

In the Ukrainian Catholic Herald, an underground publication known to you all, a hypothetical interviewer asks Iosyp Terelya to state his ultimate aim, his credo. Terelya answers in these words:

"I want Ukraine to be a free and cultured country, not dependent on anyone. I want her to take her rightful place of honor among the cultured nations of the world, and for the future I want us to find unification and freedom only in the love of Jesus Christ."

Terelya thus points out the connection between two major themes in the history of Ukraine: the striving for recognition as an equal among nations, and the tradition of Christianity. And what precisely is that connection? I think it is this: today, the special role of Christians in Ukraine offers lessons that the world can ill afford to ignore. It is by serving as teacher, guide and example that Ukraine can play its special role in today's world.

What are the lessons that the Church in Ukraine has to teach? The first has to do with the relationship between Church and society. Historically, the Ukrainian Catholic Church has been a Church of the people rather than of the state. Under Polish, Austrian and Soviet rule the Church has always shared the people's aspirations for the dignity and independence of the individual and the nation. It has formulated the Christian basis and the guiding principles for those aspirations.

Today, the underground Ukrainian Catholic Church in the Soviet Union continues this tradition of Christian activism. A few years ago one of its leading spokesmen, Iosyp Terelya, wrote a letter to the West German Catholics in which he indicated the role of the Church and the responsibility of believers in today's world:

"The thorny path now trodden by the Ukrainian Catholic Church leads our people towards Love, towards the purpose of Christianity throughout the world — the Kingdom of God. International rivalry and strife should disappear in the way of unity shown in the new commands of Jesus Christ. We, Catholic Christians, cannot be passive observers of the destruction of the world."

And in a letter to President Reagan which appeared in the fourth issue of the clandestine Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Ukraine, Terelya asks:

"Can a Christian stand apart from today's events which are taking place in today's world? When the fate of humanity is being decided, can we Christians fail to participate in the general discussion —would this not testify to our indifference to the social good? Jesus taught us an active life among the wolves of this world." Vasyl' Kobryn — who, like Terelya, was sentenced to imprisonment earlier this year — expresses a similar thought in his letter to the Austrian Catholics, also published in the **Chronicle** (No. 6):

"Jesus said, Go among the wolves of the world, which means that not only must we pray, but we must also take an active part in life and strive to the limits of our power to create good and sow the seeds of love among the evil of this crippled world..."

What is this active role that the Church must play in the life of the people? In his "Easter Talk" in the fourth issue of the **Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Ukraine**, Iosyp Terelya draws an analogy between today's Ukraine and the Poland of the nineteenth century. When a nation falls into captivity, he says, it begins to seek spiritual renewal and moral regeneration. It looks for ethical guides. Today, he concludes, it is the Church which can serve as such a guide for the captive Ukrainian people.

But there is an analogy with **present-day** Poland as well. For it is there that the world has seen how the Church can act as a powerful focus for the aspirations not only of individuals, not only of the workers, but of the entire Polish nation. This is precisely true of Lithuania also, a subject to which both Keston College and I have paid a great deal of attention.

In the Third World, too, we have seen the role of the Church expanding. Yet there has been controversy and confusion about just what this role should be. The debate about liberation theology has reminded us how easy it is to lose sight of Christian principles in the zealous pursuit of social activism.

The issue of the Church's role in society is a matter of debate in the developed West as well. Should the Church be commentator, guide or leader? Should the Church be separate from the State, and if so, how far does that limit the Church's role in public life?

In all these debates, your Church, with its rich historical experience, its tradition as a leader of your nation, and the continuing Christian witness of its faithful on Ukraine, can serve as guide and example.

As you all know, the **Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Ukraine** to which I have been referring is the organ of the Action Group for the Defence of Believers and the Church — an organisation dedicated to the legalisation of the Ukrainian Church in its homeland. It is the issue of legalisation which brings us to the second area of concern in which the experience of the Ukrainian Church can offer some guidance to other churches and countries. That is the question of the relationship between Church and State.

In the West, this question has usually arisen in states that have been either friendly or neutral towards religion in general. Thus, the doctrines that have evolved from the dialogue between Church and state have generally been