

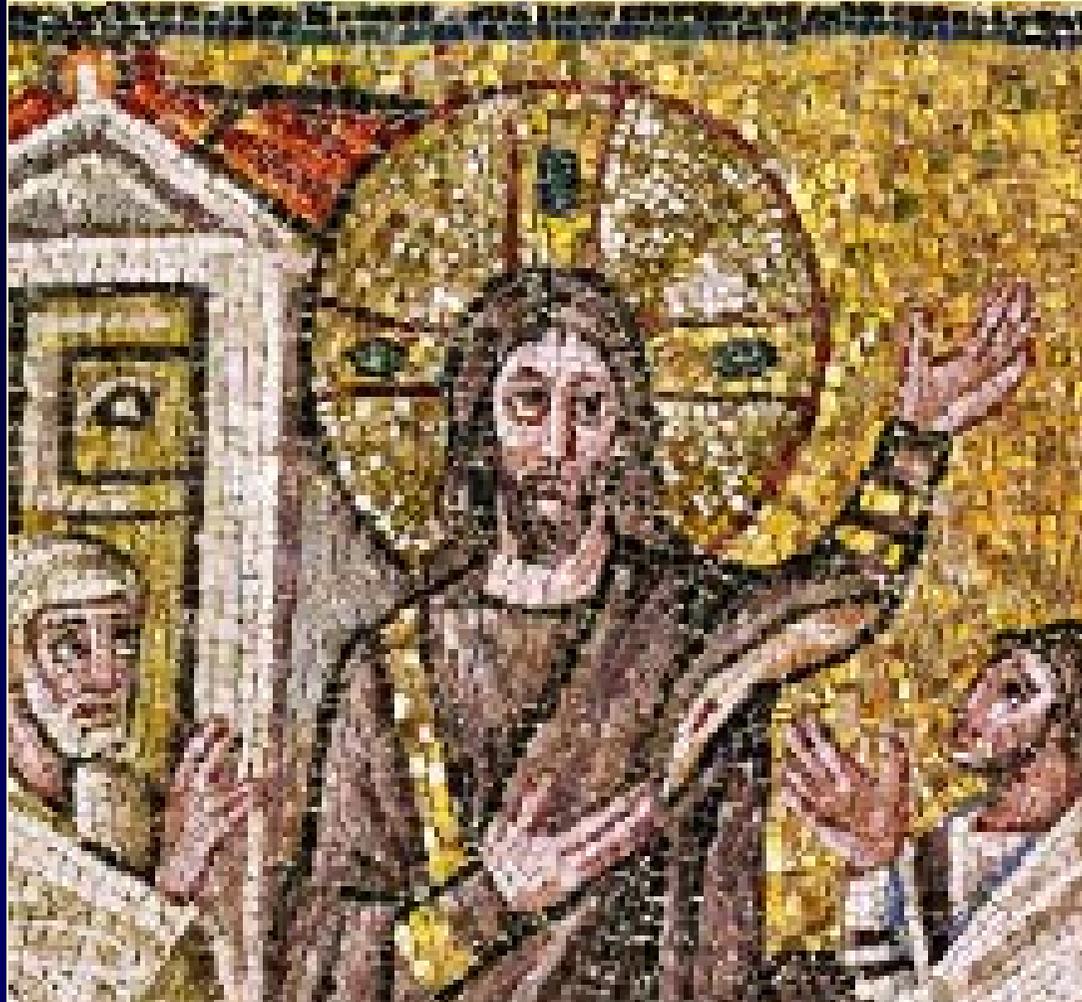
Missionaries of the Precious Blood

Week of Reflection on Mission
July 20-24, 2009

A Short History of the Church's Mission



Introduction

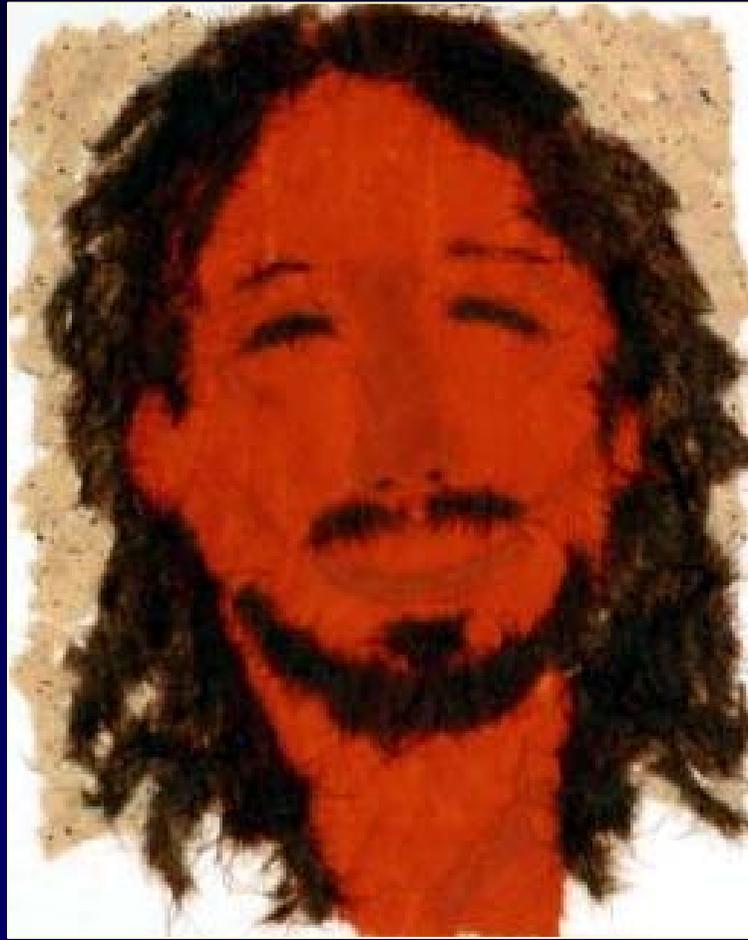


Not tangential to church history

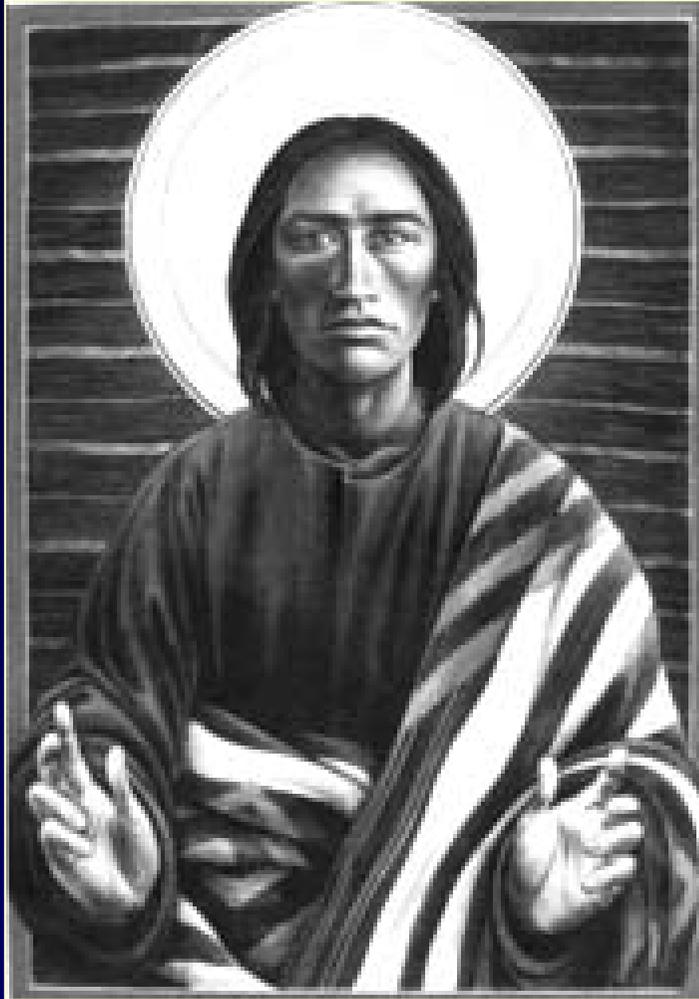
- Rather, at the heart of the church's life
- Our story, the church's missionary activity
- While some events and characters central to church history, many may not be
- Charlemagne, Gregory VII, etc. but also Alopen, Ramon Lull, Marie of the Incarnation
- Help us see that the church has always been a world church
- Mission of East Syrian church to China as important as that of Patrick, Boniface
- “The church exists by mission....”—hope this reflection will show just that



I. The Mission of Jesus Creates the Church

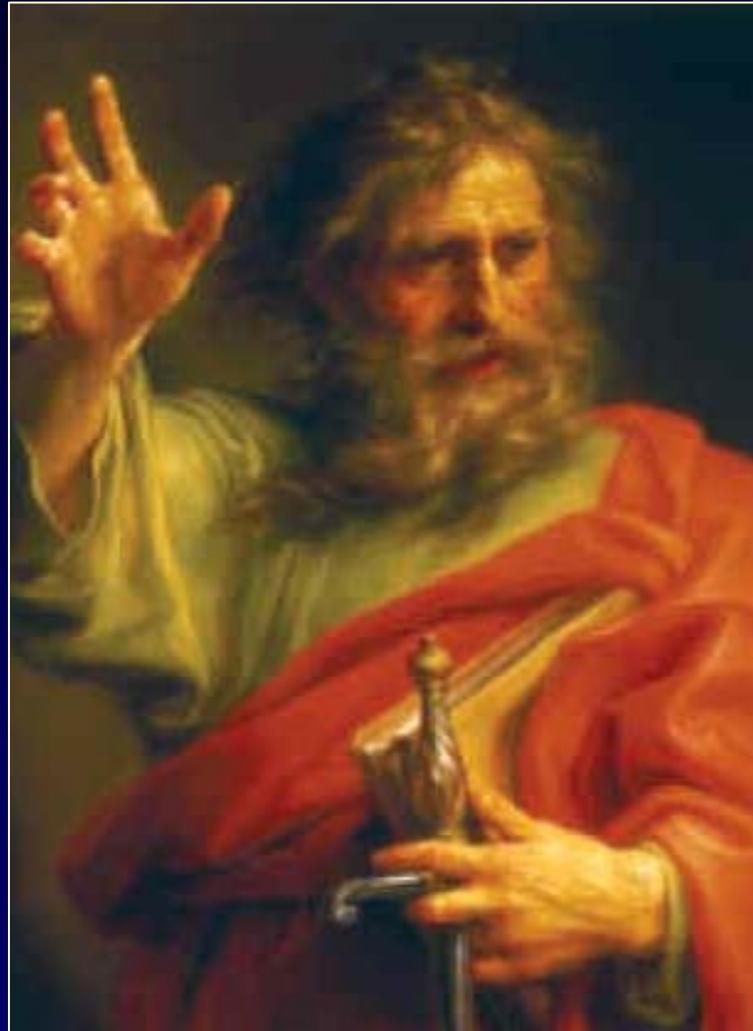


Jesus was a missionary...



- Sent to preach, serve and witness the Reign of God
- Message of God's love, forgiveness, inclusion, challenge to do the same— "think different!"
- Executed as a blasphemer and subversive
- But experienced as risen!
- Gradually, followers began to realize they were to continue Jesus' mission
- Something beyond boundaries of Judaism—Jesus movement became the church

II. Paul and the New Testament Church

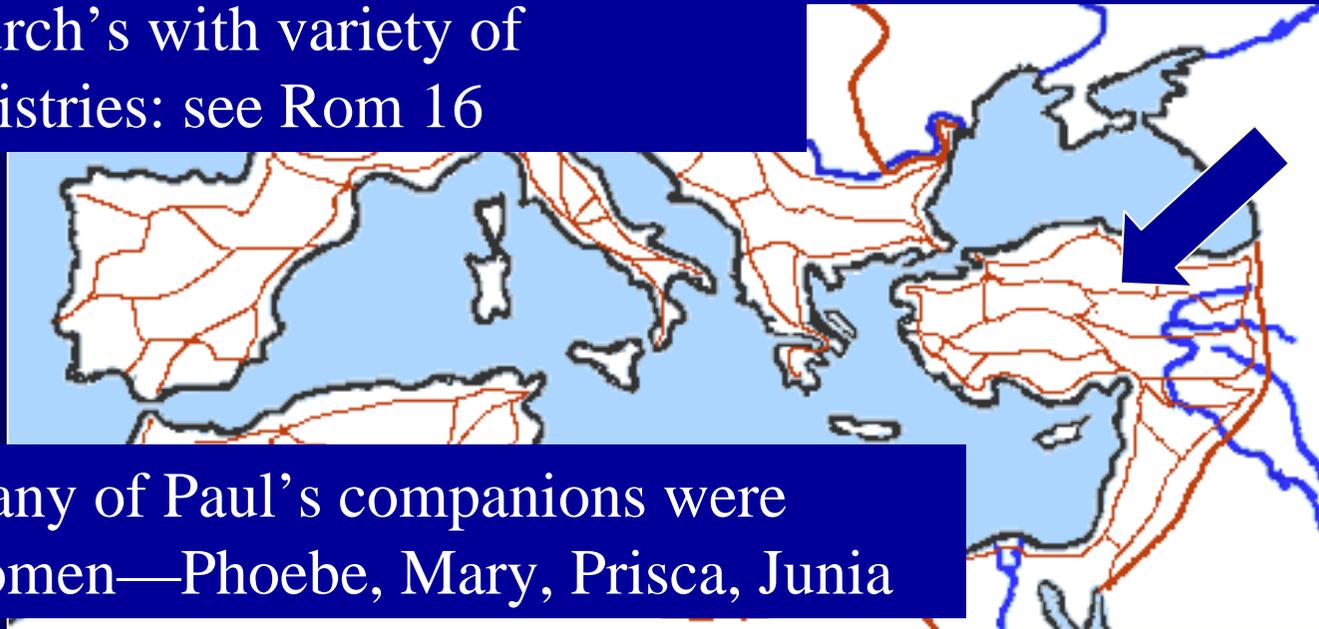


...but a Gentile Christianity began to flourish in Roman Empire



Paul and companions made use of extensive network of Roman roads

Church's with variety of ministries: see Rom 16



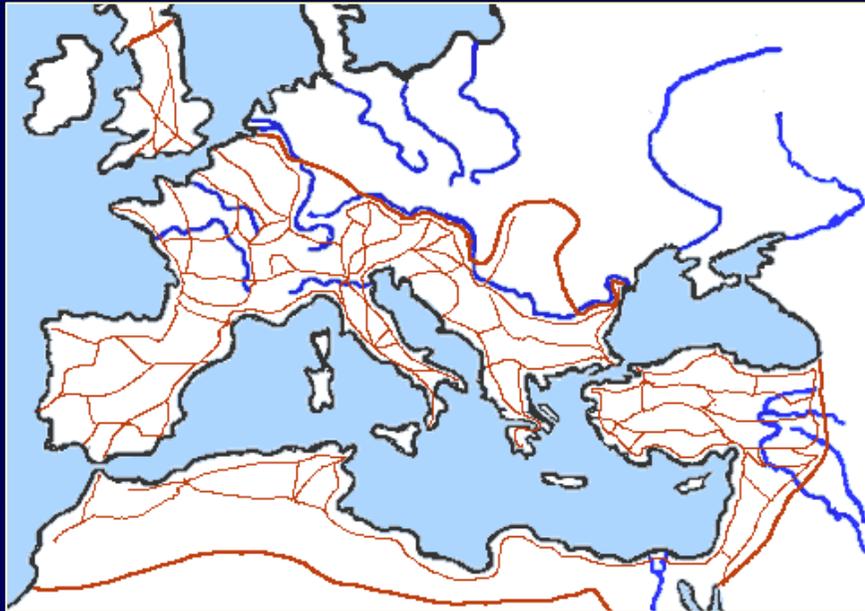
Many of Paul's companions were women—Phoebe, Mary, Prisca, Junia

Jewish Christianity would flourish...

III. Gossiping the Gospel



Wandering apostles, but...



- Best missionaries, ordinary men and women...
- Stark: family networks
- Witness: plagues, respect for women, martyrdom
- Spread West—but East as well! Persia, India
- Armenia 301;
Constantine 313
- Ethiopia by Frumentius

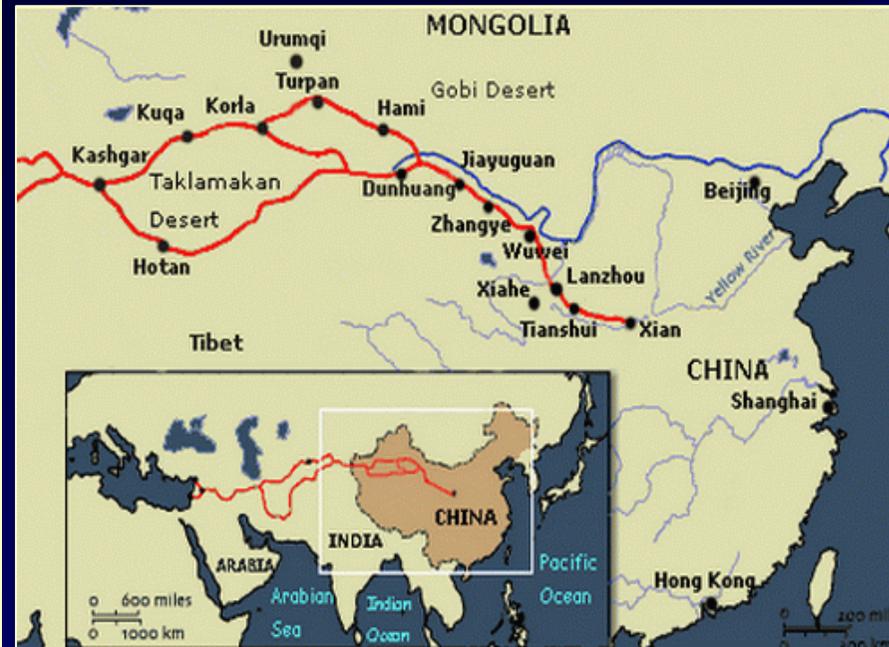
IV. Mission and Monasticism

300-1000



A “white martyrdom”

- New kind of witness to the world
- Antony of Egypt, Synlectica, Pachomius, John Cassian (4th century)
- Cappadocians (4th century)
- Patrick and Celtic monasticism (5th century)
- Benedict (6th century)
- East Syrian monks in India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia (?), on the Silk Road—Alopen in China 635—Adam in 8th century
- Cyril and Methodius in 10th century; Russia as well

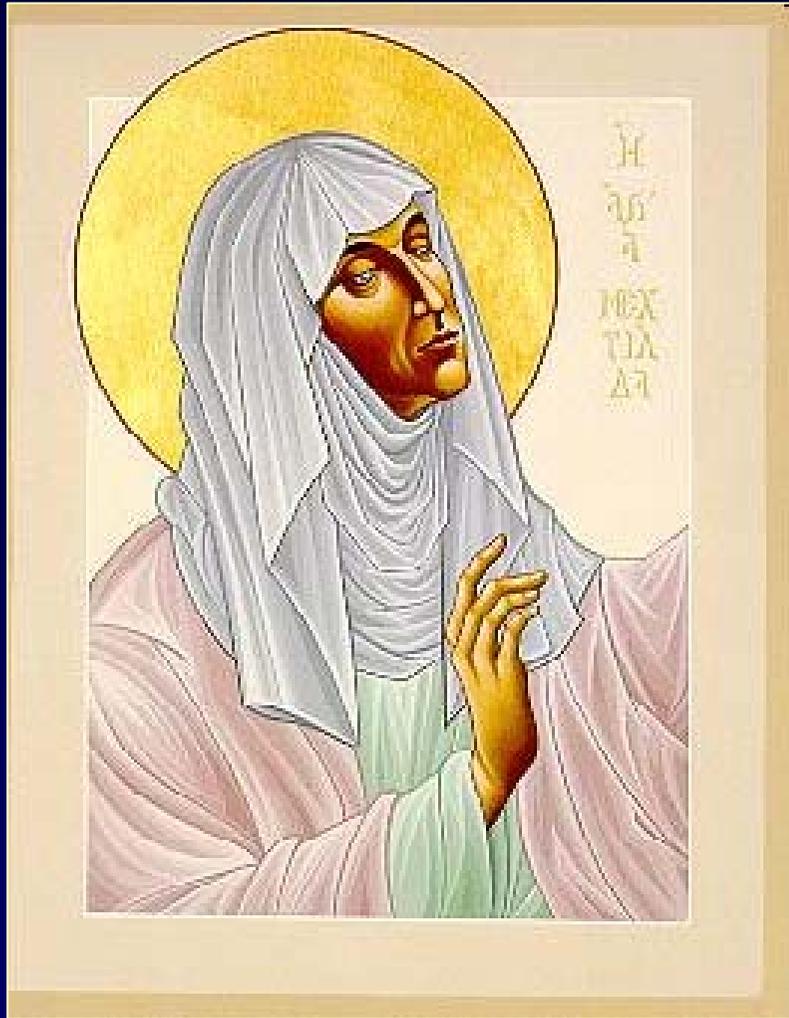


V. Mission and the Mendicant

Movement: 1000-1500

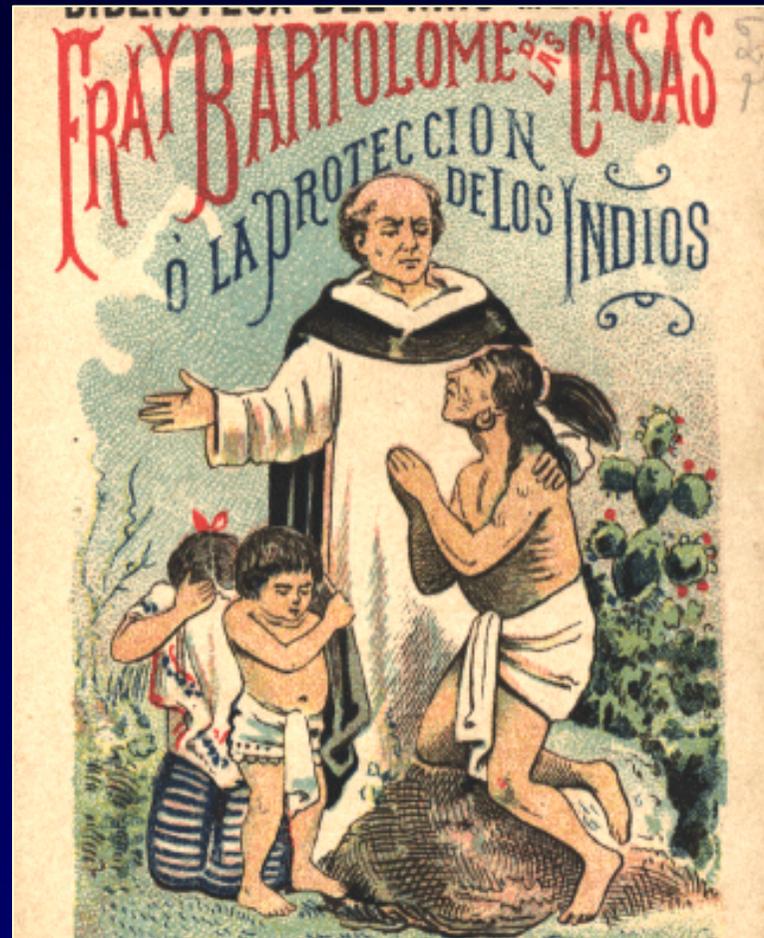


A new way of doing mission...



- Time of corruption, clerical rule
- “vita apostolica”
- Waldensians and others
- Franciscans—a lay movement
- Clare, Ramon Lull, John of Montecorvino
- Dominicans—confidence in argument, not force
- Low Countries: the Beguines
- 1453—Fall of Constantinople: beginning of dominance of Western Christendom

VI. Mission in the Sixteenth Century and the Rise of the Jesuits

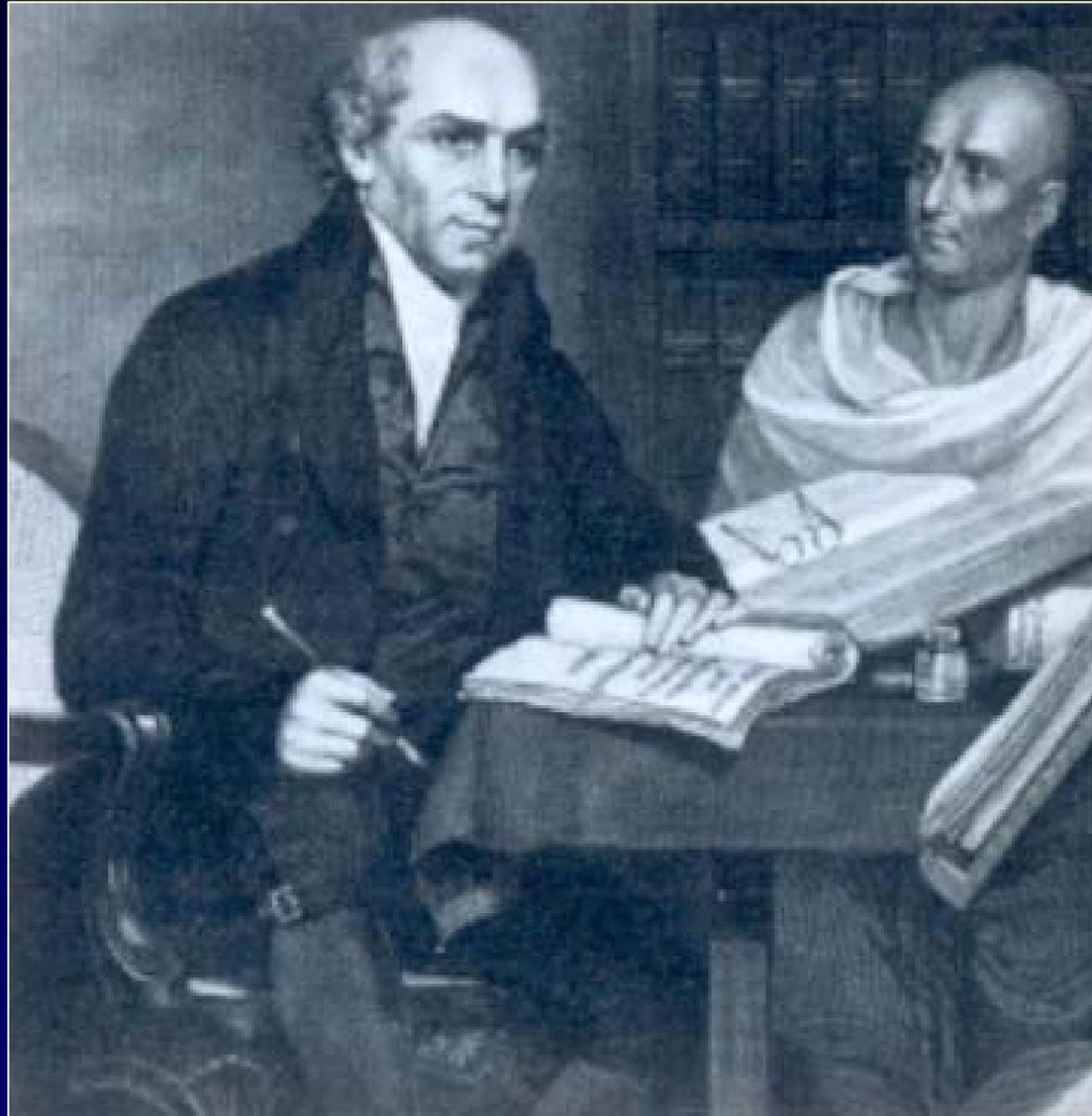


Discovery? Encounter? Invasion?



- Much greed, but also commitment to evangelize
- Antonio de Montesinos, 1501
- Bartolomé de las Casas—one of several “voices of compassion”
- Philippines after 1530
- Foundation of the Jesuits: new kinds of missionaries
- Reductions in Paraguay
- Valignano and Ricci in China
- De Nobili in India
- De Rhodes in Vietnam
- Collapse of missionary movement—only 300 left!

VIII. Mission in the “Great Century”

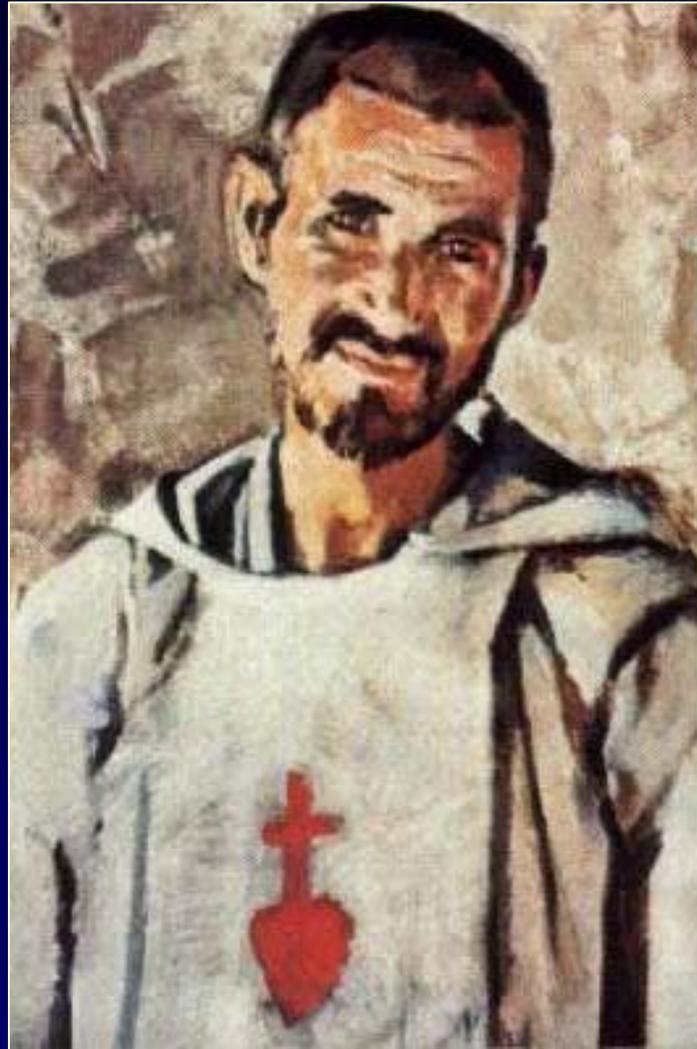


An explosion of missionary activity!



- 1793: William Carey and beginning of Protestant missionary movement
- Hand in hand with colonialism
- Venn and Crowther
- China Inland Mission
- After Napoleon, explosion too of Catholic missionary groups
- Women prominent in Protestant movement (60%)
- 1910 and Edinburgh

Twentieth Century into the
Twenty-first



Certainty, Ferment, Crisis, Rebirth



- First 60 years: certainty
- Papal mission encyclicals
- Vatican II: ferment—
church is missionary, non-
Christians can be saved,
culture good
- Crisis—why mission?
- Rebirth: 1975
- “single, complex reality”
- Missionaries from Two-
Third’s world
- Lay, short-term mission

Conclusion



Only scratching the surface!

- But I hope you can see centrality of mission in the church's history
- Many wonderful people, events
- But also shadows!
- Need to remember that the Holy Spirit is the “principal agent of mission”

