



Code of Ethics For Priests

One of the developing subjects in the modern world is that of professional ethics. There are codes of professional ethics for the medical profession, legal profession, nursing profession, teaching profession, engineering profession, and even in business.

These Codes of professional ethics have helped the above-mentioned professions to improve their membership, their services, their relations with others. These Codes have helped also to protect the profession itself.

Strangely enough we do not hear about a Code of professional ethics for priests. Of course there are many documents, even monumental ones, on the priestly life and ministry. But to some such documents are sources for a Code of Priestly ethics, rather than the Code itself.

Would it not be a good project for the priests to draft one based, of course, on the official teachings of the Church? If certain documents of the Church are general directives and pointers of norms, would it not be timely to draft their concrete application according to our local needs in the Philippines?

Who can do this? Is it the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines? Is it the Philippine Priests, Inc.? Or should it be a joint project of both?

Social Quakes

In the years 1969 and 1970 we have witnessed strong earthquakes in the Philippines some of which have wrought havoc and destruction in certain places. According to seismologists, such earthquakes are signs that somewhere in the various strata of the earth there is a need of adjustments. At the same time they are

the effects of these adjustments which afterwards make the strata of the earth stable and firm.

Now we have also witnessed some social quakes in the country. Various sectors of society rose up in strikes and demonstrations which rocked the nation. They have also caused havoc and destruction to some persons and in some places.

These social quakes cannot but make one think and ask these questions: Are there perhaps some "vacuum spots" in certain parts or strata of our society of which these social quakes are symptoms and effects?

If there are, what are they? Where are they? And what can we — the priests — do to help solve the situation in the light of the doctrines of our Faith?

Image of the Priesthood

Last February 17th and 18th, the Seminary Rectors of the Philippines had a conference in Baguio City. It was convened and presided by Archbishop Carmine Rocco, Apostolic Nuncio, and Bishop Jaime Sin, Chairman of the Episcopal Commission on Seminaries.

One of the items in the agenda was the problem of recruitment and discernment of priestly vocations. The Seminary Rectors presented two resolutions on the matter, namely, first, the creation of a National Commission on Vocations to prepare materials, literature, and plans etc. to facilitate the work of recruitment and discernment of vocations, and second, the creation of Diocesan Commissions on Vocations to take care of the work in the diocesan and parochial levels.

It is interesting to note, however, that during the discussions something was brought out as a pre-requisite for actual recruitment. It is the "Proper image of the priesthood". It was the consensus of the Rectors that unless we have this "proper image" the recruiting will not be as fruitful as expected.

But who can really project the "proper image of the priesthood"? The National Commission? The Diocesan Commission? Or the Seminarians and the priests themselves?