) - och utser centralkommitténs medlemmar – artikel 5(3). Valbara till centralkommittén är

- delegater utsedda av medlemskyrkorna
- suppleanter som är närvarande i generalförsamlingen som ersättare
- medlemmar av den avgående centralkommittén (Bye-Laws § 8.2.1).

I "Standing Orders of the Assembly" regleras förutsättningarna för val av centralkommitté närmare:

En nomineringskommitté på 11 personer utses av generalförsamlingen. Denna nomineringskommitté ska inte vara bunden av några som helst förslag eller rekommendationer (7.1).

Enligt Bye-Laws §5 ska de olika konfessionerna och regionerna i Europa vara tillfredsställande representerade. Dessutom ska en balans eftersträvas mellan kyrkoledare, församlingspräster/pastorer och lekmän, män, kvinnor och ungdomar.

I Standing Orders preciseras de senare kraven till att minst 40 % av kandidaterna ska vara kvinnor, minst 40 % män och minst 20 % ungdomar under 30 år - så långt generalförsamlingens sammansättning medger det (7.3).

Alternativ till de kandidater som föreslagits av nomineringskommittén kan framföras inom 24 timmar med underskrifter av åtminstone tio medlemmar av generalförsamlingen. De alternativa kandidaterna måste tillhöra samma denomination och komma från samma region i Europa som de kandidater vars nominering utmanas.

Nomineringsreglerna i CEC är alltså sådana att all makt över fördelningen mellan olika konfessioner och regioner – och därmed också makten över den konfessionella fördelningen inom respektive region - ligger hos nomineringskommittén.

I Graz gjordes dock ett uppmärksammat avsteg från denna regel – genom att en ortodox kyrka från östra Europa frivilligt frånträdde ett förslaget mandat till förmån för en protestantisk minoritetskyrka från samma region.

Medlemmar i Norden-Baltikum

Enligt CECs förteckning över medlemmar i Norden och Baltikum 2000 har CEC 16 medlemskyrkor med nationell bas i Norden-Baltikum. Dessutom har CEC ett antal transnationella medlemskyrkor, varav åtminstone 3 är representerade i Norden och Baltikum, bil. 1. Den konfessionella fördelningen mellan de 19 medlemskyrkorna är följande:

	<u>Nationella</u>	<u>Transnationella</u>
Lutherska	10	-
Ortodoxa	1	1
Baptistiska	2	
Reformerta	1	
Metodistiska	2	1
Frälsningsarmén		1
Summa	16	3

Förslag

1. Centralkommittén i CEC som är kyrkornas gemensamma organ bör bestå enbart av ledamöter som har sina egna kyrkors förtroende och har fått detta bekräftat genom att vara nominerade av sin kyrka. För att garantera detta bör CECs stadgar och Bye-Laws ändras så att
 - (a) generalförsamlingen består endast av ordinarie representanter eller personliga ersättare utsedda eller nominerade av medlemskyrkorna. Ledamöterna i den avgående centralkommittén bör ha närvaro- och yttranderätt men inte rösträtt om de inte är utsedda eller nominerade av sina kyrkor;
 - (b) centralkommitténs ledamöter måste väljas bland de kandidater som nomineras av medlemskyrkorna.

2. Även om nomineringarnas betydelse med nuvarande regler är begränsad bör CECs medlemskyrkor i Norden och Baltikum inför framtida val till CECs centralkommitté eftersträva en gemensam, ekumeniskt förankrad nominering av kandidater från regionen. För att möjliggöra en rimlig balans mellan konfessioner inom regionen liksom mellan majoritets- och minoritetskyrkor bör alla medlemskyrkor över en längre period beredas möjlighet till en realistisk kandidatnominering med ekumeniskt stöd.

Eftersom vare sig alla medlemskyrkor eller alla länder inom regionen samtidigt kan vara företrädare i centralkommittén föreslår vi en turordningslista, som speglar den ekumeniska mångfalden och dynamiken inom regionen. Ett exempel på hur en sådan turordningslista skulle kunna utformas bifogas som diskussionsunderlag, bil. 2.

3. En sådan turordningslista bör kombineras med en förstärkning av informationsutbytet om den europeiska ekumeniken inom och mellan de olika länderna i Norden och Baltikum. Därvid bör de nationella ekumeniska råden i resp. land spela en strategisk roll.

4. Eftersom det inte finns någon gemensam nordisk-baltisk ekumenisk struktur föreslår vi att de nationella ekumeniska råden i de nordiska och baltiska

länderna i samråd med Islands kyrka och Lettlands evangelisk-lutherska kyrka har ett huvudansvar för att hålla samman nomineringsprocessen i Norden och Baltikum utifrån denna turordningslista.

5. Om det inte går att enas om en sådan ordning med en i förväg överenskommen turordningslista inom regionen bör man avstå från försöken till nordisk-baltisk samordning av nomineringarna och i stället arbeta för nomineringar i första hand via de konfessionella grupperna i Europa.
6. Dessutom bör övervägas om inte CEC på samma sätt som WCC skulle kunna ge rätt till allamedlemskyrkor som för tillfället inte har egen plats i centralkommittén att på egen bekostnad delta i centralkommitténs möten med en representant med yttranderätt men utan rösträtt.

Det skulle ge möjlighet för alla som så önskar att följa centralkommitténs arbete även under perioder då man inte har en egen direktrepresentation i centralkommittén.

Även en sådan förändring kräver en förändring av CECs stadgar och Bye-Laws.

01-03-19

CEC

Medlemskyrkor i Norden och Baltikum 2000

Danmark

Dansk baptistsamfund
Evangelisk-Lutherske Folkekirke i Danmark

Estland

Eesti Evangeelne Luterlik Kirik (Estniska evangelisk-lutherska kyrkan)
Eesti Evangeliumi Luteri Usu Kirik (Estniska evangelisk-lutherska kyrkan utomlands)
Eesti NSV Metodisti Kirik (Metodistkyrkan i Estland)

Finland

Suomen Evankelis-Luterilainen Kirkko (Finlands evangelisk-lutherska kyrka)
Suomen Ortodoksinen Arkkipiispakunta (Finlands ortodoxa kyrka)

Island

Thjodkirkja Islands (Islands evangelisk-lutherska kyrka)

Lettland

Latvijas Evangeliski Luteriska Baznica (Lettlands evangelisk-lutherska kyrka)
Lettlands evangelisk-lutherska kyrka i utlandet

Litauen

Lieturos Evangeliku Liuteronu Baznycia (Litauens evangelisk-lutherska kyrka)

Norge

Den norske kirke

Sverige

Svenska Baptistsamfundet
Svenska kyrkan
Svenska Missionsförbundet
Metodistkyrkan i Sverige

INTERNATIONELLA MEDLEMMAR MED REPRESENTATION I NORDEN OCH BALTIKUM

Ekumeniska patriarkatet i Konstantinopel
Frälsningsarméns internationella högkvarter i London
Förenade Metodistkyrkan – Nordeuropeiska centralkonferensen

ASSOCIERADE ORGANISATIONER I NORDEN OCH BALTIKUM

Nordiska ekumeniska rådet
Sveriges Kristna Råd

Summa

16 nationella medlemmar
3 internationella medlemmar med representation i Norden och Baltikum
2 associerade organisationer

Exempel på turordningslista för ekumeniskt förankrade nomineringar till CECs centralkommitté

1. Den norske kirke
2. Svenska Missionsförbundet
3. Lettlands evangelisk-lutherska kyrka, Lettlands evangelisk-lutherska kyrka i utlandet eller Litauens evangelisk-lutherska kyrka
4. Frälsningsarmén
5. Folkekirken i Danmark
6. Finlands ortodoxa kyrka eller annan företrädare för Konstantinopel-patriarkatet
7. Svenska kyrkan
8. Metodistkyrkan i Estland eller Sverige eller Nordeuropeiska centralkonferensen av Förenade Metodistkyrkan i övrigt
9. Islands kyrka
10. Estlands evangelisk-lutherska kyrka eller Estniska evangelisk-lutherska kyrkan i utlandet
11. Dansk baptistsamfund eller Svenska Baptistsamfundet
12. Finlands evangelisk-lutherska kyrka

Kommentarer

1. Gruppindelningen syftar till konfessionell och geografisk balans och mångfald. Grupperna bygger därför på
 - konfessionell gemenskap
 - regional samhörighet (nordisk resp. baltisk)

Turordningslistan måste också vara flexibel så att den kan tillämpas oavsett om antalet mandat för den nordisk-baltiska regionen förändras – uppåt eller nedåt.

2. Om den nordisk-baltiska regionen som nu har sex platser i centralkommittén fungerar turordningslistan på följande sätt:
 - * Period 1 Grupp 1-6 är representerade i centralkommittén
 - * Period 2 Grupp 7-12
 - * Period 3 Grupp 1-6 etc.

Om någon kyrka eller grupp vill avstå från en plats den har rätt till enligt turordningslistan går budet vidare till nästa grupp i ordningen.

En turordningslista uppbyggd på detta sätt förutsätter att överenskommelser kan träffas inom de berörda grupperna (1-12) inför varje generalförsamling.

3. Eftersom antalet länder inom regionen är fler än antalet platser i centralkommittén kan inte alla länder vara representerade samtidigt. Garantier bör dock skapas för att minst en representant ska företräda de baltiska länderna.
4. Den ovan angivna turordningslistan är ett exempel på hur en sådan överenskommelse skulle kunna byggas upp. Om en principöverenskommelse kan nås om att söka en överenskommelse enligt dessa huvudlinjer, måste turordningslistan och dess konsekvenser analyseras ur en rad olika perspektiv innan den fastställs.

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- Anne Weider Aasen

Aktuelle opplysninger om deres bakgrunn er som følger:

Siri Magnussen: 29 år, menighetsprest med ansvar for undervisning i Skedsmo prestegjeld, medlem av NØKK og NØKKs styre, Den norske kirkes representant i MELUSA-komiteen, medlem av tenkegruppa og styret i Emmaus – senter for dialog og spiritualitet i Oslo, tidligere medlem av Norsk økumenisk ungdomsforum under NKR, tidligere representant/styremedlem/leder (97 – 99) i Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe, har organisert økumenisk lederkurs for ungdom i regi av NKR.

Kristine Sandmæl: 31 år, sokneprest i Vågan prestegjeld, varamedlem for Den norske kirke i NKR, medlem av Presteforeningens stiftsstyre i Sør-Hålogaland, deltaker i Presteforeningens prosjekt Joint Pastoral Reflection, tidligere medlem av Borg bispedømmeråd og MKR, var representant for Den norske kirke ved LVFs generalforsamling i 1997 og ved Yought Pre-Assembly, tidligere deltaker i Nordisk-tysk kirkekonvent.

Gro Elin Vinnes: 28 år, kontorleder i NKR, sosionom med kristendom, pedagogikk og mediafag som tillegg, medlem av NKR's Sudankomite, medlem av Alfa-lederteam i Storsalen, bakgrunn fra ungdomsarbeid tilknyttet Indremisjonen og Misjonssambandet, tidligere prosjektarbeider/leder i Jubileum 2000, skal overta som NKR's representant i Norsk økumenisk komité for lokal økumenikk.

Anne Weider Aasen: 27 år, journalist i TV 2, politisk avdeling, medlem av NØKK og NØKKs styre, Den norske kirkes representant i NKR og i Dialogen om tro og livssyn, tidligere leder av Norges Kristelige Studentforbund, var observatør for MKR ved FN's 55. generalforsamling.

Kopi → Trond B. ✓
MKR / Ag ✓

FORSLAG til nomineringer fra Norden til WCC central- og executivekomite:

WCC medlemskirker i Norden:

Det er følgende otte kirker:

Finland:

Den ortodokse Kirke i Finland

Den evangelisk lutherske Kirke i Finland

Island:

Den evangelisk lutherske Kirke i Island

Norge:

Den norske Kirke

Sverige:

Den svenske Kirke

Det svenske Missionsforbund

Danmark:

Den danske Folkekirke

Baptistsamfundet

I indeværende periode er følgende 6 kirker repræsenteret i KV's centralkomite:

Den ortodokse Kirke i Finland, Den evangelisk lutherske Kirke i Finland, Den norske Kirke, Den svenske Kirke, Den danske Folkekirke, Baptistsamfundet

Det betyder at der er to nordiske kirker der ikke er repræsenteret i centralkomiteen i denne periode. Den islandske kirke efter eget valg. Det svenske Missionsforbund imod kirkens ønske. Missionsforbundet har mulighed for at sende en delegeret repræsentant til centralkomiteens møder, med taleret, men uden stemmeret.

Den finske ortodokse kirke har hidtil været nomineret til repræsentation på den nomineringsliste, som de ortodokse kirker indgiver – selv om den naturligvis også er nordisk. Det vil i princippet sige, at der i denne periode var fem pladser for de nordiske medlemskirker at nominere til. I sidste periode var der seks pladser til rådighed, men antallet til Norden – som til nogle andre regioner – bliver mindre, fordi antallet af medlemskirker i specielt Afrika og Asien vokser. Antallet af mulige repræsentanter i kommende periode er derfor ukendt, men det bliver næppe større.

En rotationsordning vil derfor være ønskelig, så også de mindre medlemskirker kan indgå i rotationen. Den finske ortodokse kirke holdes i følgende forslag fortsat udenfor, da nomineringen ordnes af de ortodokse kirker.

Forslag til model for nomineringer:

1. Den finske ev. Lutherske kirke

2. Den svenske Kirke,
3. Den norske Kirke
4. Det svenske Missionsforbund
5. Den danske Folkekirke

Hver tredje gang udskiftes Det svenske Missionsforbund med Det danske Baptistsamfund eller med Den islandske ev. Lutherske Kirke (evt. så de indbyrdes skifter hver anden gang), undtagen i de tilfælde, hvor den svenske kirke ikke nomineres til centralkomiteen. Dette sikrer at i hvert fald nationen har en repræsentant. I tilfælde hvor Den danske Folkekirke ikke er repræsenteret udskiftes Det svenske Missionsforbunds/den islandske kirkes repræsentant med en fra Det danske Baptistsamfund. Det svenske Missionsforbund ville så have plads i centralkomiteen to ud af tre valgperioder, undtagen hvis antallet af nordiske repræsentanter bliver så lille, at kirkerne på skift ikke er repræsenteret. I det tilfælde indgår denne plads i rotationen sammen med de øvrige kirker, så sidste plads(er) ikke får nogen repræsentant.

For hver periode skifter numrene, så nummer 1 rykker til at være nummer 5, nr. 2 til nr. 1, nr. 3 til 2 etc. Dermed sikres, at repræsentationen går på skift, hvis der er mindre end fem nordiske pladser (plus den ortodokse) i centralkomiteen. Nr. 1 opstiller - hvis ikke andet forhandles på plads - medlem af executivkomite, nr. 4 stiller ungdomsdelegat, hvis ikke andet forhandles.

I indeværende periode er nummerordningen:

1. Den danske Folkekirke
2. Den finske ev.-luth. kirke
3. Den norske Kirke
4. Det danske Baptistsamfund
5. Den svenske Kirke

Næste periode vil nummerordningen ifølge dette forslag således blive:

1. Den finske ev.-luth. kirke
2. Den norske Kirke
3. Det svenske Missionsforbund
4. Den svenske Kirke
5. Den danske Folkekirke

Marts 2001

Ane Hjerrild (i samarbejde med Thord-Ove Thordson)

RAPPORT FRA »LIVING IN COMMUNITY – TOWARDS EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND OVERCOMING DISCRIMINATION. THE SITUATION OF THE ROMA MINORITY IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE» BRATISLAVA, SLOVAKIA, 2. – 6 MAI 2001 AV HANS MORTEN HAUGEN, MELLOMKIRKELIG RÅD

Romanifolkets situasjon har de siste årene fått en sentral plass på den politiske dagsorden. Dette skyldes i hovedsak de nye kravene som EU stiller til de landene som ønsker å bli medlemmer, knyttet til minoritets- og menneskerettigheter (københavnkriteriene). Også organisasjoner som OSSE (Organisasjonen for sikkerhet og samarbeid i Europa) har rettet betydelig oppmerksomhet mot det faktum at romanifolket blir ekskludert og nektet grunnleggende rettigheter.

Møtet med prester og andre som har arbeidet blant romanifolket i flere tiår, var en stor inspirasjon. En prest fra Slovakia kunne berette fra sitt arbeid som ordfører i en liten by der halvparten av befolkningen – og et flertall av barna – var roma.

Kirkerådene i alle de sentraleuropeiske landene har etablert egne fora for romanifolket. AIDRom i Romania administrerer en rekke prosjekter, blant annet den tyske stats støtteordning for de menneskene som ble fordrevet og mistet sine eiendommer under Den andre verdenskrigen – knyttet opp til oppgjøret overfor jødene.

Det var tre arbeidsgrupper i KEK/CCME (Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe) som sto bak seminaret: Arbeidsgruppen for europeisk integrasjon og arbeidsgruppen for menneskerettigheter og religionsfrihet i KEK, samt arbeidsgruppen mot rasisme og fremmedfrykt i CCME. To prosesser var sentrale som et bakteppe til konferansen:

- a) Verdenskonferansen mot rasisme i Durban i august-september 2001.
- b) Generalforsamlingen i Trondheim i juni-juli 2003.

Fra Norge deltok også Karl Sundby, styremedlem i Romanifolkets Landsforening. Han erstattet Gøran Jansen, som ikke kunne delta. Karl Sundby var en meget positiv deltaker. Bjørn Hvinden, professor ved NTNU i Trondheim, fikk et plutselig oppdrag som førte til at han måtte trekke seg. Imidlertid vil han få tilsendt mye av dokumentasjonen for å kunne følge prosessen videre fram mot Generalforsamlingen i Trondheim. Det er også interessant å merke seg at Kirkens Nødhjelp uttrykte stor interesse for å delta på seminaret. Dette var blant annet knyttet til det faktum at Kirkens Nødhjelp arbeider i Mitrovica («den delte byen») i Kosova med to flyktningeleire for romanifolket. Dette arbeidet fikk meget positiv omtale av Nicolae Gheorghe fra OSSE

Fra Sverige hadde Sveriges Kristna Råd funnet to pinsepastorer fra Stockholm, der en var pastor for en romanimenighet innenfor den større menigheten. Fra Finland deltok to prester fra Finske Kirken, den ene medlem i arbeidsgruppen mellom romanifolket og kirken, og den andre generalsekretær i «Romano Missio», en 95 år gammel organisasjon innenfor Finske Kirken. Utvilsom hadde de nordiske land den største andelen romani i sine delegasjoner, men det var også romani fra andre land. En stor andel av deltakerne arbeidet med romanifolket som flyktninger.

Innholdet i seminaret

Innlederne var meget relevante, og holdt et høyt nivå. Generalsekretæren i KEK, Keith Clement, åpnet seminaret, og viste her spesielt til Generalforsamlingen i Trondheim, og det samarbeidet med Den norske kirke, også om det temaet som var i fokus på dette seminaret.

Visestatsminister Csaky fra Slovakia gav en presentasjon av situasjonen for romanifolket, knyttet opp til de mange problemer som et integreringsarbeid medfører. Etablering av »førskoler» skal hindre at barna faller utenfor i skolesituasjonen. Slovakiske myndigheter vedtok i 1999 en lov om minoritetsspråk som stadfestet at 64 kommuner har romanispråket som offisielt språk. Slovakia er ett av landene med den høyeste andelen roma (ca 9 prosent), og derfor er tiltak for språklige rettigheter på høy tid. Csaky pekte også på at det ikke bare finnes ett romanispråk i Slovakia, men at de forsøker å finne en standardmal som anerkjennes av alle. Slovakia mottar støtte fra EU for å styrke skolemulighetene for romanifolket. Csaky pekte også på vanskelighetene med å forholde seg til svært mange organisasjoner og partier for romanifolket. 17 registrerte partier gjør det vanskelig å føre like gode dialoger med alle.

Angela Kocze arbeider ved Roma Rights Centre i Budapest, og gav en kritisk kommentar til de sentraleuropeiske statenes tiltak overfor romanifolket. Hun pekte på at utgangspunktet for å forstå romanifolket er den kollektive utestengelsen de har opplevd. Den holdningen de er møtt med av storsamfunnet har for mange ført til mistillit overfor andre og seg selv. Hun kritiserte testene som brukes for å vurdere spesialskole er tilfredsstillende. Hun pekte også på det problemet med offentlige tjenestemenn som er korrupte, og at penger kan få løst det meste.

En viktig lokal tilnærming ble presentert av Miroslav Zima, som arbeider i Brno i Tsjekkia. Han rettet oppmerksomheten mot boligsituasjonen. Her kom det blant annet fram at den økte kommersialieringen gjør det vanskelig for romanifolket å kunne konkurrere. Mange bor i dag i leiligheter, og noen av dem som ikke har betalt leie, får nå tilbud om å arbeide med oppussing og renovering av disse boligkompleksene for på denne måten å kunne betale leie. Han kunne vise til at i Tsjekkia var ikke spesialskole noe hinder for å gå videre på høyere utdanning, men ofte var problemet at familiene ikke ønsket at barna skal ta lang utdanning.

Forholdet mellom diskriminering og forfølgelse av romanifolket var temaet for innledningen til Jean Concolato fra FNs Høykommissær for flyktninger (UNHCR). Til tross for at UNHCR ikke vil si at romanifolket har behov for beskyttelse, er det mulig å finne eksempler på at personer både har et sterk og velbegrunnet frykt til å frykte forfølgelse. Adgangen til asylprosedyren påvirkes av visumkrav. Det ble også spurt hvordan UNHCR ser på forfølgelse begått av såkalte ikke-statlige aktører (nazister er ett nærliggende eksempel), hvor det i dag er ulik praksis mellom vest-europeiske land. Concolato pekte på at kollektiv tilbakesending er ulovlig bare dersom de som sendes tilbake trenger beskyttelse etter Flyktningekonvensjonen.

OSSEs Nicolae Gheorghe gav en presentasjon av både internasjonale og nasjonale rettslige standarder for romanifolket. Blant annet pekte han på Europarådets uttalelse fra 1993 om at romanifolket er en »transnasjonal minoritet» og derfor trenger ekstra beskyttelse. Mange vestlige land har svake rettslige standarder, blant annet Spania som ikke har noe begrep for »nasjonal minoritet» eller Italia, som opererer med romanifolket som en flyktningekategori.

Adam Tyson viste til hvordan ikke-diskriminering er en del av EUs prinsipper gjennom Amsterdamtraktaten. Han viste til arbeidet med anti-diskrimineringsdirektiver, og hvordan rettighetstenkningen også vil få betydning for romanifolket. Han presenterte også EUs sanksjonsmuligheter, som skal være effektive, proporsjonale og »overbevisende».

Videreføring av arbeidet

Gruppearbeidet pekte på en rekke utfordringer som kirkene står overfor. Det høye ambisjonsnivået som ble lagt til grunn er et uttrykk for at kirkene faktisk har langt større legitimitet overfor romanifolket enn hva myndighetene har. Dette ble blant annet uttrykt slik av noen av romanifolket selv: »Vi respekterer en Guds mann.»

Det interessante er også at noen av innleiderne understreket at kirkene er et »nyttig redskap» for statene. Slovakias justisminister uttrykte under en mottakelse at kirkene må ta over der politikerne feiler. EUs representant uttrykte at EU-støtte er tilgjengelig for de kirkene som vil »gjøre jobben for EU.» En slik instrumentell forståelse av kirken er det grunn til å stille spørsmål ved.

KEK har gjennom vedtaket fra Sentralkomiteemøtet i Iasi i oktober 2000 bedt alle kirkene legge til rette for en dag spesielt viet romanifolket. Lite oppmerksomhet ble viet til en konkretisering av dette vedtaket, og heller ikke arbeidet fram mot Trondheim 2003 ble det dvelt lenge ved. Dette skyldes i hovedsak at deltakerne hadde oppmerksomheten rettet mot enten kirkevekst og menighetsbygging eller rettighetsarbeid og humanitært arbeid. Det var en klart uttrykt respekt for »den andre tilnærmingen». Erfaringer med møteplasser i Den norske kirke (predikanter i domkirker, minnestunder, konserter i kirker) er klart relevante.

Selv forsøkte jeg å peke på at det mellom disse to også var mulig å vise en tredje tilnærming, knyttet til arbeid mot den påførte skammen som mange romanifolk opplever, og for å øke den enkelte og gruppens selvrespekt og stolthet over eget opphav. Bakgrunnen for dette er naturligvis erfaringene fra Norge, der dette var avgjørende for å bygge noen form for tillit. Det var ikke alle kirker som opplevde at de hadde noe å beklage. Eventuelle beklagelser ville da være knyttet til erfaringene under Den andre verdenskrig.

Arbeid med sosiale spørsmål må ha en helhetlig tilnærming. Det hjelper lite med tiltak for bedre skolegang dersom barna opplever å bli trakassert fordi de har feil klær, språk, eller vaner. Det er også viktig å ikke skape større klientifisering, men stille krav, for på denne måten å sikre større bærekraft. I denne sammenhengen er opplæring – på egne premisser – av stor betydning.

Videre ble det diskutert hvordan kirkene arbeider mot diskriminering, og for rettigheter og asylrettigheter. Her ble det fra kirkene i Sentral-Europa pekt på at kirkene i Vest-Europa fortsatt er mest opptatte av dette. Det er viktig å ikke presse på for at dette skal bedres umiddelbart i de landene som har svakere tradisjoner for dette. Videre ble det en diskusjon av samarbeidsformer med nye internasjonale fora for romanifolket. Her ble det pekt på at romanifolket har lite kunnskap om og interesse for slike nye internasjonale fora, som Romanifolkets internasjonale parlament.

Samtaler om kirkeforståelser og teologi var de mest interessante. Holdningene til de tradisjonelle kirkene, proselyttisme, behovet for egne romanimenigheter og hvilke teologiske krav som skal

stilles til forkynnerne, var sentrale i samtalen. Den rumensk-ortodokse kirken har tydelig sagt at de ikke ønsker egne romanimenigheter. Andre opplevde at det var ikke mulig å kontrollere dette. Tematikken fortjener langt større oppmerksomhet, sett på bakgrunn av at det i mange av landene bor opp mot 9 prosent romanifolk.

Det ble ført samtaler med Nicolae Gheorghe og Henry Hedmann fra Finland, som tidligere arbeidet sammen med Gheorghe i OSSE. Ideen ble ført videre om et eget seminar mellom kristne ledere fra romanifolket og kristne ledere fra de etablerte kirkene. Tanken er at Norge, Sverige, Finland og de sentral-europeiske landene skal inviteres spesielt. Det ble fra min side også pekt på viktigheten av å trekke inn andre land i Vest-Europa med betydelige romanigrupper, som Frankrike og Spania. Modellen kan hentes fra et seminar som CCME står ansvarlig for (oktober 2001) om kirkene og de nye »etniske menighetene».

Det er viktig at det går ut informasjon om dette til Norges Kristne Råd og Norges Frikirkeråd, og at ideen også drøftes i Sverige og Finland. I Norge blir tanken diskutert på det neste møtet i dialoggruppen med RFL. For at arrangementet skal kunne skje på forsommeren 2002, er det avgjørende at Ex.com i CCME får seg forelagt planer på sitt møte i oktober. Slik jeg ser det, er et møte mellom disse kristne lederne viktig for å kunne skape en god prosess fram mot Trondheim 2003. I dette arbeidet er Daniel Kwiek, pastor for romanifolket i Filadalfia i Stockholm er ressurs, gjennom sitt enorme nettverk i Europa.

Arbeidet må ikke minst ta sikte på en langt større bevisstgjøring av egne medlemmer. Her er det viktig å nevne at det er under utarbeidelse et hefte i arbeidsgruppen mot rasisme og fremmedfrykt i CCME. Innholdet kan påvirkes, og det er viktig at det tenkes helhet og mobilisering fram mot Trondheim 2003. Jeg skal følge opp dette arbeidet for å finne ut hvordan det best kan tilflytte Norge.

Avslutning

Den slovakiske kirkerådet var et modig vertskap for et tema for fortsatt er sensitivt og vanskelig. Problemet er også at kirkene ikke tør å ta ordentlig tak i problemene. Utfallet kan bli dypt tragisk, som når kirker i realiteten holdes stengt for romanifolket, eller at menigheten holder seg hjemme dersom de informeres om at gudstjenester skal arrangeres sammen med romanifolket. Også den lutherske kirken i Slovakia - etter den informasjonen jeg mottok – holdt noen menighetsbarnehager stengt for barn av romanifolket. Denne praksisen har nå endret seg, blant annet som følge av press blant annet fra den tyske kirken.

På den andre siden er det mange gode eksempler på godt kirkelig arbeid. Ett eksempel er kirker som holder åpent for at skolebarn skal få skikkelig forhold til å kunne utføre hjemmelekser. Andre eksempler er knyttet til tilrettelagt bibelskolevirksomhet, eller mye bruk av sang for å sikre at romanifolket føler seg hjemme i menighetene i større grad. Helt klart vil en integrering også måtte skje på romanifolkets premisser dersom de ikke skal bli fremmedgjort. Erfaringer fra England viser at de etablerte kirkene ikke var klare til å ta i bruk formene til de innflytterne som kom til England fra 1960-tallet, noe som førte til at egne »svarte menigheter» ble etablert. I dag ønsker de tradisjonelle kirkene å gjøre bruk av disse formene i større grad.

Seminalet ble ikke minst vellykket som følge av deltakere fra romanifolket med stor kunnskap og integritet. På denne måten fikk vi anledning til å få en bedre forståelse av gatebarn og prostitusjon, som må forstås som utslag av fattigdom, ikke som utslag av kultur. Slike meningsutvekslinger gav mye, og må føres videre.

Takk til Mellomkirkelig råd for oppnevningen, til Kirkens Nødhjelp og Utenriksdepartementet for økonomiske bidrag og til Karl Sundby for deltakelse og inspirasjon!

7.mai 2001
Hans Morten Haugen

