

The Congregation of the Mission

*An instrument of God to
proclaim Good News to
the poor*



Above: An early priest of the Mission. They are also known as Vincentians, Paúles, or Lazarists.



“...according to the ordinary plans of providence, God wishes to save all people, using other persons as his instruments. Indeed, the Lord took on a human form to save us. What joy to be able to work in the same way as Jesus. He came to proclaim good news to the poor and this is also our principal work. If our perfection is found in the practice of charity, then there is no greater charity than to dedicate oneself to the salvation of others and to be totally consumed, as was Jesus, in the accomplishment of this work. For this purpose, we have been called and have responded to God’s call. With this vision we entered the Little Company which is totally consecrated to the imitation of our Lord.”

St. Vincent de Paul
Letter to Monsieur A. Fleury
November 6, 1658

“The Congregation of the Mission is, above all, an instrument of God to **proclaim Good News to the poor**. The evangelization of the poor, in order to be efficacious, ought to be by the poor themselves. For our part, we ought to organize them, form them, and help them to establish small base or nuclear communities, where everyone can know, help and love one another. We ought to draw them to Christ by means of the power of God’s love that motivates us to serve them, and to support them with the Word of God, but also with micro-credit, with small income-producing projects, with opportunities to get out of their surrounding poverty by themselves.”

form “Evangelization of the poor” by
Father P. José Luis Azevedo Fernández, C.M., vice-province of Mozambique
Translated by Hugh O’Donnell, C.M., Chinese Province
http://www.aic-international.org/pdf/reflection8_en.pdf

Fr. Robert Maloney, C.M. in Haiti



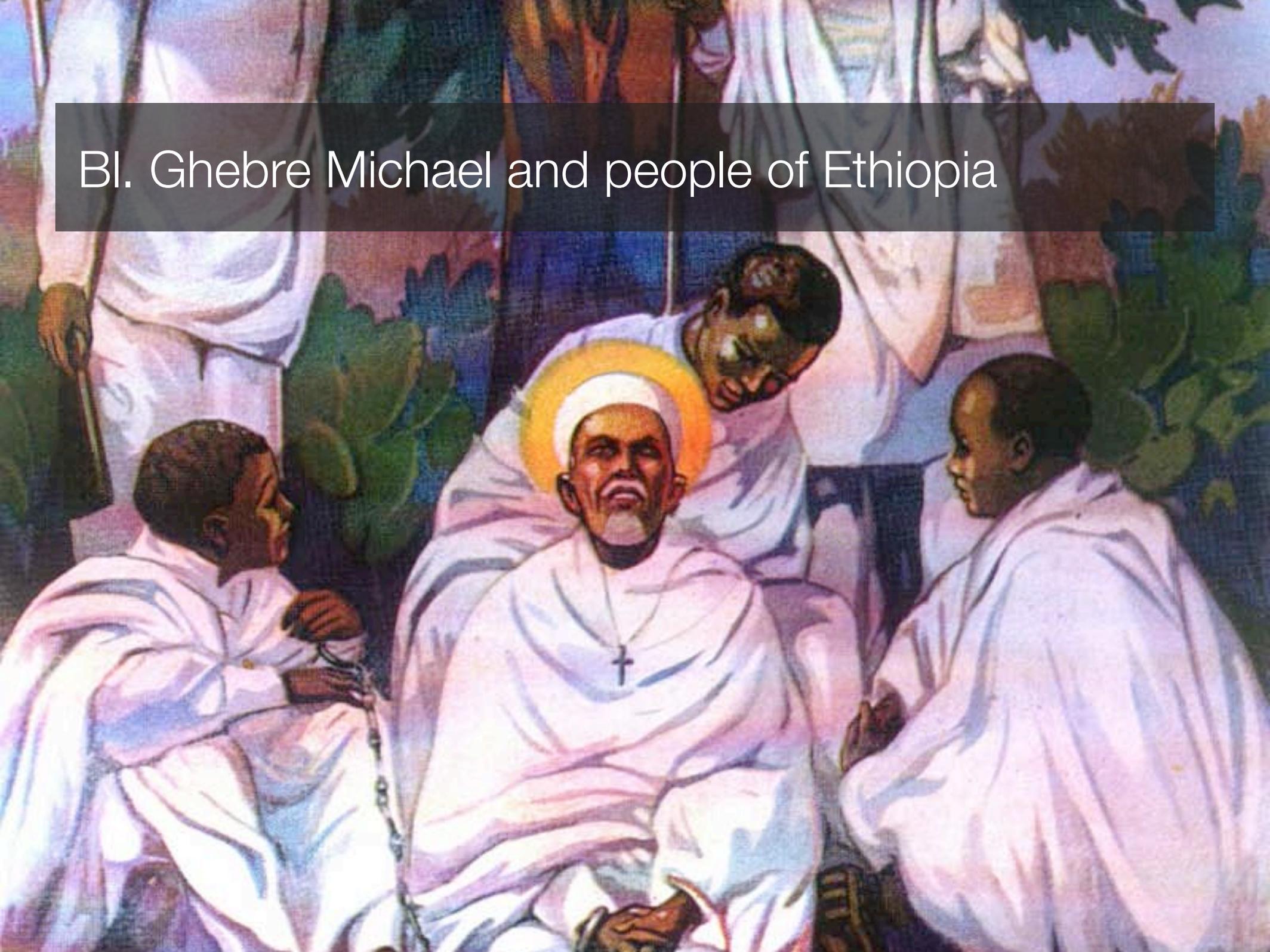
C.M. Mission in Kenya



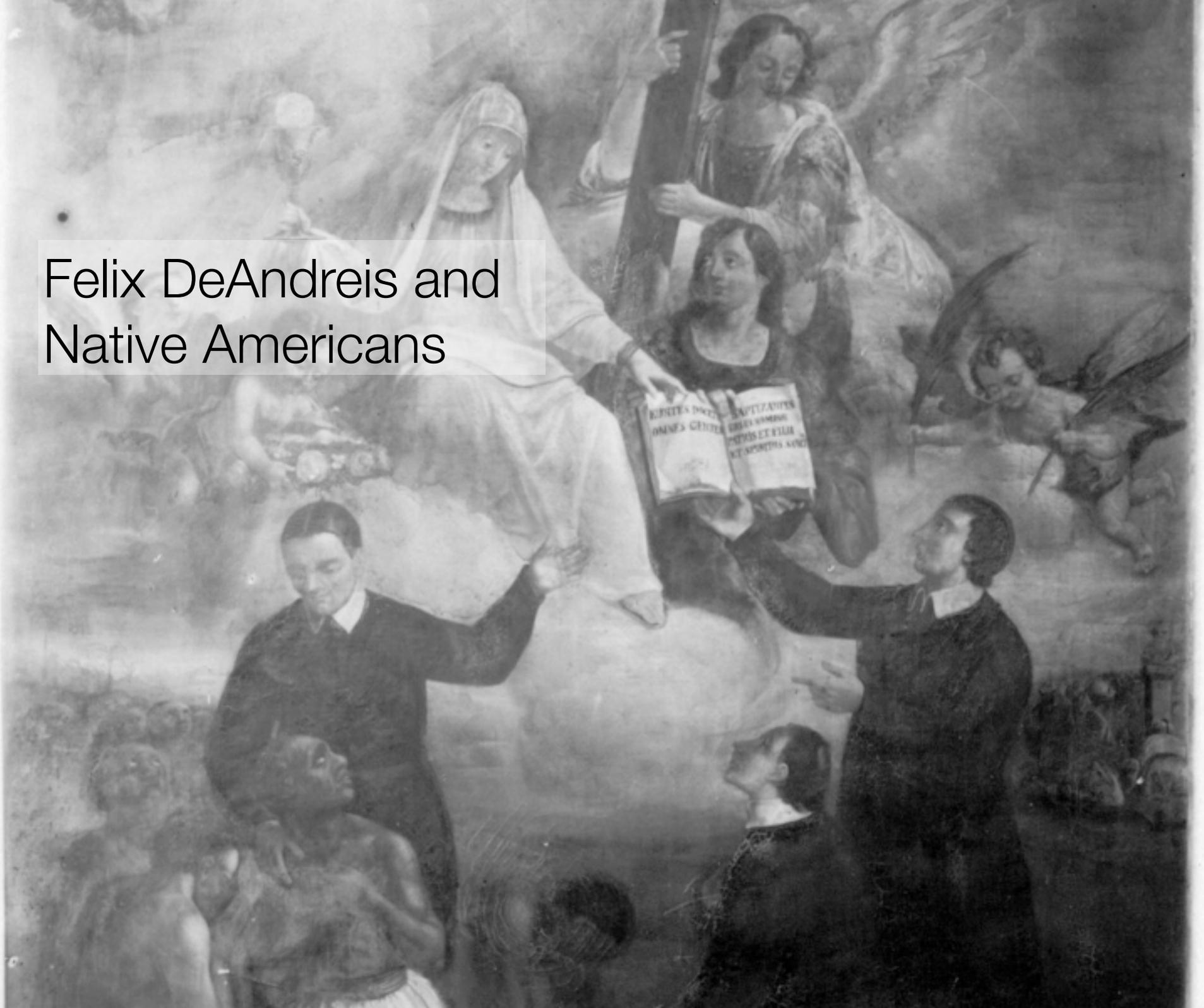
“The evangelization of the poor happens through the incarnation and **adaptation of the missionary to the reality and surroundings of the mission.** This is the only way to touch the lives of many and convert some.”

form “Evangelization of the poor” by
Father P. José Luis Azevedo Fernández, C.M., vice-province of Mozambique
Translated by Hugh O’Donnell, C.M., Chinese Province
http://www.aic-international.org/pdf/reflection8_en.pdf

Bl. Ghebre Michael and people of Ethiopia



Felix DeAndreis and
Native Americans



C.M. School in Iran, 1909

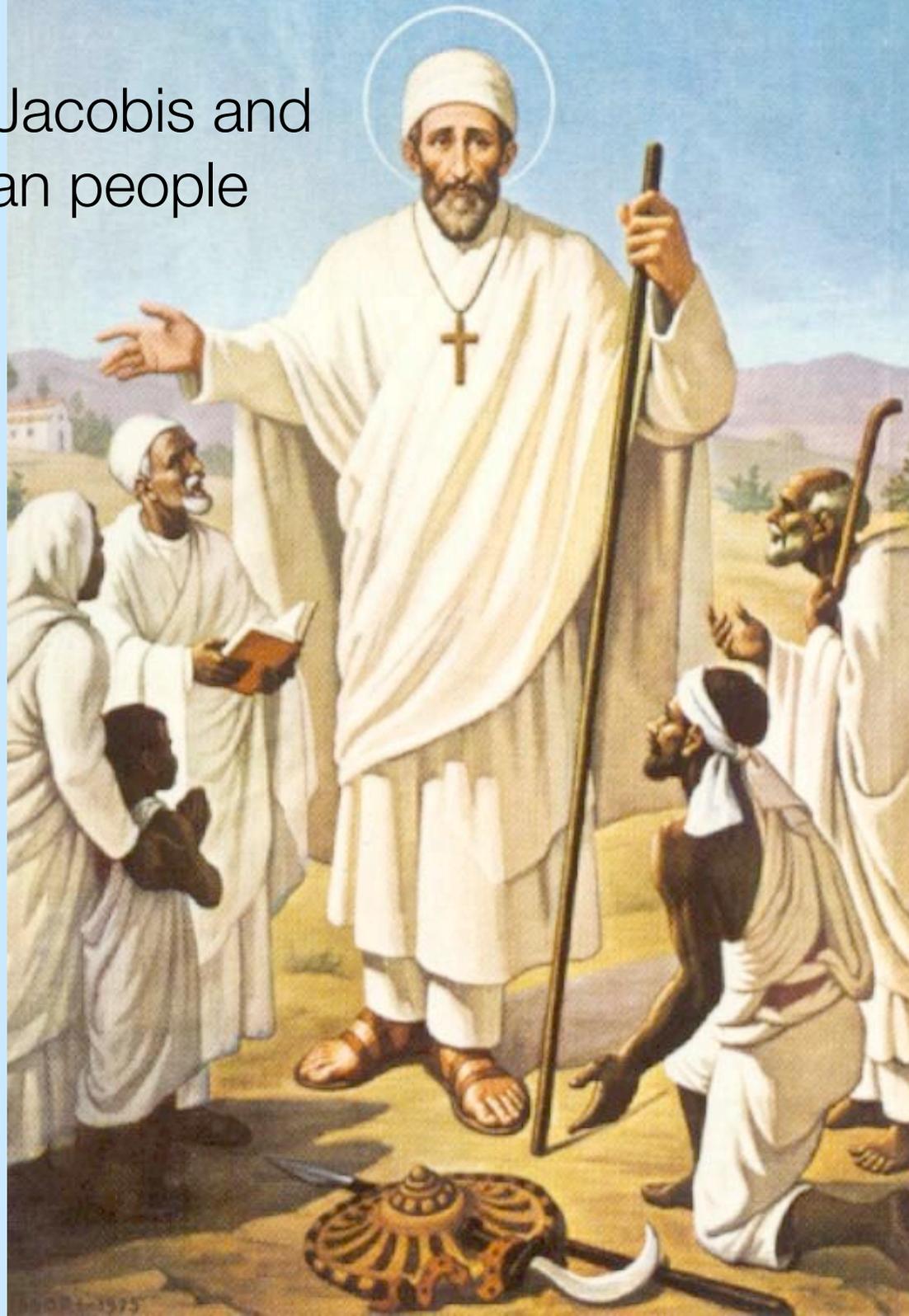


Tauris, école, 1909. - M. Courandière, Berthoumesque et Allain, C.M.

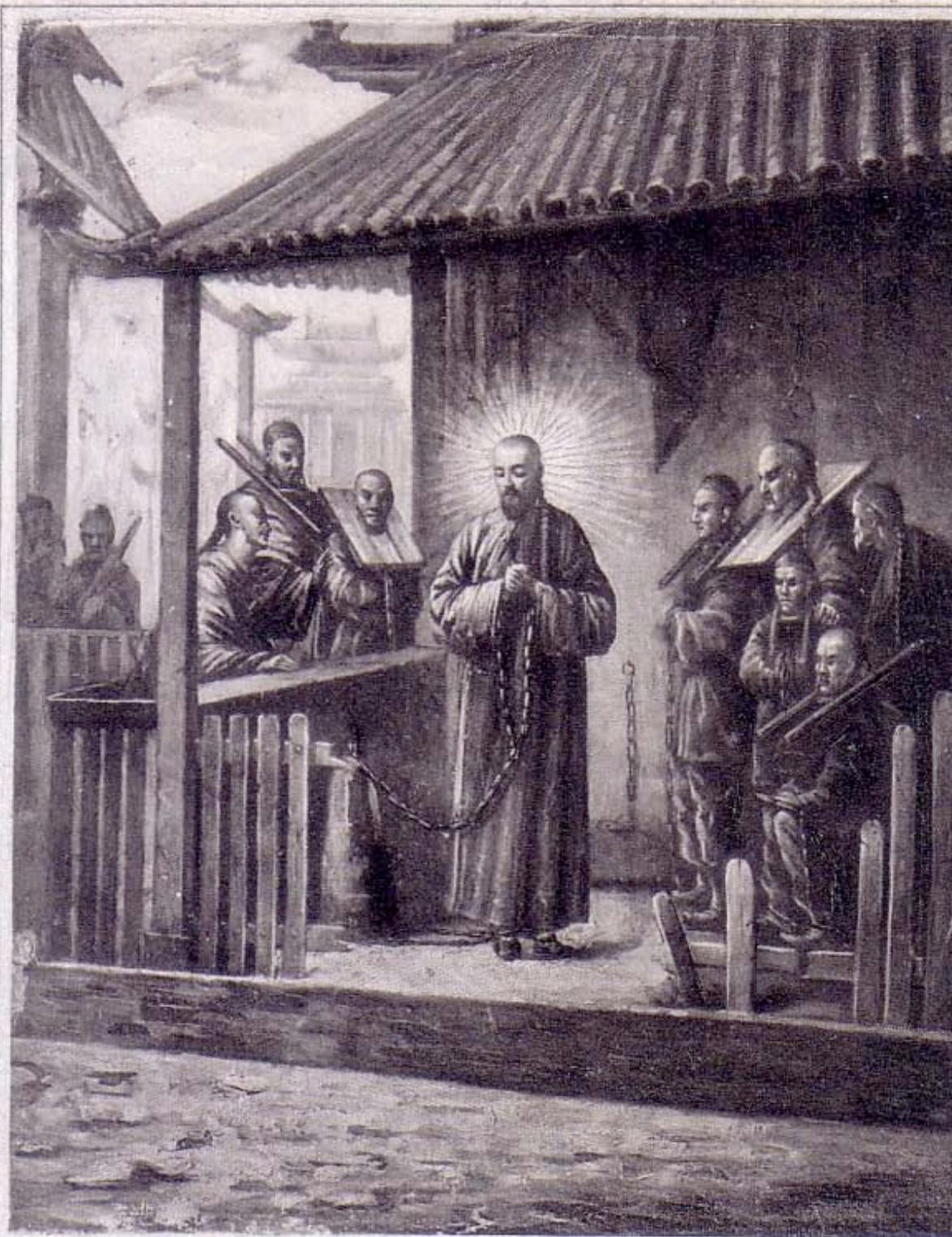
“Ongoing **evangelization has to enter into the hearts of the people so that they feel loved by God** and experience themselves as **agents of their own material and spiritual salvation**. Then they will believe God is good, merciful and just. If our preaching of the Word of God touches only the surface of their lives, then, when the difficulties and afflictions of life arrive, they will have recourse to their gods, to the wizards, to the spirits...whom the Gospel will never have replaced in their heart of hearts.”

form “Evangelization of the poor” by
Father P. José Luis Azevedo Fernández, C.M., vice-province of Mozambique
Translated by Hugh O’Donnell, C.M., Chinese Province
http://www.aic-international.org/pdf/reflection8_en.pdf

St. Justin de Jacobis and
the Ethiopian people



St. Jean Gabriel
Perboyre, martyr;
missioner in China



Pierre Petit Phot.

Place Cadet, Paris



St. Francis Regis
Clet, missionary in
China

Fr. Pedro Opeka in Madagascar



Christ and the poor were very close to Saint Vincent's heart. He never turned his eyes from them, neither in his spiritual life nor in his apostolic activity. The contemplation of Jesus led Saint Vincent to the poor, and in the poor he saw Jesus. He wished to continue Jesus' work of preaching the Good News to the poor. Saint Vincent desired, therefore, that the Congregation of the Mission live for the evangelization of the poor, thus continuing the mission of Jesus.

Miguel Pérez Flores, C.M. & Antonino Orcajo, C.M., *The Way of St. Vincent Is Our Way*, 1986

St. Vincent helps a prisoner





St. Vincent giving Communion

St. Vincent with Daughters of Charity and Foundlings



St. Vincent
evangelizing



Providence: “God Has Done This”

St. Vincent was fully convinced that God was the founder of the Company:

“I never even thought of our rules, nor of the Company, nor even of the word ‘mission’. It is God who has done all of this; men have had no share in it. As for myself, when I think of the way that God has given birth to the Company in the Church, I confess I do not know what role I have had; and it seems to me that all that I see is a dream. Oh! it is not man-made; it is from God. Would you call ‘human’ something which human understanding had not foreseen, something which the human will had not sought or desired in any way?... It has all come about contrary to my hopes and without my ever having thought of it in any way. When I consider this and see what the Company is doing, it seems to me, in truth, to be a dream, and I think I am dreaming; I cannot explain it to you. It is like the poor prophet Habakkuk, whom an angel seized by the hair and carried off to a far-distant place to console Daniel in the lion’s den; then the angels brought him back to the place where he had been and he thought everything had been a dream.”

St. Vincent XI, 326

Lay people were in collaboration from the beginning...

“The de Gondi family... believing it to be of great benefit for the salvation of souls and, at the same time, believing it to be a work pleasing to God, established a Congregation of pious and suitable men to care for the instruction of poor country people. Once this holy resolution was taken, St. Vincent, with just a few men, and inspired by God who is the author of all good things, began this work so useful to Christianity. Thus began the Congregation.”

Urban VIII, Salvatoris Nostri



Madame de Gondi signs document to establish Congregation of the Mission

As Saint Vincent said to us, the great motive in our apostolate is the knowledge that **the Son of God's work from beginning to end was evangelization and that he uses us as his instruments to do the same.** We are confident that he sustains us, because he has called us, gathered us and sent us (Abelly, III, 10) and in his providence accompanies us (Abelly, III, 10). "Give me a man of prayer and he'll be able to do anything; he can say with the holy Apostle, 'I can do all things in him who sustains and comforts me'." {Phil 4, 13} (CCD XI, 76; Abelly, III, Chapter 7)

form "Evangelization of the poor" by
Father P. José Luis Azevedo Fernández, C.M., vice-province of Mozambique
Translated by Hugh O'Donnell, C.M., Chinese Province
http://www.aic-international.org/pdf/reflection8_en.pdf



Frs. Richard Benson and Tom Esselman, C.M. in North India

Image sources:

Depaul Image Archive,

<http://tesselmancm.blogspot.com>