



THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE USA

NEWS
WINTER 2005

A WORD FROM THE REGIONARY

February 16, 2006 will mark the ninetieth anniversary of the foundation of the Liberal Catholic Church. The date of the Episcopal consecration of Bp. James Ingall Wedgwood has been chosen as the beginning of our Church. Many Liberal Catholics, especially in Australia, where Bp. Leadbeater was particularly venerated for his psychic abilities, consider that our Church had two Founders. However history and the facts don't support such designation. If a second Founding Bishop should be designated, it should be Bp. Robert King who lead our Church in England while Bp. Wedgwood traveled around the world. The first years of our Church are reported by Bp. Wedgwood himself in an article he wrote for the LCC American Magazine *UBIQUE: The Beginnings of the LCC*, reprint by ALBANUS 2001.



Consecration of James Ingall Wedgwood as First Presiding Bishop, London, England, February 13, 1916

Seated, left to right: Rt. Rev. Robert King, Rt. Rev. James Ingall Wedgwood, Rt. Rev. Frederick Samuel Willoughby, Rt. Rev. Rupert Gauntlett.

Standing: Jose B. Acuna (later Bishop), Reginald Farrer, three unidentified Servers, Theodore Bell.

“ I was myself responsible for the wording of most of the forms of service. Bishop Leadbeater and I collaborated in the writing of the Collects, though he was mainly responsible for them. He selected the verses for the psalms and canticles, and the passages serving for epistles and gospels.

“ I have so far discussed changes in the Liturgy and mode of worship. One other matter calls for mention in this record of our early work. We decided to be scrupulously careful in our choice of bishops and in the circumstances of their consecration. The title of Archbishop is with us set aside. It was originally decided to drop the title of Father as attached to priests.

We have done our best to be sensible and to cast off the earlier tradition of extravagance. I was myself responsible for the writing of the Statement of Principles.

" A few months later I was once more on my way to Sydney. The worldwide journeying was decidedly expensive, but I realized some capital in order to make it possible. Bishop King was left in charge of the work in England and admitted some good workers to the priesthood. Mr. Leadbeater was consecrated bishop on July 22, 1916, having previously received conditional baptism and confirmation and the earlier Orders, again conditionally, at my hands.

" The many and sundry rites of the Church were carefully studied and through these researches were laid the foundations of our existing Liturgy and of the valuable and interesting book later published by our great colleague, The Science of the Sacraments. My own studies in theology now proved useful. I was able to formulate question after question, and the principles governing the working of the holy sacraments and the offices of worship of the Church were gradually elucidated."

Bishop Wedgwood's creativity, liberalism, and larger view of religion have guided the Liberal Catholic Church since its very first days and until now, on the path of innovation which has served as guide lines to other branches in Christianity: Liturgy in the vernacular, open communion, married priests and bishops, absence of dogmas, gratuity of the Services, restoration of the human being as the image of God, and more recently the opening of the Holy Orders to women. His perception of the future has made him a leader far more advanced than all the those who followed him at the helm of our Church.

ADAM'S FIRST WIFE by M.H.W.

The story of the Creation according to Genesis requires attentive reading. Many specialists of the Ancient Testament recognize today that the story reported in the Hebrew Bible is, at least partially, a compilation of other Mediterranean traditions.

Some scholars however have labeled the Bible as being so abbreviated that the story of the original manifestation of the divine in the material world, in a duality of equally divine nature, had been removed or forgotten. This dualistic origin of creation took many forms of which Manicheism is one of the most widely known. This version of creation persisted for centuries within Christianity, and its supporters became the victims of cruel persecutions by the Trinitarian Christians.

From the beginning there was a competition between two forms of Christian social order: One based on the equality of men and women, each created equals in the image of God (Gen.1:27), and the other in which women are submitted to men, an attitude equally based on the Book of Genesis (Gen. 3:16). The patriarchal cultures of Palestine and of Rome looked at women as inferior to men, and the justification they found in Genesis fueled Christianity for the following two thousand years. Peter and

Paul were products of their times and therefore very much convinced of their own superiority over women. Paul could perhaps be excused as he never met physically with Jesus and hadn't received the teachings of the Master during His ministry, but that is not the case for Peter. The Gospels and Acts report Peter's numerous complaints to Jesus against women, Mary Magdalene in particular.

But why do some Christians believe in a human manifestation of the divine in two equal principles? If we take a closer look at the story of Genesis, we see that God in fact created two wives for Adam: The first in the first chapter (Gen. 1:26-28), the second in the second chapter (Gen. 2:21-23). The second wife was named Eve, and most Christians, having forgotten the first, believe that Eve was the first and only spouse to Adam.

The Bible does not--with a single exception (Isaiah 34:14)--list the name of Adam's first wife, nor does it tell what happened to her or give the reason for a second creation. Only the *Secret Books* (Apocrypha) of the Ancient Testament provide some answers. We cannot expect Jewish society at the time of Moses to be more respectful of women than at the time of Jesus. It is therefore not surprising that the leaders of Israel have eliminated from their Scriptures, those books telling the story of Lilith.

Lilith, who claimed the same rights as Adam because of her divine origin as co-equal image of God, was a threat to the Jews. It was imperative that such ideas of gender equality didn't occur to the daughters of Israel and disrupt the carefully maintained social order of the patriarchal social system. So the story was not only banned from the Holy Scriptures, but distorted to make sure that Lilith was permanently discredited. There are enough references in the Rabbinical Midrash (presumably relying on earlier legends) to provide an idea of her appearance: Lilith grows long hair (Erubin 100), she looks like a human being, but has wings (Nidda 151). Many references claim that she is demoniac.

So what happened, according to the legend, between Lilith and Adam to cause their divorce? The story is reported in the *Alphabeth of Ben Sira* (8th-10th century), as follows:

"Adam and Lilith never found peace together; for when he wished to lie with her, she took offense at the recumbent posture he demanded. Why must I lie beneath you?" she asked. 'I also was made from dust, and am therefore your equal.' Because Adam tried to compel her obedience by force, Lilith, in a rage, uttered the magic name of God, rose into the air, and left him.

"Adam complained to God: 'I have been deserted by my helpmate.' God at once sent the angels Senoy, Sansenoy and Semangelof to force Lilith back. 'Return to Adam without delay,' the angels said, 'or we will drown you!' 'How can I die,' Lilith asked again, 'when God has ordered me to take charge of all newborn children?' Yet she escaped the curse of death which overtook Adam, since they had parted long before the Fall and his eviction from Eden.

"Undismayed by His failure to give Adam a suitable helpmate, God tried again. The sight caused Adam such disgust that even when this woman, the First Eve, stood there in her

full beauty, he felt an invincible repugnance. God knew that He had failed once more, and took the First Eve away. Where she went, nobody knows for certain. God tried a third time, and acted more circumspectly. Having taken a rib from Adam's side in his sleep, He formed it into a woman; then plaited her hair and adorned her, like a bride, with twenty-four pieces of jewelry, before waking him. Adam was entranced."

Some sources report that God created Eve not from Adam's rib, but from a tail ending in a sting which had been part of his body. God cut off this tail, and the stump--now the useless coccyx--is still carried by Adam's descendants. Others say that God's original thought had been to create two human beings, male and female, but instead He designed a single one with a male face looking forward, and a female face looking backwards.



Again He changed His mind, removed Adam's backward-looking face, and built a woman's body for it. Still others hold that Adam was originally created as an androgen of male and female bodies joined back to back. Since this posture made locomotion difficult and conversation awkward, God divided the androgen and gave each half a new rear. These separate beings He placed in Eden, forbidding them to couple. Surprisingly, the myth of Lilith has survived until our century. It even inspired one of the strangest sculptures by Salvador Dali: *Lilith and the Double Victory of Samothrace*. During the last decade, the myth of Lilith has gradually been cleaned up of the legends accumulated by the ages, the serpent, the demon, and has regained her ancient stature of the Ancient Mother, of Sophia, of the female aspect of God

Notes on sources:

1. Genesis II. 18-25; III. 20.
2. Genesis I. 26-28.
3. Gen. Rab. 17.4; B. Yebamot 632.
4. Yalqut Reubeni ad. Gen. II. 21; IV. 8.
5. Alpha Beta diBen Sira, 47; Gaster, MGWJ, 29 (1880), 553 ff. or <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/~hummm/Topics/Lilith/alphabet.html>
6. Num. Rab. 16.25.
7. Targum ad job 1. 15.
8. B. Shabbat 151b; Ginzberg, LJ, V. 147-48.
9. Gen. Rab. 158, 163-64; Mid. Abkir 133, 135; Abot diR. Nathan 24; B. Sanhedrin 39a.
10. Gen. II. 21-22; Gen. Rab. 161.
11. Gen. Rab. 134; B. Erubin 18a.
12. B. Erubin 18a.
13. Gen. Rab. 55; Lev. Rab. 14.1; Abot diR. Nathan 1.8; B. Berakhot 61a; B. Erubin 18a; Tanhuma Tazri'a 1; Yalchut Gen. 20; Tanh. Buber iii.33; Mid. Tehillim 139, 529.

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCH. HERE, THERE, EVERYWHERE....

The Province of Belgium

A small group of dedicated members has revived enough interest in our Church to open a new Mission in Antwerp. One of the new members has offered a room in her home for a permanent chapel dedicated to Our Lady, the Patron Saint of the city. Mr. Eddy Doms, the current person-in-charge, is working diligently to establish the new congregation, and has received the Minor Orders up to Acolyte. The Rev. Ronald Engelse, Priest-in-charge of the Church of Saint Francis in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, will celebrate the Holy Eucharist once a month, with services celebrated in Dutch. On Nov. 14, 2005, Bp. Maurice gave a lecture introducing the Liberal Catholic Church at the Faculty of Comparative Religions in Antwerp, with 20 members of the faculty and 50 students in attendance.

The Rev. Joseph Ilunga announces the birth on Dec. 6, 2005, of his granddaughter Alicia Courthiau to his daughter Marie-Sophie Ilunga and son-in-law Benjamin Courthiau; and on Dec. 20, 2005, the birth of a grandnephew, Dieudonné-Bienvenue Makambu.

The Province of Cameroon

Bp. Maurice Warnon received a very enthusiastic welcome during his visit to the Province of Cameroon. The main purpose of this visit was to complete the process of admission of a number of congregations into our movement. The Liberal Catholic Church in Cameroon was established in the 1970's by the late Bp. André Lhote. Unfortunately, one ethnic group became so prominent that it took control of the operations of the Church and refused to admit members from other ethnic groups.

At the end of 2004, a group of members of the Gallican Church, after numerous and useless attempts to join the LCC over several years, contacted us by internet with the request to join our movement. On May 15, 2005, our General Episcopal Synod meeting in Arnhem, created the Province of Cameroon with Bp. Maurice as Commissary. Although English (20%) and French (80%) are the two official languages in Cameroon, only about 1/3 of the population can understand any of these languages. The large majority of the people use one of five major native languages.

The main congregation is located in Yaoundé, the capital city, and meets in a large church building dedicated to Saint Michael and Our Lady of Good Hope. The building accommodates about 4,000 people. Every Friday evening a prayer for the sick is organized, culminated by a Midnight Mass of Healing. The rite of the Liberal Catholic Healing Service was introduced at this occasion, and was administered to 273 of the nearly 4,000 people present that evening

Having been deprived of Episcopal ministry for so long, this group was in serious need of Sacraments, particularly Confirmations and Ordinations, which were

given mainly during the Sunday Mass. Four deacons and three subdeacons were ordained before a congregation in excess of 4,000. A television crew was present and taped the service, which was broadcast on National Television the same evening. In order to have the majority of the congregation participating to the services, the liturgy was complemented with traditional songs in native language, as the Kyrie, the Gloria, and other parts of the Mass.

With the exception of a day dedicated to the visit of two “bush parishes” in the jungle, the remainder of the visit was dedicated to clergy training and to sessions with parish volunteers. Volunteers are critical to assist in the ministry of the V. Rev. Laurent Désiré Ngah, the single Priest of our movement in Cameroon, and they had many questions. Bush Parishes assemble regularly with congregations of 300 to 500 members.

At this point of time, our movement in Cameroon consists of 3 Parishes and 7 Missions and counts between 6,500 and 7,000 members. The process of registration is not yet complete. Our web site has been updated to reflect the admission of the new congregations at: <http://TheLiberalCatholicChurch.org>, by selecting CAMEROUN on the world map.

The Province of Canada

At the end of another year, the Canadian cold and snow have arrived in time for a beautiful white Christmas. In the name of Our Lady’s Parish, in Magog, Quebec, I want to wish everyone joy, especially on the occasion of the rebirth of the marvelous Light of Christmas.

The year 2005 will be remembered for the change of our place of worship and a significant increase in the number of Services celebrated. Lectures and discussion sessions have become common practice, and quite a number of our members have accepted a call to work at the altar: Marc Simard received the order of Cleric, Diane Tremblay became a Reader, and Reynoud Wijtman, a subdeacon.

The Rev. Eric Archambault

The Province of the Netherlands

The major news from the Dutch Province is the demise of Mrs Karen Margrethe den Outer-Sieverts, in Wageningen, the Netherlands, on Oct. 4, 2005. She was the spouse of the Rt. Rev. Frank den Outer, the Regionary Bishop for the Netherlands, after a long and painful battle against cancer. Mrs den Outer was born in Randoeblatoeng, Indonesia on Mar. 25, 1934. In the name of the members of the Liberal Catholic Church in the USA, I present our heartfelt condolences to Bp. Frank, her daughter Birgit, her son Peter, and her three grand children. May she rest in peace in the Light.

*Death is nothing at all. I have only slipped away, into the next room.
I am I, and you are you. Whatever we were to each other, that we are still.*

*Call me by my old familiar name, speak to me in your easy way which you always used,
Put no difference in your tone, wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.
Laugh, as we always laughed at the little jokes we enjoyed together,
Pray for me, think of me. Life means all that it ever meant.
It is the same as it ever was: there is unbroken continuity.
Why should I be out of mind, because I am out of sight?
I am waiting for you, for an interval, somewhere very near, just around the corner.
canon Henry Scot-Holland 1847*

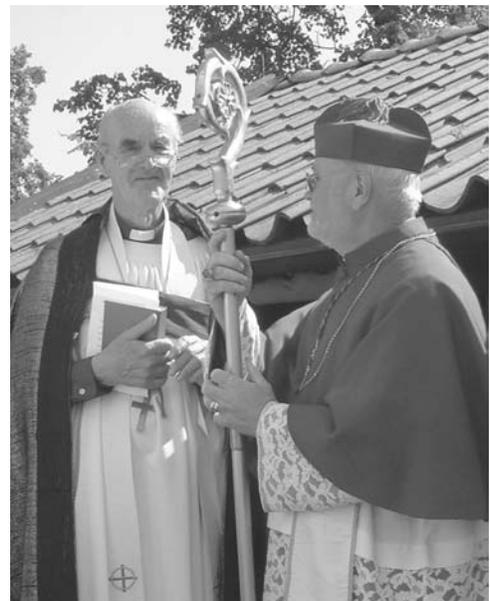
All is well.

The Rev. Wies Kuiper was ordained to the Priesthood, as the first women priest in the Netherlands, by Bp. Frank den Outer, Regionary, on Nov. 5, 2005. The ordination took place in the church of Saint Michael in Zwolle. Many priests of the province came for the event.

The Rt. Rev. Peter Baaij has resigned from his position as Rector of the LCC Parish in Amsterdam, to devote himself to his Episcopal Ministry. Bp. Frank den Outer, Regionary, has appointed the Rev. Piet Standaar as Priest-in-charge.

The Province of Sweden.

Forty years ago, clergy from nine denominations gathered for the opening ceremony of Capella Ecumenica – a chapel dedicated to Christ beyond canonical borders. Since then, these and other Christian denominations have frequently used the chapel for services and ceremonies. Capella Ecumenica, which is also a popular wedding church, is beautifully situated on the isle of Västra Gärsholmen in the Norrköping archipelago.



On August 21st, 2005, clergy from 13 denominations gathered to celebrate the 40th anniversary in an ecumenical service. Regionary Sten-Bertil Jakobson represented the Swedish province of the LCC and was given the honor of both opening and closing the service.



On October 1st, 2005, the Swedish province held its annual general meeting. The atmosphere was very relaxed and the attendees were in high spirits. We were able to look back on a number of exciting and very positive events during the past year, which of course coloured the mood of everyone.

The day after, October 2nd, we held our traditional Michaels Mass. This year we could also rejoice at the ordination of our second female deacon, Carina Carlström.

The LCC in the British Isles.

On All Saints Day - 1st November 2005— we were formally welcomed as a new Province in the Movement, and the Rt Rev. Allan Barns, previously an Assistant Bishop in the Grail Community, had the honour of being appointed as our first Episcopal Vicar General.

It has been an exciting start for our new group. At present we consist of four active Oratories and, hopefully we will be adding a Mass Station late next year. In August Elizabeth Parker was Ordained to the Sub-Diaconate and so joins Carol Harbour, a Deacon, as the second women cleric in our Group. On the 20th November Colin Stubbing was Ordained as a Cleric, thus taking the first step up the ladder.

A small Newsletter is being produced Quarterly and has generated considerable support and interest, not least among clergy of the Main Church and other LCC groups. It seems to be well worth the effort in making known our existence and binding together our rather scattered congregations.

Next April we are planning to hold a 'Church Weekend' at Apperley. We have organised these in the past and they are popular and a good way of bringing people together and continuing our training. The theme will be 'TOWARDS THE FUTURE.

We, therefore, have a healthy outlook for a growing future, in the Movement, helping in our small way in forwarding the work of our Master.

+ Allan Barns

The Province of the United States of America.

Possibility of a new Mission in Kansas.

The Rev. David Carpenter from the Parish of Tulsa, OK has celebrated the Holy Eucharist at the request of a family of Kansas City, KS. The celebration took place on Sunday Sep. 26. 2005 at 10:00 p.m. After the celebration, the Rev. David wrote:

"My friend and I have since corresponded, and he expressed great delight with the service, telling me it was more beautiful and more powerful than he had expected. He has re-read the service several times and I think he may grow to love it as much as I do. Time will tell what transpires in Kansas City, but I am hopeful that a Mission may be established there in the next several months.

Church of Saint Raphael, Archangel, Orlando, FL.

Our Parish Sanctuary and Chapel is housed on the campus of the Theosophical

Society In Orlando. On the second Sunday of October in 1996, the members of the Theosophical Society dedicated their campus as a "Designated Nature Sanctuary." Every year on this date we commemorate this event with a "Nature Appreciation Day" ...Nature Meditation, brief readings, and group sharing of experiences with Nature, refreshments and good fellowship.

The public is invited to attend this event.

We are happy to report that our computer publishing system, which is our resource to put together our print newsletter THE PULPIT, is now back on-line and hopefully working well. We look forward to being able to offer our next issue of THE PULPIT in mid December for the Christmas holiday issue, and also to put together the new information to transmit to our webmaster to update our web site with our current Church information. If you are not on our postal mailing list and would like to receive THE PULPIT, please send us your address...You can e-mail it to us :

Rev. William M. Delahunt

Church of Saint Francis, Minneapolis, MN.

Our Rector, Rev. Richard Curney, sustained a severe injury to his left hand on December 14, 2005, rendering him unable to celebrate the Eucharist. Subdeacon Judie Cilcain led her first service of Prime on Sunday, December 18. Dick is currently wearing a large bandage and a splint, but managed to perform the Eucharist for the Christmas service. Rev. Lee Dunn conducted the Mass of the Presanctified on September 11 and October 9, 2005. We continue to say Our Lady's Rosary of the Seven Rays on the first Saturday of each month.

Rev. Curney married Lynn Marie Wilwert and James Russell Jutz at Tartan Park in Lake Elmo on September 2. He baptized Safiya Tesgaye and her young son Same Tesgaye on Sunday, November 6, 2005. The family provided a delicious meal for the congregation after the service.

The Celestial Light Circle celebrated the Fall Equinox on Sept. 24, and the Winter Solstice on Dec. 21 at Saint Francis. Our 25th (or so) annual Thanksgiving vegetarian potluck was again a popular event, with nearly 40 people attending. Our next quarterly potluck will be held at noon on Sunday, February 26, 2006.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you.

David S. Cargo

Mission of the Holy Sophia, Stockholm, WI.

We continue to have Eucharist services on the first and third Sunday of each month, with seminars/discussion groups following Prime on the second and fourth Sundays. Since my goal is to help people understand the nature of "reality," at our recent meetings we reviewed basic atomic theory and string theory. This lays the

foundation for discussing the philosophical implications of these theories on the nature of reality. We will also study the nature of physical reality from the mystical side of ancient wisdom. St. Sophia continues to slowly interest more people, with 10-15 coming to Eucharist services and 10-20 attending the seminars.

On Sunday evening, December 18, we had a candlelight caroling session in the church with a potluck dinner afterward. The church was beautiful with about 50 candles burning (many carried by carolers), no electric lights (except the red sanctuary lamp), and a light snow falling outside. About 35 people showed up and had a lovely experience which will probably become an annual event.

St. Sophia continues to do well financially, with contributions exceeding expenses, even with our cold winter. We have had enough people become official members that we plan on our first vestry meeting and election this January to set up an official governing committee. We still need some items for the church and a vestry to decide how to spend the money would be most helpful. In general, the church is in a "very usable" state and only requires finishing work, except the kitchen, which needs a refrigerator and a few other items (a person who came to the caroling event noted our lack and offered an almost new refrigerator as a donation, even though he does not attend St. Sophia).

In short, we continue to grow and interest spreads. There is no other church anything like this in the area and many have not gone to church anywhere because they do not resonate with conservative or fundamental churches. It is a pleasure to see people's eyes light up when they finally understand that a church does exist that allows freedom of conscience and yet has a long tradition and liturgy. This makes all the work seem even more rewarding.

Pat and Wally Zick

Church of Our Lady, Mother of the World, Rock Tavern, NY.

The Priest Ordination of the Rev. Joan Warnon-Poortman took place on Sunday, September 11, 2005 in the church of Our Lady, Mother of the world, Rock Tavern, NY, USA by the Rev. Maurice Warnon. The Rt. Rev. Michael Warnon, and his family participated to the ceremony, working in the sanctuary. The Rev. Eric Archambault and his wife Diane, of St Mary, Magog, Quebec, also served at the altar.



Joan is the first women ordained to the priesthood in the Liberal Catholic Church. Oral tradition in the LCC reports that ordinations of women occurred in the past in Indonesia and in the Netherlands in the 1920's, but no evidence of these ordinations has survived. It is thus a fair statement to declare that this ordination is the first recorded ordination of a woman.

Joan was born a Liberal Catholic. Her parents, the Rev. Henri Ch. Poortman, priest-in-charge of the Liberal Catholic congregation of St Alban in Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, and his wife Constance Zey were married by Bp. Wedgwood in Camberley, England. Her two brothers work as Liberal Catholic priests, and her three sons are members of the Liberal Catholic clergy. During her entire life, she worked tirelessly in the LCC, hosting uncountable church meetings.

Before and after her ordination, Joan has said that, although she feels a little old to accept the priesthood, she has done in to help the work of the Church and serve the members our congregation. She has celebrated her first Mass on the day of the octave of the Nativity of Our Lady.

ALBANUS Press.

ALBANUS was created during the GES meeting of Woudschoten in 1988 as a subsidiary of St Alban Press, with the specific objective to facilitate the distribution of Liberal Catholic literature in non-English speaking countries. From the beginning of its existence, ALBANUS was managed and operated by volunteers of the Belgian Province of the Liberal Catholic Church. Very soon, this organization became involved in the distribution and publication of Liberal Catholic literature in other languages, mainly in French and Dutch. In 1996, Albanus opened an eStore named ALBANUS on line, but this conversion was not supported by St Alban Press. After 2003, St Alban refused to honor the orders by ALBANUS, which had then become a fully operational Publishing House.

Today, ALBANUS is still focusing its services towards non-English speaking members of the LCC, but occasionally publishes material in English which is out of print or was never published earlier. The services are provided to all the Liberal Catholics regardless of their jurisdiction.

Visit ALBANUS' eStore at: <http://TheLiberalCatholicChurch/ALBANUS>

RECENT PUBLICATIONS:

J.I. Wedgwood	TALKS TO THE CLERGY	Revised edition including original notes kept at St Michaels the Netherlands
J.I. Wedgwood	ADRESSES AU CLERGÉ	French translation of the above. First Edition
J.I. Wedgwood	SIGNIFICATION ELARGIE DE LA RELIGION	New French translation

The Liberal Catholic Church in cyberspace.

Our Liberal Catholic web site continues to attract a large number of inquirers from all countries. Its major accomplishment, recently, was to be an effective tool in the admission of the 6.000+ members in our Liberal Catholic Province of Cameroon. But many others are contacting us on a regular basis, and other new congregations may join in the future.

The individual requests for information are answered by volunteers and redirected in preference towards existing congregations located closest to the address of the inquirer, regardless of jurisdictions. Our web site has distributed more than 1/2 a million pages in 2005, of which 1/4 was general information, 1/8 information about congregations. The rest is generated by our ever more popular Digital Library.

After considering the transfer of our site to a commercial host, we have decided to keep running it on our own equipment for the time being, as there are more and more attempts by domestic and foreign governments to reduce the free circulation of ideas.

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**THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH IN
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