

REGIS COLLEGE

3425 BAYVIEW AVE., WILLOWDALE, ONT., CANADA M2M 3S5

February 21, 1974

Your Excellency,

At the request of Cardinal Seper I am sending you herewith my reflections on the pamphlet, The Evangelization of the Modern World, Vatican City 1973.

With the sincerest expression of my deep respect I beg leave to be,

Yours faithfully,

Bernard Lonergan S.J.

Bernard Lonergan, S. J.
Member, Internat. Theol. Comm.

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3425 BAYVIEW AVE., WILLOWDALE, ONT., CANADA M2M 3B5

February 21, 1974

Right Reverend Monsignor,

At the request of Cardinal König I am sending you my reflections on the pamphlet on The Evangelization of the Modern World.

I greatly regret I was unable to give the matter the attention I felt it merited within the appointed time.

With the sincerest expression of my deep respect I beg leave to be,

Yours faithfully,

Bernard Lonergan S.J.

Bernard Lonergan, S. J.

Member, Internat. Theol. Comm.

Consultor, Secretariat for Non-believers

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Reflections on

THE EVANGELIZATION OF THE MODERN WORLD, Vatican City 1973.

My work and experience bid me confine my reflections to Part Two: Theological Evaluation. Comments on precise points will be followed by a general remark on the consequences of the Second Vatican Council.

I. Some Principles of the Theology of Evangelization

I do not consider these principles open to question.

II. Detailed Study of Certain Apostolic Insights of the Second Vatican Council

Here we are offered what Aquinas would call solubilia argumenta. I consider the seven topics mentioned though not in the order proposed.

B. Freedom of conscience is not to be confused with religious indifference. It consists principally in the acceptance of the traditional doctrine that faith is a meritorious and therefore a free act. It denies that the work of evangelization consists in the exercise of economic, political, military, or similar power. It does not exclude the influence of holiness, good example, intellectual integrity, persuasion.

C. "Qualitative" Catholicism is to be pursued with regard to those already in the church. "Quantitative" Catholicism maximizes those to be brought into the church, and it is to be deplored only when conversions are superficial and short-lived and so confer no benefit to the converts or to the church.