

## **B. Economic-Political-Church Situation affecting the prophetic-mystic vocation of Religious**

1. What are the significant developments in the economic political cultural situation in the last five years in your country?

Major events that took place in last 5 years:

1. The 30 long years of war came to an end.
  2. To bring about National Reconciliation and Nation building a commission was appointed: Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC). It came out with very good recommendation.
  3. The almost three hundred thousand Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) were sent back to their homes from the Refugee camps.
  4. National Elections took place and the Government became a powerful one.
  5. Influence of China in the economic building of the country.
  6. Many infrastructure Development projects started with the help of China. This also due to the suspension of aids to Sri Lanka by the Western countries
  7. International community and UN requesting Sri Lanka to investigate the human rights abuses and war crime inquiries during and after the war
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2. What issues, attitudes and perspectives in your Local Church challenge your prophetic response?
    1. Local Church of Sri Lanka is a very traditional one.
    2. The decision of the Archbishop of Colombo in reintroducing the Liturgical aspects that look more pre-Vatican
    3. Over emphasizing of the importance of Bishops' Conference in deciding the Church Life with regard to the social, political and economic fields.

4. Church's silence towards the Human Rights abuses and in a way siding with the authorities and showing blind eye to atrocities.
  5. Very little concern of the Church towards the JPIC issues.
  6. Church's closeness with the President and rulers.
3. What are the factors that enable your Conference to respond prophetically to these challenges?
1. The situation of the country: No war, No peace
  2. The increase of Human Rights abuses, Fear Psychosis, etc.
  3. Silencing of Human Rights Crusaders, peace advocates, Journalists media men and organizations – This led to the realization that all have to establish net work and join hands with others in establishing a new civilization.
  4. The stand of the Bishops and National JP commission on the situation of the country; continue silent, engage in relief work.
  5. The Vision of the Conference is for the change.
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4. What are the factors that prevent /limit your Conference's from responding to these challenges?
1. Many of the Congregations in Sri Lanka are inward-looking types.
  2. More Congregations and especially the members are not convinced of the JPIC ministry. Get satisfied with their own assignment.
  3. Lack of full time personal to get involved in the programme.
  4. Feeling of not to upset the Bishops Conference.
  5. Fear of intimidation, silencing from the Government.
  6. Lack of resources. Lack trained personal.
  7. Lack of organized plan.
5. Cite instances/examples of prophetic action done by Religious in your Conference.

1. The present situation of the country and the Church prompted the conference to go through a re-visioning process to discern the vision of the conference (CMRS). The new vision of the conference is a challenging one.
  2. The establishment of Regional Religious Unit (RRU) to respond to the needs and signs of the times and places of the particular region was a bold step.
  3. The creation of a strong JPIC – CMRS to respond to the justice and peace situation and move towards reconciliation.
  4. The ministry of reconciliation of the nation had begun with establishing harmony and reconciliation among the religious starting among the members of the conference
  5. In support of the affected sectors, participation of religious in many protest marches and programmes against the government and military was commendable (Problems of Free Trade union labourers, fishermen, residence against the factory owners, Against the impeachment of the Chief Justice (CJ) and appointment of the new CJ, against the arrest of Missionaries of Charity (Mother Theresa sisters)
  6. At the time of emergency after the war, there was inter-congregational cooperation in helping the refugees.
  7. Inter-congregational work on behalf of JPIC-CMRS in a village, which is occupied by the Sri Lankan Navy, to make the Navy vacate the village and resettle the villagers. Still a big struggle.
  8. Building and forming a team of youngsters to be future leaders who promote of Peace and Reconciliation. JPIC-CMRS is accompanying 50 young people (25 from North and 25 from South) for a period of one year.
6. In what ways do these issues lead you to contemplation?
1. The situation in the country makes the religious realize that nothing could be done in the country alone, having the talents of one person.

The present situation prompts all to feel that they have to be led by the Lord in this ministry.

2. The fear of intimidation by the authorities makes the religious, who involve in action on behalf of poor and marginalized feel that they have to rely on the Lord and discern His direction.
3. Every simple and single victory is celebrated. It helps all to feel that Lord is present in the event and gave the courage to go forward.

*ATTACHMENT \*1 FOR CONFIRMED PARTICIPANTS*