

## **The Way I See It**

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Globalization, a contemporary theme many people like to use all too flippantly, serves as a verbal cue that a person is in touch with the trends and issues relevant to twenty-first century life. From climate conferences to G8 economic forums, people recognize the reality that they truly live in a world where global interrelatedness is profound and growing exponentially.

For the follower of Jesus, globalization carries even more critical implications. Statistics clearly indicate that the Church of Jesus Christ is growing more vigorously outside North America than within its boundaries. Even more profound is the fact that the Church is growing where opposition to the gospel seems to be most violent. Could it be that North Americans have significant lessons to learn from people whose life experience is not blessed with material goods and relative security?

This issue of *Encounter* is very cognizant of the global nature of Christianity and the

thoroughness of theological reflection necessary to fully honor Christ's Kingdom. The Church is discovering what it is like to communicate the gospel in a world that has plenty of "gospels" from which to choose. Believers are painfully observing that shoddy thinking leads to weak communication, and the Church can no longer absorb the destructive back draft of either liability. Our response to the challenges of a globalized twenty-first century must include men and women who will take seriously a transforming encounter with God that utilizes every ounce of created being, fully energized by a renewed mind that discerns, with increasing clarity and passionate conviction, that Jesus is Lord. The pages of this issue of *Encounter* demonstrate what serious theological reflection can yield when one fully gives his or her life over to Christ's Kingdom and His enduring redemptive mission.