

ABSTRACT

Since the early Church, proclamation of the Word had been the main mission of the leaders of the people of God. The leadership of the people has been authoritatively entrusted to the bishop (*episkopos*). In line with the development of the Christian communities, the leadership in the church has been extended to priests (*presbyter*). In the daily practice dealing with the church-people, priests became the leaders of the Christian communities. Consequently, proclaiming the Word has become the most important responsibility of the priests.

During the development that followed, the leadership in the Church got closely connected with the power of presiding the celebration of the Eucharist. This stage of development induced a shift in emphasizing various aspect of leadership in the Church. The function of the leader of the Church had been narrowed down to the celebration of the liturgy, especially the Eucharist. The other responsibilities of the priests, the proclamation of the Word in the first place, did not get the attention which should have been given to.

The Second Vatican Council opened a new perspective by drawing full attention to the responsibility to

proclaim the Word. As it brought to life again the early church's vision about the function of the priest, it emphasized again that the first responsibility of the priests is the proclamation of the Word. But this time the proclamation of the Word has been located in a much broader context, i.e. in the context of building up the Church, the People of God.

The proclamation of the word is not an easy task to be accomplished. Especially in a world like ours, which changes rapidly and totally, the proclamation of the Word got quite complicated. The truth and salvation which we proclaim has to be clothed in words and send out in such a way that it makes sense for the reality of people's life of today's world. The truth proclaimed has to answer to the longing of people today, and the salvation presented has to give a meaning able to transcend the suffering people bear in this world now. Therefore, it is required an adaptation of methods which sustain the inner strength of the proclamation of the word to the modern society we live in today.