

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

FEBRUARY 1978

**PRAYER LIFE
IN THE CHURCH OF ASIA TODAY**
Editorial

POSITION PAPER ON THE SYNOD THEME
Philippine Hierarchy

LAY ASSOCIATIONS IN THE CHURCH
Mons. Marcel Uyenbroeck

THE EUCHARIST, CLIMAX OF VOCATIONS
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OF GENERAL SACRAMENTAL ABSOLUTION**
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THE NATURAL RIGHT OF PERSONALITY
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Prayer Life In The Church Of Asia Today

What shall we do after the Synod on Catechetics? The Bishops of Asia who went to Rome for the Synod asked themselves this question when they met before the closing of the congress. After considering several options they decided that the General Body Meeting of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences in 1978 will be on "Prayer Life in the Church of Asia Today". Proceeding immediately to a concrete step, they invited the Asian Churches to celebrate 1978 as a YEAR OF PRAYER.

To fix one's attention to Prayer is not to put aside concern for Catechetics. In the asian context, so the Bishops felt, the crucial question in catechetics is the role of prayer. The exigencies of the Christian religion will force us to reject the idea that catechesis can be reduced to teaching people how to pray. But on the other hand a catechesis which will not train Christians to be more prayerful will rightly be seen by asians — influenced by such prayerful religions as Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam — as "strange teaching", something that cannot be welcomed by asian culture.

The great religions of Asia give top priority to prayer and Christianity cannot but be looked down upon as an inferior religion

in Asia if it does not makes its adherents more prayerful men and women.

Within the Christian religion itself emphasis on prayer in catechetics is one way of returning to the sources of our faith. In the early Church, the followers of Jesus were known as "those who invoke the name of Jesus Christ" (see I Corinthians 1:2; Romans 10:9-13; II Timothy 2:22; James 2:7; Acts 9:14.21; 22:16). If we Christians could only be seen once more by the world as a prayerful people who nevertheless have our feet firmly on earth, we could really contribute greatly to the betterment of mankind. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of".

The Asian Bishops were not the only ones who recognized man's hunger for prayer today. Cardinal George Basil Hume, of Westminster, interviewed about his impressions on the recent Synod, said: "Bishops from every part of the world speak of the hunger for prayer and spiritual experience which they encounter in young people as well as in old. There is a search for God which goes on despite the apparent rejection of the institutional church."

He said, further, "It is certainly my experience of people I have met here at home. Already this movement of prayer is developing in parishes, convents, monasteries, family groups as more prayer groups are set up, as the charismatic renewal spreads, as people devote more time and energy to the search for God in Christ."

Concluding on this point of his reflection the Cardinal expressed his belief that the prayer movement is a "a seed of hope for the future. It can transcend denominational frontiers and barriers. It inspires us to live as Christians."

In the same interview Cardinal Hume noted that, while the mood of the churches behind the Iron Curtain was "tough and tenacious", and the South American Bishops were "alert and pre-occupied by the problems they face" and the African Bishops were "exuberant and enthusiastic", "the Asian churches were, I found, calm and serene. They drew on a rich religious tradition of mystical prayer."

Let all of us in Asia, and specially in the Philippines, help our brethren tackling the tremendous problems of evangelization and development today find through prayer, calmness and serenity and strength to carry on.

In This Issue

The Lenten Season has been, traditionally, a time for intensive catechesis. As we begin Lent on February 8 this year it is most fitting for us to catch up with some recent documents on catechetics. As an initial offering we present the Philippine Hierarchy's **Position Paper on the Synod Theme**, "Catechetics in our time with special reference to catechetics for children and adults". In our next issue we hope to follow up with documents of the Synod.

Lent is also the "hatching time" for desired renewal in the Church. Hopefully, Lent this year will hatch up the renewal of our **Lay Associations**. We are already very tardy in this task. The Article of Mons. Marcel Uylenbroeck gives some pointers for the important of reorganizing structures in lay associations.

Very soon thousands of young men and women will be graduating from College and High School. Certainly some of them have a vocation to the priestly or religious life. We should be able to make them realize this through wise guidance. Father Hamer's article on **The Eucharist, Climax of Vocations** gives us some pointers for this. It also easily leads up to a reflection on the **Liturgical Movement** and matters connected with it like **Liturgical Prayer for the Dead**, and **Misuse and Overuse of General Sacramental Absolution**.

Fr. Manuel Piñon shares with us his insights on the **Natural Rights of Personality: Does the Unborn Human Fetus Have Such a Right?** His article is a timely reminder about the grave moral issues raised by abortion, and we should be ever vigilant against its legalization in our country.

Our Historical Section continues the series of articles in honor of the quadricentennial of Bicolandia's' christianization.

Position Paper
of the
CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE
OF THE PHILIPPINES
on the Synod Theme

**CATECHETICS IN OUR TIME WITH SPECIAL REFER-
ENCE TO CATECHETICS FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS**

The local Church of the Philippines views Catechetics as a vital and timely concern in our times. The theme of the forthcoming Roman Synod, "Catechetics in Our Time", comes in as a logical sequence of the deliberations of the last Synod in 1974, and of the Apostolic Exhortation "Evangelii Nuntiandi". The Bishops of the Philippines, in line with the renewed stress on Catechetics, faithful to the guidelines contained in the General Catechetical Directory as well as in the Apostolic Exhortation on Evangelization in the Modern World, and reaffirming their solidarity with the Universal Church and with their own people, propose the following observations for serious study and consideration.

Underlying these observations is the desire to be of assistance in the deepening and strengthening of the Church's "supreme and absolutely necessary function" of making more easily understood the "message of salvation" by men of all times "in order that they may be converted to God through Christ that they may interpret their whole life in the light of the faith, . . . and that they may lead a life of faith in keeping with the dignity which the message of salvation has brought them and that faith has revealed to them".¹

I. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

1. Catechesis a clear and faithful presentation of the content of God's revelation as taught authoritatively by the Church and having as its aim the clarity, maturity and vigor of the faith.²

¹ *General Catechetical Directory* (GCD) 37.

² This is explained with greater detail below in section II, first Proposal and especially in section III, 1. "The Aims of Catechetics", under a somewhat different aspect. Although the emphasis is also different these aspects are complementary.

Modern theological and catechetical explorations may prove to be sources of catechetical clarity; but this will just result in the confusion of the faithful unless they are made coherent with the fundamental doctrines of the Church as proposed by the Magisterium.

2. Without neglecting the traditional catechetical work carried in school and out of school, there is urgent need to move more decisively in the direction of ADULT CATECHESIS, in such a way as to steer up the evangelizing resources inherent in family life.

3. Since the majority of our people have already been baptized, a certain number of them have also been instructed, but very few indeed have been truly converted to the Lord Jesus and the practical demands of His Gospel, priority must be given in all our catechetical efforts to the creation of various models of the CATECHUMENATE.³

4. The establishment of small Christian communities which are imbued with truly ecclesial quality, constitutes nowadays one of the most challenging developmental thrusts of our pastoral ministry. The Pope speaks of these communities, if they are genuinely ecclesial, as "sharing the Church's life, nourished by her teaching and united with her pastors".⁴ There are five essential elements which identify the local Christian community as ecclesial, i.e., the Gospel, the Eucharist, the Church, the Bishop and the Spirit. If one of these marks is missing, or is not at least inchoately present, the assembly may be made up of Christians, but it is not (or it is not yet) truly an ecclesial community. In the present position paper, whenever small Christian community is mentioned it should be understood in the above context. In this sense also we find the importance of the small Christian community: it can help in the Christian renewal of the faithful, it foments the creation of new lay ministries and fosters more lay participation in and dedication to the evangelization of the whole community.

Hence, in the light of these observations, we make the following proposals.

II. PROPOSALS

A. ORTHODOXY AND ORTHOPRAXIS IN CATECHESIS

1. We see a need of catechesis formulating its teaching in such a way as to be properly and effectively received and absorbed by the catechized in the language of the present situation but still

³ On this see *infra* under section II, C. "The Catechumenate".

⁴ *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN) 58.

remaining always faithful to the contents of God's revelation as authoritatively taught by the Church.

We note with grave concern that parents, expressing their alarm over their children's lack of doctrinal formation even after years of catechetical instruction, often hold Catholic schools responsible for this state of affairs. This does not necessarily mean lack of content in our present catechesis; some other factors may also be considered as contributing to this apparent failure such as environment, methodology, catechists' formation, the time element, etc.

In order to be effectively received and absorbed by the faithful in their Christian living the communication of the Divine Message avails itself of pertinent research in sociology, anthropology, history and culture. All these, however, should serve and never obfuscate the "clear proclamation that in Jesus Christ, the Son of God who became man, died and rose from the dead, salvation is offered to every man as a gracious gift inspired by God's mercy".⁵

But in today's world one needs more than mere teaching in words about Christ and His message. One needs environs which live the message of reconciliation and sharing as brought to us by Christ. He is the ever-new inspiration of each one personally in his daily actualizations and the source of growth in their communal living. The community becomes CHRIST-CENTERED, not so much from an intellectual act of faith in Him by all the members of that community, but much more by each one's effort to attune his daily relationships with the others in his community after the example of Christ, living among people".⁶

We call this the Orthopraxis of catechesis. Its two pillars are reconciliation and sharing. By this and through this the community will be totally different from the political or economic community which we see around us. Its internal network of relationships is radically different: instead of exploitation we have acceptance; instead of greed we have sharing; instead of authoritarian imposing on others we have listening to each other.

2. It is our considered view that a serious effort must now be made to clarify in the minds of all those engaged in the catechetical apostolate what is the aim and purpose of catechesis.

⁵ EN 27.

⁶ *Growing-up Towards a New Community*. Practical Guide for Building Christian Communities. Ed. by Mensa Domini Catechetical Institute, San Jose, Antique, p. 11.

Catechetics is supposed to build upon the conversion in Christ which is achieved in evangelization through the proclamation of the message of salvation and proceeds to develop systematically the adherence to it.⁷ Its aim is not a detached and uncommitted imparting of knowledge, but rather the sharing of a knowledge that inspires those who shall receive it to keep alive, conscious and active the faith previously received and accepted and to properly nurture it.⁸ The knowledge imparted in catechetics must be considered as a means to facilitate man's response to God's call for closer union with Him, in such a way that God's ideas, values and ways⁹ and "the eternal decisions of His will regarding the salvation of men",¹⁰ fully revealed in Christ, may become the point of reference of their lives. We feel that a more intimate understanding of the nature of catechesis is required even among ourselves. Catechists, especially, should be equipped with a more profound understanding of their apostolate.

Thus, a clear and concise explanation of the objectives of the catechetical function in the Church (quite distinct from the catechism itself) as had been already concisely presented in the General Catechetical Directory¹¹ should be stressed and developed, incorporating the Church's own understanding over time for her own "supreme and absolutely necessary function". Pastoral letters and pertinent exhortations by the local Conference of Bishops may highlight the local Church's own perception of the depth, extent and coverage of her mission, thus contributing to a localized presentation of catechesis.

3. The formation of the right attitude of faith should be stressed in our catechetical programs.

Catechesis presupposes an attitude of faith, a personal and loving acceptance by the catechized of the person of God and of everything He tells us.

We therefore believe that it is of vital concern to the Church to reintensify her efforts at evangelization, whose precise objective is the achievement of the attitude of loving acceptance, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

We also deeply feel the need to provide catechists and those who shall take charge of evangelization with the necessary knowledge which could allow them to discern the existence of faith, the

⁷ Cf. GCD 17-18.

⁸ See footnote 2 supra.

⁹ Cf. Is 55:8.

¹⁰ *Dei Verbum* 6.

¹¹ GCD 21.

acceptance of Jesus Christ in those to whom they shall impart further, more specific knowledge. But more important than just a knowledge or a technique of discernment of the true faith of the people, true discernment is to be acknowledged to be a gift which flows from the Holy Spirit to whom, therefore, we must ceaselessly address ourselves while performing our catechetical apostolate.

4. The success of any catechetical program rests, among other things, on the degree of awareness and conviction of the members of the Hierarchy whose principal role is to function as the official catechists of the People of God.

More important than pastoral letters and homilies, in insuring the success of our catechetical programs, is the living witness of the Bishops and the parish priests. This can be shown by their initiative, understanding and persevering support — including financial — of the efforts of the lay catechists.

5. The right formation of our catechists should be given the required priority of consideration.

Availability and willingness to participate in the catechetical ministry are not sufficient ingredients of success. "No one gives what he does not have" is a dictum as valid in philosophy as it is in the prophetic mission of the Church. Therefore sufficient attention should be given by those concerned to the proper and adequate formation of our lay catechists.

B. ADULT CATECHESIS

1. We propose a more extensive (and intensive) catechesis for adults and of the youth in and out of school.

We feel very specially that this effort should be intensified with the purpose in mind of leaving no sector of our society ignorant of the message of salvation and that the proclamation of this message should be oriented towards the strengthening of family life and community building.

We observe that, because of this lack of orientation, not a few among the faithful have been deluded into endorsing those means of family limitation which are unnatural and artificial. We also see certain groups of adults openly advocating state divorce apart from the legalization of the annulment of marriages, which could eventually contribute to the deterioration of the stability of the married state.

We also feel that a certain amount of permissiveness in sexual matters is evident among the youth, making it doubly difficult for

them to reconcile their creative urges with the divine purpose for which they were intended.

We note the perpetuation of self-interest as a continuing guide in social and political life. This self-interest derives from a basic lack of respect for the rights of others and the rights of a community over the individuals.

We feel that a solid emphasis on the communitarian aspects of life in the Church is called for, especially in the catechesis of adults and of the youth in and out of school.

2. In the Philippine context, as in other developing countries two powerful influences which may affect, favorably or unfavorably, the effectiveness of catechesis for adults are strongly felt:

a) We take note that Filipino culture is in many ways a "culture of mediation". Extensive use is made of "go-betweens" to facilitate access by ordinary man to people occupying positions of power, wealth, higher learning. This phenomenon translates itself into popular religious culture one of whose most striking characteristics is the popularity of devotion to the Saints viewed as mediators and intercessors before the throne of God.

Devotion to Our Lady is of invaluable help to both the evangelization and catechetical effort of the Philippines.

It is necessary, therefore, to bridge the growing gap between believers who choose to profess only the essentials of faith and those who actively involve themselves in popular religious fervor. Frank and sincere interaction can become mutually enriching and could only redound to a deepening of the life of faith.

b.) Technological progress in developing countries is fast widening the gap between the haves and the have-nots the rich and the poor, the technocrats and the unlearned, the urban center and the rural area.

In the Philippines — as in many developing societies — the Church is called upon to preach within the context of these divergent sectors, especially within the context of both a progressive urban center and depressed rural area where progress is slow and the hold of traditional values is still strong.

Care must therefore be taken to see to it that the values and examples invoked in catechetics take full cognizance of the state of development of the catechized as well as of the values they hold and accept.

3. People today, especially in a developing country like ours, go by values which they can see and touch: money, prestige, power. Catechetics must give them values which they can equally see and touch, but which are just the opposite of what they experience in daily life, namely, the values of sharing, respect for each person, reconciliation. But how to make these values "seen and touched"? By gathering people in small viable communities who are helped to live by these values of the Gospel. Such communities are not just an exercise of the intellect, but rather an exercise in living. This means that no genuine catechetical program can exist without a genuine liturgical and social program. The Liturgy must radiate life, not just routine words and the social involvement must be based on the values of reconciliation, unity and sharing.

a) Hence it is important to see the clear link existing between **Catechetics and Liturgy** so beautifully expressed in the official Introduction to all the new Rites for the Sacraments. We might well admit that much of this is not yet implemented to its fullest extent and may also be a factor in the weakening of the catechetical profile in our country. A renewal in catechetics will only be viable if it will be based on a renewal in the celebration of the Liturgy.

So far the liturgical renewal has been often restricted to the updating of the rubrics. Our country lacks enough liturgical centers for study and deepening the spirit of the Liturgy. Efforts to make the Liturgy more relevant and catechetically appealing seem to be frowned upon or at least not encouraged. In the absence of proper liturgical centers of study and research, there is danger that we may end up with two kinds of Liturgy: one barren and dry based on no more than the rubrics, and the other full of all possible innovations based on mere emotions. In both instances, the opportunity for genuine catechetical formation will be lost.

b) Similarly, there is a link between **Catechetics and Social Awareness**. If catechetics remains a mere exercise of the mind without any relevancy to actual life socially motivated Christians will "use" catechetics as a tool for their own ideological purposes. The answer is not to condemn such Christians but to give them better catechetical tools which relate to life around us. Proper catechetics must open the minds and the hearts of the listeners by discovering together the deeper motivation of God's plan for man. Catechetics must give us the tools to compare: how God looks at man, and how man today looks at himself and his neighbor.

Christian Social Action will only be Christian to the extent that it activates us to implement God's view on man while catechetics in our time will only be relevant to the extent that it gives us the correct view of man as seen by God.

4. We believe that the catechetical effort in the Philippines must, at this point of history, seek to re-examine not only the culture and economic structure of the country, but also the political context within which the Church is called upon to unfold her message.

It is noted with grave concern that political issues are beginning to create divisions within the ranks of the clergy and the faithful. There is even a tendency to approve of the system of authoritarianism, regardless of the adverse effects to human religious liberty which it may entail. There is also a growing rift — a chasm of mutual indifference — between those who seek to assert, at least implicitly, the primacy of liberation from material wants and those who rightly insist that the Church's primary mission is the proclamation of the Good News to all men.¹²

A proper understanding of the aims and objectives of adult catechesis, of the Church's "supreme and absolutely necessary function" will help heal the wounds which politicalization has inflicted upon the ranks of the faithful and the clergy.

C. THE CATECHUMENATE

1. The essence of the catechumenate should be an intense pedagogy towards Evangelical conversion.

The process of conversion is a continuing process covering the whole range of our Christian life through the different stages and situations of life which require a knowledge of the practical demands of the Gospel. It could be a catechesis of initiation in man's first contact with the teaching of the faith; it could be an "ongoing catechesis" drawing out the implications of the Gospel in the various situations of life; it could be a perfective catechesis directed to those whom a special mission or vocation impels to a deeper penetration of faith.

Hence a series of models of catechumenate could be created to make the life of the faithful more meaningful in the light of the Gospel.

¹² See the pastoral letter of the Philippine Bishops issued in Cebu, January 1977, on "The Bond of Love in Proclaiming the Good News". See also EN 32-35.

2. Priority must be given in our catechetical efforts not only to the creation of as many models but to the enriching of such models including a long-range process and programming, for a more effective pedagogy and movement towards evangelical conversion.

3. These models must however be sufficiently flexible to adjust to the built-in limitations of time and local resources and to the needs of those catechized.

D. THE "ORGANIZED" AND THE "ORGANIZING" COMMUNITY

1. Since, as stated above, the aim of catechetics is "the sharing of a knowledge that inspires those who shall receive it to keep alive, conscious and active the faith previously received and accepted and to properly nurture it", in practice, such aim demands an environment which would promote its growth. It is in this context that the special importance of small Christian communities, which are genuinely ecclesial, should be seen and appreciated.¹³

2. We affirm that the Proclamation of Revelation is also a message of Salvation answering the aspirations of our people. This proclamation should be incarnated in the social, economic, political and cultural situation of our people, stressing the building of small communities of faith which will promote a more Christian environment through witnessing, serving and worshipping.

3. There is a need for professionally trained catechists who, together with the priests and other pastoral agents, will lead our people in building small Christian communities.

But we believe that this goal will not be attained unless our people understand and accept their responsibility as prophets to evangelize and catechize their own family and members of small Christian communities.

4. Our catechesis should make adults, youth and children aware of their mission as Church, and where and how they may and must accomplish it. This catechesis for adults, for youth and for children cannot be independent from one another but must be coordinated towards the common goal of building small Christian communities.

¹³ Besides the already mentioned letter of the Philippine Bishops, see also nn. 41-50 of the *Conclusions of the Asian Colloquium on Ministries in the Church* published by the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (Hongkong-Manila, 1977). The Colloquium was held 27 February-5 March 1977 in Hongkong. On "base communities" cf. also EN 58.

III. ON SPECIFIC CATECHETICAL PROBLEMS

The following are reactions to specific catechetical problems mentioned in the Synod Schema. They do not follow the sequence of the Schema, but are rather ranged according to the order of our General Observations:

1. The Aims of Catechetics

There is probably general agreement — in the conceptual order — to the following objectives of catechetics, namely:

- a) To arrive at a Christian interpretation of life;
- b) To train oneself and others to see everything in the light of faith;
- c) To take the necessary steps, based on a Christian view of life and history to intensify man's personal union with Christ through prayer, apostolic action and reception of the sacraments.

However, there is still a surprising degree of disagreement and variance with reference to the choice of means and the application of those means to achieve the above aims.

Thus, it would not be unusual for groups to appear to emphasize, say, the simple transmission of doctrine, preparation for reception of the sacraments, or rote-memorization of the tenets of the faith while being in complete agreement with the above objectives. Rather than begin to decry these emphases or directions, an attempt will have to be made to understand, first of all, why such directions have taken the forefront. In other words, rather than force a uniform emphasis, a serious evaluation of specific circumstances must be undertaken.

What is said here about the efforts of groups within a diocese can also be said about different countries represented within the Church itself.

For example, Philippine Christianity may be criticized for the heavy emphasis on devotional practices to the seeming neglect of a concerted effort in the line of "liberating people from social, political, economic, and moral conditioning". This emphasis even appears to have the sanction of the Hierarchy, and for this it is possible that the official Church itself could be held blame-worthy.

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that devotions and their ritualization have already become part of Philippine culture and

tradition. In this sense, they may be outside the pale of ecclesiastical authority in influence. As in Latin America, where "accion popular" seems to be the by-word it may even be pastorally inadvisable to exert anything but the most prudent effort to change this situation, since its acceptance by the People of God can be interpreted as the popular will. The approach of catechetical agents can only be directed at integrating devotional/ritual practices within a broader framework which should clearly show that such practices make sense only if other matters are fulfilled or attended to.

If catechists were to follow the path of discrediting or relegating to a very secondary position such practices without offering alternatives, grave dangers would arise. The first of these dangers is that, because of human attachment to such practices, a frontal discrediting of them might lead to complete rejection of the faith and the creation of a vacuum. The second is also related to the first: rituals are probably one of the few remaining links which can be used for the intensification of a life of faith. Sever this link and the opportunity for a deepening of belief may also be lost.

Therefore even if devotions and rituals may look like substitutes and surrogates for the neglect of more critical requirements of Christian life, understood in a fuller biblical sense, we cannot close our eyes to their significance in the lives of those who practice them.

2. Content of Faith and Catechetics

We have in our country two main tendencies in the approach to the content of faith. The first is the **traditional** — the doctrinal — oftentimes culture-bound in the sense that it is transmitted through the elders of the community and the family. Hence, our old presentation of the faith has been colored or nuanced by folk-belief of the people transmitting it.

The second is the **experiential**. This approach has emphasized social situations and their emotional impact to the extent that the fundamental message of salvation expressed in the doctrine of the Church has been placed too much in the background. For the past few years, this approach has taken prominence in the Philippine catechetical movement. Hence when reversals of social situations occurred, catechesis began losing its force and vitality.

For the first trend we propose a proper reorientation by being faithful to the message of salvation as expressed by the Church in her doctrines.

For the second trend we propose that our area of human realities be widened. We should take into account not merely ephemeral social situations, but also the popular devotions and common religious practices as integral components of our Philippine situation.

The values then derived from all these should be related to the message of salvation.¹⁴ This approach will therefore call for a revision in depth of our local catechesis — its approach, the ambit of its content. All the while, in the process of this revision in depth we should strive to bring out the riches of the fundamental message of salvation, the very essence of Christian life.

3. Catechetics and Modern Cultures

What can be considered an integral part of traditional Filipino culture in strict sense, are the devotional practices to honor Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the Saints. There is always some quasi-religious or religious ritual for nearly all occasions from birth to burial, through marriage, baptisms, construction of residences, etc. These should be viewed as *apertura* or openings to a deepening of faith. Modernizing agents — principally oriented towards material prosperity, efficiency and scientific rationalism — are attempting to introduce new values in the system.

The difficulties arise from the inroads of modernization, and these are very similar to those which can be observed in the countries of Western Europe, among others. However, there is a surprising degree of syncretism which makes easy for the host culture to assimilate foreign cultures. In the process, neither culture survives in its original form although the devotional practices mentioned earlier have survived for a long time. In fact, it is the ritualization of many of these devotions which could account for their resiliency over time.

What appears to be more interesting in the Philippine case is not the comparison between the existing culture and the culture of the young or of the West but rather that between the new, prescribed culture and the traditional culture.

Various seminars, in-service training programs and catechetical schools, together with organized efforts at parish diocesan or national levels, have been directed towards renewal of catechetical language and methods. The results have been good, when judged from the viewpoint of doctrines set forth by Vatican II. But the

¹⁴ *Gaudium et Spes* 11.

question still remains: Has catechesis become anymore relevant now than it was in the past? In other words, reform should go beyond language and method. It must cover content: In this respect also the local application of the directives of Vatican II should take account of the existing traditional cultures.

4. Catechetics and Social Situations

As it can be ascertained the experiments cover areas like language — the problem of translation into the vernacular; methods — away from the school-church situation towards something more personal (though less efficient); cultural adaptation — suiting the message to the local cultural mould. It has been voiced by some people/groups, however, that because of these changes in catechesis children never really get the "fundamentals" of the faith (meaning: as contained in the post-Tridentine catechisms). The problem may even be more basic: the parents (Tridentine-trained) may no longer be able to help in catechizing the young, who are presumably trained in whatever is said to have resulted from Vatican II.

Furthermore, that has been said above regarding the risks of an exclusively or excessively predominant experiential approach to catechetics, too depending on social situations, is particularly applicable here.¹⁶

5. Catechetics and the School

As already mentioned, catechesis seems to be concentrated mostly in the schools. Out-of-school children and youth receive minimal attention. Moreover, in many places they are completely neglected, acquiring their religious ideas from the general culture of the people.

There are formal theology classes at the university level in Catholic institutions. In other instances, seminars and activities such as workshops, field work, renewal sessions, Bible classes and charismatic sessions are valid vehicles for catechesis.

6. Catechesis for Children, Young People and Adults

Catechesis for children is emphasized with little active support from the home. It is mostly done in the atmosphere of the school or the parish church — seldom in the home, though some efforts

¹⁶ See *supra* under n. 2 "Content of Faith and Catechetics".

to involve the parents are made by school and pastors. The community acts, like the parents, through surrogates: the teachers, the volunteers, the priest and religious. There is little reinforcement which can be had from the community or the home. What might perhaps create some worry is the fear that even the home and the community impart "religious ideas" which, upon closer look, are heterodox or unorthodox, to say the least.

Young people and adults seldom get a systematic development of the message since as one grows older his attention is increasingly focussed upon social involvement and family life — a remark which is valid even for religious groups and organizations. The only message which filters through at these later stages is the vague feeling that the Church is pro-justice, freedom, peace, love, etc.; the "why" however, is seldom clear. One could easily get as a result a "humane type of morality": goodness for the sake of smoother social interaction.

Some proposals are therefore in order for a more effective catechesis of these different age groups.

a) Catechesis for Children

(1) Fuller use of liturgical and paraliturgical practices would help the children imbibe the Message.

(2) Popular religious culture, properly explained, could be of great aid to the catechist.

(3) The participation of children in classroom activities should be encouraged, if only to open their eyes and to lead them to ask questions — the answers to which shall be their initiation to catechetics.

(4) Apostolic organizations at the parochial and diocesan level should take it upon themselves to organize religion classes whenever no provision for these has been made, along with organized activities of play and worship. This latter concept serves to instill early in life a sense of community.

b) Catechesis for Adolescents and Young Adults

(1) Special emphasis on preparation for family life should be made at this level or even earlier if, in the judgment of the local pastors, communications media have already implanted ideas which in time could prove harmful.

(2) The passion of Christ as an expression of His love for men deserves special mention. The image of the Church as an assembly or community of love and service should also be fostered.

(3) Apostolic organizations among adolescents and young adults — working with the poor or their elders, or within their own age group — would develop the youth's creative drive, whose manifestations are strongest at this level, a drive which needs to find fulfillment and selfless expression.

c) Catechesis for Adults

(1) This is a kind of catechumenate as the adult goes into diverse interests and occupations and various strata of society. What has been said of the catechumenate in general applies particularly to this group.

(2) Special mention must be made, however, of the development of the gift of discernment of the signs of the times since upon the shoulders of adults rests the important responsibility of executing or even making social decisions. These decisions must be such that they do not delay or create barriers against the coming of the Kingdom.

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, we would like to take cognizance of the great and noble work which the vast numbers of catechists throughout the whole world have done in communicating the Divine Message through catechesis. The whole Church turns to them in gratitude and appreciation; the Schema is a great tribute to them and to the importance of their work.

Finally, we strongly suggest that catechists should accentuate the movement towards total conversion of the whole man, the dynamism towards personal union with God which the Holy Spirit sustains in all those who accept that Jesus is Christ, the eternal Son of God made man, and an outpouring of the effects of this union through Christian witness.

PASTORAL LETTER

40th Anniversary AFP Chaplain Service

27 November 1977

Dearly beloved in our Military Vicariate:

May the Holy Trinity be with you all.

With the grace of Our Lord, We address you through this pastoral letter in anticipation of the 40th anniversary of the AFP Chaplain Service this coming November 27th.

The Filipino Tradition and Culture

A basic tenet of our Philippine Constitution is the recognition of man's need of God and dependence on Him. An example of this is the provision for a military chaplain service. The same provision is contained, and more expressly, in the National Defense Act of 1937.

Indeed, the framers of our Constitution were true to the richness of Filipino tradition and culture which through the centuries of the pre-colonial era had already been imbued with belief in God and divine worship.

Our tradition and culture as well as the written laws of our land are enough to convince us all, brethren in the Military Vicariate, that we can only be true to our respective roles in the AFP if our lives both private and public, reflect a living faith in God and are guided by its religious tenets.

However, the call to a God-centered Life does not originally stem from our laws our tradition and culture. The real and only source is God Himself Who in His infinite mercy gave us the gift of Faith. We are God-loving not because of our Filipino heritage, but because God inscribed in the tablet of our hearts the Two Great Commandments, the Love of God above all things and the love of our neighbor as our own selves. Independent of recognition of any nation or Government the truth will ever remain that God exists and rules the universe.

For a believer, faith is the full adherence of the mind to the truths revealed by God (Gen. 15:6), and full confidence in His saving

promises. Faith is man's free decision, but at the same time God's free gift (Jn. 6:44 & 65). Man is justified by faith, not by works (Rom. 4:2-6), but faith is also dead without actions (James 2:14 ff).

In the New Testament, faith above all is faith in Christ. Thus, the words of St. Paul: "... for those who have been called, whether they be Jews or Greeks, Christ is the power and wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 124).

An eloquent proof of the universality of man's religious belief is the fact that most countries, except those whose governments avowedly reject God, have a chaplain service in their Armed Forces. In fact, too, many countries, including those where Catholics are in the minority have a Military Vicariate as well.

The conclusion is clear that spiritual strength is a constitutive factor in the formation of a well-balanced and responsible man-in-uniform.

Four Centuries of Christianity

God, however, was not content to plant the "seed of the Word" in our land before the colonial times. By His special predilection, God rewarded the pristine faith of our forefathers with the "Good News" brought to our shores four centuries ago through the Church founded by His Only-begotten Son.

May God be praised that you early received the grace of the "Good News." Baptized in the Catholic Church, you embrace its teaching and continue to cherish its means of salvation, especially the sacraments. We are edified to note that you spare no effort to build "houses of worship" in most military installations, and in many more ways, show sincerity in trying to live up to the teachings of Our Lord.

As we approach, therefore, the 40th anniversary of the AFP Chaplain Service it will profit us all to evaluate how much we have benefited from it.

The Priesthood of Christ

Like all priests a Catholic military chaplain assumes the priesthood of Christ Himself by ordination, delegation and privilege. As such he is a bridge-builder between God and man, a reconciler between creature and Creator. He can only do such functions if he be called and deputed by God.

Unfortunately a stereotype image of a priest is of a man who celebrate Mass, administers the sacraments, and is called upon for invocations and house blessings. All such functions are of course, truly priestly and of great value. Stereotypes, nonetheless, are always inadequate. They can also mislead.

Christ was not a priest only at the Last Supper or when He was crucified on Mount Calvary. He was also a priest at the marriage in Cana and when He showed predilection for the children and the poor. He was as much a priest with Dives as with Lazarus. He was as much a priest with the wise men in the temple as with fishermen in Galilee.

Yes Christ was a priest to all men, of all walks of life, and on all occasions whenever and wherever his mission to make men love God above all things and their neighbor as their own selves was concerned.

Consequently, if we do not admit that our priests have such an all-embracing role, then neither do we accept the totality of Christ's priesthood. We cannot limit the role of a priest/chaplain to the altar and within the confines of a chapel. He is the bridge-builder between God and ourselves; and oftentimes this function is better realized outside the chapel and in our homes.

Similarly, on the part of laity the measure of the value of their church-going or the reception of the sacraments, of their pious devotions, and so on, is known from the manner in which these practices mold and affect their daily lives, their norms of conduct, the values that guide their family, community and official relationships.

We have so many stereotype priests and so many stereotype lay Catholics because so many are not full-fledged Catholics. We "compartmentalize" our hearts and minds, closing thereby a good portion of them to Christ.

The temptation, therefore, is great for the priest/chaplain to preach only that which pleases "the ears of the flesh," and for the faithful to welcome only a preaching of the Word that does not cut through the sanctuary of their worldly lives or interfere with their shady transactions. Thus the Word of God is manipulated, is silenced or sterilized.

Hence, the warning of Paul VI on the 5th anniversary of 2nd Vatican Council: "We must beware, in particular, lest an arbitrary selection should reduce God's design to the limits of our human

views and restrict the proclaiming of His work to what our ears like to hear, excluding on purely natural criteria what does not please contemporary taste". (Quinque Iam Anni)

Nowaday Preachers

There are two common types of a preacher nowadays.

On the one side, the Word of God is "doctored" or manipulated to suit certain socio-political ideologies. The Word becomes ancillary to the promotion of human rights and social justice, but the real vehicle is Marxist analysis and historical dialectics. The obsession is to establish a "new" theology a "new" popular Church, a "new" pastoral. And because they are an obstacle to all this, the "establishment" need be levelled, the "hierarchical Church" proletarianized.

The end-result is the confusion of the faithful and its division, the proliferation of "commando or guerilla groups" within the Church.

On the other side, there are preachers who allow themselves to be "gagged" by the first group, afraid that they be dubbed as "reactionaries" "pro-establishment," or conservatives. And not very different from these are priests who "soft pedal" the Word so as not to step on the toes of their listeners. They prefer silence in the face of injustices and violations of human rights, mistaking cowardice for prudence. This, too, does violence to the priesthood of Christ. This option, moreover, makes one lose in the long run the respect even of those whom we fear to offend.

The test of the objective quality of the ministry of the Word is twofold, namely: The first criterion is oneness with the teaching authority of the Church, with the Holy Father and the bishops in communion with him. No opinion of any number of theologians can outweigh the official teachings of the Pope. St. Paul stressed this when he wrote: "...if anyone preaches a version of the Good News different from the one you already heard, he is to be condemned" (Gal. 1:9). Without a visible supreme teaching authority religious indifference becomes inevitable. "The second criterion comes from a saying of Jesus: '...by their fruits you will know them' (Mk. 7:15-20)." Thus again Paul VI says: "In the clash of conflicting ideas, the greatest generosity runs the risk of going hand-in-hand with the most questionable statements... In the matter of discerning the word of faith, do we take sufficient note of the fruits that it brings? Could God be the source of a word that would make Christians lose the sense of evangelical self-denial or which

would proclaim justice while forgetting to be the herald of meekness mercy and purity? Could God be the source of a word which would set brothers against brothers?" (*Quinque Iam Anni*)

The Priesthood of the Laity

The foregoing criteria of course do not apply only to the ordained priests. Through baptism you, my brothers of the laity, belong to the "royal priesthood" and have received the mission to "preach the gospel to all nations" (Mark 16:15). There are Catholics who believe that as long as they hear Mass, receive the Sacraments, have their home blessed and start their gatherings with an invocation, they already qualify as "good Catholics". That is not enough. In accordance with our calling all of us are commissioned to proclaim the message of salvation. All of us can and should experience "as it is written," according to St. Paul, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news" (Rom. 10:15).

We exhort you, therefore, dear brethren, to know Christ first of all and His teachings. The best book for this is the Holy Scripture. Read the bible assiduously and with reflection. For how can you preach about Christ without knowing Him? Be preachers, above all, by your work and example, by your way of life and through constant prayers. Let your home and your family be your little "cathedral," the corner-stone of your God-given mission to evangelize at least the community you live in.

This was the purpose, and it will continue to be so, of the AFP Chaplain Service and of our Military Vicariate. The purpose, namely of providing for your moral formation and pastoral ministry. However humble, we are the bridge-builder between God and yourselves, a reconciler between Creator and creature.

"Many the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep . . . equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Heb. 13:20-21).

Given on the feast of Christ the King, 20 November 1977, at this office.

Your humble pastor

✠ MARIANO G. GAVIOLA, D.D.
Titular Bishop of Girba
Military Vicar

CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES

OFFICERS: 1978-1979

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NOTE: The Chairman of each Episcopal Commission will nominate the members of his Commission.*

* These will be approved at the January 1978 meeting.

LAY ASSOCIATIONS IN THE CHURCH

By

Mons. Marcel Uylenbroeck

Secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Laity

The Church is essentially communitarian. Her Founder willed her to be so. In the course of time, this communitarian reality has taken on concrete form in various ways. The apostles, members of the first community that formed around Jesus with their collaborators and immediate successors, founded little communities on all sides. Later, the "parishes" will be the basic ecclesial communities. But, to express the communitarian character of the Church there are also the various kinds of religious congregations, the third orders, the confraternities. In the last few decades, there has been a great development of movements of the apostolate and new associations of spirituality. Recently, there has been an explosion of basic communities, the characteristics of which, vary a great deal.

I would like, here, to turn attention to the associations made up mainly of laymen. The Pontifical Council for Laymen is in contact with at least seventy of these which have an international dimension.

In the past, these associations were generally promoted by priests, and sometimes also by religious orders or congregations. There have been, of course, well-known exceptions: it is enough to think of the St. Vincent de Paul Society by Frederick Ozanam. But it is particularly in the last fifty years that laymen have begun to create and direct associations within the Church, appealing to priests for their religious leadership.

THE "FAMILIES" OF ASSOCIATIONS

Although different, the Associations have certain affinities in common, based on the great aims by which they are inspired. In this way it is possible to group in "families" associations that are more or less similar.

The "family" of associations of piety or spirituality. This is certainly the most ancient "family" including the "confraternities" that have been in existence for many years, and also more recent movements for the renewal and deepening of Christian life.

The "family" of movements of apostolate, more generally designated with the name of general or specialized Catholic Action. To these movements is due the development in the whole Church, of awareness of the lay dimension of the life of Christians: its secular character, the necessity of living the faith within the secular reality, and the mission of laymen to commit themselves individually and collegially to transform the collective realities and the world in which they live.

The "family" of family associations. They have arisen from awareness of the riches of the marriage-sacrament and of the social dimension of the family as also from the great challenges that the family must meet as a human institution and as "ecclesia domestica".

The "family" of charitable or social action associations. Some of these came into being in the 19th century to give a Christian answer to the great needs of the poor and underprivileged. In the last few years, among other things, under the impulse of Vatican II, they have been undergoing a renewal in depth. This leads their members to the practice of individual charity more in harmony with present needs and the modern outlook. Furthermore, it leads to a keener realization that charity calls for sincere efforts to bring about real social justice,

The "family" of lay associations for Christian inspiration of the temporal. At a certain moment in history, particularly when, in Christian countries, civil society became increasingly marked by laicism, numerous associations of Christians were promoted to animate temporal society in a Christian way. Their structure and

their starting point are very different, but those that are most characteristic of the "family" are the Christian professional organizations of doctors, chemists, nurses, engineers, businessmen, men of learning, artists, etc. These associations try to give their members a formation to Christian life in harmony with the practical requirements, the positive contributions, the risks and challenges inherent in the profession exercised. They also wish to defend the principles of the Church in the professional environment in which they are present. These organizations have often had, to a varying extent, a trade-union character, that is, the purpose of defending the legitimate interests of their members in society.

Alongside the professional associations, in various European countries and particularly in those in which Christianity has won particular recognition, Christian organizations have come into being in the working-class, rural and artisan environments etc. Nor should we forget the associations that aim to ensure a Christian presence in the press, the cinema and television.

The "family" of movements of charismatic type. In the last few years various movements, more or less organized and structured, have sprung up in the Church, which wish, under the inspiration of the Spirit, to contribute to the renewal of individual family, ecclesial and social life. Some of these movements have a precise framework and can be considered as "associations". Others wish to have only minimal structures in order to be able to bring about an impetus of renewal within all the realities of ecclesial life (parishes, various associations).

INTEGRATION OF THE ASSOCIATIONS OF FAITHFUL IN THE GENERAL APOSTOLATE OF THE CHURCH

The Second Vatican Council expressly recognized the validity of associative life in the Church. As for priests and religious, it is right of the laity, as members of the people of God, to found associations, direct them as also to become members of the existing associations. The Council, however, stressed the fact that these associations must serve, not their own purposes, but the mission of the Church and therefore must be integrated in their right place in her apostolate. This integration requires the development, at every level of ecclesial life, of trustful relations of collaboration and communion with the Hierarchy. These relations, however, the

Council says, can assume various shades according to the different *actuositatem*" (n. 24), it is declared that some forms of apostolate can be organized explicitly by the Hierarchy and that for this reason they are integrated in a more organic and official way in the general mission of the Church.

Some topical problems. Everyone is aware that, in recent times, some associations — especially those for the young have going through a more or less serious crisis. The crisis in fact is not yet completely over, even though there are present increasingly great and valid elements for its solution. Catholic associations like the whole Church, have been marked by the deep cultural crisis that society has traversed in the last few years. It is enough, for example, to think of the criticism to which every more or less traditional institution has been subject in the last decade, to understand how the associations themselves have suffered from the anti-institutional or anti-organizational movement that has marked so many of our contemporaries.

The desire, certainly a legitimate one, not only to remedy existing problems, but to trace their underlying causes, has led some associations to undertake analyses of society. In spite of every good intention, some of these analyses are coloured by Marxism and go very little beyond a superficial approach to phenomena. The difficult attempts at post-conciliar "aggiornamento" carried out within the Church, have also been experienced by the associations, especially the more traditional groups, not without consequences of internal polarizations, conflicts, painful breaks. Some associations have decreased more and more in number. If formerly they gathered many members to whom they offered a "Communitarian environment" in which formation was given for life and for the Christian apostolate, now, their rank and file are made up only of small groups of militants who, moreover, are very busy in the world.

These few notes are enough to show how the associations are living through a time of reflection concerning their identity, a time of renewal of their aims and methods, a time of search for new ways of integration in the apostolate of the Church. Let us not forget, on the other hand, that the pastoral work carried out both at the level of the traditional parishes and at that of the new ecclesial communities which have arisen in the Church, also appeals to the associations to take their place again in a Church that is

deeply renewing its pastoral work in the light of the Second Vatican Council. Only a few years ago, one could not often find in the associations lay people who could really make a personal contribution and find the formation for their apostolate within the realities of life.

Today, and to an increasing extent, it is the basic community itself which makes this participation possible and wishes to give this formation.

ROLE OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE LAITY

One of the important tasks of the new Pontifical Council for the Laity is to follow carefully the evolution in progress in associative life within the Church. The associations continue to play a front-rank role with regard both to the formation of lay people and their individual and communitarian apostolate in the world today.

For the Pontifical Council for the Laity it is a question of being always well-informed about the policies and major activities of Catholic international associations; of developing a frank and open dialogue with the lay leaders and ecclesiastical assistants; of attending also, the great world assemblies, in order to be able to help, to stimulate, to correct if necessary, to bring forth the necessary collaboration, and to watch over the integration of this vast activity of lay people in the global apostolate of the Church.

With confidence in the Spirit who guides the Pastors of the Church and animates the Christian people, the action that the Pontifical Council for the Laity will be able to carry out will help to develop real ecclesial communion among all "for the salvation of the world".

THE EUCHARIST, THE CLIMAX OF VOCATIONS

by

Most Rev. Jerome Hamer, O.P.

Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

The following lecture was delivered at Chieti in the framework of the Italian national Congress of Vocations.

I have been asked to speak of the Eucharist as the climax of the various vocations. In this title there are, therefore, two key words: "Eucharist" and "climax" ("culmen"). To be sure of meeting your expectations and setting forth exactly the thought of the Church, I have re-read the passages of Vatican II—there are five in all—in which these two words are associated. For the Council, the Eucharist is the summit of the Christian life (*Lumen Gentium* 11), of the whole action of the Church, that is, of all her apostolic activities (*Sacrosanctum Concilium* 10), of the whole life of the Christian community (*Christus Dominus* 30), of the whole of evangelization (*Presbyterorum Ordinis* 5), and of the various sacraments (*Ad Gentes* 9).

This simple series of quotations makes it possible to see that the subject proposed to me touches a central point of the teaching of the Council. The Eucharist is the climax of the Christian aspiration. It is natural, therefore, that all the activities of the Church should aim at it and that the ecclesial community should be constituted for this orientation towards the Eucharist.

The Council says so explicitly and gives the underlying reason: "The sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate are bound up with the Eucharist and are directed towards it. For in the most blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself our Pasch and the living bread which gives life to men through his flesh — that flesh which is given life and gives life through the Holy Spirit. Thus men are invited and led to offer themselves, their works and all creation with Christ" (col. 925).

The two aspects of the question

It seems to me that this text contains everything that I would like to set forth to you. It shows clearly that the Eucharist is at the same time the climax of all the exterior activities of the Church and of her interior life; and that it is therefore important to speak not only of the Eucharist as a liturgical celebration, but also of the Eucharist in its relations with the interior sacrifice. The two aspects are inseparable, moreover, in the reality of things. "Between the exterior worship of the Temple and the interior worship of the heart, a deep correspondence is established; a necessary continuity is affirmed". (B. Bodrinsky, DS, t. 9, col. 923).

EUCCHARISTIC CELEBRATION**Full development of the Eucharistic Celebration**

Let us begin, therefore, to describe the Eucharistic celebration in its entirety. The faithful, the Council says, "must be convinced that the principal manifestation of the Church consists in the full, active participation of all God's holy people in the same liturgical celebrations, especially in the same Eucharist, in one prayer, at one altar, at which the bishop presides, surrounded by his college of priests and by his ministers" (S.C. 41).

Here, then, is the complete form. It cannot always be realized entirely, I admit, but it must serve as a model.

The bishop cannot preside personally over his flock always and everywhere. In the parishes, it is a priest who takes the bishop's place, but the rest are not excluded. In particular, it is full and active participation that must be the object of our whole attention.

The active participation of all

This participation is justified by the fact that no one is present at Mass as an indifferent spectator, but everyone has the part of an actor in the strongest sense of the term, everyone is personally committed. It is true that the priest only by virtue of his priestly ordination carries out the sacrificial oblation by pronouncing the words of consecration, but the whole community of the faithful takes part in the oblation, offering it through the priest's hands; offering it with him. This unity of the sacrificial oblation, in the different roles, is well expressed by the "Pray brothers" of the Mass. The priest addresses the faithful: "Pray, brothers, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the almighty Father".

The community answers that the sacrifice is common, it is true, to the whole assembly, but that the priest has an absolutely specific in it. "May the Lord receive the sacrifice from your hands...".

The active participation of all in the Mass is the effect of the fact that the Mass involves us all in the mystery of redemption. "What is carried out is God's salvation and the spiritual sacrifice of the Church. But nothing happens invisibly that is not visibly signified. It is, therefore, in a visible action that everyone, in the liturgy, accepts salvation and offers himself to the Father. It is by listening, speaking, walking, offering and eating that the meeting of God and man is accomplished mystically, and that the Covenant is renewed". (J. Gelineau, DS, t. 9, col. 925).

The Celebrant

But what, then, is everyone's part in the eucharistic Celebration? Let us open Paul VI's missal. At the beginning of the liturgical texts, we find an important document entitled "Principles and norms for the use of the Roman missal". Chapter III, which I would like to summarize briefly, answers our question.

It should be noted first of all that the bishop has an absolutely preponderant part in the eucharistic Celebration. When the bishop is present, it is desirable that he should celebrate the Mass for the assembly. And this is not to give a ceremony more solemnity, but just to signify better the mystery of the Church. It is true that the bishop has the same consecrating power as the priest, yet his role in connection with the celebration of the Eucharist is more important. If he who celebrates the Eucharist does so "in persona Christi capitis", (in the person of Christ the head), this representation of Christ is more intense and richer in the episcopal order than in the priestly order. The bishop is invested with the fullness of the priesthood. Episcopal consecration also confers, with the office of sanctifying, the offices of teaching and governing. In this way the bishop, in an eminent and visible way, sustains the parts of Christ himself, Teacher, Pastor and Pontiff, and acts in his person (cf. L.G. 21).

The lawful celebration of the Eucharist supposes, therefore, that the bishop should celebrate it personally, or that he should have the Eucharist celebrated by the priests, his collaborators. The latter are united with him in the priestly dignity, but they depend on him in the exercise of their power.

The Deacon

It is not necessary to dwell any longer on the priest's role. It is well known. I would like to emphasize a little that of the deacon, who has a special role in the Christian community by virtue of the sacrament of Orders that he has received. This specific role has its liturgical expression in the eucharistic celebration. In my opinion this is not made sufficiently clear. The specific functions of the deacon, considered by Vatican II as "extremely necessary for the life of the Church" (L.G. 29), should not, without really serious reasons, be entrusted to laymen. On the contrary, in all territories where the episcopate considers it opportune according to the indications of the Council (cf. L.G., 29), vocations of deacons, eager to dedicate their lives permanently to the exercise of this holy Order, should be brought forth. The sacramental order of the diaconate has its own sacramental grace.

The faithful

The part that the faithful take in the sacrifice of the Mass is expressed by their whole behaviour. This is first of all a community behaviour. Any form of individualism is in conflict with the very nature of the Eucharist, which unites the faithful by uniting them with Christ.

This community behaviour will be manifested by a collective attitude in conformity with the progressive development of the celebration: the attitude shown to the proclamation of God's word, the prayer recited together, the singing that gives the prayer special fullness, the attitudes of the body (with particular attention to kneeling at the moment of consecration), above all, eucharistic communion.

The Church lays great stress, and rightly, on singing, which is a privileged form of the participation of the people of God. Singing enables us to express our joy and gratitude better; to manifest better unanimity of sentiments, because with its rhythm and melody it stimulates a fusion of voices, and facilitates more intense adherence to the words spoken.

Singing has, therefore, the aim of involving us more deeply in the liturgical celebration. It is for this reason that the Church never allows it to be replaced by records. The singing that the record reproduces will certainly be more beautiful than that which can be produced in an ordinary church. But this singing is not a prayer, at least it is not the prayer of the community gathered at that moment.

Some particular liturgical activities

The quality of a celebration depends a great deal on the altar service, carried out by one or more acolytes, who assist the celebrant, but it also depends on the way in which the readings are proclaimed. Here we are perhaps up against one of the most serious deficiencies of our celebrations. How often must we undergo hasty readings, carried out any how, without prior preparation, without concern for clear articulation to make oneself understood! The same can be said of the prayer of the faithful.

The carrying out of a celebration presupposes, therefore, a number of activities, for the singing, for the altar services, for the readings, for the prayer of the faithful, to comment on the ceremonies, to collect the offerings of the faithful... Each of these activities is indispensable for full development of the power of expression of Mass. But to perform each of these activities in the harmony of the whole requires very great availability, suitable preparation, great perseverance, and close collaboration with the clergy. The preparation itself consists not only in an immediate and practical activity (to choose the hymn, to rehearse it, to decorate the altar, etc.) but also in the concern to acquire liturgical knowledge, a culture in this matter. To take an active part in liturgical celebration presupposes, therefore, competence and dedication.

**Extraordinary minister of
the distribution of Communion**

To be complete I would like to add a word on an important and delicate problem for a correct understanding of the Mass. Under some circumstances lay people, that is, persons not ordained, men and women, can distribute Holy Communion, both during the celebration of Mass and outside Mass (for example to the sick).

But this presupposes some conditions:

- that there are no priests or deacons;
- that priests and deacons are prevented from distributing communion, owing to another pastoral ministries, or because of illness or advanced age;
- that the number of the faithful asking for communion is a very large one.

The faithful who will thus be able to intervene for the distribution of the Eucharist will be personally chosen and authorized by the bishop.

He is also called upon to respect a certain order in his choice, giving preference to persons with a more special commitment towards the Church, such as, for example, seminarians from the major seminary, and religious men and women.

The bishop can also permit priests engaged in pastoral work, in case of urgency and necessity, to choose a person who will carry out this ministry for the occasion. We will not reproduce here all the legislation on this matter. It can be found in the instruction "Immensae caritatis" (SCDS, 19-1-1973).

Why these limits? Why this precise framework? 1) First of all, to show that the distribution of communion is not an ordinary liturgical activity for the faithful. It is, in fact, a function which is "more closely connected with the functions ("officis") of pastors" (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 24). In addition to the aptitude ("aptitudo") given by Baptism and Confirmation, it is necessary, therefore, "to be deputed by the hierarchy" (L.G. 33), that is to receive a special "mission" (A.A. 24).

2) It is for this reason that duly authorized faithful are called "extraordinary ministers of the distribution of communion". The extraordinary minister cannot intervene except in case of necessity and in virtue of a special delegation (Prümmer, III, n. 54). The ordinary minister, the one on whom it falls "ex-officio" to distribute the Eucharist, is only the bishop, the priest, the deacon. All this has practical consequences, which it is well to recall according to the instruction "Immensae caritatis": "In view of the fact that these faculties are given solely for the spiritual good of the faithful (who ask to receive communion) and in case of real necessity, priests should remember that they are not dispensed from the duty of distributing the Holy Eucharist to the faithful who ask for it legitimately, or from the duty of taking it to the sick".

3) By authorizing some faithful in certain circumstances to distribute communion the Church does not create, therefore, a ministry parallel to that of priests and deacons. A suitable catechesis should enlighten minds on this matter. Any superficiality or haste in this field would result in a diminution of esteem in the Christian people for the ordained ministries of the priest and the deacon, indispensable for the Church.

The full development of our celebrations

After this parenthesis on the extraordinary ministries of the distribution of communion, we can return to the main subject, eucharistic celebration, the first part of our exposition, stressing again the necessity of giving to our celebrations the fullness of

their power of expression. This does not mean that it is necessary to have recourse to pomp or ostentation, but that every gesture and each of our words must be given their full significance. This presupposes great attention on the part both of the celebrant and of the faithful, but it does not require recourse to anything exceptional or luxurious.

Let me quote here some points of an article by Mons. Albert Descamps (Qu'en est-il exactement de la "Nouvelle" Messe? in La Libre Belgique on 28-5-1977). "A great step forward would be taken if priests would study again carefully, in its official version, the new amazement that many prescriptions or suggestions of the Ordo run the risk — if I may say so — of falling into disuse even before they have been applied, to the detriment of a sufficiently dignified celebration, complete in its parts, truly religious".

It is because we are unable to take advantage sufficiently of the riches contained in the "Ordo Missae" that our celebrations are often poor, dry, constricted, in a word, mediocre. We are often content to respect the absolutely essential prescriptions. A minimum is enough for us in the main concern to avoid a celebration that is too long.

Now, to give all the rites of the Mass their rightful place and their worthy execution, and all words their full resonance, is not a luxury, does not require too much time. It is just to ensure the Mass its normal splendour, this splendour that we put in all the important acts of our life. It must be recognized that on this point we often sin by omission.

EUCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY

Relationship between Celebration and Spiritual Life

However, the Mass is not just an exterior ritual celebration, a great sacred act. The Mass commits us personally in a particular way. A celebration is not a drama. It is our life that is in question. It is important, therefore, to consider how the liturgy is inseparable from a corresponding spirituality.

External worship fosters and nourishes piety. "The liturgy offers the believer a large number of signs to understand and meditate on the word to worship, to supplicate and give thanks, to confess one's own faith, to recognize one is a sinner and receive forgiveness, to accept the gift of Life to contemplate and love, to hope and

await the Kingdom in communion with one's' brothers gathered with the Church of earth and of heaven" (J. Gelineau, DS, t. 9, col. 926).

In the Sacrifice which she offers the Church offers herself

In the rite of priestly ordination, at the moment when the bishop gives the new priest the chalice and paten with the bread and wine for the sacrifice, he utters the following words: "Receive the gifts of the holy people for the sacrifice that will be offered to God. Be fully aware of what you will do, imitate that which you will accomplish and conform your life to the mystery of Christ's cross". Inspired by a fine text of St. Augustine (*De Civitate Dei*, Book X, chap. VI), frequently used in the documents of the Magisterium Paul VI recalls that the Church "has learned to offer herself in the sacrifice that she herself offers" (*Mysterium Fidei*, AAS, 1965, p. 761).

This text in its conciseness shows that the Church cannot offer Mass, the sacrifice of Christ, without herself and without modelling the gift she makes of herself on the gift that Christ made of himself.

Mass is thus the concrete realization of Jesus' words: "If any man would come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it". (Mk. 8, 34-35).

In the second eucharistic prayer immediately before the words of the institution, the celebrant recalls that Jesus "offered himself freely" to suffering and death. With these simple words, the liturgy sums up well a teaching of the New Testament. Jesus gave himself for us, he offered himself for our sins. "Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (Eph. 5, 2); "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Eph. 5, 25). And this gift that Jesus makes of himself, in his redeeming passion, is at the centre of the whole plan of the Incarnation. Jesus Christ "who, though he was in the form of God. . . emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, . . . humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil. 2, 6-8).

The gift of oneself: its measurement

To this free gift of Christ, which the Mass celebrates, there must correspond our donation. I do not think it is necessary to make long speeches to explain what the gift of oneself means for

each of us. We can easily guess. It is a question of not reserving anything for oneself, of renouncing one's own will and one's own outlook, of not taking oneself back after having offered oneself, in a word, of agreeing to be completely the domain of the sovereignty and action of God. This is the interior sacrifice that is asked of us at Mass, and on this plane priests and the faithful are equal. Complete generosity is asked of both.

The Mass asks of each of us, in fact, complete generosity, because it brings before us the sacrifice of the cross which is Christ's sacrifice. Now the sacrifice of Calvary is the adequate expression of the offering that Christ made to the Father of all his humanity, an offer inspired by the greatest love that has ever existed. It follows that the interior offering of Christ, that is, of Christ's love, is the yardstick at which the interior offering of the Church and of each of her members must aim. Therefore I speak of "complete generosity". In the Mass, the Church must commit herself thoroughly. In a complete gift of herself to God, always tending towards an even more perfect gift. Thus we are called to live, in the celebration of the Mass. St. Paul's words: "Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2, 5).

"Mysterium Tremendum"

We are thus associated, both in the exterior rites and in the oblation of ourselves, in the sacrifice of the Mass, which brings before us the sacrifice of the cross, the supreme expression of Jesus' love. The celebration of the Mass is thus a tremendous mystery, which leads us to worship, and in which we should participate with deep awe. This awe has nothing to do with fear, on the contrary it is a filial sentiment in which love is inseparable from deep respect, motivated at the same time by the greatness of God and by his holiness.

The whole Mass, in its rites and its words, draws our attention to the greatness of God and his holiness: in the "gloria" and in the "Sanctus", in the eucharistic prayers, but also in the penitential act, in the "asperges", in the incensation of the altar, in the kneeling at the moment of consecration, in the "sign of reverence" ("debita-reverentia": *Eucharisticum Mysterium*, 34), which the faithful are called upon to make before communion and in the thanksgiving afterwards.

Among these expressions of awe, allow me to quote the prayer that the priest recites before communion: "Let not communion in your Body and your Blood, Lord Jesus become for me a judgment of condemnation, but let it be, through your mercy, a remedy and

safeguard for the soul and for the body". This prayer echoes St. Paul's warning: "Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself" (1 Cor. 11, 27-29).

Casualness

Diametrically opposed to this awe is a certain casualness, which very often indicates thoughtlessness or superficiality, and which might become real insolence and even lead to profanation.

Frequent communion, thank God, is no longer an exception today. The teaching of Pius X has yielded its fruits and has made it possible to overcome some too rigoristic opinions that made the Eucharist a reward, as it were, for perfection. Today we know that, while greater purity is recommended, the two conditions required to receive communion are: permanent or regained state of grace, even if it is still exposed to relapses; and honest intention which excludes mechanical habit and any other merely human motive.

Can it be said that today's frequent communion is always in conformity with this double requirement? A foreign bishop said to me recently, speaking of a large city: "Communion often becomes a cultural fact. People receive communion in order to do as others do. The importance of the act carried out is not understood". In this case, it is perhaps a question only of a regrettable lack of reflection, of the herd instinct. But when persons who live in clear disagreement with the principles of Christian morality do not hesitate to receive communion regularly without confession, then we are confronted with far more alarming cases.

The awe due to the presence of the Lord in the Eucharist is closely linked with the frequency of the sacrament of penance. Is not the estrangement from confession in certain environments the sign of a weakening of the sense of sin, or of its seriousness? Is it not the consequence of a limitation of morals to the social field only? Where sin no longer appears as an offense against God, not only is the sacrament of penance neglected but the holiness of God, the foundation of awe, is lost sight of.

Other forms of respect

Respect for the Eucharist is manifested further in all forms of devotion bound up with the Reservation of the Holy Eucharist ("La Sainte Réserve"): Benedictions of the Most Holy Sacrament, respect

for the Eucharist taken as viaticum, processions, visits to the Blessed Sacrament. Liturgical laws give great importance to the place of the tabernacle in the Churches and to its decoration, related precisely to private prayer and to the adoration of the faithful. This is one of the reasons why the Catholic Church is not favorable — unless in exceptional cases — to the construction of interdenominational places of worship, that is, of churches or chapels that can be put at the disposal both of Catholics and of Protestant for their respective worship. In fact, for us Catholics the place of worship is used not only for the celebration of Mass, but it is also the place reserved for eucharistic adoration outside the Mass.

Conclusion

Here ends this lecture. It consists of two parts: the eucharistic celebration and eucharistic spirituality. They are inseparable. In the Mass, in fact, the interior sacrifice is closely united with the exterior sacrifice. The Eucharist is really the climax of our Christian life, both at the level of our liturgical activities and at the level of our conscience.

We know, in fact, that the Mass is always, in a mysterious but real way, a participation in the heavenly liturgy of the angels and saints, according to the terms of the preface to the second eucharistic prayer:

“Therefore, with the angels and all the saints we proclaim your glory singing with one voice: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God of power and might”.

LITURGICAL MOVEMENT

by

Cardinal Jean Villot
Vatican Secretary of State

The similarities between the life-situation of the Philippines and Latin America make this article on the Liturgy and some particular problems of the Latin American Church relevant to us.

The ecclesial renewal that must result from the liturgical reform, duly applied, will take into account also the specific situations of the Church in the Latin American continent, situations which are the expression of a history, a life, the reflection of a rich past, and which can contribute to a new enrichment, therefore offering reasons for great hope. If all this is put into practice in a suitable way, it will not be a cause of useless and curious differentiations, but a note that manifests the riches that spring from plurality in unity.

In this connection, we are happy to emphasize some aspects of the religious life of the continent which must be kept in mind in the liturgical renewal.

a) One of the characteristic notes of the Latin American people is its so-called "popular" religiosity. Sometimes the latter is the expression of a faith not completely formed or instructed; at other times it is the expression of a faith which is manifested in forms outside the liturgy or which reflects cultural and religious traditions of the past. In spite of their imperfections, these manifestations of faith constitute as a whole an authentic value and it would be an error to wish to wipe them out from the life of the people, particularly the most simple of them, without replacing them adequately. On the contrary, it is necessary to study them, understand them, utilize them, purify them of all the aspects that are least true, and start from them for a profitable evangelization. They must be enriched with elements that are characteristic of the liturgy so as to help them to develop and lead to the true liturgy, intelligently

and prudently adapted to the particular situations. These same forms of faith and popular devotion, which have often come into being to replace a liturgy that is too far from the understanding and the expressions of the faithful people, can and must be, when opportunely purified, even a starting point for a liturgy prudently adapted to particular situations, groups of persons, stages of maturity and deepening of the faith.

b) The faith and Christian life of many communities has been preserved and developed, as still happens today, thanks to the gifts of ministry that the Spirit of the Lord brings forth incessantly in the Church. It is necessary to promote and take care of vocations to the priestly and diaconal ministry. But the discovery and realization of new forms of ministry, which include liturgical life not reserved for the ministry properly speaking, and other aspects of the religious and human life of the community, above all if it lacks a priest, also constitutes one of the aims that the Latin American Church must pursue most intensely. These lay ministries, which in the past were dedicated almost exclusively to the prayer life of the community, helping to preserve the faith by means of religious practices that were often devotional, have a far vaster field of action open to them today, also as regards the liturgy. These ministries must be stimulated and cultivated and those who exercise them must be opportunely formed: they are a gift of the Spirit and a hope for the future of ecclesial communities.

c) The particular situation of the Latin American Church frequently leads to the creation, within the traditional communities, of smaller groups or communities. Everyone can grasp their importance as a source of Christian commitment which, more often than not, passes through liturgical celebration. On the pastoral plane it is clear that these smaller communities cannot be an element of separation within the ecclesial community, creating groups withdrawn into themselves. They must rather constitute living, responsible and effective nuclei for a Church that will have greater influence on the human reality in which it is integrated. On the liturgical plane, too, these smaller communities can have a real influence of renewal if they assimilate the authentic values of the reform to the extent of making them a source of life and if they succeed in communicating them to their brothers, helping and animating the celebrations of the wider local community. It is, therefore, indispensable that their celebrations should not be arbitrary or needlessly affected creations. They should be a more committed deepening of that content of the mystery which must nourish their spiritual life more intensely, and through their life, the life of the whole local community.

d) The presence of different cultures. In these the Latin American continent is so rich, whether it is a question of native cultures still preserved with a certain purity of tradition, or of cultures that have sprung from the merging of original elements with those imported from the old continent and from countries with a different tradition. This presence of different cultures raises the problem of finding a way to adapt them to the liturgy of the Roman rite. It is not a question of creating a new liturgy, nor of novelty for the sake of novelty, nor, in deference to archeology, of bringing to life again elements that are already obsolete. Pastoral insight, based on a staunch faith that is deeply lived by the Christian community, close collaboration between pastors of the Church and persons competent in the different fields of science, will indicate the way to make good use of certain worthy elements of authentic local traditions so that the liturgy, in conformity with the prudent indications of the Second Vatican Council, may express itself more clearly in the language, the mentality and the life of the different local Churches, while respecting the essential unity of faith and in deep communion of charity.

e) Finally, the Holy Father exhorts Pastors of the Latin American Church to continue ardently the work of guiding, organizing, directing and promoting the liturgy in the continent. He exhorts the organisms of CELAM. These providentially permit fruitful coordination of pastoral efforts, stepping in even when local forces are lacking. The different national and regional organisms can and must intensify that effort. Already it has yielded heartening results, to deepen the faith and the life of prayer of the People of God. May the Bishops encourage their collaborators and may they also be an example and stimulus, showing how the liturgy, prudently applied in its possibilities, duly used in pastoral action as a whole, is a vital force for the fulfillment of the Church mission. With these wishes, the Holy Father accompanies the work of this Meeting of the National Liturgical Commissions, he invokes the graces and light of the Spirit on the participants, and he imparts the Apostolic Blessing to Your Excellency, to your collaborators in the organization of this Meeting and to all those taking part in it

Giovanni Cardinal VILLOT
Secretary of State

LITURGICAL PRAYER FOR THE DEAD

By

Herman J. Graf, S.V.D.

Eight, respectively nine years ago, Rome published the reformed Rite of Funerals (1969), and the reformed Missal (1970) with an extensive section of Masses for the dead. Generally speaking both Ritual and Missal were well received by pastors and faithful. Occasionally however, we also encounter complaints, and questions are raised concerning the theology underlying the reform.

As far as the rites are concerned, the complaints should not be directed to Rome. Bishops should have seen to it that the rites be adapted to local conditions. They were to consider "carefully and prudently which elements from the traditions and cultures of individual countries could be appropriately admitted". Rome has always given its blessings where such proposals have been made.

But we find also complaints concerning the prayers of the Masses for the dead, and for the antiphons, responsories and intercessions of the Ritual. They take exception to the very paschal aspect of the Christian funeral which the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy had so strongly emphasized (art. 81). Here follows a summary of complaints which reached the writer of these lines some time ago.

"The "old" prayers of the Missal, Breviary and Ritual have never asked for the resurrection of the body. In the new ones such a petition appears frequently. After death the future of the body is settled. To pray for a glorious resurrection of that body will be to ask God for a change of a "causa iudicata", a thing that will never happen. So why ask for the glorious resurrection of that body

"Concerning the soul it is different because there exists the possibility of purgatory. Here the suffrages of the Church are conditioned. If the soul be in purgatory those suffrages are applicable.

"To ask for the glorious resurrection of the body could be interpreted as not believing in the immortality of the soul. In our situation in the Philippines some of the prayers of the new funeral ritual can confuse the faithful who live together with members of

¹ Rite of Funerals, Introduction, n. 21.2.

sects (INC and Jehovah's witnesses) who believe that the soul, after death, remains in a state of hibernation, near the body, waiting for the day of resurrection. — To these complaints more could be added".

There is, first of all, complete agreement that it is meaningful to pray for the deceased. "The pilgrim Church from the very first ages of the Christian religion has cultivated with great piety the memory of the dead. Because it is "a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins" (2 Mach. 12:46) she has also offered prayers for them".² We have witnesses of this conviction and practice from the second century on.

For what are to pray? — Most, if not all of the prayers of the pre-Vatican II Roman Missal and Ritual had been composed during the first Christian millennium, a time when the terms "condemnation" and "purification" had not been sufficiently clarified. People often thought of purgatory as a temporary sojourn in hell, or as an anteroom of hell. Sometimes they thought that those in purgatory were under the power of satan. It is within this context that we have to understand the former offertory antiphon of the Masses for the dead: "Lord Jesus Christ, free the souls of all the faithful departed from the pains of hell (infern) and from the deep pit; free them from the lion's mouth that they may not be swallowed up; may they not fall into darkness..."

Primitive Christianity was not at all sure about the fate of those who died as friends of God, except the martyrs.³ The latter went surely right away to heaven. But what happened to the others? Did they completely die for the time being? Were they in a state of sleep or unconsciousness? Something of this uncertainty seems to have influenced the composer(s) of the oldest, preserved prayer for the dead of the Roman Church, about the sixth or seventh centuries.⁴ Until the recent reform of the funeral liturgy it was found only in the third part of the Roman Pontifical,⁵ and consequently, was hardly ever used.

With some slight modifications this prayer was re-inserted into the reformed funeral ritual (n. 174) and promptly occasioned the accusation of heresy when it was used for the funeral of a cardinal

² Vatican II, Constitution on the Church, art. 50.

³ Cf. Constitution on the Church, art. 50.2.

⁴ A. Chavasse, *Le sacramentaire gélasien* (Bibl. de théologie IV, 1), Tournai 1958, pp. 57-60.

⁵ Pontificale Romanum, Mechliniae, H. Dessain 1934, p. 1032.

in Rome.⁶ The text in question is the following: "...ut lubeas suscipi animam famuli tui N., in sinum amici tui Abrahae patriarchae, resuscitandamque in novissimo iudicii magni die..." In literal translation: "Order the soul of your servant N. be received in the bosom of your friend, the patriarch Abraham and raise her (the soul) up on the last day of the great judgment".

But this translation is wrong. The word "anima" has here the same meaning as the Greek word "psyche", meaning the concrete human existence, the human life. It would be a mistake to understand "anima" in a hylemorphic sense. Hylemorphism entered theology only during the High Middle Ages "In the vast majority of cases the word soul (in Sacred Scripture) too means the whole corporeally existing man".⁷ The text of this liturgical prayer does not speak, therefore, of the death or sleep of the soul, and its subsequent re-creation or re-awakening. The official translation of this text in English — by the International Commission on English in Liturgy — is correct: "Welcome your son (daughter) N., to the company of Abraham (our father in faith), and raise him up on the last day, the day of judgment".

It is true that the prayers of the so-called Tridentine Missal, Breviary and Ritual never asked for the glorious resurrection of the body. These liturgical books hardly ever referred to the final resurrection, except where they quoted Sacred Scripture in their readings. This is strange indeed, especially when we consider the importance of the second-last article of the Apostles' Creed "carnis resurrectionem".⁸ Commenting on this article Cardinal Ratzinger wrote: "First of all, the hope of the resurrection of the dead simply represents the basic form of the biblical hope of immortality; it appears in the New Testament not really as a supplement to a preceding and independent immortality of the soul but as the fundamental statement on the fate of man".⁹

The ancient funeral ritual presupposed, as a matter of fact, a biblical theology, which placed man's death side by side with his baptism.¹⁰ The baptismal rite, especially in the form of immersion, symbolically represents the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

⁶ Anon., De oratione "Deus, apud quem omnia morientia vivunt." *Notitiae* 8 (1972) 15-17.

⁷ J. Ratzinger, Introduction to Christianity (London 1969) p. 270.

⁸ On the history and development of the Apostles' Creed cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* (New York 1972) pp. 369-434.

⁹ J. Ratzinger, *l.c.*, p. 269.

¹⁰ Cf. H. R. Philippeau, in: *Le mystère de la mort et sa célébration* (Paris 1951), here quoted according to the German translation (Frankfurt 1955) p. 172.

The Christian is identified with Christ and with his saving acts. True, death is the passage from this life to the Father; death is the gateway to our true country and to the vision of God; death is the entrance into eternal rest in the light of God. But it is still not the end. The paschal mystery of Christ is to be completed in us through the final resurrection to glory.¹¹

It was really strange that the pre-Vatican II Roman funeral liturgy did not refer to the resurrection of the dead, because the ancient sources of the Roman liturgy frequently did so. A look into the so-called Leonine Sacramentary with its Masses for the dead proves that the Roman Church at that early time asked that the deceased person "may be able to look with secure hope and joy for the day of the resurrection".¹²

In several Mass formularies of the ancient Gelasian Sacramentary the Church prayed for the glorious resurrection of the deceased. We find there even the petition that the deceased may "share in the first resurrection".¹³ Jesus (Lk. 14:14: "resurrection of the just") and especially the Apocalypse (20:5-6)) hint at two resurrections at different times, separated from one another by a long intermediate reign of the just with Christ. Only the just are raised after the appointed number of the elect has been completed. The general resurrection will take place at the end of time when the last rebellion of satan has been quenched.

More frequent in the same Gelasian Sacramentary are the petitions for a glorious final resurrection. They ask that the dead person "may receive his body on the day of the resurrection and come to stand with the blessed at the right hand of God the Father".¹⁴ In another prayer the Church asked God: "Lord, raise him up in the company of your saints and elect".¹⁵ In still an-

¹¹ H. Ashworth, *The Prayers for the Dead in the Missal of Pope Paul VI*, *Ephemerides liturgicas* 85 (1971) 15.

¹² L. C. Mohlberg (et al. eds.), *Sacramentarium Veronense (Rerum Ecclesiasticarum Documenta. Series maior. Fontes I)* Rome 1956, n. 1148, p. 145: "... ut resurrectionis diem spe certae gratulationis expectet."

¹³ L. C. Mohlberg (et al. eds.), *Liber Sacramentorum Romanae Ecclesiae (Rerum Ecclesiasticarum Documenta. Series maior. Fontes IV)* Rome 1960, n. 1612, p. 235: "... et habeat partem in prima resurrectione..." The same petition is found in nn. 1616, 1619 and 1620.

¹⁴ L. C. Mohlberg, l.c., n. 1612, p. 235: "... et inter suscipientes corpora in die resurrectionis corpus suscipiat, et cum benedictis ad dexteram dei patris venientibus veniat..."

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, n. 1617, p. 236: "...resuscitare eum digneris, domine, una cum sanctis et electis tuis..."

other oration the Church prayed that "the body, buried by us in its weakness, may be raised in power among the saints".¹⁶

The Gregorian Sacramentary prayed in a similar tone that the dead person may find his "rest in the glory of the resurrection the company of the saints".¹⁷

Some prayers from the supplement of the Gregorian Sacramentary may stand here for later liturgical sources of the Roman rite. The compiler of this supplement is most probably St. Benedict of Aniane (+ 821). In it the Church prayed: "Order him to rise, when the day of judgment comes, together with your saints and elect".¹⁸ Another prayer text asked: "Join him to the great assembly of all the saints that he may rise with the elect and be crowned at your right hand".¹⁹

What was the reason for the disappearance of these and similar prayers from the liturgical books of the Roman liturgy? We do not know for sure. Some scholars think that in the moral decadence of the early Middle Ages the Church used in her pastoral approach the rod of severity rather than the balm of mercy and mildness: "During the centuries of the barbarian invasions, among peoples who had not been turned into saints straight away by baptism, we see outbursts of cruelty, lust, selfishness, showing how slowly does the leaven of Christianity permeate the ways of fallen mankind. The Church is obliged to be severe. To keep men on the right way, she had to act sternly and remind mankind of the punishment reserved for sinners, the terrors of the Last Judgment, of which the Lord himself gave us a foresight".²⁰ During this period — late ninth and tenth centuries—liturgical texts of a threatening nature, like the "Libera me, Domine, de morte aeterna"²¹ entered the Roman liturgy.

Still, there remains the question why, after the Council of Trent, these negative elements were not eliminated, or at least repressed.

¹⁶ Ibid., n. 1623, p. 237: "... ut hoc corpus a nobis in infirmitate sepultum, in virtute et ordine sanctorum resuscitet..." Note the allusion to 1 Cor. 15:43.

¹⁷ H. Lietzmann, *Das Sakramentarium Gregorianum* (Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen, Heft 3) Muenster 1958 (2nd ed.), n. 225, 2, p. 131: "...ut in resurrectionis gloria inter sanctos tuos resuscitatus respiret."

¹⁸ J. Deshusses, *Le sacramentaire gregorien* (Spicilegium Friburgense, Vol. 16) Fribourg 1971, n. 1409, p. 461: "...et cum dies iudicii advenerit, cum sanctis et electis tuis, eum resuscitari iubeas."

¹⁹ Ibid., n. 1414, p. 463: "... omnium sanctorum coetibus adgregatus, cum electis resurgat in parte dexterarum coronandus."

²⁰ P. Herbin, *We Die Unto the Lord. Sickness and Death of the Christian* (London 1960) p. 85.

²¹ Liturgisch Woordenboek II (1968) 1527.

Why was the paschal aspect of Christian death not brought out more forcefully, since the reform aimed at restoring the liturgy "to the earlier norm of the holy fathers"?

For one, those entrusted with the reform had not those complete sources in classical editions at their disposal which we have today. Aiming at a restoration of the liturgy "to the earlier norm of the holy fathers" they were simply not able to reach that goal. A last valid answer to the question cannot be given, at least not at the moment. But the fact remains that "in the reform of the ritual those texts seem to have been preferred which speak of the fear of the judgment, rather than those which reflect on the hope and peace of heaven after the turmoil of life on earth".²² It was in view of this rather gloomy aspect of the liturgy for the dead in the Roman rite that the second Vatican Council demanded so strictly that the funeral rites should more clearly express the paschal character of the Christian death (Const. on the Lit., art. 81).

Summing up, we are consequently fully justified to say that in former times the Roman Church prayed in her official prayers for the glorious resurrection of the deceased. On orders of the Constitution on the Liturgy of Vatican II, the Church only resumed an ancient custom.

Originally it had been planned to take the new texts, to be introduced into the liturgical books, from existing, ancient sources so that they would harmonize with the formularies of the Missal of Pope St. Pius V which the reform intended to retain. In the end this proved impossible. Existing prayer texts had to be modified and corrected. Others drawn from ancient sacramentaries, had to be inserted. Even new ones had to be created to meet the requirements of the Constitution on the Liturgy.²³

Too many liturgical texts of the former funeral rites were affected by the ancient world view — no longer our own — that the heaven is 'up there' and hell down, somewhere deep in or under the earth. After death, it was thought, the soul started a difficult and arduous journey to heaven. This led her through the regions of the air which were considered to be the realm of demons. St. Paul wrote to his Christians that before their conversion they "were following the way of this world, obeying the ruler who governs the air" (Eph. 2:2). Toward the end of the same letter he writes: "Our battle is not against human forces but against the prin-

²² H. Ashworth, l.c., p. 4 — Cf. P. M. Gy, *Le nouveau Rituel romain des funeraillies, La Maison Dieu* 101 (1970) 17-18.

²³ H. Ashworth, l.c., 3-15. — Cf. P.P. Gy, *Ordo exsequiarum pro adultis, Notitiae* 2 (1966) 353-363.

cipalities and powers, the rulers of this world of darkness, the evil spirits in regions above" (Eph. 6:12). In this world view the air is the habitat of demons.

As brigands and robbers made the roads frequently insecure in antiquity and in the Middle Ages, so the demons of the air were thought to make the way of the souls dangerous while journeying to heaven. Not all such texts have been eliminated in the reformed liturgy. Well known are the responsories "May the angels lead you into paradise" and "May the choir of angels welcome you". The Gregorian melodies of these texts are enchanting. Were they retained for the sake of their melodies?

The ancient sources used for the composition of new prayers, and for the adaptation of old ones, were not only Roman, like the Leonine and Gelasian sacramentaries. Valuable elements were taken from the ancient Spanish liturgy, especially from the Oracional Visigótico.²⁴ Also the writings of St. Peter Chrysologus yielded valuable material for the reform of liturgical texts for the Masses and rites for the dead.

The prayer for the resurrection of the dead makes sense, even when we keep in mind that it is absolutely certain that all will be raised (1 Cor. 15:51), either to the resurrection of life or to that of judgment, since Christ himself had said: "The hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear the voice (of the son of man) and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment" (Jn. 5:28 f).

It can be meaningful to ask for a saving deed of God of which we are certain will happen. In each Mass the Church asks in the preconsecratory epiclesis that the gifts of bread and wine may become the body and blood of Jesus Christ. In Eucharistic Prayer II the celebrating priest prays: "Let your Spirit come upon these gifts to make them holy, so that they may become for us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ".

The Lord himself urged us to pray for the coming of God's kingdom. Actually, in his own person and work this kingdom had come: "The kingdom of God is at hand" (Mk. 1:15). In its fullness and perfection this kingdom will come with absolute certainty;

²⁴ Published by J. Vives (Monumenta Hispaniae Sacra. Serie liturgica: Vol. I) Barcelona 1946. — Cf. J. Pinell Pons, *The Theology of Life and Death in the Mozarabic Rite, Concilium*, Febr. 1968, 14-18.

nothing can hinder or prevent its final coming in Christ's parousia. Despite this, Jesus taught his disciples to pray: "Your kingdom come" (Mt. 6:10; Lk. 11:2).

Perhaps one could consider this petition of the Our Father as a means to speed up the coming of God's rule and kingdom. But can we not also pray for the acceleration of the final resurrection, since the resurrection of the dead is only a partial aspect of the coming of God's Kingdom?

When we ask God for something he has solemnly promised to give to us, our prayer is another form of thanksgiving. In our petitions we acknowledge that the saving act of the glorious "resurrection of the dead" is purest grace that comes exclusively from God, also for those who seriously collaborated with God during their earthly life and died in his friendship.

"MISUSE" AND "OVERUSE" OF GENERAL SACRAMENTAL ABSOLUTION

By

Florencio Testera, O.P.

Consultation

The practice of imparting general sacramental absolution to the faithful has become quite frequent in some churches and places of prayer and recollection in this city. Unfortunately, this is done with little or no regard whatsoever for the requirements imposed by law, such as the number of penitents, dearth of confessors and the like. As a consequence of this practice the number of penitents going for individual confession has dwindled notably since many of the faithful apparently choose to forego the individual confession in favor of collective absolution.

We are aware of existing legislation regulating the practice of general sacramental absolution. However, we doubt if such legislation counts with sufficient built-in safeguards to stop or at least to minimize abuses in this matter of collective absolution.

Answer

The pertinent legislation you refer to is "The Pastoral Norms concerning the Administration of General Absolution" issued by the SCDF on June 16, 1972. (AAS., 64 -1972-, pp. 510-514; Boletín Eclesiástico, 46 -1972-, pp. 427-432).

And yes indeed, these Norms are provided, in our opinion, with sufficient safeguards which are built-into the very conditions set by the lawgiver for the licit administration of group-absolution, such conditions having to do with the number of penitents, the lack of confessors, and the time of absence from confession and holy communion. However, despite such safeguards this law — like any other law — is far from being foolproof.

In conformity with the principles laid down by the Council of Trent, the Pastoral Norms emphasize the need for integral, individual confession and absolution, except in approved emergency cases, when collective sacramental absolution could be resorted to under certain conditions, (Norms, I).

The emergency situations that could justify the administration of collective absolution will arise — aside from cases of danger of death — whenever on account of a dearth of confessors coupled with a large gathering of penitents it will be impossible "to hear properly the confession of each penitent within a reasonable time with the result that the penitents, through no fault of their own, would be forced to do without sacramental grace or holy communion", (Norms, III).

A high number of penitents by itself will not justify collective absolution whenever a sufficient number of confessors could be made available to hear the individual confessions within a reasonable period of time as it usually is the case during solemn festivities, pilgrimages and the like. It devolves on the local bishop, in consultation with his fellow-bishops, to decide whether the circumstances obtaining in a given case warrant the administration of general absolution.

Individual confession indeed is still regarded the ordinary — and ideal — way for the faithful to be reconciled to God and the Church. The practice of general absolution is merely an exception to the rule and may be resorted to only whenever the conditions mentioned above are present and the penitents are suitably disposed for confession, (Norms, VII).

Hence, the practice of general absolution is to be regarded a serious abuse — a "misuse" or "overuse" — whenever the above mentioned requirements are totally or partially ignored, (Norms, XIII).

The safeguards attached to the Norms have not always been effective due perhaps to the pastoral nature of the document which thereby demands a great deal of flexibility. An inherent danger of "misuse" and "overuse" of the practice of group-absolution had already been foreseen right after the Norms made its first public appearance. At the very outset there was the founded fear that the practice of general absolution would be readily abused to the detriment of individual confession. Truly the general consensus was that the Norms were opening the gates of penance a little wider.

However, there were some who took the opposite view: that the Norms were "repressive" and tended in the final analysis to negate the great potentials of collective absolution and communal penance. (Cf. GALLEN, J., *General Sacramental Absolution: Pastoral Remarks on Pastoral Norms*. Theological Studies, 1973, pp. 114-121).

Though the Pastoral Norms have not been adequately used in all its practical applications, it would be farfetched to regard them either dangerous or repressive. For if they were applied faithfully and without legal rigorism, the good results envisaged by the law-giver will be fully achieved. On the other hand, the document offers ample ground for further experimentation in the pastoral level and for a meaningful development of communal penance. (Cf. CRICHTON, J. D., *The Ministry of Reconciliation*, London, 1975, p. 91).

Finally, it is to be stressed again that in normal cases there is no substitute for an individual reconciliation with God through a private confession to his minister. Certainly, in this our age of rank individualism a collective and impersonal absolution is but a makeshift or occasional expedient that can hardly give entire fulfillment and peace of mind to the christian.

THE NATURAL RIGHT OF PERSONALITY

(Does the Unborn Human Fetus Have Such a Right?)

By

Fr. Manuel Piñon, O.P.

STUNNING DECISION. On January 22, 1973, the US Supreme Court legalized abortion. Therewith every woman in the US obtained the legal right to abortion during the first six months of pregnancy. The ruling of the Court was premised on the woman's right to privacy which, in the view of the same Court, has come to be an indivisible part of every American's right to "liberty". In this connection the Court's opinion writer, Harry Blackmun, explained that, the fetus is not a person under the Constitution and thus has no legal right to life.¹ The question whether the fetus might not be by nature a person and, consequently, attended with the natural right to life, was not given consideration at all.

In a subsequent decision, *Roe vs. Wade*, handed in 1973, the same US Supreme Court declared that the fetus is not to be considered a "person in the whole sense", prior to viability. Viability was defined in the same decision as that point in the development of the fetus at which it is "potentially able to live outside the mother's womb, albeit with artificial aid". The Court placed the stage of viability of the fetus at "seven months or 28 weeks"; although it admitted that it could occur earlier, as early as 24 weeks. Clearly, nothing definite was established on the matter except for the effect of absolving individuals from criminal liability. By defining that the fetus is "not a person in the whole sense" in the first seven or six months, the Court led people to think that an individual can be a person by portions. Then, notwithstanding that we may already have a person, yet, if he still is not a person "in the whole sense" which the Court did not elucidate further, he would not yet be a

¹ Conf. TIME, Feb. 5, 1973, page 40.

In a subsequent decision the US Supreme Court has ruled against the rights of any father to interfere with or try to prevent such abortion of their own offspring. In order to uphold a doubtful "right" that it had granted to women, the same Court had to deny the certain natural "right" of fathers to bring up and to educate their own offspring.

subject of rights. Personality is thus viewed as a physical attribute which, like temperature, can be attained by degrees; or as Philosophers would say, as something accidental, which may be had in a lesser or full degree, on the basis of viability.

Since the time of the said decision of the Supreme Court, a special report says, live and dead fetuses, fetal tissues and fetal organs became widely available in the US, and were used as "guinea pigs" or objects for medical research. In 1974, in response to a wave of public concern, the US Congress passed a bill creating a National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioural Research, and banned all experimentations involving live whole fetuses, before or after an induced abortion. As of May 1975, the Commission submitted a report of its deliberations to the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. It set the "age of viability" of the living human fetus at 20 weeks and 500 grams; and suggested that the total ban placed earlier on experimentation with living human fetus, be lifted. This simply meant that the fetus at the mentioned stage was no longer a candidate for biomedical research. The Secretary of HEW adopted most of the Commission's recommendations and incorporated them in the new set of guidelines.²

AN IMPORTANT OBSERVATION. Nothing in the Commission's report was mentioned about the human dignity or personhood of the fetus in the earlier stages of development. For the effect of relief from criminal liability, non-viability of the fetus was taken as the norm. From the ethical standpoint this is irrelevant, since medical advances could conceivably move the age of viability to an earlier period. In truth, if nature should have laid down the oviparous process of development and maturation for the human fetus, it would be viable from the start as a zygote and then, on the basis of the given criterion, it would be a person. Any reflecting individual remains unconvinced. Much has been written by lawyers and physicians for the purpose of determining whether the unborn human fetus is a person or not and when it attains to be a person. But all such discussions have been inconsequential.

In the view of a learned physician and academician all discussions by lawyers and physicians concerning the personality and the natural rights of the unborn human fetus are likely to be an exercise in futility, because the essential concepts of the person and of the nature of personality are neither legal, nor medical, but philosophical and, to be more precise, metaphysical. The observa-

² Conf. Maggie Scarf: *The Fetus and the Guinea Pig*. Special Features, Philippine PANORAMA, July 25, 1976, p. 29-30.

tion is well taken. Before we may engage in any enlightened and productive discussion on whether or not the unborn human fetus is already a person and with a right to life, so that it may not just be destroyed abortionwise, it is necessary to have clear concepts as to what personality is and as to what makes the human being essentially a person. These concepts are not found in the fields of jurisprudence and of medicine.

FUNDAMENTAL NATURAL RIGHT OF PERSONALITY. Despite the fact that every human adult in our modern world is deeply conscious of his or her personality, and despite the fact that every human adult is admittedly a person, the concepts that most people have, including many so-called Philosophers, about the nature of personality and as to what makes a human individual a person, are elusive and hazy. Hence, notwithstanding on the one hand, that the reason and basis why man has natural and inviolable rights are, admittedly, that he is a person; and notwithstanding that modern men have been very vocal in spelling out and in defending the natural rights of man as deriving from his very nature, and not from the grant of law or of society; yet, on the other hand we do not find any declaration to the effect that the fundamental natural right of every human individual is that of personality.

Many readers may be surprised at what I have just mentioned. It is even likely that, for the most of them, this is the first time they have heard that here is such a natural right of man of personality. Some may be wondering if there is such a right, and if so, in what does it consist. For the moment let it suffice to say that there is such a right, and that it carries a double aspect. It is the natural right of every human being to enjoy the dignity that nature has given to him, as a being of his own ontological worth and right, and to enjoy a margin of responsible freedom of action corresponding to the said natural dignity. Man's natural right of personality with regard to his being and to his action is so basic, that all the other natural rights of man are premised on it and may be reduced to it.

Thus, e.g., the natural right to life, to integrity of limbs, to a good name, to the protection of one's natural rights, etc., pertain to man in view of his personal nature and dignity. They are grounded on man's natural right to the enjoyment of personality as to his being, from the doing of nature making man a natural beneficiary of ontological personality.

MAN'S RIGHT TO PERSONALITY IN ACTION. The other set of natural rights of man, to wit, the right to the pursuit of happiness, to rightful freedom of action, to education and to the development of his natural faculties and talents, to gainful work, to the acquisition and retention of property, to marriage and the maintenance of a family, to truthful information and communication, to legitimate association, etc., are all grounded on man's natural right to the enjoyment of a corresponding sphere of freedom of action, in view of his nature and dignity as a personal being and a personal agent. The recognition of the rights enumerated earlier constitutes an admission of man's natural right to be considered as agent of his own right and an admission of man's complementary right as personal agent, so that he should be accorded a rightful margin for freedom of action.

It is, therefore, fundamental, that we should have a clear notion of the nature of the human personality. This involves knowing what the nature of person is, and what it means to say that man is a person. In this regard the fundamental right of the human being, from his side, is the enjoyment of his natural endowments as personal being and as personal agent; and from the side of society, the fundamental right of the human being is to the recognition of the said endowments and to the accordance of a due margin of freedom of action, as corresponds to his nature as a personal agent. It would have been sufficient for positive law to recognize man's dual right to personality as to his being and as to his action so that therewith all the other natural rights of man should also obtain implicit recognition. Whereas, as long as the mentioned twin aspects of man's personality are not given explicit recognition, there remains a basic lacuna in all Bills and Declarations of the Natural Rights of Man.

But, before we should proceed further, we ought first to elucidate the concept of what a right is.

THE ORIGINAL AND PROPER CONCEPT OF RIGHT. When we ask the question, "What is a right?", the usual answer is given in terms that are analogous to the following: "A right is a moral and inviolable power vested in a person to do, hold, or to exact something as his own." Few have a better notion than this; and fewer still are those who have misgivings that the given definition may do only for derivative rights. It does not match several fundamental rights and, therefore, it is a shortchanged definition. What, for example, can be the moral and inviolable right of an infant to do, to hold, or to exact something as his own, when it cannot execute the simplest human act? With a concept like that, we cannot establish

any rights in hopelessly demented persons. No wonder that with such kind of concept there is now a way to establish the right to life of the unborn human fetus.

Notwithstanding the universal acceptance of the given definition and the exclusive place it holds in textbooks, it does not properly apply to such fundamental rights as the right to life, to integrity of limbs, to a good name, etc. There is simply nothing to do, to hold, or to exact about them in an original manner. The original right of man about them is to be beneficiary of them from the assignment of nature and of the natural law. Even the enjoyment of the said benefits as beneficiary, does not entail any action proper to be done with regard to them. Only when they are endangered, or encroached upon unjustly, there obtains the consequential right in the individual person to defend the said benefits, or to seek and demand the protection of his rights with regard to them, or even to seek due redress for any harm sustained with regard to them.

The definition of right given in terms of a "moral and inviolable power to do, to hold, or demand" might apply to dynamic or operational rights which are concerned with the doing or the pursuance of something. It does not strictly and properly apply to designate rights which of their nature are prerogatives of the individual person as beneficiary of particular benefits.

RIGHTS TAKEN AS OBJECT DUE, AND TAKEN AS ATTRIBUTION OF THE PERSON. In general, right may be taken either in the sense of something that is due to an individual person, or in the sense of the formal attribution of the person as beneficiary or something that is due to him. In the former case, "right" is taken as meaning an object due, e.g., a salary or payment that is due; in the second sense, "right" is taken as meaning a formal prerogative of the individual person.

Now, the object that is due may be a benefit like life, or an action like eating or talking, or a thing proper like an earned salary. Taken as object due, a right may be due to a person either from the design of nature or the ordainment of the natural law; or it may be due from the design or ordainment of positive law. It is in this sense that St. Thomas etymologically derives "right" taken according to its Latin term "jus", from "justum", that is, from something that has been adjusted to the individual by the Law. Suarez alternately derives it from "jussum", that is, something that has been assigned and ordained by the Law. In this sense life, integrity of limbs, freedom for legitimate personal pursuits, etc., are something adjusted or commensurate to man from the ordainment of the natural law.

Owing to the assignment or ordination of law of something as due to an individual person, there correspondingly arises in the said person a commensuration or attribution to the said thing as beneficiary of it. Hence, correspondingly to "right" taken as something due, is the concept of "right" as the formal attribution or prerogative of the person. In this formal and subjective sense, "right" is essentially and originally the commensuration of a person as beneficiary of the thing that is due to him, whether from the assignment of the natural law, or the positive law. This is the most analogous and fundamental concept of formal right, as meaning the subjective prerogative of the person. It is applicable to all kinds of rights, whether in connection to a benefit, or to a thing proper, or to a specific course of action.

Thus, the right to life is the commensuration and attribution of man as beneficiary of biological existence; the right to freedom is the commensuration and attribution of man as beneficiary of self-determination in his external pursuits; the right to suffrage is the commensuration and attribution of the citizen to cast an elective vote. In our present discussion we take natural right as synonymous with human right; because in the last analysis all rights are premised on the nature of man and grounded on the natural law.

AGENT FROM HIS OWN RIGHT. Almost everyone takes for granted that rights are attributions that are proper only of persons, and vice versa, that persons are the natural beneficiaries or subjects of natural rights. There is also little disagreement among Psychologists that the hallmark of the personality of the human being is discoverable from his capability for intellectual discretion and self-determination with regard to his objectives and pursuits. There are well taken. For, the individual who, from his nature and natural endowments is commensurate for rational and elective discretion as to objectives and courses of action is also an individual who is an agent of his own cause, and a principal agent from natural commensuration and right. He is not just an agent of Nature, like the brute animals which are moved from instinct by Nature, or like other irrational creatures which are moved by Nature from natural inclination and according to pre-programmed courses of action. A personal agent can program his own course of action.

An individual who acts from rational discretion and elective self-determination is an agent on his own behalf and for his own behalf. He is superior to all irrational creatures. He is a principal

agent and, as such, an apt candidate to be a rightful beneficiary of the useful means that may be assigned to him for the pursuance of his existential aims. If such means are assigned to him, the assignation obtains true significance and validity. The means that may be assigned are not only physical ones like inheritance goods, but also moral ones. Of this nature are the rights granted either by positive law, like the political and civil rights; or by the natural law, like the natural rights which are acknowledged by positive law. It is from his rational discretionary and elective endowments that man is a principal agent and, therefore, apt to be the rightful beneficiary of the dynamic rights that natural law and positive law have assigned to him.

From the explanation given, that formal right is the commensuration of the individual person as beneficiary of some good from the assignment of law, whether natural, or positive, someone might infer that, whereas God is not subject proper of any law, He is consequently not a subject of rights. But, the formal thing to consider in this matter is that formal right is essentially the commensuration of the person as beneficiary of some good. In the case of human natural rights such commensuration stems from the design of Nature. Such design of Nature is metaphorically and analogously said the natural law for men, because it is the norm to govern the objective and fundamental correctness of human actions. God is not the subject proper of any law. But, he has an original commensuration to act as Supreme Being from His nature as God, and to assign natural rights to men in His capacity as Universal Creator and Supreme Lawgiver.

PER-SE-ENS OR PERSON. Philosophers say that before anything can act, it has first to be something existent; and the actions that is characteristic of the agent, manifests its nature. This means that anyone who is an agent of his own right, is also, from metaphysical implication and priority, a being of his own right, that is, a person. To express this in Latin, we say: "per-se agens est per-se ens". The

term "person" is a derivation from the Latin "per-se ens", which in the case of man denotes, not merely a substantial being, but a being of his own right. A substance is said in metaphysics an "ens per-se" because it is a being from its nature, by relation to the "accidental modifications". But, the person is said to be "per-se ens" because it is a being from its own right by comparison to irrational creatures. The human being obtains this effect from his endowments of rational and elective discretion. These endowments not only impart to him to be an agent of his own right, but also disclose his inherent essential dignity as "being of his own right". For, from the possession of rational nature and corresponding powers, the human being is set above all irrational creatures and in command of them.

In every being there is an ontological subject that is specified by a nature, and is made actual and real through an existential principle. In man this ontological subject is designated by his proper name, and by the general personal pronouns. The ontological subject in man, aside from being a human being, is also a person, that is, a being of its own ontological dignity and right, owing to the entitative excellence that it obtains from its rational nature. Every human being, owing to the entitative excellence it enjoys from its rational nature, is also a personal being and has its own personality, that is, rightful individual dignity. By comparison, irrational beings are things of Nature, "res Naturae". They may carry separate individual distinction, but they have no individual worth of themselves but only as representatives of their species. Of themselves they are not aware of their individual worth as beings of their own right, but fall back on Nature and seek to identify themselves with Mother Nature.

PERSONALITY VERSUS MERE INDIVIDUALITY AND SUBSTANTIALITY. It is not so with individual human beings. There is a personal subject in him or her that seeks to assert himself or herself, aside from other beings and from Nature itself. Man is not just part of Nature. Human beings, in particular the female gender, are not satisfied with what they have obtained from Nature, but seek to improve with cosmetics and face-lifting devices. From his possession of rational and elective discretion, man is aware that he is a being of his own right. Every individual human being is aware of his or her personality, of himself or herself as a person that is not identical with the body, but is aligned with his or her innermost

spiritual self. Even individuals with loose morals feel humiliated when their personality is overridden, and they are taken merely as objects of lust or sexual gratification. Man is aware that Nature is his home, but he thinks that he can improve matters in this home. Owing to the possession of intellectual and discretionary powers, man walks his own path in Nature and considers that he can somehow be superior to the vicissitudes of Nature.

Perhaps someone may be thinking that the explanation we have advanced to disclose the nature of the person in terms of "being from its own right" does not say much, and that the concept is also applicable to denote mere substances. But this is not so. A substantial nature is said to be a *per-se* being in the subsistential sense, owing to the commensuration of its nature to carry separate existential actuality. But, the person is said a being *per-se*, from its rightful deservance to exist separately and incommunicably from another person. The substantial nature of itself is communicable to an individual subject principle, as happens with the human nature in us, which is communicated to our person. The human substantial nature does not exist of its own rightful deservance, but is ordained to exist as communicated to a human person, by which the nature is ontologically closed and perfected. — An analogy may illustrate the matter. A car of its nature is commensurate to run the city streets by itself. But, it has no right to run the city streets without a driver, and so it will be intercepted. It is the licensed driver who is the proper and original subject of the right to run the car through the city streets. He must be licensed, because the right involved is a positive one.

RIGHT TO PERSONALITY AS TO BEING, AND AS TO ACTION.

It was the Creator Himself who made man a being of his own right, or a person, by assigning to man a rational nature endowed with intellectual and elective discretionary power. From this rational nature, and from the original assignment of the Creator and His Natural Law, man is a natural beneficiary of personhood and of personal dignity. Man has, therefore, an original attribution and right of personality as to being. This right must be given due recognition by positive law, if positive law wishes to be aligned with the Natural Law. Man has also a rightful claim to such recognition by positive law and society and to be acknowledged as a being of his own individual worth and right, and not merely as a member of the social group, or of a political party.

Next, by virtue of his inherent personal dignity, every human being has a rightful attribution and claim to personality as to action, that is, to be acknowledged as an agent of his own dignity and right; and consequently, he has also a rightful claim to be acknowledged and to be accorded a legitimate sphere of free action in keeping with his existential aims and individual dignity, and in keeping with the developmental needs of his natural faculties and with the discharge of his natural responsibilities. In view of his personality, man has also a rightful natural claim to free communication and association with his fellowmen within the framework of legitimate pursuits, and to be assisted by them and by society when he find himself shortchanged in meeting his existential and human needs.

Man's twin right to personality as to being and to personality as to action are the two poles around which revolve the entire ensemble of his natural rights. All Bills and Declarations of the Natural and Inviolable Rights of Man should start with the recognition of these twin fundamental rights of man because they are the foundations on which all the other natural rights of man are premised. Man has a rightful claim to the recognition of the said twin rights of personality as to his being, and of personality as to his action.

THE HUMAN FETUS AND PERSONALITY. Now we come to some crucial questions. First: When does the human being start to enjoy the right of personality? Second: Does the unborn human fetus have that right? If so, when does it start to enjoy that right?

To the first question the answer is: The human being enjoys the natural right of personality from the time he is made by nature a beneficiary of human nature. For, personality is an attribution that essentially attends to human nature as such, and is assigned by Natural Law to every human being with and through his human nature. To the second question the answer is: Essential personality, which is the attribution with which we are presently concerned, attends to the human fetus from the moment it is an individual human organism or being; and that is, from the moment we have the zygote. Hence, human life is sacred and inviolable from its inception, because it is associated with human personality. These things are not difficult to establish on the plane of abstract philosophical thinking.

As long as an individual organism carries in a self-contained manner all the biological characteristics of an individual human being; and as long as it carries a biological life of its own, independently from the life of the mother, although not in physical separation from the mother, the human organism concerned is a human being and is attended with the essential personality of the human being. By metaphysical and ontological standards the self-contained individual human organism is synonymous with the individual human being. The reason is simply because, every individual organism is an individual human being. Being is nothing else than an existential thing; and so, an existential human organism that carries in a self-contained manner all the biological characteristics of a human individual is an individual human being, even if it does not yet have the shape of the human form, or even if it is still tethered to and nestled in the mother for its sustenance, toxic disposal, and protection.

The last mentioned considerations are not pertinent and relevant for the issue of determining whether or not the unborn human fetus has essential and ontological personality; just as the question whether the adult human being who is strapped to an iron-lung machine, or is tethered to a dextrose tube for the effect of survival, is a person or not. The consideration of viability or of non-viability is biomedical; it is also not pertinent for the ascertainment of personhood. It boils down to the consideration whether or not the unborn human fetus can survive outside the maternal environment and in physical separation from the mother. This consideration is quite different from the consideration whether the unborn human fetus has its own essential and ontological personality or not. It is not the formal consideration to be taken into account. For that effect no adult human being can survive in outer space outside the life sustaining space ships; nonetheless, men living in outer space in space-ships are persons.

The decisive and formal consideration that should be considered is, whether the unborn human fetus carries its biological characteristic and life as a functional part of the mother, or as an autonomous individual human organism, containing its own set of chromosomes half of which proceed from the father, and carrying its own genetic code for development and individual characteristics.

THE ESSENTIAL VERSUS THE LEGAL. It is true that most state legislatures have not made any positive pronouncement in favor of the personhood of the unborn human fetus. But to con-

clude from the said silence that the unborn human fetus is not a person, or even that the Law denies it to be a person is, by logical standards, to infer a conclusion from no premise at all. Even if the Law should not grant personality to the unborn human fetus, that consideration would be irrelevant for ethical purposes, because the Law is not the author or original grantor of personality to human beings. In the recent past, the black man in the U.S. was not a legal person, in particular if he had been sold into slavery. But that legal posture was a mistake and an affront to the dignity of human nature. The unborn human fetus is still something hidden from the public and, for external purposes it is as if it were not yet existing. It may even miscarry and die prematurely and, for that cause, do as if it had never existed, just like babies that die upon birth, or a very short time after.

In the recent past, state legislatures had not been confronted with the need to make any pronouncements regarding the personhood of the unborn human fetus. The new wave of abortions has changed the picture. But, most legislatures are not in a position to make any definite pronouncement from lack of a sufficiently elaborated theoretical and philosophical groundwork. As far as this writer knows this paper is the first one to speak on the natural right of the human being to personality, including of the unborn human fetus, and to lay down the rationale of such right. Several individuals have even expressed to this writer their wonderment whether such a right exists. But, again, one thing is that most state legislatures have not made any positive pronouncement in favor of the personhood of the unborn human fetus; and another thing is its possession of essential personhood. One thing is that the possession of personhood by the unborn human fetus is not clear and that there are doubts and even ignorance about it, as we may have doubts and ignorance about the specific sex of an unborn fetus; and another thing is its factual possession of personhood, or of a specific sex.

Finally, one thing is the consideration that an individual human being has definitely established his own personality through separate physical existence and even birth registration; and another thing is the attribute of personality that essentially attends to the human being from the very start of its existence notwithstanding its fetal form or condition. If physical separation were the valid criterion,

then we should say that siamese twins are not two individual persons, even if each one should carry its own name and its own individual psychological response.

ESSENTIAL PERSONALITY VERSUS PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSONALITY. We speak here of essential personality by distinction from psychological personality. Essential personality is the attribute that attends to the human being from his possession of rational nature. Whereas psychological personality is the dynamic result of man's essential personality, and manifests itself in man's enjoyment of rational and elective discretion. Concededly, it is through the latter that we come to know the former; and so, noetically speaking, psychological personality is more important, because it manifests the essential personality of men. But, we should not confuse the essential personality of man with his psychological personality as this transpires in the use of his rational and elective discretion; otherwise, we shall have to swallow the absurdity that an unconscious or sleeping man has lost his personality; or that infants, who do not yet possess rational and elective discretion, are not yet persons.

The unborn human fetus is in an analogous condition. It already has essential personality, although it does not yet exercise psychological personality. But, nature has destined that in due time and conditions, it shall manifest its essential personality, by way of natural unfolding, without external addition. — Some have expressed misgivings whether ordinary folks can understand the metaphysical explanations we have given concerning human personality, and have thought that it might be advisable to remain on the psychological level. But, these misgivings are ungrounded. There are many concepts that are metaphysical and yet are readily understood by common folks, e.g., the concept of being, of something, of causality, the Supreme Being, natural rights, the rational nature of man, etc. So, even if the concepts of personality and of the person are metaphysical, as the concepts of morality, justice, democracy, etc. they are not beyond the reach of ordinary folks. Modern Philosophers reject metaphysical concepts because they are not experimentally verifiable. Nevertheless, centuries of past generations of men have lived by the said concepts as fundamental ones.³

³ The proposal that we remain on the psychological level in order to explain the nature of personality would not be of much help in the present matter, because of the following. First, the nature of personality and of the person is not something psychological; and so, it is not possible to

INADEQUATE MATERIAL CRITERIA. Scientists deny that the unborn human fetus is a person, because they say that it is only a "potential" human being, and not yet a perfect human being. What are we to say to this allegation?

The unborn human fetus is a "potential" human being, not in the metaphysical or essential sense, but in the biological and psychological senses, inasmuch as it is not yet fully developed and does not yet enjoy the use of discretion. But, this is a material consideration. In the metaphysical sense, and this is the formal thing to consider, the unborn human fetus is already and actual being and nothing else but human; even if it does not yet have the full biological development that should afford to it the use of rational and elective discretion. The latter consideration of biological under-development is not metaphysical. It is not even the formal biological issue to consider but the material and physical biological consideration. It is inadequate for determining the nature and personality of man; because it is one-sided and covers only the material side and physical stages of man. But if we take the formal biological criterion into consideration, according to which the offspring proper to every species is its biological reproduction, so that the offspring of cats are cats, of dogs are dogs, and of pigs are pigs, notwithstanding that they are not yet born; then, we should say that the offspring of human beings and persons are human beings and persons, notwithstanding that they are yet in the condition of unborn human fetuses.

explain it adequately merely through psychological explanations. *Second*, modern positive Psychologists make a distinction between personality and the person, because they do not necessarily associate personality with a person. Thus, e.g., they speak of the "personality", and even of the "I.Q." of some "intelligent" animals; although they do not take such animals as persons or as intellectual beings. By our standards, the "personality" and "intelligence" of certain animals can only be metaphorical, on the basis of analogy with the psychological personality and rational intelligence of man.

In a similar way, Lawyers speak of juridical entities, like registered corporations, as juridical *persons* and as having juridical *personality*. They qualify such entities as *juridical persons* by distinction from *natural* or physical persons. Their juridical personality is not natural, but from the grant of the Law. They are said to be legal *persons* and to have legal *personality* metaphorically, by analogy to the natural person and to his personality; inasmuch as the Law grants to juridical entities to be capable of positive rights, and to be subjects of legal rights in the manner of natural persons.

The criterion of biological perfection covers only the physical side of man. It is, therefore, inadequate for the effect of determining the personality of the human being. When a man has attained 25 years of age, normally speaking he has attained full biological development and perfection. Yet, can we say that the same man has therewith attained the full perfection of his rational and personal capacity? It is not usually the case. And, when a man has attained 60 years of age, he is already in his biological decline and yet he still has perfect command of rational and elective discretion, and of the use of language. To take perfection as the criterion for man is to take something undetermined and fluid as norm. For, who can say of any ordinary man that he has, at any time, attained all the human and intellectual perfection he is capable of, and that he has no more room for development and greater perfection?

Considering the matter of essential personality as attribute of the nature of human beings, it must be borne in mind that just like the essential nature of human beings is fixed and indivisible, and does not admit degrees of more or less; so also is the essential personality of the human being. In other words, of two or more human beings, we cannot have one that is a human being or a person more than another; but each one is essentially and simply a human being and a person. We may illustrate this matter from the nature of numbers. The nature of a number, let us say of number two, cannot be more or less. If, therefore, there are several sets of two things, one set cannot be more two than another, while being two. The concept, therefore, of a human being that is not a human being in the full sense, or that is "not a person in the whole sense" is, philosophically and metaphysically speaking, preposterous and untenable.

NATURAL RIGHT TO GESTATION BY THE MOTHER AND TO BIRTH. Owing to the reason that the unborn human fetus is a human being by metaphysical implication and priority, — for, although something can be a human being without being a human fetus, yet not vice-versa. — the unborn human fetus has not only the attribute of essential personality, but also the natural right to life.

Furthermore, considering the design of Nature and of the Creator, the unborn human fetus has also the natural commen-

uration and right to be gestated and protected by the mother until its maturation; and to be born and delivered when such a time comes. These natural rights of the unborn human fetus are grounded on its essential personality and premised on the design of Nature and the Natural Law, irrespective of whether the fetus has been conceived from the consent of the mother, or from rape. These rights of the unborn human fetus emanate from the sovereign right of the Creator to design the natural law and process for human life, and to allocate natural rights. Correspondingly, the natural commensuration and right of the mother is to gestate the unborn human fetus until its maturation at birth time, not to abort it. And so, miscarriage and abortion do not take place except outside the programmed course of nature.

The right of the unborn human fetus to life and to gestation by the mother until its time of maturation at birth, and the natural duty of the mother to the said gestation, cannot be defeated by an undefined concept of a right to privacy of the woman. Granting that there is such a Constitutional right, nevertheless it has no bearing to justify a directly procured abortion by the woman. In the first place, such a right is of a lower order and importance than the right to life of the unborn human fetus and so must give way to the latter. In the second place, there is no infringement on the woman's right to privacy by the unborn human fetus any more than the food she has ingested. Even if women should have such a right of privacy, no woman can legitimately claim such right after she has opened her privacy to sexual intercourse. If the allegation of woman's right to privacy were valid for the effect of justifying a directly procured abortion on her part, there is no reason why it should not also be valid for the woman's option to dispose of her born baby, which also interferes with her liberty and privacy.

Through its latest decision, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled against the right of any fathers to interfere with or try to prevent the abortion of their own children by their wives. In order to uphold a dubious "right" that it had granted to women, the Court has denied the undisputable and centuries honored natural right of fathers to bring up and to educate their own offspring. One serious error has led to another.

THE PERSONALITY OF MAN AND THE RIGHT TO DIE. By contrast to the natural right to life of the unborn human fetus, the question has been recently raised in connection with the celebrated Karen Quinlan case, about a man's natural right to die. Is there such a right and in what conditions does a man enjoy it?

Despite the fact that many people, even some state courts of the U.S., have expressed themselves in favor of such a right, a convincing and satisfactory rationale has not yet been advanced to establish such a right. It seems rather preposterous that, if man has a natural right to life, he should also have a natural right to death, which is just the opposite. In this connection, it is necessary to recall that a natural right is essentially a moral claim of a person to something, from the commensuration assigned to the person by Nature to such a thing. In the present instance, we pose the following question: Are there instances in which the individual person has, from the doing of Nature, the commensuration to die rather than to live? We are not talking here of death in the sense of annihilation of man, for the spirit of man is immortal; but of death in the sense of man's deliverance from a miserable and painful organic life, as an outcome of Nature's doing:

In order to obtain the answer to the given question, we should bear in mind that there are instances in which, medically speaking, a point of no return has been reached, because the lethal damage to the life sustaining organs has become irreversible so that the natural march to dissolution has become unstoppable, and there are no known effective remedies available. In the said conditions the commensuration of the individual from nature is for death, rather than for life; and hence, the person obtains in the given conditions the natural right to die and to be relieved from an existence of misery and helplessness. Although the person has still the right to enjoy the residual life that he still has; yet, nature herself has taken away him the commensuration and the right to continue in existence, and so there is no moral obligation on his part or on others to have his residual life sustained through artificial means.

In truth, conditions of bodily misery and of utter helplessness are derogatory to the dignity of man as a personal being and agent; and so, Nature on her own doing terminates the said conditions. The individual concerned should, therefore, be allowed a dignified exit from the said conditions according to the design of Nature. In the said conditions man has a natural right to a dignified death. Such right is conformable to his personal dignity. Christians should have little qualms about such a right. For if on the one hand, from the gracious donation of God, the Christian who has been engaged in meritorious works has a right to go to heaven; and on the other hand, from the disposition of Divine Providence, there is no other

way than through death, when it has become due from the norms of the same Divine Providence; then, the Christian in the given condition has also the right to die.

In this connection, it is opportune to know that death is not a punishment meted out for original sin, but a penalty of original sin.⁴ This means that death is not an afflictive measure imposed by God by way of punishment to compensate for delinquency, but an afflictive result that followed in the wake of original sin, after God withdrew the special favor of immortality which He had granted in honor of His original divine friendship and adoption because of original sin. Death at present follows from the natural principles and processes of nature; yet, if there had been no original sin, death would not have taken place from the special preternatural favor of God. And so, on the one hand, death is natural to man; yet, on the other hand, it is a penalty for original sin, much like the loss of fortune is a natural result to the gambler, and yet it is also a penalty for his sin and it afflicts not only him but also his family.

RIGHT TO DIE NOT THE SAME AS RIGHT TO KILL ONE-SELF, OR TO HAVE ONESELF KILLED. Some may entertain apprehension lest by affirming the right to die we are condoning, or even defending "Euthanasia" or "mercy killing". But, the right to die is quite another thing from the right to kill oneself or to have oneself killed by another, however merciful the manner may be. The confusion and identification of the former with the latter is unwarranted and must altogether be avoided. When a patient is "given" by the doctors e.g. a month or a week to live, it means that the patient's organism is still capable of sustaining life for the given time. To destroy that capability through direct intervention is to kill the individual.⁵

⁴ "God created man for incorruption; ... but through the devil's envy death entered the world." Wisdom 2, 24 (RSV).

⁵ Nevertheless, we should evaluate human acts in their formal context. If we should take matters materially, there is no physical difference between fornicarious union and legitimate marital union, between killing in murder and killing in defence of one's country. Now, in conditions wherein the living capability of a man's organism has been irreversibly and irretrievably destroyed so that the impending natural outcome is death not life, should the individual concerned ask for the "coup de grace" or the finishing stroke, it should not be taken as a request for his killing but for an early deliverance. In the said conditions, even if the man should commit an apparent suicide, his action should be evaluated in the formal manner as self-deliverance, rather than suicide.

This manner of evaluation is premised on the truism that, an individual who has been already effectively killed from the massive and irremediable destruction of his vital organs, cannot be killed a second time: e.g.,

IMAGE OF GOD'S PERSONALITY. When God created the first man, He said: "Let us make man to our image and likeness; and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth". "And God created man to His own image; to the image of God He created him, male and female He created them".⁶ God created man to His supernatural likeness through the gift of sanctifying grace, wherewith He made first man His adopted child. God created man to His own image, imbuing man with a rational and spiritual soul. But, this is only a portion of God's image found in man. The full image is found in the personal nature that God has given to man. Man is a creature of God; but because man is the image of God, according to the dynamic personality that he carries, God assigned to man dominion over the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the air, the beasts, the earth and every creeping creature that moves upon the earth.

Before God had created man God could not find on the whole face of the earth anything that was capable of responding to Him, as an image His own Personality. For that effect, the earth was inhabited only by dumb creatures. But after God created man in His own image and awarded to man a personality like His own, man could respond to God like a child to his Father, and even talk to God in the fashion of "a man to man". In prayer to his Creator man reflects most intensely the image of his Maker, and discloses the superiority of his being over all the irrational creatures of the earth. In prayer the personality of man meets the personality of God. In this connection, I recall the story of two American College Professors. On a certain occasion during their anthropological travels through the South Sea Islands, they thought of investigating the attainments of the native mind with regard to themselves and the world in which they lived. A good prospect seemed their own native guide. So, one of them directed to him the following question:

"Tom, how do you know that human beings are really different from the animals?" The native, with the unlettered wisdom of common sense, replied: "There is a big difference. Men are people, persons; animals are not. Men know God and pray to Him; animals do not know God and do not pray to Him!" What a confounding reply for secularistic men who disdain to acknowledge the Creator and to pray to Him, as if these acts were derogatory to scientific men:

when a soldier's entrails have been blown away by a mortar piece on the battle field, or when the organism of an individual cannot stay "alive" anymore without the action of an external machine. There is therefore no more place for the infringement of the commandment, "thou shall not kill", from the subsequent action.

⁶ Genesis 1, 26-27.

or unworthy of modernistic men, who snobbishly think they are superior to aborigenes because they have come to think and to act as if they are merely evolved and glorified simians! The Psalmist addressing God exclaims: "What is man, that Thou are mindful of him?" And the same Psalmist gives the inspired answer: "Thou hast made him a little less than the Angels. Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor, and has set him over the works of Thy hands".⁷ But considering the doings of men, the same Psalmist remarks: "Man, when he was in honor, did not understand; he is compared to senseless beasts, and is become like to them".⁸

DEFACED IMAGES. But, sophisticated modern men have gone down lower. Because they have reneged the Creator and His Natural Law, they have prostituted their personalities to sex, and sex to unrestrained contraceptive lust. They have made use of their rational power not to acknowledge the truth and to abide by it, but to rationalize the pre-empted views they have taken in favor of "liberated" sexual indulgement. They have arrived to the point where they nonchalantly destroy their offspring and dispose of them as "human garbage", to borrow the expression with which some modern U.S. hospitals designate the bins destined for the collection of abortion refuse. This malfeasance not even the lowliest of animals commit. They know what is garbage and what is their own kind.

The unborn human fetus is not just garbage. It is destined by the Creator to be an individual capable of knowing and of loving Him, of responding to Him, and of being an heir of eternal life. The unborn human fetus is already a human being and a person, much like the mango that is still tethered to the tree and in the process of development is already a mango fruit.

God has given the earth and the things of earth to the children of men.⁹ But the Creator has not given the person of any man to anyone, so that it may be disposed of at will. The Creator has reserved the human person, which carries the seal of His image, for Himself. The unique value of each human person is found in his individual religious dimension and direct responsibility to the Creator. Therewith he carries value in himself which transcends society and the whole universe at large. If personality is a crown of honor that God has placed on the brows of men, it also imposes on men the responsibility to carry it with honor as "Images of the Creator".

⁷ Psalm 8, 5-6. Conf. Vatican II. The Church in the Modern World, Pt. I. Ch. 1, n. 12. Ed. Abbott.

⁸ Psalm 48, 13 and 21.

⁹ Conf. Psalm 113, 16.

PORTRAIT OF THE BIKOLS AT SPANISH CONTACT AND THE FIRST SEVEN DECADES OF THEIR EVANGELIZATION

By

Jose Calleja Reyes

Before the Spaniards had set foot on Bikol soil, contemporary events were fast happening in the central part of the Philippine Archipelago. Legazpi had successfully implanted the cross in Cebu in 1565. The Legazpi expedition had enlarged its foothold in the Visayan Island group by moving on to Panay from whence explorations into the Mindoro and Manila Bay areas were made.

By 1569, one group of these explorations jointly headed by Capt. Luis Enriquez de Guzman and Fray Alfonso Jimenez, an Augustinian friar, chanced upon the islands of Masbate, Tikaw and Burias. In Burias, Fr. Jimenez baptized its powerful chieftain. The expedition moved on and sailed to the bigger island across the sea to what is now the southern part of Sorsogon. This island across the sea was called "Tierra de Ibalón" by the expedition. Fray Jimenez stayed in Ibalón for sometime and baptized many native leaders. From here they explored the adjoining territory and discovered a thriving inland balangay or rancheria on what is now the present town of Camalig in the province of Albay. The party was welcomed by the hospitable natives and given shelter in their habitations which consisted of many lineal sheds each called in the native tongue "Kamalig". In Spanish, "Kamalig" meant "Camarin", and since the Spaniards saw many of these habitations, the expedition later reported the area covered by their exploration to be "Ibalón of the region of Camarines". Thenceforth, "Ibalón" and "Camarines" began to appear interchangeably in records and charts of the time to mean the present day Bikol Region.¹

Since the objective of these incursions was to secure provisions for Legazpi's main expeditionary force in the island of Panay, not much had been accomplished in the way of firmly implanting the cross and the sword in these Bicol areas first touched by the Spanish

¹ Domingo Abella, *Bikol Annals*, Vol. I pp. 3-4.

conquistadores. The serious business of conquest and evangelization had to wait until 1573 when the future Maestre de Campo, Captain Juan de Salcedo with a group of 120 soldiers made his second thrust of conquest from the north, the first having been made two years earlier but aborted at Paracale because Salcedo was urgently summoned by Legaspi to return to Manila.²

Salcedo and his group of soldiers re-traced their path of conquest to Bicol from the conquered settlement of Maynilad. They crossed the Laguna de Bay and the mountains of Tayabas, and from Mauban, Quezon set sail across Lamón Bay onward to San Miguel Bay and from the east of what is now the Bicol peninsula sailed upstream into the Bicol River at Cabusao until they reached its headwaters at Lake Bato where on its lakeshore he found the flourishing balangals of Kalilingo and Libong.³ In Libong, Juan de Salcedo decided to set up the Spanish villa of Santiago de Libong in honor of the Spanish famous patron Saint Santiago de Compostela.⁴ Libong then became the first Spanish settlement in the Bikol region, and one of the four (4) special villas the Spaniards would set up in their 400 years of stay in the Philippines. The other three were Villa del Santo Niño in Cebu, Villa Fernandina in Vigan, Ilocos Sur and Villa de Lipa in Batangas.⁵ When Salcedo returned to Manila, he left a garrison force of seventy soldiers under the command of Pedro de Chavez. The latter would shortly found the city of Nueva Caceres upstream along the Bicol River across another flourishing balangal called Nagá.

What was the portrait of the Bicolano, so to speak, at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards and during the early post conquest period? Is it possible to describe the features of this people whom Salcedo heard to be "gente rica, buena y bellicosa?"

Four 16th century letters, two of which were written by a governor-general, one by crown officials and the fourth by an Augustinian friar give us an overview of the early Bikols — his countenance and accouterments.

Governor Guido Lavezares who succeeded Legaspi wrote to his majesty, Philip II, the then reigning monarch of Spain — "the people there (Bicol) are the most vallant yet found in these regions".⁶ This was corroborated by Fray Martín de Rada, an Augustinian friar who

² La Region Bicolana (Printed and unauthored) Jose Calleja Reyes Collection.

³ Ibid

⁴ In the province of Leon, Spain.

⁵ La Region Bicolana (Printed and unauthored). Jose Calleja Reyes Collection

⁶ Guido Lavezares to Felipe II, July 17, 1574 Blair and Robertson, Vol. III pp. 272-282.

wrote to the Viceroy of Spain and reported — "the people there (Bicol) are the most valiant and the best armed men of all these islands. — Although they never attacked the Spaniards, still they defended themselves in all their villages and would not surrender unless conquered by force of arms".⁷

These letters were written after the Cebu of Rajah Tupas and the Maynilad of Rajah Sulayman and Rajah Matanda had been attacked and conquered by the Spanish conquistadores. In these campaigns, the might of Spanish arms had clashed with native valor. The Spaniards little thought that in some uncharted peninsula in the big island of Luzon they would encounter natives who would display raw courage far superior than what they had met in their previous campaigns of conquest in Cebu and Maynilad.

Governor Guido Lavezares, in his Letter to King Phillip II, added "the Bicolos possess much gold armor — as iron corselets, greaves, writlets, gauntlets and helmets — some arquebuses and culverins".⁸ This report was once more corroborated in the letter of the crown officials Andres Cauchela and Salvador Aldave to Phillip II when they said — "the men are warlike and well armed for Indians — for they have corselets of buffalo hide, iron greaves and helmets set with fish bones and stout shells which no weapon except the arquebus can damage".⁹ Picture the Bicol warrior his upper torso accoutered with a heavy armor of carabao hide perhaps in-laid with filigreed gold of geometric designs. His head wore a helmet of some indigenous fiber material like the abaca set with the hardy bones of some sea mammal like the "tiburon"¹⁰ and capped with the stout shellbone of the "pawikan" or tortoise. His legs were protected at knee high by an iron corselet of cylindrical greaves. His arms wore writlets of the same material. The fighting hand that held the deadly "minasbad" or the "budiak"¹¹ wore a gauntlet of hammered iron richly inlaid with gold. In spite of this colorful and sophisticated battle regalia, Fray Martin de Rada reported — "the natives never attacked the Spaniards". The sight of a strange people intruding into the tranquil grounds of their villages and whose intentions were absolutely unknown to them, was not enough cause for the early Bikols to display a hostile attitude for threats of aggression against the Spaniards. A people possessed of such values and

⁷ Martin de Rada to the Viceroy Martin Enriquez, June 30, 1574 — Blair and Robertson, Vol. XXXIV pp. 286-287.

⁸ Guido de Lavezares to Felipe II, July 30, 1574. Blair and Robertson, Vol. III pp. 283-285.

⁹ Andres Cauchela and Salvador Aldave to Felipe II, March 17, 1574 — Blair and Robertson, Vol. XXXIV p. 397.

¹⁰ a sea mammal.

¹¹ a spear.

attitudes could only mean a degree of culture and discernment which was far from barbaric. These sentiments belonged to a race that was refined in its thoughts and beliefs, proof that the early Bikols were possessed of a substantially high degree of culture despite the primitiveness of their society. A serious provocation was needed to arouse in them the spirit of self-preservation and to defend their villages with consummate valor. Governor Lavezares, in his letter-reports to King Phillip II little thought that he was indeed paying the highest compliment to a hardy people who would not surrender their birthright except to overwhelming force beyond their capacity to resist.

The early Bikols were also said to be "the best and most skillful artificers in jewels and gold that we have seen in the land. Almost all the people of Los Camarines pursue this handicraft".¹² Picture early Bicol maidens bedecked with ornaments of shining gold. From their ears hung cylindrical coils of gold earrings (*hikaw*); their heads decked with shell of tortoise combs inlaid with filigreed gold of many designs; strung around their necks were intricate necklaces of pure gold chains with pendants of carnelian and agathe stones (*kolintas*); wrapped around their wrists were filigreed gold bracelets called "*kalombjga*". In this respect, the early Bicolns were indeed comparable to the Incas of the South American continent whose gold artifacts and jewels brought about the loss of their ancient civilization and their almost total annihilation.

In the Bicol conquest a similar thing occurred. It was the news of the gold that fired Salcedo to launch the conquest of Bicol even before the fires of the conquered Maynilad had died down. Salcedo received reports that on the estuary of a mighty river called Bicol lived "*gente rica, buena y bellicosa*", and "that many maguinoos possessed great treasures consisting of quintales of powdered gold and precious chains of filigreed gold crafted by natives who were excellent artificers in jewels".¹³ The conquistadores determination to put their hands on such fabulous treasure must have been irresistible that Fray Martin de Rada in his letter said — "all the villages entered in the same way, by first summoning them peacefully and to pay tribute immediately unless they wished war. They replied they would first prove to those to whom they were to pay tribute and consequently, the Spaniards attacking them, an entrance was made by forc of arms and the village was overthrown and whatever found pillaged. Then the Spaniards summoned the natives to submit peacefully. When the natives came, they asked them to immediately give them tribute in gold and in an excessive amount,

¹² Guido de Lavezares to Felipe II, July 17, 1574. Ibid.

¹³ La Region Bicolana (Ibid).

for which they promised to give them writs of peace. Therefore, since all the people defended themselves, more have perished in that land than in any other yet conquered. After he had accomplished this, Juan de Salcedo returned with the gold and left Pedro de Chavez settled in the river of Vicor with seventy men".¹⁴

Picture a typical besieged settlement along the mighty Bicol river. Clustered thatched-roof "Kamaligs" bordered the water's edge. On the river bank are moored rudderless 'barotos'¹⁵ which the natives used in moving from one village to the other along the estuary. On higher ground could be seen the fortified "moog"¹⁶ of the maguino or village chief flying many buntings multicolored pennants indicative of prestige and authority. The nearby fields are "middle-sized, of color (acietunado) similar to the quince fruit and both men and women have good features with very black hair, scarce beard and are quite ingenious in every way, keen and quick tempered and quite resolute".¹⁷ They possess gold mines, gold and plenty of provisions.¹⁸ Menfolk can be seen in the "toltoogan",¹⁹ a huge marble-like stone grinding the precious metals of gold and iron. Nearby was the "sanghiran"²⁰ where the gold dust was assayed and gathered for the melting kilns. In another section of the village menfolk and womenfolk are busy pounding and moulding the thin sheets of gold into filigrees which will be fashioned into jewels of intricate native designs. In one quite but revered corner of the village was the "gulanggulañgan",²¹ a native temple dedicated to the god of good, "Gugurang",²² where offerings were made on bamboo pedestals called "salañgat"²³ accompanied by the enchanting air of the "soraque"²⁴ ritual chant. In this almost eden-like setting, the "patong"²⁵ beat was sounded in the bamboo-look-outs perched on the village periphery, signalling the alarm of approaching strangers. The menfolk quickly abandoned their tasks.

¹⁴ Martin de Rada to the Viceroy Martin Enriquez, June 30, 1574 — Ibid.

¹⁵ a river boat without outriggers, rudder or sail.

¹⁶ a tall house like a tower which in ancient Bicol was constructed on tree tops.

¹⁷ Antonio de Morga, "Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas".

¹⁸ Guido de Lavezares to Felipe II, July 30, 1574. Ibid.

¹⁹ P. Fr. Marcos de Lisboa, Vocabulario de la Lengua Bicol, Manila 1865, p. 403.

²⁰ Ibid p. 334.

²¹ P. Fr. José Castaño, "Breve Noticia Acerca del Origin, Religion, Creencias y Supersticiones de los Antiguos Indios del Bicol" — W. E. Retana, Archivo del Bibliofilo Filipino, Vol. II.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ a gong-like wooden instrument hollowed out like a boat used by the natives for transmitting calls and signals.

and in their warrior attire clambered to the ledges of the wooden palisades surrounding the vilage. The chief, with hushed and perturbed gaze, looked down into the estuary and watched the approach of strong sailing crafts festooned with the standard of Castile, filled with men clad in iron armors and helmets brandishing glistening arms of steel. The encounter was set. The events as related above by Fray Martin de Rada ensued and the early Bicolis are born into history.

The village conquered, the tribute of gold exacted, the conquerors moved on along the Bicol estuary and the surrounding region in search of other villages until all have been similarly subdued and the sword of Castile firmly implanted. The names of some village magulnoos would be recorded as Pagkilatan, Makaboñgoy, Sampuñgan, Maabau, Hocoman, Pañga, Domogma,²⁶ chiefs who governed the balangais surrounding the present day towns of Ligao, Polangui, Bato, Nabua and Iriga. Although small in number, they served to identify a few of the early Bicol chiefs in what would otherwise be a nameless multitude.

To those who survived the holocaust of conquest, the seeds of Christianity would be implanted in 1578 by the early Franciscan missionaries Fray Bartolome Ruiz²⁷ and Fray Pablo de Jesus.²⁸

Twenty four years later (1602), Fray Marcelo P. de Ribadeniera,²⁹ would write of the early Christian Bicolis in words which bring to our mind a picture of the catechumens in the early days of Christianity —

“Soon after the arrival of the Franciscans in Manila, a few of them were sent to Camarines which is in the island of Luzon, seven leagues distant from Manila. Those who have been there and are still there say that the province is the most mild and has the best climate in all of Filipinas, in hot or cold weather. The people there are healthy and have long life expectancy. They are the least vicious of the tribes that have been discovered in these islands. — Their customs and political way of life are aligned to natural reason. They are a composed and temperate people, particularly the women folk who are very honest and reserved.

²⁶ Felix Huerta, O.F.M. Estado Geografico, topografico, estadistico, historico-religioso de la santa y apostolica provincia de San Gregorio Magno — en las Islas Filipinas (Binondo, 1865).

²⁷ Fr. Eusebio Gomez Platero, Catalogo Biographico de los Religiosos Franciscanos de la Provincia de San Gregorio Magno de Filipinas. Imprenta del Real Colegio de Santo Tomas, Manila, 1880, pp. 22-25.

²⁸ Ibid, pp. 15-17.

²⁹ Fray Ribadeniera was in the Philippines between 1594 and 1600.

It is now 24 years that the religious of our order have preached the gospel to these people — thanks to the Lord a very bright summer has come — there is an abundant harvest of new christians who have heard and lived the words of the Lord. They even forget to eat and drink when, spellbound, they listen to the word of the minister during which the days become hours and they would listen even by day or night. The enthusiasm with which they hear the word of the gospel is such that they take down notes in their own syllabary all that the missionary preaches to them so they may not forget. They ask the fathers to relate to them the lives of saints most especially the life and miracles of the Blessed Virgin of whom they like to hear so much.

Those christians amongst them who by their virtues have been allowed to receive the Holy Eucharist do so with great devotion and reverence at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. — The change of their old ways of life is so evident that when their confessors ask them about their old rites, beliefs and superstitions, they feel embarrassed and run away, giving the impression that it is no longer proper to impute those old beliefs on them.

They mortify themselves willingly. Some do not even use salt in their meals by way of mortification. Others forego bathing, which is a great sacrifice to them because to wash clean is their custom from birth. — They endeavor to rise in prayer in their dwellings the moment they hear the matens of the religious and at this hour they offer themselves to God and do mental prayer. — When Holy Week comes, they perform bloody mortifications and even carry a heavy cross as an act of expiation. There are some houses where the faithful gather to talk about the Lord and perform penitential exercises, making these habitations a refuge for souls. — Some do not eat for three days by way of joining themselves to the passion of Our Lord. Others will go to secluded places where following the example of the Lord they would go into deep meditation and mortification, all for the love of God. — Their confessions are frequent and voluntary, done after the proper examination of conscience. They would kneel at the foot of the confessor with great fervor and with copious tears that it takes a while before they can speak out. —

The friars teach the children to read, write and sing songs with the accompaniment of the organ. Some friars even had to learn to play the flute and the clarinet. Some

boys who study latin in our convents do so with facility as though they are Spaniards. They write well although some of their writings are curious. They are lovers of music. In Quipayo,³⁰ there is a man who with his two sons on his side serve mass, a very edifying sight to behold. In the town of Minalabag,³¹ the children, from their young days know the prayers to the Blessed Virgin and they help the priest say the prayers outside of the choir. The church choir is composed of many singers. They practice daily and are divided in such a way that some sing in church in the morning the *Prima de Nuestra Señora*, some play the flute at mass and others sing the *Salve Regina* in honor of the Immaculate Conception at dusk. They have many bells in high towers which are rung in their solemn festivities. The church is kept clean by those who serve in the church. They would decorate the altars with fresh flowers daily, since the land around is so fertile that there are flowers and roses the year round in the fields and gardens. — The natives are taught to be devoted to the Blessed Virgin and they carry rosary around their necks with the crucifix carved by their own hands. When the priests pass by they would kiss their hands and ask for their blessing. In order that the others may come to church and learn the christian doctrine, there are certain guardians who look after them and who impose punishments for those who are less faithful.

In the faraway places in the hinterlands where the non-christians still live, a religious would come to preach the gospel and the natives would be asked to bring out their idols which they still believe and reverence by offering perfumes and odorous scents. The natives would gather all their idols, in one case some 400 of them, and in the presence of the villagers they burn them, giving thanks to the Lord now they have received the true light of the gospel. In the place of the idols, they would put images and a cross and in their houses they would construct altars in some decent corner".³²

Seven decades later (1649), an unauthored manuscript entitled "Entrada de la Seraphica Religion de Nuestro P. S. Francisco En Las ISLAS PHILIPINAS"³³ pictured the extent that the work of

³⁰ A town along the Bicol River near the present day City of Naga.

³¹ An inland town near the present day City of Naga.

³² P. Marcelo De Ribadeneira. *Historia de las Archipiélago Filipino y Reinos de la Gran China, Tartaria, Conchinchina, Malaca, Siam, Cambodge y Japon* (Edition of P. Juan R. de Legisima, P.F. M. Madrid 1947. pp. 59-70. Interpretative Translation by Jose Calleja Reyes.

³³ W. E. Retana, *Archivo del Bibliófilo Filipino*, Vol. II.

evangelization had accomplished in the Bicol Region in a mission-chain that extended from Capalonga in the north to Bulusan in the south. This 17th century cronicle also gives us an insight into the beginnings of the townships in the region which later would be welded into the growing political structure of the incipient Filipino nation.

Provincia de Tagalogs³⁴

32. Ten leagues by sea (from the convent of San Diego de Gumaca) is the convent of Santa Lucia de Capalogan (Capalonga) which has 100 tributes and 400 persons. The church and convent is made of bamboo, the previous one having been burned by the Dutch. It is served by one religious.

33. Twelve leagues by sea is the convent of the La Purificacion de Paracali (Paracale) which has 200 tributes and 300 persons. The church and convent is made of bamboo, the previous one having been burned by the Dutch.

Provincia de Camarines³⁵

1. In the City of Caceres is the convent of our father San Francisco, which is a community administering a part of the city called Naga, having 150 tributes and 600 persons. The administration in this convent covers also the town of Canaman and Mllaor. In this town of Canaman there are 400 tributes and 1,500 persons. It is served by one religious under Naga which is two leagues from the town of Milanix (Mllaor). The latter has 300 tributes and 1,200 persons.

There is in the convent in Naga normally four priests and two lay brothers for the infirmaary.

2. In the convent of Indar (Indang) which from Paracale is distant six leagues from the sea, there are 400 tributes and 1,800 persons; it has one visita on the higher bank of the river; it has a wooden church and convent and served by two religious.

3. Two leagues by land is the convent of San Juan Bautista of Dait (Daet) with one visita having 300 tributes 1,200 persons; it has a wooden church and convent and served by one religious.

³⁴ In this unauthored manuscript the Bikol missions of Capalonga and Paracale were placed under the Tagalog provinces. Interpretative translation of the manuscript by Jose Calleja Reyes.

³⁵ Province of Camarines — the name by which the missions in the Bicol Region where classified. Interpretative translation of the manuscript by Jose Calleja Reyes.

4. Eight leagues by sea is the convent of Santiago de Ligmanan (Libmanan) which has 200 tributes and 800 persons; it has a wooden church and convent and served by one religious.

5. Four leagues by sea and land is the convent of Nuestra Señora de Quipayo which has 3 visitas, 800 tributes and 2,400 persons; the church and convent are made of red bricks and served by two religious.

6. The other part of Caceres or Naga, in the middle of the province, three leagues upstream is the convent of Minalana (Minalabag) which has 300 tributes and 1,300 persons. It has a wooden church and convent and served by one religious.

7. Six leagues away is the convent of Santa María Magdalena de Bula with one visita having 250 tributes and 900 persons. It has a wooden church and convent and served by one religious.

8. Three leagues from here is the convent of Santa Cruz de Nabua which has 600 tributes with some negritos that live in the mountains; the tributes are made only to the doctrine. It has 2,400 persons with a wooden church and convent served by two religious.

9. One league away is the convent of San Antonio de Iragá which has 460 tributes and 1,600 persons. It has a wooden church and convent and served by one religious.

10. Three leagues away is the convent of our father San Francisco de Buy (Buhí) which has 200 tributes and 800 persons. It has a wooden church and convent and served by one religious.

11. Six leagues from it is the convent of Santiago de Libon which has 300 tributes and 1,200 persons with a brick church and convent, served by one religious

12. One league away is the convent of San Pedro de Polangui which has 300 tributes and 1,400 persons with a stone church and convent, served by one religious.

13. One league away is the convent of San Miguel de Oasque (Oas) with one visita. It has 600 tributes and 2,500 persons. It has a stone church and convent served by one religious.

14. Four leagues away is the convent of San Juan Bautista de Camarines with its visita called Cagsawa. It has

700 tributes and 3,000 persons. It has a stone church and convent and served by several religious and one lay religious in the infirmary which this convent has.

15. One league away is the convent of San Gregorio de Albay which has 300 tributes and 1,200 persons. The town is administered by Spaniards. It has stone church and convent surrounded partly by stone walls which serve as a defense for the province, the town being very near the sea and the port for the vessels of his majesty which come to load abaca and other tributes. Last year the stone church and convent were destroyed by the Dutch. A part has been rebuilt with bamboos. It is served by two religious.

16. Eight leagues by sea is the convent of San Juan Evangelista de Tanaco (Tabaco) which has 340 tributes and 1,350 persons with a visita one and a half leagues distant. The church-convent is of bamboo, the former edifices having been burned by the Dutch, Camucon y Mindanao (moros). It has one strong house for its defense against enemies. It is served by one religious.

17. One league by land is the convent of Santa Ana de Malinas (Mallnao) with one visita. It has 300 tributes and 1,200 persons. It has a wooden church and convent and served by one religious.

18. Eight leagues by sea is the convent of the Anunciacion de Bacon with a visita called Solsogon (Sorsogon). It has 400 tributes and 1,600 persons. The church and convent both are of bamboo, having been burned by the enemy Camucon and Mindanao. There is one religious who also administers to the Spaniards who usually arrive in the port of Solsogon (Sorsogon) in the vessels of his Majesty.

19. Three leagues by sea is the convent of the Visitacion de Casiguran with one visita. It has 430 tributes and 1,560 persons with a wooden church and convent, served by one religious.

20. Eight leagues through high mountains and twelve leagues by sea is the convent of Bososan (Bulusan) with 3 visitas. It has 400 tributes and 1,500 persons. It has a bamboo church and convent served by one religious.

21. Thirty leagues by sea is the convent of Quilpa (Quipla) with its visita, Donsol. It has 300 tributes and 1,200 persons with a church and convent made of bamboos. It is served by one religious.

At this point in time, it may also be said that the Bicol Region and the Bicolanos had been firmly locked into the chain of Christendom, the Bicol provinces and its growing missions being within the area of the suffragan diocese which was earlier proclaimed in Rome (August 14, 1595) by Pope Clement VIII as the "Ecclesia de Caceres in Indies Orientalibus (Church of Caceres in the Oriental Indies)".³⁶

This portrait of the early Bikols is their manner of reaching and participating in the quadri-centennial anniversary of Bikol's evangelization which begins on October 7, 1977 and ends on December 8, 1978³⁷ — a portentous event to which they gave the full measure of their fortunes and life itself that the Bicol region may be born to Christ. This portrait is also their enduring cultural legacy for all time to Bicolandia and the Filipino nation.

After 400 years, their succeeding generations would be characterized as the the one ethnic group in the country whose religiosity is a shining gem in Philippine Christian tradition.

In the forthcoming quadri-centennial of Bikol's evangelization (1578-1978) the present day Bicolanos must look hard and well at this portrait of their ancient forebears. They, too, must have a portrait of themselves in the context of the present with a related view to their past. For to paraphrase a Jesuit priest-scholar "by means of a critical evaluation of our past and an understanding of the new dimensions of the present, we can better determine for ourselves what our moral ideals should be in the future. This is what the philosopher Heidegger meant by history as "Geschichte", that is, to see in the "said" of the past, the "unsaid" of the future",³⁸ a sentiment so well expressed by our national hero, Dr. Jose P. Rizal, almost a century ago — "to foretell the destiny of a nation, it is necessary to open the book that tells of the past".³⁹

³⁶ Domingo Abella, *Bikol Annals*, Vol. II, p. 12.

³⁷ Joint Pastoral Letter by the Bikol Bishops, May 29, 1977 — On the Quadricentennial of the Evangelization of the Bicol Region.

³⁸ Vitaliano R. Gorospe, *Sources of Filipino Moral Consciousness*, *Philippine Studies*, Vol. 25/ Third Qt., 1977, p. 279.

³⁹ Jose P. Rizal, "The Philippines a Century Hence". *La Solidaridad*, 30 September 1889, p. 178.

HOMILETICS

I. BIBLICAL NOTES FOR HOMILIES

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

(February 5, 1978)

First Reading: Isaiah 58; 7-10

Second Reading: First Corinthians 2:1-5

Gospel Reading: Matthew 5:13-16

First Reading: The exiles returning from Babylonia complained that their services to the Lord, especially fasting, was not being blessed as they deserved (v.5). But the Lord counters by pointing out that they limit their fasting to mere external penances, devoid of inner spirit. Let them manifest a true spirit of penance by no longer exploiting the poor, and by coming to the aid of everyone in need. Then God's friendship and abundant blessings will be experienced fully.

Gospel Reading: Jesus employs two striking metaphors to describe the responsibilities of the Christian calling: salt and light. Of the various qualities of salt, Jesus stresses seasoning. Unless it seasons (gives taste to), it is useless. A Christian must "season" his surroundings by his Christian principles and manner of life. Otherwise as a Christian he is a failure, no matter whatever be his standing or career. His life as a Christian is of no avail to others. On every Christian it is incumbent to spread the Gospel-spirit of Christ.

A light lets you see your way to reach your goal so that you do not stumble, or lose yourself in devious paths. Lamps are lit in order that people see where they are going. The Christian has the social obligation to be a light to others, so that their example and manner of life lead men to the knowledge and praise of the goodness of God, their final goal.

Second Reading: On his second missionary journey, Paul suffered a great let-down at Athens where his philosophical approach in human "wisdom" (Acts 17: 22-31) had very little success. Coming then to Corinth he put aside all further attempts at mere human argumentation, and determined to let the salvific event of Christ's

crucifixion speak for itself. Naturally speaking, a crucified Savior would be repulsive to his hearers. But there is just where the Holy Spirit showed his mighty power through signs and wonders. Many were converted, not by Paul's human "wisdom" but by the divine power at work through him.

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT (February 12, 1978)

First Reading: Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7

Second Reading: Romans 5:12-19

Gospel Reading: Matthew 4:1-11

First Reading: Already in 1950, Pius XII in "Humani Generis" declared that the language of these chapters is pictorial and does not intend to give a scientific description of the origin of man. Instead, its message is salvific:

1. Man's formation is God's doing, not chance. He became a living being by God's special activity, imparting human life (breath) to him.
2. God planned happiness for man on earth, symbolized by the image of a pleasant garden full of good things for man. The tree of life symbolized immortality and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil a certain experiential knowledge. Note that throughout the chapter man and woman are spoken of in general not by proper names.
3. The origin of sin in mankind is definitely disobedience to God's command. The serpent symbolizes an evil power inimical to God and bent on ruining man. It resorts to denying God's word and to lies. (Later revelation identifies it with the devil: Jn. 8:44; Rev. 12:9). The forbidden fruit (nowhere is there mention of an apple!) symbolizes something very attractive to the woman, who listens rather to the word of the tempter than to the word of God, commanding. Striking is the presentation of the psychology of temptation.
4. The eating of the forbidden fruit on the part of the man and woman symbolizes the accomplishment of the sinful act of the part of both man and woman. Since the language is to be taken figuratively (pictorial), opinions differ as to what exactly the disobedience consisted in. No clear revelation has been given on this point in the sources of revelation.

Gospel Reading: The historical fact of the temptation of Jesus is briefly but clearly stated in Mark, the earliest gospel (1:11). Matthew and Luke elaborate the scene into three distinct temptations. Jesus may have narrated this to his disciples and each evangelist presented the matter in accordance with his respective plan, but more likely it is a catechetical elaboration of the Early Church, setting forth Christ as the New Israel, the Model for all the People of God in their encounter with all and every temptation of Satan. Where Israel in the desert defaulted any number of times, Christ conquers invariably.

All three temptations concern abuse of power to obtain the ends of Christ's mission: 1) to obtain basic physical needs. Jesus does not fulfill his mission in this manner but by proclaiming the word that is life (JBC). Over against Israel's murmuring for food in Ex. 16:2f, Christ counters with Deut. 8:3, not by denying the need of food, but by stressing the pre-eminence of the spiritual. 2) abuse to produce a spectacular sign to convince the crowd, by presuming on God's protection. Christ counters with Deut. 6:16 over against Israel's putting God to the test in Ex. 17:7.3. 3) Abuse to use power independent of God to establish the kingdom. Jesus counters with Deut. 6:13 over against Israel's attempt to conquer Canaan on their own, in Num. 14:44f. In all these instances, the example of Jesus shows how all temptations must be overcome. One does not argue with the tempter, one does not dilly-dally. Christ was brief, resolute and determined. And he quoted the word of God.

Second Reading: It is beyond the scope of these biblical notes to give a complete exegetical explanation of this difficult and complicated passage in Paul's letter to the Romans, the chief theme of which is man's justification through Christ. Sufficient for homiletic purposes are the following remarks: Paul draws a comparison between man before Christ and man incorporated into Christ:

1. Sin (personified as an actual evil force) came into the world of man through the **disobedience** of man at the very beginning, and its consequence is Death (which includes spiritual death, separating man from God, the source of all Life).
2. Uprightness comes to man through the **obedience** of Christ, and through him all who are incorporated into Christ share new life (the Christ-life with its pledge of life eternal).
3. Under the impulse of the evil power of Sin, **all men** have sinned personally and thus reaped the wages of sin which is death. This includes also those who lived before Moses and the Mosaic Law, with its death sanctions. Hence the influence of man's sin at the beginning is **universal**.

4. Christ's salvific work far outstripped the work of Sin. He obedient even unto death, alone won for man the gift of God's favor (grace) and new life. His one salvific work affects all men and is universal in its effects. Man's disobedience led to death for all men. Christ's obedience leads to life for all (who are incorporated into him).

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT (February 19, 1978)

First Reading: Genesis 12:1-4a
Second Reading: Second Timothy 1:8b-10
Gospel Reading: Matthew 17:1-9

First Reading: In the twelfth chapter of Genesis, God begins to unfold his plan of salvation for all mankind. It is he who takes the initiative, and the man of his choice is Abram, the nomad. The Lord manifest remarkable generosity in a series of promises of which this is the first, involving both a new country for him, a multiple progeny, and a name which would be a blessing for all the nations of the earth. Truly remarkable promises and entirely gratuitous, prior to any merit of Abram, (reflecting God's action to Abram's progeny Israel). All Abram is asked to do is to accept what God offers. This however would involve deep faith and commitment to God, for it meant a leap into the unknown, leaving behind family and surroundings, and taking along a wife who was childless. Abram rose to the occasion, but his faith would still be greatly tested.

Gospel Reading: Matthew's account of the transfiguration does not differ in essentials from that of Mark and Luke, which have been explained in Bol. Ecl. Jan. 1976, 89f, and Bol. Ecl. Jan.-Feb. 1977, 99f. In short, the passage is theological in its presentation, endeavoring to describe a mystical experience of the disciples in the language and images of the Sinai-event (Ex. 19). Jesus is the new Moses, with a new revelation for man. Emphasis in on the heavenly Father's command: Listen to him (Christ).

Second Reading: Living the Gospel-message of Christ entails suffering and trial, but it is every bit worth while, because having received the call to holiness, we have been given to share God's gift of salvation. It was planned by God from all eternity, but accomplished by Christ becoming one of us. He himself destroyed death by his death, and obtained immortal life by his resurrection. The Good News (gospel) is this gratuitous work of Christ's love for man, by no means merited by any deed of man.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT**(February 26, 1978)****First Reading: Exodus 17:3-7****Second Reading: Romans 5:1-2.5-8****Gospel Reading: John 4:42 (or: 4:5-15.19-26.39.40-42)**

First Reading: In spite of the many favors of the Lord, Israel continued to grumble and complain, doubting his loving providence. This time it was lack of drinking-water for man and beast. Again the intervening prayer of Moses saves the day. He is told to strike the rock with the staff that was instrumental for Israel's delivery through the sea. From the rock came life-sustaining water. "Massah" refers to Israel's testing the Lord, and "Meribah" to their quarreling (Horeb does not fit into the picture and seems to be a later interpolation). In reality it is Christ, the Rock, who imparts the "Living Water" that is the Spirit to the thirsting People of God.

Gospel Reading: This superb Gospel-passage has much to offer:

Jesus reveals himself to one who is a woman, immoral, and a Samaritan (despised by his fellow-Jews). He speaks to her seven times, the sacred number of the covenant, and the seventh time is the revelation of himself as Messiah (26). The woman responds six times and the seventh word she speaks is a profession of faith, not yet complete (29). There is a progression in both cases, reaching a climax, but the final climax is the revelation of Jesus as Savior of the world (42).

The theme of "living water" is deliberately provoked by Jesus by his asking for water from the well. He pursues his idea so as to take the ordinary meaning of water up to a higher plane with a supernatural meaning. He poses as the Giver of "Living Water" which he will give if asked. Indeed it is the Gift of God. This Living Water has the ability to quench one's thirst forever, because it becomes an inner fountain within a man. (Later, in 7:38f, the Living Water is explicitly shown to be the Spirit whom Jesus will give, once he is glorified).

Jesus further explains that authentic worship of God does not consist in merely externalized actions with no inner spirit, but in true internal worship with proper dispositions. The deeper meaning intended by John the Evangelist is understood if we keep in mind that in chapter two Jesus is put forth as the Living Temple, and he himself is the Truth (14:6). Only in him and with him

can all true worship of the Father be henceforth given. In this Living Temple, all worship will be given in the Spirit of Christ, which is one of love and filial piety.

The passage is also excellent to show Christ's pedagogical methods. Though the woman was immoral and hostile to begin with, Jesus found an opening by appealing to her womanly instinct to help a man in need (drink). He was willing to overlook her rather flippant answer and aroused her interest by speaking of something she needed (water that would never run out). Soon he had her asking for it. His meaning was on a higher plane, but when she humbly asked him for it, he was satisfied, and after revealing her sad state of soul, he revealed himself by the peculiar phrase: I AM, which is equivalent to the divine name: Yahweh. Note the progression in the woman: flippancy, reverence, desire, clever covering up by substituting a religious theme, implicit faith and commitment to the coming Messiah, crowned by initial faith in Jesus, and apostolic evangelization.

Second Reading: After showing that man's justification comes solely through his acceptance of Christ (faith), Paul now proceeds to show the fruits of justification. First of all, peace, as the consequence of our reconciliation with God at the present time, brought about by Christ's salvific work. But our hope for the future is to share the very glory of God in the beatific vision. This hope gives us certainty, and that certainty rests on God's love for us which he manifested 1) by pouring it out into our hearts through the Gift of the Spirit and 2) by giving up his own Son to death for us while we were still God's sinful enemies. To God alone belongs all the credit.

I. BIBLICAL NOTES FOR MARCH

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

(March 5, 1978)

First Reading: First Samuel 16: 1b.6-7.10-13a

Second Reading: Ephesians 5: 8-14

Gospel Reading: John 9: 1-41 (or: 9: 1.6-9.13-17.34-38)

First Reading: God calls whom he freely chooses, in this instance David, the youngest of all Jesse's sons, to be king of Israel. God's choice is always his own doing, also in each individual instance, and external qualities do not influence him. The disposition of the heart is what counts.

Oil was used in the rite of consecration. High priests were anointed (Ex. 29:7) as were the kings of Israel. Through it, in a certain way, the king became a sharer in God's holiness, and his person considered inviolable. Anointing with oil symbolized God's Spirit taking possession of him. Christ, the new David, was anointed not with the mere symbol but with the Spirit himself (Acts 10:28), and likewise are all who are incorporated into him in baptism. Hence the anointing with chrism. While doing so, the priest says: "as Christ was anointed priest, prophet and king, so may you live always as members of his body, sharing everlasting life".

Gospel Reading: A splendid victory, of Light over darkness. As sheer drama, this trial scene is brilliant, rich in tragic irony. Not merely is it the beggar who is rejected, but Christ the Light. In the setting, a current view is repudiated: personal ailments are not always the consequences of personal sins. Jesus gives the purpose, not the cause of the blindness; that is in order that God can manifest his wonderful works. Jesus himself is the Light of the world; he has come to give light to man, taking away his blindness, not only physical but also spiritual.

1. **The sign:** It is worked very modestly. Jesus lets the waters of Siloam (which represent him as the One Sent) cure the man, after he had anointed him (the Greek verb means that) with spittle and earth, to arouse interior sentiments of faith.

2. **The interrogations:** There are four:

a. Neighbors and acquaintances: he tells the facts without any fear, and openly confesses that Jesus cured him.

b. Pharisees who doubt: again the facts are related exactly. A division of opinion ensues, but the beggar insists: he is a prophet.

c. Parents, called in by unbelieving Pharisees. But they throw back the responsibility to the beggar, out of fear.

d. Pharisees a second time: the climax. All intention of finding out the facts is disregarded. They seek to trap the beggar by cross questioning, then by ridicule, by vilifying Jesus, and finally by intimation. The beggar stands his ground and publicly professes Jesus to be from God. Conclusion of the trial: Ejection, no matter what the witness said. In reality they are refusing to accept Christ's divine mission.

3. **The light of faith** is given by Christ to the beggar. His faith greatly contrast with the stubborn unbelief of the Pharisees, the great ones in Israel. "Son of man" is a term often used by Jesus of himself, since it was free of all political overtones, yet designated the mysterious personage of Dan. 7:13.

4. **Judgment on spiritual blindness:** Those who refuse to accept the Light remain in spiritual blindness. It is now Christ who pronounces judgment. For many, the result of Christ's divine mission is tragedy, through their own pride and willful blindness.

In the above passage, the Early Church saw the sign of Christian baptism: the Light of Christ (faith) given through anointing and water for one who had been totally blind. The beggar on trial suggests to the Christian his own situation in the world, enlightened in baptism and called upon to confess Jesus before men.

Second Reading: The Christian's life is one of light in Christ. He is to put aside all former evil habits (the darkness of unregenerated man). The fruits of light are beneficial to all. Evil deeds will stand condemned in face of this light. A section of an ancient Christian hymn refers to the Risen Christ who brings man from spiritual death to the light of life in himself.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT (March 12, 1978)

First Reading: Ezekiel 37:12-14

Second Reading: Romans 8:8-11

Gospel Reading: John 11:1-45 (or 11:3-7,17,20-27,33-45)

First Reading: Under the figure of a resurrection from the dead, the prophet predicts Israel's return from exile to her own country. Graves symbolize their sojourn in a foreign land. Their restoration will be a proof of God's love for them. He will pour out his Spirit anew upon them, and they will flourish once more. The passage is well applied to a spiritual resurrection from the spiritual death of a life estranged from God.

Gospel Reading: Jesus raises to life one who believes in him: the seventh and last sign of the Book of Signs (Jn. 1-12). "It is a sign both of the final resurrection and of the rising from sin to grace

that takes place in a believer" (JBC). Today's liturgy emphasizes the latter aspect. Bethany is a little town not far from Jerusalem, the home of friends beloved by Jesus. (Verse 2 anticipates the narrative of the following chapter, already known to the Christian community). The sister of Martha is nowhere called Magdalen.

In a dramatic unfolding narrative, Jesus addresses six groups: the disciples, Martha, Mary, the Jews, Martha again, the Father in heaven, and finally the seventh word in a dynamic climax, the word of power to Lazarus, imparting new life. But the narrative revolves around the revelation of Jesus' person in his words: I am the Resurrection and the Life (25). His person is the cause and final end of our resurrection, and he is the source of life eternal. Thomas' bold resolve (16) contrasts with the fear of the other disciples (7.12), and Martha's magnificent profession of faith (21-27) eclipses that of her sister's.

How well the human side of Jesus stands out! Three times his love is mentioned (3.5.36), twice that he is moved by deep emotion (33.38) and once that he does not disdain to weep (35). But his divine power climaxes the entire narrative, showing him master of life and death.

Second Reading: A powerful Pauline passage for renewal in the Spirit. Paul contrasts the man of sin, led by his own selfish impulses (flesh), with the man regenerated in baptism and led by the Spirit of Christ (life in the spirit). In baptism he received the very Spirit of Christ and hence belongs to Christ, with the obligation to live like Christ lives. Yet this process is a gradual one, for there is a constant battle of spirit and flesh. Though endeavoring to live the Christ-life (his spirit lives), he is still prone to sinfulness and death in his mortal body. But the indwelling Spirit will one day conquer completely, for he is the pledge even of bodily resurrection. The Father who raised Christ from the dead will also raise all those who possess Christ's indwelling Spirit.

PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION

(March 19, 1978)

First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7

Second Reading: Philippians 2:6-11

Gospel Reading: Matthew 26:14 to 27:66 (or: 27:11-54)

First Reading: This is the third of the "Servant of Yahweh" songs. The Servant knows how to counsel and compassionate weary way-

farers, for he faithfully listens to God speaking to him. He has been called to suffer much for his people, and he meekly accepts it all, both insult (plucking out one's beard) and maltreatment. But his whole trust is in God who will eventually vindicate him. The Early Church saw this prophecy fully realized in Christ.

Gospel Reading: The longest of the passion accounts is that of Matthew, and seemingly the most used in antiquity. Some details are peculiar to this gospel: the end of Judas, the message of Pilate's wife, the splitting down of the curtain of the sanctuary, the appearance of the dead.

Second Reading: See biblical notes in Bol. Ecl., Jan.-Feb., 1977, 106f.

HOLY THURSDAY (evening mass) (March 23, 1978)

First Reading: Exodus 12:1-8.11-14

Second Reading: First Corinthians 11:23-26

Gospel Reading: John 13:1-15

For the explanation of the readings see Bol. Ecl., Feb. 1978, 165f.

Easter Vigil Midnight Mass (March 26, 1978)

First Reading: Romans 6:3-11

Gospel Reading: Matthew 28:1-10.

First Reading: See Bol. Ecl., Jan.-Feb., 1977, 107f.

Gospel Reading: Although the traditions concerning the apparitions of Jesus on Easter morning differ in several details, it is of no avail to endeavor to harmonize them, for the main message stands out clear and uncompromising: Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified, died and was buried in this tomb, has risen from the dead. Both the heavenly messengers and human witnesses testify to it. All the stress of the various apparitions is on the reality of the Resurrection, which comes from the positive evidence of both men and women, rather than on the fact of the empty tomb. The women in this passage come on an errand of love and as a reward they receive the revelation of the fact that Jesus is risen from the dead.

EASTER SUNDAY MORNING SOLEMNITY**First Reading: Acts 10:34a. 37-43****Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-4****Gospel Reading: John 20:1-9 or Luke 24:1-12**For the explanation of these readings see *Bol. Ecl.*, Feb., 1976, 166f.For Luke 24:1-12: *Boletin Ecl.*, Jan.-Feb., 1977, 108.**II. HOMILIES FOR FEBRUARY****You are the Salt of the Earth****February 5, 1978 (Fifth Sunday)**

The Human Situation: Salt is a necessary element in man's diet. It carries out several important functions in various bodily organs. Mankind has always felt the need of salt, and often gone to great trouble to obtain it. Without salt in proper amounts, the body goes into convulsions and eventually dies. Salt is also a strong preservative. Meat and fish are salted to preserve them. Great quantities of various objects are stored away in abandoned salt mines which act as excellent preservers. But the quality of salt which Jesus has in mind in this passage of the gospel is that of a condiment. Salt gives taste to food. Without it, food becomes insipid and tasteless. Then as salt it is useless, and is simply thrown out to be trampled on.

The Good News: Jesus wants his followers to be the salt of the earth. Figuratively, they are to act as salt does on food, that is, to give a Christian "flavor" to their surroundings. They are to reach out and influence others by their good example and their positive involvement. This is to be a Christian influence, learned in the school of Christ, learned by faithful pondering over the message of the Gospel, learned by faithful adherence to the guidance of the Church, which is the voice of Christ. A Christian is expected to live his Christian commitment. He will spread Christian ideas, promote Christian ideals, and affect others by his sincere Christian example of life. Then he is truly the salt that savors.

On the other hand, if a Christian has not learned the true ideals of Christ, nor bothered to go into the meaning of his Christian commitment; if he continues to give an example that is worldly, and more pagan than Christian, if he is a positive scandal to those he lives with, then he defaults in his role as a Christian, and like the salt that no longer gives savor, he deserves to be rejected. His lot is no longer among the chosen People of God, unless he repent and return to a sincere way of life. The example of a pagan may not always be his fault, but that of a fallen-away Catholic is deplorable. He may be the cause or at least the occasion for many others not finding salvation in Christ.

Christian social involvement is something that Christ expects of everyone of his followers. He wants them to be a light to others so that those who observe them may find the true way that leads to the Father and to true fulfillment in life. The entire sermon on the mount (Mt. 5-7) is an elaboration on the precept of fraternal love, how the followers of Christ are expected to carry out their role of a Christian in the many encounters of daily life with their neighbor. Anger is to be avoided, and abusive language; despising others and hatred is entirely unchristian. Adultery and divorce are not Christ's ideals. Retaliation for evil done to one should be replaced with long-suffering after the example of Christ. Love of enemies and forgiveness of injuries are genuine Christian ideals.

A program of social involvement is also given in the first reading today: "Share your bread with the hungry, shelter the oppressed, as well as the homeless, clothe the naked and do not turn your back on your own" (Is. 58:7f). Today especially, the need of social involvement is all the more demanding, given the many hungry mouths that go to be each night hungry and tired, or those shivering from the rain and cold without proper shelter. How does a Christian become the salt of the earth for these unfortunates, and the light of the world for them, so that they find joy in living once more, and realize that a loving Father is helping them through the brothers of his Son?

Christian involvement invades all fields: our work, profession, business; the home, education, politics, sports, recreation. In all fields, Christ expects his followers to show forth the principles given by his own words and deeds. St Leo the Great cried out: O Christian, recognize your dignity! Yes, the Christian dignity is great, but the corresponding responsibility is just as great. And there are many who give little thought to that responsibility.

Our Response: A Christian ought to be proud of his calling, and of the fact that the Master calls him the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Not to live up to our calling will expose us to the danger of being cast out and rejected. In how far do I influence others, and am the salt of their lives? Let us begin with ourselves: the home, the office, our profession, our job. Salt is good! But if it lose its savor, it is only good to be thrown out, said the Master.

Jesus, Model in Temptation

February 12, 1977: First Sunday of Lent

The Human Situation: In one of Luzon's provincial prisons was a prisoner accused of robbery. He had had little religious education and planned only to get out as soon as possible and perpetrate the same deeds as before. But when the seminarians from the nearby Major Seminary came weekly to offer religious instructions to the prisoners, he listened, at first to while away the monotony, but soon with evident interest. He began to take his religion serious, and was reconciled with God with the sacrament of healing. After his release, it happened that he had an easy occasion of robbery and he was strongly tempted to go back to his old ways. But the instructions given by the seminarians and the grace of the sacrament held him in check. Later, he admitted this to those in prison whom he visited.

The Good News: No man escapes temptation and trial. Even the Savior willed freely to undergo a period of temptation to show us how we are to conduct ourselves in various encounters with evil. Though Jesus was sinless and could not be tempted from within, he submitted to being tempted by agents from without.

The main aim and endeavor of Jesus was to establish the reign of God among men. His fellowmen expected that event to come about with a great show of power which would dazzle the spectators and compel them to follow him. But the will of the Father called for so such spectacular show. Jesus was to preach the Good News of the Kingdom and convince the heart of man to willingly and freely accept God's reign over him, with whatever change of mind and heart that would entail. Jesus did not intend to act indepen-

dently of the will of the Father, no matter how hard the path that lay ahead: "I always do what pleases the Father", he said (Jn. 8:29).

But after many days of fasting, the Savior, being a true man as we are, was hungry. In fact, he was famished. Satan takes advantage of the situation. How cleverly he hits at the very heart of the matter. "Do not bother about the will of the Father", he says. "You are in dire need of food. Do not wait for God to care for your needs. Your power is unlimited. Use your power as Son of God and be independent, regardless of the Father's will". But this is not the way Jesus is determined to fulfill his mission. More important than food is carrying out the plan of God. "My food is to do the will of him who sent me", he would tell his followers later on (Jn. 4:34). In this he gives us a solid example. In all our material needs, we ought to turn to God, exercise true confidence in his fatherly love, and rely all the more on him. Need begets prayer and humble petition, buoyed up by confidence in God's goodness and providence.

Satan then has another thrust. He tempts the Master to throw aside the difficult path laid out for him of preaching to man in order to change his life. Rather let him start with something attractive, something spectacular and sensational. Let him fly down from the highest point of the Temple walls right into the midst of the crowd. How they would cheer and flock around him! Then they would surely be convinced that he came from above! True a cunning suggestion. It would bring the Savior a great crowd of followers from the very start. But this was sheer presuming on God's protection by forcing the Most High to save his life. That is not the humble way of obedience that was his life's program. Jesus rejected it with a single word of Scripture: "You are not to put God to the test". Here the Master shows all his followers the way to overcome the tempter. Be resolute, but do not swerve from the difficult path which you know to be the will of God. How often a person endeavors to reach his or her ends by presuming on God's help by putting himself in questionable situations, allowing himself evil companions or shady deals, all the while thinking himself a mature person, strong in virtue, a good Catholic, a person of repute! And how often this presumption has led to Satan's victory! Even the Lord who had all power in his hand refused to abuse it by presuming on God's help in doing some senseless action.

Finally, Satan throws off his mask. He promises universal world power in all its fullness, something that would enable Jesus to establish the kingdom at once, without any trouble, but at the terrific cost of total defection from God, by giving adoration to a mere creature. This is the bases of temptations. Yet how many make wealth and possessions or power their god which they adore and serve with all their might! How many acquire abundance of this world's goods or power by giving themselves over to the power of Satan and relinquishing all service of God their Creator and Father! Jesus angrily rejects the foul thought: "Away with you, Satan. God alone shall you serve and adore". Yet many a man has sold his soul and thrown his conscience to the wind, by giving himself up to enriching himself by totally immoral methods. Great is this temptation to obtain worldly prestige, and that is why the Savior gave us the choicest example of single-hearted service of God, obedient to his will even to death on a cross. Once that cross is carried and embraced, death itself leads to life eternal and the glory of Christ himself.

Our Response: Have in mind some ready words of scripture or short ejaculations whereby to ward off at once with determination all the wiles of the wicked one.

A Glimpse of Glory

February 19, 1978: Second Sunday of Lent.

The Human Situation: Many a college students opts for the degree of medical doctor, engineer or a similar profession. He visualizes the future as a bright one because his profession will be a very useful one, bring him a good income and make life comfortable for himself and his family. He is well aware that years of hard labor, study and research lie before him, with endless examinations, tests and various probations. But all that this is shouldered gladly with the thought of future success and reward buoying him up.

The Good News: All three evangelists place the transfiguration right after the first prediction of the passion. That prediction had evoked a very strong remonstrance from Peter, because he could not accept a suffering Messiah. Neither could the rest of the apostles. Thus the transfiguration was intended to throw light on the suffering aspect of the Savior's role. Suffer and die he would, but not on

account of any human machinations or the hard irony of fate. He willingly and freely would give himself up to sufferings and death, for that is how he was to enter into his glory. A passing glimpse of that glory was given to the three disciples on the mountain with Jesus, a glimpse of dazzling brightness wherein Jesus is a transformed figure of light and splendor.

The three witnesses to the scene are the same three which Jesus would choose later on as witnesses to his mighty struggle in the Garden of Gethsemani, where his prolonged endeavor to overcome the nausea and the horror of the imminent crucifixion cause his sweat to become like drops of blood trickling to the ground. His disciples needed to be given a glimpse of that glory, in order to be strengthened against that night when his sacred face was transformed into anguish and sorrow. Yet they were wholly unprepared for his transient glimpse of glory and it frightened them. Man is most often filled with fear when he senses that he is in the presence of the divine. In this instance, however, fear is combined with exultant joy in Peter, who a short week before had acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah of Israel. Now when he sees Jesus so transfigured, he immediately concludes that this is final. His triumph is at hand. The only thing to do is to build a dwelling place for Israel's King, glorious and splendid, as they always pictured him to come.

But this is not the glorious day of triumph. Jesus is first of all a suffering Messiah, the suffering Servant of Yahweh prophesied of old, for it is by suffering that he is to redeem the world and restore man to the friendship of God. When that hour comes with its appalling cruelty, the disciples must not lose heart or take scandal. They are to remember the foretaste they had on the mountain of the glory of their Savior and Master. First must come the suffering and death and then resurrection and glory. A glimpse of this glory is like giving a preventive medicine or injection, in order to ward off the evil effects of possible infection. Or it is like the prizes shown to those who compete in games, which will be theirs after the toll and the sweat of the game is over.

Three things stand out in today's transfiguration scene:

1. **This is God's beloved Son.** He is not just another of the prophets, or one of the kings of old. He is the very Son of God, whom the Father has sent into the world to bring it the fulness of salvation. He possesses the very glory of God, and the transfiguration anticipates the full flowering of Christ's triumph and splendor in the Resurrection.

2. **Jesus is the new Mediator.** No longer are Moses and the Law the norm for conduct for the People of God. All are now to listen to Christ. The Law has run its course. Emphasis has shifted to a person. Mankind will now be committed to the Word of God in person, who has taken on human flesh to be our exemplar and model in all things, and whose entire life is the message of the Father. It is the marvellous person of Christ that will henceforth attract men of all nations and climes to himself and to the Father. "Listen to him" the Father commands. He will tell us the way to God. Therein lies our peace and eternal salvation.

3. **Jesus is nevertheless the suffering Savior.** Therefore this glimpse is only a passing favor of God. Not yet has the time come for full glory and reward. At first the suffering of the cross and the ignominy of crucifixion awaits the Redeemer of the world. At first his followers must take up their cross and follow him to Golgotha. Only through the cross will they arrive at the crown of glory.

Our response: The Lenten period preceding Easter is meant to inspire us anew to listen carefully to Christ's gospel-message, and remodel our lives on it. It is a period of penance so that we strip ourselves again of the old selfishness and put on Christ anew. It is a preparation for a renewed life in Christ in the period of Eastertide. Our penances and prayers offered now will insure a healthier Christian life when we have risen with Christ spiritually on Easter morning.

The Savior of all Mankind

February 26, 1977: Third Sunday of Lent.

Because of its superb beauty, it is suggested that the entire gospel be read rather than shorten it. Then a brief homily suffices. For this, the biblical notes for today suffice.

II. HOMILIES FOR MARCH

LIGHT FOR THE BLIND

March 5, 1978: Fourth Sunday of Lent.

It is preferable to read the entire gospel and then comment briefly by means of the biblical notes given for this Sunday.

JESUS SOURCE OF LIFE

March 12, 1978: Fifth Sunday of Lent.

Again, it is preferable not to shorten this superb narrative, and give a brief comment with the help of the biblical notes given before.

March 19, 1978: Palm Sunday. Read the Lord's passion and death.

AT THE SERVICE OF HIS BROTHERS

March 23, 1978: Holy Thursday

With this Eucharistic celebration we have begun the Sacred Triduum which commemorates the great events at the climax of the ecclesiastical year: the institution of the Eucharist as well as of the priesthood, the passion and death of Jesus, Savior of the world, and his triumphant resurrection from the dead. Tonight in the Gospel we saw him kneeling before his disciples in the humble attitude of a slave washing their feet. Tonight in the second reading we heard him institute the Eucharist which would be our sacrificial meal till the end of time. Tonight in the first reading we saw him prefigured in the Lamb given over to immolation for the deliverance of God's People.

The Son of God, equal in all things to the Father, stands before us as the Son of Man, having put on our human nature with all its limitations. The Master, whom all obey, has become the slave in the service of his own servants. The Lord, whom all creation worships, has himself become the Lamb of sacrifice in place of all his fellowmen. The Creator of the universe, who fills the earth with all good things, himself becomes our food and drink. Who can

fathom the depth is his immense love? What human mind or angelic intelligence would ever have dreamed of what the Lord Jesus from all eternity planned to do for little man on his planet earth!

Who would put himself at the service of his fellowmen in menial labor freely and willingly if the Son of God himself had not given such an example of service and self-abasement? Who would sacrifice himself for the good of his neighbor so wholeheartedly, if Jesus had not given himself over completely to sacrifice even unto death? Who would spend day and night caring for the poor and the needy in our institutions, or in our hospitals with the sick and the aged and the retarded, if Jesus himself had not only spent his public life in utter service of all and everyone, but even given himself to be our medicine and healing in this Most Blessed Sacrament? Who of God's ministers would have the courage to mediate before God for sinful mankind, if Jesus himself had not become our High Priest, pure and undefiled, who entered into the very presence of the Most High, with his Blood poured out on Golgotha in sacrifice, to open the way of confidence to the Father for all his brothers and sisters?

But this calls for a response on our part! These are the days when we ought to encounter him in the sacrament of reconciliation and healing, by sincerely acknowledging our sins and resolving to do better in the future. These are the days when we ought to receive him worthily in Holy Communion to show our appreciation gratitude for this marvellous invention of his love. This very night we can give him some return by visiting him in the various Churches along our way, and pouring out our thanks for his many favors to ourselves and our dear ones, and asking his mighty help in the days that lie ahead, so that our renewal in our Christian commitment be sincere and lasting. These are the days when we ought to spend some longer time in prayer to mediate before God together with our High Priest for all mankind, that war and suffering be eliminated, that peace come to mankind, that those who do not as yet know the Paschal Mystery of the Savior come to its knowledge through the ministry of his priests. This Sacred Triduum is a challenge to our Christian calling, to witness to all around us that we glory in being members of the Crucified, and joyfully determine to live anew the Christ-life which has been renewed in us at this climax of the ecclesiastical year.

May the love of Christ penetrate us, and set us on fire in carrying out the good we have determined to do, in face of the eminent example of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who says to each of us: "All I ask of you is forever to remember me as loving you".

HE WAS PIERCED FOR OUR OFFENSES**March 24, 1978 (Good Friday)**

(Pointers for the seven words can be found in Bol. Ecl., Jan.-Feb., 1977, 119)

The Human Situation: The agent rang the door-bell. But when the door opened, he almost shrank back with fear, for the sight that met his eyes shocked him. A mother stood there, with three toddlers clinging to her lovingly, but the mother's features were disfigured and deformed in a very ugly manner. Her hands were crippled and gruelling to gaze at. What had happened? Mother and father some months previous had put the three little tots to bed, and as it was a quiet evening, they took a stroll down the neighboring streets. Suddenly they heard fire engines, and watched with astonishment when the fire engines went in the direction of their street. With apprehension they hastened their steps and arrived at their home only to find it ablaze. Without caring for the firemen's warning, the mother rushed into the bedroom, grabbed all three tots, covered them with blankets and made her way out of the blazing fire, only to be severely burned and disfigured for life. But the children did not mind her looks. They loved their mother who had saved their lives at such a price. She was beautiful to them,

The Good News: On the cross hangs Christ, covered with dirt and blood, disfigured and dishonored. How well the prophet depicted him: "We thought of him as one stricken, as one smitten by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins. By his stripes we were healed". (Is. 53:4). Despised and rejected by men, Jesus died amid the jeers and mockery of the bystanders. Those eyes that had looked so mercifully on men were now filled with blood. Those hands that had cured so many were now nailed to the cross. His sacred tongue and lips that had spoken so often of love and goodness are parched and cracked. That Sacred Heart that beat only out of love is pierced with a lance.

Yet, who caused these wounds in his hands and feet? Who pierced his sacred side? Who lashed his body with the scourage and plaited a crown of thorns for his head? It was the sin of the world, the sins of all mankind, our sins, that laid low the Lamb of God. It was our thoughtlessness and negligence that gave him such agonies. It was our lethargy and apathy that drove him to the heights of Golgotha.

But he accepted it all without a word. He was pierced for our offenses. Enlightened by faith, we see Christ our Savior, and to

us he is not an object of disgust, but as our loving Redeemer who pays the price for us that we escape eternal death; as one who obtained healing for our own wounds of spirit, by his willing and voluntary offering of himself; as the sole salvation of all mankind by his victim sacrifice on the cross. He is the Good Shepherd who preferred to lay down his life rather than let the devastating Wolf snatch away the prey. He is the Stronger One who divests the Strong One who is Satan of all his spoils, by fighting to the end though it means these wounds and these stripes. He is the silent Lamb of God who is led to slaughter silent and not opening his mouth, so that we might obtain life that never ends.

Who is not moved today by this re-enactment of the passion and death of God's Son who became our Brother to be our Sacrifice and burnt holocaust before the Most High? What hardened heart does not feel sorrow and compunction when it considers who this is that suffers such humiliation, such disfigurement, such excruciating pains? What inveterate sinner is not reconciled to God by gazing on the Crucified, who became his Brother out of sheer love for him? What sincere heart will not offer him love and compassion in face of this tragic drama enacted again today?

As we kneel to venerate the sacred Cross of Jesus, we will kiss his wounds which healed our wounds. We will beg him to forgive our fallings and sins, and to cleanse us anew in his precious Blood. We will offer the deepest sentiments of our hearts, to the One whose Heart bore the weight of guilt of the whole world, and also our own. Today we resolve to die with Christ to all that is sinful and displeasing to that Sacred Heart, in order to rise with him in the newness of the Christ-life on Easter morning.

THE TRIUMPH OF FAILURE

March 26, 1978: Easter Sunday

Almost everyone considered Jesus of Nazareth a complete failure as he hung on the cross that first Good Friday. The leaders in Israel were glad he was finally out of the way. The soldiers had laughed at him and mocked his claims. The people shook their heads in disappointment, for they had put much hope in him to deliver them from the yoke of the foreigner. Even the close disciples were disheartened and disillusioned, as is evident from the words of two of them on the way to Emmaus "We were hoping that he was the one who would set Israel free" (Lk. 24:21).

But Christ's death on the cross was Christ's magnificent triumph. If it was a failure in the eyes of men, it was the victory that vanquished Satan and death, for Christ rose again glorious and immortal, never to die anymore. His death is the glory of the Incarnate Word of God, the one and only sacrifice acceptable to the Father, the price willingly paid so that the Spirit of God would be given to the heart of man. Far from being a failure, it is the greatest achievement of mankind for all times.

Today we celebrate that triumph. Today we rejoice with our Savior for accomplishing his Paschal Mystery with such a masterly stroke. Today the Lamb of God shares the very throne of his Father amid the entire court of heaven, as they sing his victory with an eternal allelula.

But we too celebrate a triumph: It is our victory over selfishness and sin that we have put off by dying with Christ in order to let his Spirit animate us still more in a spiritual resurrection. The failure and sins of the past are swallowed up by the victory of the Lamb. His Blood has washed us clean. His resurrection means new life and energy. Even out of past failures God can draw good. Past mistakes are often humble stepping stones to a life of true holiness in Christ.

A striking illustration how God turns all things to good is the following true happening: Twenty-three year old Ronnie, heavy-muscled and vigorous, had no goal or ambition in life. He had little interest in the many jobs he had had, and still less in people. On the last day at a saw-mill chipper, he inadvertently turned on the wrong switch. At once he found himself being thrown toward the chipper-blades, and he succeeded in extricating himself only with an extreme struggle, but not before both legs were amputated by the blades, below the groin. Rushed to the hospital, it took intense care and nine months before he was fitted out with artificial legs but he lived. Ronnie is a completely changed man. Now he wants to be with people and work with them, and he looks at his fellowmen with the greatest interest. He has become a vocational counselor, especially for the handicapped. What seemed to be the greatest trial and failure in his life turned out to be his greatest asset.

Easter brings new life and new ambition to the heart that has cast off the old self and let Christ be renewed in it. The possibilities to do good to others are manifold. The members of Christ's Body who are in dire need are legion. Our Easter mood is one of joy and vigor, with Alleluia, praise the Lord, in our hearts. The Lamb has unfurled the banner of victory. We follow him to fight the good fight.

BOOK REVIEW

PANALANGIN NG BAYAN

Galindez, Fr. Fidel, O.F.M. Cap., Panalangin ng Bayan, Bookman Printing House, Manila, Clothbound, Bookpaper, 145 pages, 9" x 6".

Ang Panalangin ng Bayan ay isa na naman pagpapatunay at tanda ng kaunlaran at pakikilangkop ng Simbahan sa tao at pagsasakatuparan ng Liturhiya ayon sa pinagtibay na Ikalawang Pulong-Vaticano o "Vatican Council II".

Bukod sa pagpapaliwanag ng layunin at pagtuturo ng tamang pagbabalangkss ng panalangin ng bayan, ang librong ito ay naglalaman din ng 120 panalanging bayan na hango sa "Officium Divinum" at sa panalangin ng bayan pinagtibay ng "Comision Episcopal de Liturgia" ng Espana at akma sa iba't-ibang panahon ng pagdiriwang ng Liturhiya katulad halimbawa ng pagdiriwang ng Adbyento, Kuaresma, Mahal na Araw, Pasiko ng Pagkabuhay, Araw na hindi linggo ng Karaniwang Panahon, Araw ng Nobenea sa Espiritu Santo, iba't-ibang pagdiriwang sa kapistahan ni Hesus at ni Maria, pagdiriwang sa araw ng mga apostol, martir, obispo, banal na lalaki, banal na babae, birhen, pagdiriwang patungkol sa mga Yumao, kapistahan ng ibang mga Santo tulad ni San Jose, San Juan, atbp.

Dahil sa paggamit ng katamtamang laki ng mga titik na may naayong tuldik at mga salitang madalas marinig sa pang-araw-araw na pakikipag-ugnayan, ang mga salita ay madaling basahin at bigkasin ng bumabasa at madali ring maiintindihan ng mga nakikinig.

206 BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS

Galindez, Fr. Fidel, O.F.M. Cap., Panalangin ng Bayan, Bookman Printing House, Manila, Clothbound, Bookpaper, 145 pages, 9" x 6".

The "Panalangin ng Bayan" is aimed to provide the priests with various prayers of the Faithful in Pilipino according to the structure and form approved by the Second Vatican Council.

Preceded by explanation on the nature, aim, rule and form of the prayer of the faithful, this book contains 120 prayers, translated from the "Officium Divinum" and the Prayer of the Faithful approved by the "Commission Episcopal de Liturgia" of Sapain, which are appropriate to different liturgical celebrations such as Advent, Lent, Easter Triduum of the Lord's Passion and Resurrection, Easter, Weekdays in Ordinary Timee, Novena for the Holy Spirit, different solemnities and feasts of Jesus and Mary, feasts proper to some individual saints and commons such as of the apostles, martyrs, holy men, holy women, virgins, mass for the dead, for the installation of bishop and parish priests, etc.

Thru the use of the medium-size-letters with their corresponding accents and the words ordinarily employed in daily conversations, the readers and listehers, could easily read and understand them.

Since this book would be a great help for the celebration of the Holy Mass in Pilipino it is therefore recommended that priests should try to acquire his own copy.

Rev. Angelito Santiago

SHORT NOTICES ON BOOKS

AUBERT, JEAN MARIE: LA MUJER. Antifeminismo y cristianismo. Editorial Herder, Barcelona, 1976 — 224 págs. — Rústica 350 pesetas.

The main topics of this interesting book are: 1. What is the feminine libertarian message of the Gospel, and what have been the vicissitudes of such a message; 2. St. Paul's doctrine on the matter; 3. The traditional posture of the Church; 4. The sexes compared; 5. The demographic, sociological causes and dimensions of anti-feminism; 6. The position of women in the Church. The concluding chapter drives home the point that the emancipation or liberation of women will maximize their contribution to progress in all directions.

FEINER, VISCHER et al.: Nuevo Libro de la Fe Cristiana. Editorial Herder, Barcelona, 1977 — 752 págs. — Rústica 780 pesetas, tela 950 pesetas.

Authored by a team of 19 Catholic and 17 Protestant contributors, this ecumenistic book purports to stress the points of convergence, without forgetting those of divergence between Catholic and other doctrines on the entire gamut of theology. On the whole the Catholic side is clearly expressed, though it seems one or two contributors are bent in diluting Catholic doctrine to make it amorphous and thus more readily acceptable to outsiders.

DESROCHE, HENRI: Sociología de la Esperanza. Editorial Herder, Barcelona, 1976 — 216 págs. — Rústica 380 pesetas.

It is said that a fakir in India can throw a rope high into the air and then climb it as if it were held above by an invisible giant. Such a rope is an image of HOPE, which has been transformed into millenarisms — expectations of a future prosperity and happiness even in this world, and not only in the next. The author thus explains how a millenarism appears, gathers momentum and spends itself out. It is a mirage without which no one would strive to reach the summit in achievement.

Extract from the Index: I. Religious hope: its heights and hollows, and its anthropological approximation. II. Panorama of millenarian phenomena. III. The exile and the kingdom of

eternal return. VI. Revolutionary Ideologies and religious messianisms. V. Religious phenomena and collective imagination; and the sociology of hope and the hopes of sociological systems. VI. Bibliography.

GABRIEL-MARIE CARDINAL GARRONE: *Lo que Creía Juana Jugan.* Editorial Herder, 1976 — 128 págs. — Rústica 150 pesetas.

Britanny, a province in Northern France, was the birthplace and field of activity of Jean Jugan, the foundress of the Sisters of the Poor. She believed in charity towards the poor and aged as her mission in life. She was a poor orphan herself who worked as servant of some pious wealthy matrons, and later joined hands with three or four girls and founded her institute, of which soon she became a mere member under younger but not more worthy Superiors. Thus she showed a heroic humility in her patience and resignation in obedience towards them. Humble as she was, she deserved to be extolled by the wise and eloquent Gabriel-Marie Cardinal Garrone, the Secretary of the Congregation of Education.

HARING, BERNARD: *Centrarse en Dios.* Editorial Herder, 1976 — 184 págs. — Rústica 325 pesetas.

This book deals with prayers as the core or "heart" of Theology, its theme is that without the spirit and practice of nearly constant prayer the theologian is not tuned or beamed to the divine "waves" or rapport with God. Father Bernard Haring, a distinguished moralist and prolific writer, shows us that our prayer is Christian in the measure that we pray in the name of Jesus, that is, in that we know Him lovingly, and through Him we reach God the Father. According to the author, the Church should be a congregation of praying members, and every group of Catholics should pray together.

MIGUÉLEZ, JOSÉ: *La Teología de la Liberación y su Método.* Editorial Herder, 1976 — 168 págs. — Rústica 125 pesetas.

To the author who singles out Assman and Gutiérrez as the main pillars of the Theology of Liberation this is not just a fad that will soon fade away, but a milestone in Christian thought, because its main feature and merit is not merely its actual timeliness but rather its peculiar methodology which fits nicely into our contemporaneous milieu. The author aims to analyze the currents, trends and insights of South American Theology, and points out what may be of lasting and useful value in it.

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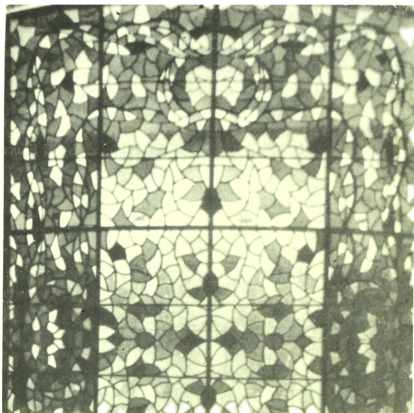
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