

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

TO RESTORE CHRISTIAN LOVE

Paul VI

TRUCE, PEACE, RECONCILIATION

Paul VI

APPEAL TO INTERIOR VALUES

Raimondo Spiazzi, O.P.

DEATH IN BATALAY

Benito Vargas, O.P.

TAGALOG PHILOLOGY

Pablo Fernandez, O.P.

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THE OFFICIAL INTERDIOCESAN ORGAN

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BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS, Official Interdiocesan Organ, is published monthly by the University of Santo Tomas and is printed at U.S.T. Press, Manila, Philippines. Entered as Second Class Mail Matter at the Manila Post Office on June 21, 1946.

Subscription Rates. Yearly subscription in the Philippines ₱20.00; Two Years, ₱36.00; Three Years, ₱54.00. Abroad, \$6.00 a year. Price per copy, ₱2.00. Subscriptions are paid in advance.

Communications of an editorial nature concerning articles, cases and reviews should be addressed to the Editor. Advertising and subscription inquiries should be addressed to the Business Manager. Orders for renewals or changes of address should include both old and new addresses, and will go into effect fifteen days after notification.

Address all communications to:

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS
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EDITORIAL NOTES

A VOICE IN THE DESERT

At presstime, a shaky ceasefire reigns in the Middle East war. But hopes run high that an eventual truce would be signed. The conflict in the Middle East stems from claims held valid and justified by two peoples whose common origin is now overshadowed by diversity of faith and a continuing mistrust for one another. Both consider the war they wage as vital for their own survival, which may not therefore be dismissed by outsiders as a simple conflict motivated by greed for power and extension of territory.

It is a war between two peoples, but all the rest of the world is in one way or another dragged into it. For one thing, the world powers suddenly have in the Middle East desert a ready-made testing ground for some of their sophisticated weaponry. And the rest of the uncommitted and uninvolved nations of the world watches helplessly, as it feels the squeeze of the oil boycott steadily tightening.

Against this divisive Middle East situation as a backdrop, the Holy Father's addresses and discourses on reconciliation, the Holy Year's main theme and goal, come out in bolder relief. Reconciliation in all levels — with ourselves, with God, with others — especially with others, with our fellowmen, comes very timely and appropriate to the Middle East situation. And the Holy Father never doubts that such a reconciliation and its ensuing fruit, peace, are possible. For "Christ, our peace, makes the impossible possible" (Eph. 2,14).

Pope Paul's call to reconciliation and peace has literally been like a voice in the desert, in the Middle East wastelands. May it not remain an ineffective, frustrated voice in the hardened, arid deserts of men's hearts, but rather move men to the attainment of that elusive peace which all desire.

IN THIS ISSUE

Since the announcement of the celebration of the Holy Year for 1975, Pope Paul VI's addresses during the weekly general audiences almost always deal on the Holy Year's main theme: reconciliation. Two such addresses are printed in this issue.

Still on the Holy Year, Fr. Raimondo Spiazzi, the eminent Italian Dominican writer on sociology and spirituality and member of the executive commission for the celebration of the Holy Year, writes on the interior values in connection with the year of jubilee, since renewal and reconciliation are actually events "which take place first and foremost at the deepest level, in the inner shrine, where conscience is called to work its conversion and to aim at the fullness of charity".

Fray Diego de Herrera, one of the first Augustinian missionaries who came to the Philippines, may be just one name lost in the pages of Philippine Church history. But, he might have been assigned a more honored place in it, had he not met his ultimately death on his return trip to the Philippines from Mexico when he was the foremost candidate to be the first bishop of Manila. Fr. Benito Vargas, O.P. writes on the circumstances of his death caused by the natives of Batalay, a barrio of the town of Bato, Catanduanes.

Starting with this issue of the **Boletin**, Msgr. Mario Baltazar, O.P., Prelate of Batanes-Babuyan, will write the biblical notes for homilies and the homilies for Sundays and feasts (Cycle B) of 1974. Despite his crowded schedule and the duties of his office, Msgr. Baltazar, a bible expert schooled under the best bible scholars of Rome and Jerusalem and a professor of Sacred Scriptures prior to his appointment in Batanes, graciously accepted the invitation to write for the homiletics section of the **Boletin** this coming year.

PAUL VI

TO RESTORE CHRISTIAN LOVE*

We are preparing for the Holy Year, as has already been said several times; and we will hear repeated two programmatic words: renewal and reconciliation. In the first word, renewal, we could see all the effort, the work, the subjective spiritual, moral and social fruit, which each member of the faithful and the whole Church intend to bring about in themselves. In the second word, reconciliation, on the other hand, there seems to be indicated an objective action, or rather an action concerning relations that go beyond the personal or collective limits of our interior sphere, and refer to the exterior sphere in which we live and by which we are surrounded. In any case the terms are very clear and evident for everyone: we must renew ourselves inwardly, and we must become reconciled outwardly. Inside and outside. This division, however, is over simplified, and it must be integrated in actual life.

Let us see, for example, on this occasion the meaning we attribute to the second programmatic word: reconciliation. What does it mean? To whom and what does it refer?

BECOMING AWARE

Let us note at once that it pre-supposes a rupture, for which we must make amends and find a remedy. It presupposes a disorder, a conflict, an enmity, a separation, a solitude, an interruption in the harmony of a plan that calls for wholeness, a perfection that corrects and overcomes a selfish isolation of ours and establishes a circulation of love in us and around us.

* Address of Pope Paul VI delivered during the General Audience on October 17, 1973.

Are we aware of this need of reconciliation? This is an important point. It represents a great innovation in human consciousness. In the first place, in the consciousness of man in regard to himself: is not he who, aware of himself, perceives together with his own tyrannical selfishness, also his own narrow existence, his independence of others, his isolation, his inadequacy, is not he more of a man, really a man? In the second place in regard to social consciousness. The need of others is engraved on our very being. No one is sufficient unto himself. How is each one to integrate himself in relationship with others? In conflict, or in order? Lastly, and especially, in regard to religious consciousness, which marks the peak of our awareness of our position in the world of Being and in the respective destiny in store for us.

Let us reflect carefully, and let us realize that we need to be reconciled on this triple front, the solipsistic, the social and the religious one. We are not, of ourselves, surrounded by a perfect order; there comes to us from every side the sting of deficiency, reproach, remorse, danger. A psychological analysis would lead us far away. Let us stop for the present with a mere mention of the three aspects (the three fronts, we said) that our conscience tells us as being in need of reconciliation.

THE LAW OF LOVE

The first one, that of our inner restlessness, owing to the fact that we feel ourselves living and at the same time failing, not self-sufficient, full of energies and deficiencies, tormented by our insatiable egoism, which is a proof at the same time of our right to live and our subjective poverty. Where and how to find peace, integration, balance, the fullness of our personality? The answer is at hand: love is our inner peace. The question then arises: what love? We will not answer this question now; we will say only that to be happy it is necessary to learn "the art of loving". It is an art in which nature itself is a master, if listened to carefully and interpreted according to the great and sovereign law of love, as taught us by Christ: love God, love your neighbour, with the strict and vital applications

that this law entails. If we really learned to love as we should, would not our personal life, and consequently our collective life be transformed into peace and happiness? The Holy Year will also have to include in its programme this fundamental aim: love, to restore love, real, pure, strong, Christian love.

THE PAINFUL REALITY OF WAR

And what shall we say about social reconciliation? Oh! what a chapter with its thousand pages! We will just say that reconciliation, that is peace, becomes more and more every day an urgent necessity, an increasing necessity. Did we not all hope, after the last world war, that at last peace would be achieved for ever? Has not the world made really grandiose efforts to give peace a constitutional place in the development of civilization? To make peoples safe for themselves, brothers for others? But the atrocious and dreadful experience of these years recalls us to a sad reality: war is still possible! The production and sale of armaments shows us, rather, that it is easier and more disastrous than before. Even today we are experiencing a painful event of war, and not the only one. We are humiliated and frightened.

Is it possible that this is an incurable disease of mankind? We should also point out here the congenital disproportion in mankind between its capacity of idealization and its moral aptitude to remain consistent and faithful to its programmes of civil progress. Thus one is tempted to say: it is impossible for the world to remain at peace. We answer: no; Christ, our peace (Eph. 2, 14), makes the impossible possible (cf. Lk. 18, 27). If we follow his Gospel the union of justice and peace can be realized; certainly not to be crystalized in the immobility of a history that is, on the contrary, in continual development; but it is possible! It can be reborn!

AT ALL LEVELS

This is what we set for the Holy Year to study: reconciliation, at all levels, the family, community, national, ecclesial, ecumenical levels. And also at the social level. Why is it not possible to conceive a human society, in which interests are certainly different and conflicting, but which is based on organic and just cooperation, and

therefore on the human and Christian peace of all those who constitute make it? Are these dreams? Madness? This is our originality; we believe that this political eschatology, this moral parousia, is a Christian duty, whatever may be the degree of its actual application in the historical situation. Love, justice, peace, are living and good ideals, full of social energy which we must not change into hatred and conflict, in order to aim at that concrete peace that will realize in wisdom and goodness Christ's words: "you are all brothers" (Mt. 23, 8).

THE FIRST TASK OF THE HOLY YEAR

And now another immense task for the Holy Year which will certainly prefer to assign priority to the third pacification, the religious one, which in fact has the first place. We mean the re-establishment of the relationship of truth and grace with the heavenly Father for each of us, for the whole Church, and, please God, for the world. This is the first inevitable task of the Holy Year: to re-establish peace between ourselves and God in the meditated and lived experience of the incomparable word of reconciliation, so dear to St. Paul. And so we entrust it to your memory, now and for the coming Holy Year. Reconciliation with God (cf. II Cor. 5, 20).

PAUL VI

TRUCE, PEACE, RECONCILIATION*

Those who follow these weekly talks of ours with the visitors to the general Audiences know that we have been trying for some time to become accustomed to thinking of the great problems of modern life in the light of the coming Holy Year, that is, by seeking their solution by means of the twofold subject that sums up the aim of this important and general event. We have spoken, and we will have to speak again, of renewal, such as the recent Council proposed to the Church and to the world. Then we began to speak of reconciliation, as if seeking to understand the meaning of this programmatic word and to realize to whom and what it refers. Reconciliation, we said, with our own conscience; our reconciliation with the brothers surrounding us and reconciliation of men with one another. At this point, before turning our thoughts to the more important and difficult reconciliation of our life with God, we have been surprised, as if by a peal of thunder, by the news filling all the media of public opinion these days: a truce, perhaps peace, in the Middle East!

Like everyone else, we are happy and almost overwhelmed, although these feelings are accompanied by anxiety and fear owing to the shadows that still disturb the longed-for result! Yet we cannot withdraw our attention from this hope, as the attention of one who kept it constantly turned there, and now feels it engrossed by a lively and multiple interest. It is a question of peace; of the peace of a group of peoples, with Israel in the centre, the chain of Arab countries around it, and with evident and formidable relations with the great powers of the world.

* Address of Pope Paul VI delivered during the General Audience on October 24, 1973.

REASONABLE AND PEACEFUL DIALOGUE

We observe this dramatic scene of living history with intent eyes, alert mind and an anxious heart. The bomb of latent war had exploded, and had revealed with what deadly instruments it was endowed. In the last few years, as never before, science, technology, industry, economy, military organization and politics had been silently engaged, with iron logic, to restore to armaments a blind and decisive power in the controversies of human relations, which in the meantime were developing nobly in the reasonable and peaceful dialogue of modern international institutions. The bomb burst, and at once terribly; but thanks be to God and praise to those whose merit it is, it has now been contained and stopped. We hope that is really so, and that it will not flare up in the meanwhile with equal and perhaps more terrible power; we hope it is stopped for ever.

FOR CONCORD TO BE LASTING

We would like our wish to be a prophecy; a prophecy of peace, real peace. By virtue of our human and superhuman mission, we feel vibrating in our heart the hope of the world; the hope of the wise, the good, the humble. The hope of the young and that of future generations. The misfortunes of the episodes of war that have again stained the earth with blood, even in the recent period, do not discourage us. They increase our conviction that mankind must clothe itself in a free and unified order, that civilization must be positive, that is, moral and universal, that concord must be ecumenical and lasting. We affirm that peace must not normally be sought with the violence of revolution, nor maintained with the weight of repression; peace must not be just a truce, an equilibrium of hostile forces a mere contingent materialistic combination of temporal interests, nor must it be an ambitious competition for prestige. Peace must be a dynamic and continuous creation of fundamental human principles, a fruit of the rights of man professed and defended with radical honesty, a miraculous result of that supreme duty, which is called love; love for man, whoever he may be, because he is a brother; and he is a brother because, like everyone, he is a son of God, the universal Father.

TIME OF RECONCILIATION

So here we are, beloved listeners, brought back by the very logic of present historical experience to our subject of reconciliation. Let no one be displeased if we affirm it as the inspiration of the new history the world. What would be the use of the progress of humanity if it were not reconciled with itself and in itself? And how could this reconciliation, this peace endure, if it were not concord between brothers? Real, convinced, united brotherhood? And let us add: can a brotherhood between human beings who are so different, and impelled by a vigilant centrifugal temptation of selfishness, maintain and celebrate this bond without directing it and linking it to the transcendent and happy fatherhood of God? How shall we be educated to recognize this real fatherhood and to open up to a trusting conversation with it, if Christ the Master does not teach us: "Pray then like this: Our Father, who art in heaven . . ." (Mt. 6, 9)?

At this fateful hour there pass before our mind the painful images of human conflicts; there are still many in the world; and for one and all of them, our wish is for reconciliation among men, who are in any case brothers: it is the persuasion of its possibility; it is the invitation to a confident, common collaboration so that it may come about; it is the victorious hope of peace for everyone.

**SACRA CONGREGATIO PRO GENTIUM EVANGELIZATIONE
SEU DE PROPAGANDA FIDE**

DECRETUM

Cum per pium obitum bonae memoriae Domini Alexandri Olalia, Archiepiscopi Lipensis, munus Praesidis Nationalis Pontificiae Con-sociationis Missionalis in Republica Philippinarum vacaverit, Sacrum Consilium Christiano Nomini propagando, audita Conferentia Epis-copali necnon obtento favorabili voto Exc.mi ac Rev.mi Domini Brunonis Torpigiani, Archiepiscopi titulo Mallianensis atque Aposto-lici in supradicta Republica Nuntii, per praesens Decretum

**EXCELLENTISSIMUM AC REVERENDISSIMUM
FREDERICUM LIMON
ARCHIEPISCOPUM LINGAYENSEM-DAGUPANENSEM**

ad idem munus eligit ac nominat, cum omnibus iuribus, privilegiis ac obligationibus eidem officio adnexis, iuxta Statuta Pontificia et Instruc-tionem 'Quo aptius' huius Sacri Dicasterii, ad quinquennium.

Datum Romae, ex Aedibus Sacrae Congregationis pro Gentium Evangelizatione seu de Propaganda Fide, die octava mensis Septembris anno Domini 1973, Festo Nativitatis Beatae Mariae Virginis.

AGNELLUS CARD. ROSSI
Praef.

† **BERNARDINUS GANTIN**
A secr.

HOLY YEAR 1975

APPEAL TO INTERIOR VALUES

RAIMONDO SPIAZZI, O.P.

From the first announcement of the Holy Year (9 May 1973), and afterwards in the addresses with which the Pope is composing a real "Catechetics for the Holy Year," in particular the Letter to Cardinal Maximilian de Furstenberg, president of the central Committee, which I will quote repeatedly, Paul VI has stressed that "renewal" and "reconciliation" — the subjects he himself has fixed as the central ones of the Holy Year — are above all interior events. They are brought about in man by the intervention of the infinitely merciful God, who redeemed the world by means of Jesus Christ his Son, and continually offers every man the fruits of redemption through the Holy and Sanctifying Spirit, who is *remissio omnium peccatorum*. They are events — the Pope says — "which take place first and foremost at the deepest level, in the inner shrine, where conscience is called to work its conversion, or *metanoia*, by means of faith and work (cf. Mk. 1, 15), and to aim at the fullness of charity".

The appeal to interior life is important. In the Letter to Cardinal de Furstenberg it is defined in the light of the Holy Spirit, all the more so in that, on the desire of the Pope himself, the spiritual movement of the Holy Year began with the solemnity of Pentecost.

It is the Holy Spirit who lives in *interiore homine*; it is the Holy Spirit who calls and attracts every man — "no one excluded," the Pope states — to take part in the fruits of redemption, to reach salvation; it is the Holy Spirit who, to the extent to which man responds to divine action, renews him interiorly, reconciles him with God, impels and qualifies him to operate also in social relations for brotherhood, peace, unity among all men.

YEAR OF APPEAL FOR THE COMMUNION OF THE CHURCH

It is known that those who take part positively in the fruits of redemption, establish bonds of communion and new solidarity with one another, in Christ, from whom they receive every good, every grace, every remission of sins. Through him they mysteriously communicate to one another the goods they receive from Christ, in an ineffable, supernatural reality which tradition calls the "communion of saints": the communion of all redeemed by Christ, sanctified by his Spirit; the communion of supernatural **goods**, given, as it were, in common to all those who, sincerely seeking God and responding to his grace, receive salvation in Christ whom sometimes they do not even know and seek, but who nevertheless seeks and finds them.

This reality, immense in extent and mysterious by nature, finds its visible body in the Church, formed by Christ as the centre of irradiation and attraction which, through announcing God's word and administering the means of sanctification set up by Christ himself, is the **efficacious sign**, in the world, of communion with God. Therefore it is the **organic instrument** of the Holy Spirit in the application of redemption and the sanctification of men.

The community of participants in redemption and salvation takes on concrete form, therefore, in the Church and becomes partly visible; while with the variety of her ministries — the chief of which is the *hierarchical one* — *she makes men hear the divine call* and helps them efficaciously to respond and to participate in the fruits of redemption.

In the Holy Year the Church intends and makes a particular effort to invite all men — beginning with believers in Christ, even when they are divided among themselves about points of doctrine and discipline — to respond to the divine call and to participate in the fruits of redemption with conversion of heart, prayer, charity, repentance. These are brought about in the human spirit particularly in the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist; they open man's spirit to the grace of the Holy Spirit who forgives sins, purifies, reconciles with God.

Extending this invitation, the Church on her side puts at the disposal of everyone the work of her ministers, who particularly with the sacrament of Penance exercises the "ministry of reconciliation"

(cf. 2 Cor. 5, 18), as the Pope recalls. She invites all her faithful to receive it, that they may also be able to go more fervently and fruitfully to the Holy Eucharist, the centre of the Christian system. This is the point of confluence of the whole movement of the Holy Year.

Precisely in the attempt to bring about a wider and more intense integration of the faithful in the system of salvation, the Church, aware of her union with Christ her head and of the communion of all her members, especially the Saints in heaven and first of all the Virgin Mary, with supreme efficacy invokes, obtains and distributes the gifts of grace and charity which purify and sanctify. In this function of hers the Church brings about our deepest "us", that of communion in Christ; a dynamic "we" that gives participation in Christ's power to all those who, being united in the Church, acquire greater power of intercession before God, according to the eucharistic prayer itself, which makes us invoke: "Do not look, Lord, at our sins, but at the faith of your Church..."

APPEAL FOR BENEFICIAL USE OF THE INDULGENCE

Among the gifts that the Church obtains and distributes is that mysterious and ineffable application of the fruits of redemption which takes on the name of **indulgence**, understood according to the apostolic Constitution **Indulgentiarum Doctrina** (1967), which sums up and clarifies the traditional doctrine of the Church.

It consists in assistance that the Church offers for more perfect sharing in the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit on the part of man. The latter, having broken with sin by means of charity which wipes out every fault, is purified still by virtue of Christ's grace. He can therefore with the elimination of every penalty of sin, bring about interior renewal to the extent of excluding every remaining obstacle to this union with God in Christ and in the Church. More, perhaps, than to a legal concept of the relationship of the sinner-penitent with God and to a mathematical calculation of the **quantum of expiation**, this penalty should therefore be referred to the demands of love which calls for purity and brings it about mysteriously in the meeting with God which takes place with conversion. In order that this conversion may be full and the obstacles to purification removed and renewal and reconciliation facilitated, the Church, the genuine and authoritative expression of our deep "us," draws for us from the spiritual treasure

of the merit and satisfaction of Christ the one Saviour, and gives it to us *ex abundantia Cordis Christi, Cordis Ecclesiae*. In Christ, and through him, the communion of the saints is formed, owing to the confluence in one whole of every implementation of redemption in the members of the one Body of Christ. The Pope promises: "We will grant the gift of the indulgence".

In the Holy Year the Church bestows the gift drawn from the "Saviour's springs" on all those who, responding to divine grace, prepare for reconciliation with God in abundant charity, in which by means of piety, penance, brotherly love, they intend to remain and grow: exercises indicated by the Church herself as ways and conditions for better access to those ineffable goods.

The Holy Year, in fact, offers privileged, that is particularly favorable, opportunities for this access to the fruits of redemption of which the Church is the minister, for consciences that, under the action of the Holy Spirit, open up to Christ, who is the one cause of salvation. Thus they enter upon more intense participation in the communion of the saints and a new relationship with God in sincerity of faith, charity, penance, personal and ecclesial prayer.

The practices of piety, penance, charity indicated by the Church serve to create these interior dispositions. To those who carry them out, thus offering the Church the **sign** of interior renewal, she responds in her turn with the indulgence as the **sign** of the benign and merciful action of the Spirit, who cleanses consciences by virtue of Christ's Blood (cf. 1 Jn. 1, 7; Heb. 9, 14). From the latter comes, too, every vital influence that the members of the one Body exercise upon one another, in the communion of saints (cf. Rom, 12, 5; 1 Cor. 12, 12, 27).

SCALE OF VALUES

It seems, therefore, that in the approach to and during the course of the Holy Year, reference should be made to the indulgence, on the theological and ascetical basis of the apostolic Constitution **Indulgentiarum Doctrina** and according to the "Norms" (7, 10, 16) it lays down on this matter. But the indulgence must be presented and recognized, according to the Pope's own words, as a spiritual gift of the Church to those who, entering into her spirit, responding to her appeal

for renewal and reconciliation, receiving the sacrament of penance with sincerity of faith and charity, receiving Holy Communion, carry out the practices of piety and charity requested by the Church as a **sign** and **aid** to their interior participation in the Holy Year. "Almost in response" — the Pope says — "to these simple and sincere manifestations by means of which the faithful . . . will accomplish a real conversion and profess their determination to remain and become stronger in charity towards God and towards their brothers, we, as humble ministers of Christ the redeemer will grant . . ." It is perhaps not necessary to stress further distinctions, classifications, definitions. Around this intervention of the Church as minister of the fruits of redemption in consciences that open up to Christ, the one cause of salvation, it will be better to leave that sense of mystery which is indispensable, cannot be eliminated and is very useful for fruitful participation in the communion of saints.

In any case, importance should be given to the scale of considerations:

1. in the first place to the implementation of the meeting with God in the sincerity of faith, charity, penance and personal prayer;
2. to ecclesial communion which unites and merges believers in the body of Christ;
3. to the ministry of the Church which, by means of the sacraments, operates in order that the meeting of every man with God and communion in Christ may take place;
4. to forgiveness of sin, which in this framework of relations with God and with the Church is granted by means of repentance;
5. to remission of the penalty — the fruit of purifying charity — which the Church, drawing upon the inexhaustible treasure of redemption and the communion of saints, of which she is minister, as far as lies in her power grants to those who offer her the **sign** of interior renewal.

The sign required consists in the practices of piety, penance and charity, which the Church proposes on the occasion of the Holy Year. According to the Pope, "it seems that the expression, the occasion and almost the synthesis of these practices, which will have their climax in the eucharistic celebration, can be the **pilgrimage**, which in

the genuine tradition of ascetics has always been carried out for reasons of piety and expiation. It can still be inspired by these motives today, both when it occurs in forms more similar to those of the ancient pilgrims, and when it uses the modern means of communication".

Let us just point out that the pilgrimage, today, can find a new place in certain tendencies and practices of mobility and migrations in our times, and its value on the plane of repentance and of witness may have an appeal for the young particularly.

It will perhaps be necessary to find ways of getting the young, especially, to go on pilgrimage, and to have a "Holy Year of the young," inviting them to clear-sighted and thorough exercise of their critical and self-critical conscience, so that they may face up to the problem of life, salvation, true liberation: this is just what the Holy Year proposes in such radical and decisive terms.

It will be the common task to ensure that the Holy Year pilgrimage will take place along the path of prayer and penance at a **double** level:

a) the **personal** one, in which according to the interior inspiration and possibilities of everyone, it is prepared and accompanied by practices of piety, penance, charity (especially by old and new ways of almsgiving: for example, to help someone to go on the journey, possibly renouncing some personal comfort).

b) the **ecclesial** one, in which the pilgrimage expresses, serves and carries out a new movement of the Christian community, as a whole, towards the sources of faith and the resources of divine grace, with intentions of revision, purification, spiritual strengthening, witness.

In any case, according to the Pope, "it is necessary for the pilgrimage to be accompanied, not only by prayer and penance, but also by the exercise of brotherly charity... and, on the part of the individual faithful, their associations, ecclesial communities and institutions, it must be expressed in works of spiritual and physical mercy, in favour of needier brothers. Thus the Holy Year will really expand the space of charity in the Church, and will be the harbinger of a renewal and reconciliation of universal dimensions."

A boundless horizon opens here. It is up to the individual faithful, it is up to all the institutes of the Church, from the Holy See to

the parishes, from religious families to confraternities, from the various agencies to lay associations, to commit themselves to a path of charity and penance — including renunciation, detachment, self-denial. This can take us very far.

YEAR OF RETURN TO THE SOURCES OF FAITH

Since the Pope has decreed that the Holy Year will be celebrated first in the local churches and then concluded in Rome, it seems that the spiritual movement, expressed and translated in the pilgrimage, can take place in two phases in its community aspect.

1. In the first place the pilgrimage takes place in every **local church** towards the cathedral as the centre of community life and the principal sign of baptismal grace, and towards other holy places (for example, to the temples where the founders of the local churches are buried, if they are not the cathedrals themselves, to the Marian sanctuaries, etc.), in convergent radii. These start out from the parishes and other centres of Christian life, territorial or according to category, as the bishops and other local leaders consider more opportune. They are **quasi** “intermediate stages”, the Pope says.

2. From the various local churches the pilgrimage continues **towards Rome**, where in 1975 “the representatives of the local churches will conclude the process of renewal and reconciliation, venerate the tombs of the apostles, renew their adherence to the Church of Peter...” In Rome, the visible centre of the universal Church, the pilgrims will be able to meet the Pope, the priests and faithful of the Roman Church. Also, in the various parishes and other centres of Christian life, they can join in celebrations of prayer and penance, exchange experiences, and discuss together the problems of spirituality and of the apostolate.

“And we, God willing — the Pope says — will have the joy of receiving them with open arms and together with them we will bear witness to the unity of the Church in faith and charity.”

For this very reason the pilgrimage should take on an ecumenical and even a universal dimension, that is, associating believers with non-Catholics and non-Christians in the great movement in pursuit of the one God, and of man's renewal and reconciliation with Him. At

the sources of faith it would even be easier to meet, understand one another, agree on what is essential.

"It is our warm wish — the Pope says — that in his progress towards the 'sources of salvation' (cf. Is. 12, 3) our Sons fully united with the Church of Peter should be joined, in the forms possible for them, also by the other followers of Christ and all those who, along various apparently distant ways, are seeking the one God with upright conscience and goodwill (cf. Acts 17, 27)".

ECUMENICAL YEAR

The Holy Year would thus be a great "ecumenical year" if it saw united, both in the local churches and, above all in Rome, the representatives of all believers in Christ and of all seekers for God, in moments of reflection, study, communion. Nor is it unlikely that all of them — although respecting the way and spirit of each one — could take part in the "simple and sincere manifestations" of conversion, which the Pope asks of the Holy Year pilgrims. This is, that "having prayer according to our intentions and those of the whole episcopal College, they will take part, locally, in a solemn community service, or make a pause of reflection before the Lord, concluding it with the recitation or singing of the **Pater** and the **Credo**, and with an invocation to the Blessed Virgin".

The Holy Year would perhaps be a good opportunity to reflect on the significance of Rome as the **sign and centre of unity** on earth of the whole pilgrim Church moving towards her eschatological goals. Thus the Holy Year pilgrimage would take its place in an ecclesiological perspective of immense proportions. A **sign**, it too, of the long progress of faith, which starts from Abraham and continues progressively in the centuries, first towards the earthly Jerusalem, then, from there, to the heavenly one, gathering and recomposing itself continually in Rome as the Church where is the See of Peter and his successors.

The very opening of the holy door, announced by the Pope, might then shine forth before the eyes of the world of today as a symbol not only of an important period in the history of the Church of our days, but, even more, of a new entrance — or at least an approach — of God's pilgrims to the city of eternal things.

FRAY DIEGO DE HERRERA

DEATH IN BATALAY

BENITO VARGAS, O.P.

The early Filipinos had their encounter with Christ when the fleet of Magellan arrived at our country on March 16, 1521; and when other expeditions (of Fray Juan Jofre de Loaisa; of Alvaro de Saavedra, and of Ruy López de Villalobos) tried to explore our archipelago, and preach the gospel in stride. But the systematic and effective colonization and evangelization of our forbears began in earnest under the joint leadership of Miguel López de Legazpi and Fray Andrés de Urdaneta, O.S.A.

Their expedition which originally consisted of five ships and more than 400 men on board lifted anchor at the Port of Natividad in the western seaboard of Mexico (then also called Nueva España) on November 21, 1564,¹ and arrived in Leyte on February 13, 1565. Besides Urdaneta, there were four other Augustinians in that venture: Frs. DIEGO DE HERRERA, Martín de Rada, Pedro de Gamboa and Andrés de Aguirre. Fray Lorenzo Jiménez, who had been slated to come with them, had died in the Port of Natividad just before departure.²

The present article deals exclusively — and fragmentarily at that — with Fray Diego de Herrera, who died in 1576 in Batalay, a barrio of my home-town Bato, in the province of Catanduanes.

¹ Juan de MEDINA, O.S.A.: *Historia de los Sucesos de la Orden de N.P.S. Agustín de estas Islas Filipinas, desde que se descubrieron y poblaron por los españoles, con las noticias memorables* (MS en AUST. Sección «HistoriaEclesiástica»), fol. 12.

² Joaquín Martínez de ZÚNIGA, O.S.A.: *An Historical View of the Philippines*, a translation by John Maver, from the original published in Manila in 1803; Manila, 1966, p. 30.

Scion of noble parents — Don Miguel de Almeida de Herrera and Doña Juana Martínez —, Fray Herrera was born around the year 1530 in Recas, in the povince of Toledo, Spain.³ On March 10, 1545 he made his religious profession in the Augustinian monastery at Toledo, and after his ordination some years later, devoted his early priestly efforts to teaching in the Augustinian colleges and to exercising the pastoral ministry.⁴

By 1561 he had already transferred to México where he learned fast the Aztec language, and busied himself in the conversion of the natives.⁵ Four years later he joined the Legazpi-Urdaneta expedition (as already said), which left the Port of Natividad on November 21, 1564, and reached Cebu on April 27, 1565. One of the soldiers of that expedition, Juan de Camus, shortly after disembarking, found the miraculous image of the **Santo Niño**, reputed to have been left in the place by Magellan.⁶

In Cebu the Augustinians built their first church and convento, and after Urdaneta had embarked on June 1, 1565 for Mexico, they elected Fray Herrera their Superior.⁷ Under his guidance the friars engrossed themselves in missionary labors. "They studied with enthusiasm the (Visayan) tongue," writes Juan de Medina, O.S.A., "and held classes for the natives to explain to them the sacrosanct mysteries of our faith . . . Moreover, they tried by all means to attract the offspring of prominent families to the convento, or wherever they set their lodgings, to teach them the catechism and the three R's ('rithmetic, reading and 'riting) . . .⁸ They tried hard to prepare many for the sacrament of baptism. The first to be baptized was a niece of the chieftain Tupas. She asked with insistence for baptism, and when she received it, the Governor himself stood sponsor. She was given the name Isabel, and her baby boy was baptized next, and then members of her household followed suit."⁹ Isabel was later given in marriage to a Greek, Andrés by name, who was of the crew as caulker. Later Fray Herrera succeeded in convincing the Chieftain Tupas to receive holy baptism, which was administered to him on

³ Bernardo MARTINEZ, O.S.A.: *Apuntes Históricos de la Provincia del Santísimo Nombre de Jesús de Filipinas*, p. 34.

⁴ Tomás HERRERA, O.S.A.: *San Agustín de Salamanca*, Madrid, 1652, p. 178.

⁵ HERRERA, o. c., p. 178.

⁶ MEDINA, o. c., folios 12 y 31.

⁷ MEDINA, o. c., fols. 40, 42, 44.

⁸ MEDINA, o. c., fol. 44.

⁹ MEDINA, o. c., fols. 46 y 47.

the third Sunday of Lent, March 21, 1568. At the same time Tupas' son was also regenerated with the waters of baptism. Legazpi was the sponsor of Tupas who was named Felipe; and Salcedo, of Tupas' son, who was called Carlos.¹⁰

On November 1, 1566 the original abode of the Augustinians caught fire, having been hurriedly made of flimsy materials; and the friars immediately set to build a new convento with strong materials.¹¹

On June 20, 1569, the few Augustinians in the Philippines held a quasi-provincial chapter or conference in Cebu, and chose Fray Herrera as their first quasi-Provincial.¹² Soon afterwards, however, he left with Fray Pedro de Gamboa for Mexico to work for the establishment of a *sui juris* Augustinian Province in the Philippines, and to recruit more confreres to come over.¹³ From Mexico he sent a letter to King Philip, dated January 16, 1570, to inform His Majesty that many natives were recalcitrant in accepting Spanish vassalage, that the Portuguese were harassing the Spaniards but with little success, that the evangelization was half-heartedly being pursued in the face of doubts as to the future disposition by His Majesty regarding this archipelago — only a hundred have been baptized so far —, inasmuch as it might be more advantageous to the Spanish Crown to abandon these islands in favor of bigger and more prosperous lands in this side of the globe, especially China and Japan.¹⁴

Coming back from Mexico with only two confreres (and namesakes) — Frs. Diego Ordóñez and Diego de Espinar —, he arrived at Leyte on June 23, 1570, where the threesome tarried until November, when they sailed for Cebu.¹⁵ Here Fray Herrera resumed his duties as Superior of the Augustinians, and acted as adviser and chaplain to Legazpi to boot.¹⁶

At the wake of his arrival he wrote and mailed, in the last week of July, 1570, a lengthy letter to the Viceroy of Mexico, in which, after informing him that his last trip had been fairly auspicious, he

¹⁰ MEDINA, o. c., fol. 52.

¹¹ MEDINA, o. c., fol. 45.

¹² MEDINA, o. c., fol. 53.

¹³ MEDINA, o. c., fol. 53.

¹⁴ Cf. Francisco COLIN, S. J.: *Labor Evangélica de los Obreros de la Compañía de Jesús en las Islas Filipinas*, Nueva Edición por el P. Pablo Pastells, S. J., Barcelona, tomo I, pp. 661-662.

¹⁵ MEDINA, o. c., fol. 54.

¹⁶ Cf. COLIN, pp. 662-665.

reported on the conduct of the lay authorities in the islands, without being a respector of persons.¹⁷

When Legazpi headed for Manila in 1571, Fray Herrera came along,¹⁸ together with Fray Juan de Alba.¹⁹ Here the two Augustinians laid the foundations of the monastery and church of San Agustín on June 24, 1571, in Intramuros. The construction of said temple and convento was later carried out under the supervision of the lay-brother Fray Antonio de Herrera, not a relation of Fray Herrera, but a nephew and ex-apprentice of the builder of the *El Escorial*, one of the few architectural wonders of the world.²⁰ In Manila Fray Herrera baptized many natives, including the older Rajah Solimán.²¹

In the provincial chapter of the Augustinians held in Manila, Fray Martín de Rada was elected Provincial on May 3, 1572.²² Fray Herrera, the outgoing quasi-Provincial, still remained in the administrative body as *definidor* and provincial councillor.²³ The new Provincial saw fit to send Fray Herrera to Spain, and he left for Mexico (from where he should proceed to Spain) on August 12, 1572, aboard the *San Juan*.²⁴ The ill winds, however, forced the ship to come back in wait for fair weather. In the meantime occurred the death of Legazpi, on August 20, 1572. Finally, nearly a year later, on July 1, 1573, the *San Juan* with Fray Herrera among the passengers left Manila, and on November 24 next dropped anchor at Acapulco, whence the Augustinian proceeded to Mexico (city), and discussed his errands and affairs with the Viceroy. Then in company of Fray Juan Alonso de Mendoza he embarked for Spain to apprise King Philip II about conditions and problems in the Philippine archipelago.²⁵

In his audience with the King, who listened to him with utmost interest and propitious mien, he pleaded for assistance to his Order for the construction of one or two monasteries, and of a novitiate and scholasticate for the formation of future Augustinian missionaries.

¹⁷ Cf. COLIN, p. 665.

¹⁸ MEDINA, o. c., fol. 56.

¹⁹ MEDINA, o. c., fol. '9.

²⁰ Cf. Teófilo Aparicio LOPEZ, O.S.A.: *Misioneros y Colonizadores Agustinos en Filipinas*, Valladolid, 1965, p. 75.

²¹ Cf. Gaspar de SAN AGUSTÍN, O.S.A.: *Conquistas de las Islas Filipinas*, Madrid, 1698, p. 336.

²² MEDINA, o. c., fol. 62.

²³ LOPEZ, o. c., p. 75.

²⁴ MEDINA, o. c., fol. 62.

²⁵ MEDINA, o. c., fol. 62.

He also interested the King in sending emissaries to the kingdom of China to pave the way for its evangelization. He supported his words with written *Memoriales*, which he left in the King's hands. Then the King referred him to the President of the *Consejo de Indias*, Juan de Obando, for assistance in expediting matters of urgency so that he could join the expedition being readied to leave Cádiz in the middle of 1575, with a group of forty Augustinians, whom Fray Herrera himself should head in their journey to Mexico and thence to the Philippines.²⁶

It was at this time when the *Consejo de Indias* was considering the appointment of the first bishop for the Philippines. Many worthy candidates were proposed, but it soon became a toss between Fray Rada, the Provincial, and Fray Herrera, the latter coming out as the final choice. However, he was kept unaware of such honorable designs on his person, which should not reach their fruition, as he would die soon upon stepping again into Philippines shores, in the manner now to be related.²⁷

Fray Herrera left Spain in July, 1575, and reached Mexico safely with his suite of forty confreres, most of whom, however, changed their minds about proceeding for the Philippines.²⁸ Thus when Fray Herrera embarked again on January 6, 1576,²⁹ bound for Cavite and Manila, only nine other Augustinians sailed with him, to wit: Frs. Lesmes de Santiago, Francisco Bello, Francisco Arévalo, Francisco Martínez de Viedma, Juan de Santa Cruz, Bernardino de Villar de Saz, Rodrigo Nuñez, Andrés Marín and Juan de Espínola.³⁰ After many ominous hardships their galleon — the *Espíritu Santo* — met a violent storm when already about a hundred leagues (557 kilometers) from Manila, that is, in the neighborhood of Catanduanes, east of the Bicol peninsula in Southern Luzon. The ship started to lurch and flounder on April 25, 1576, and a day or two later was blown to the rocky shoals or reefs along the shores of Nangumbuaya (open-mouthed crocodile, that is) Point, in the vicinity of Batalay, a barrio of the

²⁶ P. PABLO PASTELLS, S.J., apud Pedro Torres y LANZAS: *Catálogo de los documentos relativos a las Islas Filipinas*, tomo II, Barcelona, 1926, p. L.

²⁷ Gaspar de SAN AGUSTIN, p. 336.

²⁸ LANZAS, o. c., pp. LII & LIII.

²⁹ Gaspar de SAN AGUSTIN, p. 334.

³⁰ Agustín María de CASTRO, O.S.A.: *Misioneros Agustinos en el Extremo Oriente, 1565-1760* (Osario Venerable), Madrid, 1954, pp. 64-65.

town of Bato, in the province of the said Catanduanes.³¹ A sunken hull has been discovered at a distance of a few kilometers from the said barrio of Batalay at a depth of about thirty fathoms (sixty meters), and it is presumed to be remnants of the ill-fated *Espiritu Santo*.

What happened after the shipwreck?

There were more than a hundred passengers aboard.³² As could be expected, many of them drowned. "Some twenty to thirty persons reached the shore," writes Gaspar de San Agustín, O.S.A.³³ "Among them were our apostolic friars, whom the uncultured islanders attacked and killed mercilessly with spears and bolos... (Such islanders) tried to keep secret their crime as long as they could for fear of punishment or vengeance from the Spaniards at Manila, until they were subdued and taught religion, introduced into cultured ways and converted. They were later taken care of by virtuous priests. For forty years their parish priest was Alonso Jiménez de Carmona, who later donned our habit when assigned to Japan. He later came back to the Philippines, but finally returned to Japan, where he died in the opinion of holiness... Said priest, when he was still in charge of the parish of the Coast of Catanduanes, had the chance to learn the truth about the happenings (to Fray Herrera and his companions) from a very old islander who had been present during the tragedy. This age-stricken man said that the venerable friars, upon reaching the beaches, joined the other survivors, and they all repaired near a big boulder jutting into the sea. There they tore apart the branches of a tree and made a cross which they planted on the ground. Kneeling before it, they sang for quite a while. But the islanders, lying in ambush, and easily discerning the friars by their garb, decided to kill them ahead of the others, as the idolaters regarded the priests as enemies of their beliefs and gods... And with this determination they all ran towards where (the Spaniards) were gathered, and one of these, a very stately old man who spoke Visayan (and by this and other tokens he could be no other than the venerable Fray Diego),

³¹ Cf. Gaspar de SAN AGUSTÍN, p. 335; LANZAS, p. L; FONSECA Y FERRANDO: *Historia de los PP. Dominicos en las Islas Filipinas*, Madrid, 1872, tomo VI, Apéndice, p. CXVII; ZUÑIGA, p. 65; Isacio RODRIGUEZ, O.S.A.: *Historia de la Provincia Agustiniense del Smo. Nombre de Jesús en Filipinas*, Vol. I, Manila, 1965, p. 143; Gregorio de Santiago VELA O.S.A.: *Ensayo de una Biblioteca Ibero-Americana de la Orden de San Agustín*, Vol. III, Madrid, 1917, pp. 570-571; Elviro J. PEREZ, O.S.A.: *Catálogo Bio-Bibliográfico*, Manila, 1901, p. 4; *Enciclopedia ESPASA*, s. v.: HERRERA, Diego de.

³² LANZAS, o. c., p. L.

³³ O. c., p. 335.

asked them: 'Don't you know that we are Religious and priests, that we are so anxious to save your souls as to brave all dangers, labors and even the storm that has brought us to your shores?'

"The fierce villagers, instead of listening to him, attacked forthwith the venerable Father Fray Diego, spearing him from side to side and then in like manner they made short shrift of the other priests and the laymen Due to special diligence with which the natives strove to hide their crimes, it was surmised (by the Spaniards) that all (the passengers of the galleon) had drowned and that no one ever had made it to the shore alive."

Such was the story of an old man told to Padre Alonzo Jimenez de Carmona. But the same Gaspar de San Agustin³⁴ relates another report or yarn about the death of the Spaniards in Batalay from another source that he did not mention. According to this second version, one of the survivors was a Fray Francisco. When the armed natives came menacingly, the overzealous Fray Francisco started urging them, through an interpreter, who was one of his co-passengers, to burn their *anitos* and to abjure their idolatry. The natives pleaded with him to stop talking thus, but the said Fray Francisco instead raised his voice more and more so that the islanders, who were still pagans, were provoked to a high pitch of rage, and slaughtered the said Fray Francisco with his companions.

"The first (Spaniard) who came to know of this shipwreck," writes Fr. Pablo Pastells, S.J.,³⁵ "was the **Teniente de Capitan** Don Juan de Sardonil, who saw in a banca of some natives: a leather jacket, a leaden peg, a pair of scissors, a knife, a boy's shirt, other small-sized dresses and some other knick-knacks He left immediately for the island of Catanduanes, whence those natives came, with eleven soldiers and one clerk. A man and woman whom they overtook and caught, declared: 'A ship of Spain was blown to the shores, and all the Spaniards were drowned to death.' When asked to show the exact spot of the disaster, they did so, and (the Spaniards) found there boards from the ship, and part of the cargo torn to smithereens, and many corpses of Spaniards a-rotting They did not find any scarf or rope or any object of value; but under some boulders and rocks they discovered crumbs of cheese, cakes of soap a-melting, many torn pages of Latin books, some unpaired shoes of monks and soldiers, and several letters from private persons

³⁴ O. c., p. 340.

³⁵ LANZAS, o. c., p. LIII.

"A native from the town of Bigan, of the same island, asserted that those who survived from the wrecked boat would be some twenty Spaniards who were killed by the inhabitants of the river of Sion;³⁶ and that said natives as well as those of neighboring areas stole whatever they could lay hands on... and that those of Sion told him that they were keeping two survivors... and two anchors... and arquebuses of iron and many other articles... A native woman, Adac de Lauigan by name, said that the inhabitants of the town of Sion had given her and relatives some boots, shoes and a hat, and those of Sion were keeping one Spaniard alive and many things that they got from the ship. The interpreter, called Si Alan, said that those residents shouted to him: 'Tell Don Juan not to come nor to lay waste our land, and we will surrender to him a boy who survived the shipwreck.'

The folklore of Bato assumes that Fray Diego de Herrera was not killed outright, but lived for some time under the custody of a certain chieftain of the said barrio of Batalay, in Bato, Catanduanes. When the wife of the chieftain was about to deliver — so an old tradition goes —, the delivery was abnormal, difficult and extremely painful. The *herbolario* or sort of witch-doctor of the village who pretended to cure with hocus-pocus or mysterious potions suggested to open up the entrails of the woman to save the baby, though thus killing certainly the mother in stride. The chieftain asked for Fray Herrera's counsel, who told him that it was against the law of God to kill a person directly while it was not even certain that the life of the child would be thus spared. So the woman was not mangled; but unfortunately both she and her child died. The witch-doctor laid the blame on the Augustinian, and the chieftain, grief-stricken and infuriated, ordered Fray Herrera to dig a hole on the ground. When it was deep enough, the chieftain commanded his men to bury the priest alive in a standing position.

Since no one can remember, there has been always a chapel on the alleged spot where Fray Herrera was buried, and tradition has it that immediately upon his burial a spring of pure, fresh water gushed from his grave. Pilgrims drink of this water or bathe themselves with it. When yet a teen-ager, I used to pass by this spring, because it is midway between our house in Bato and my father's farm in a sitio called Suc-han.

³⁶ According to very Rev. Alfonso Molina, parish priest of Bato, Sion is a misspelling of Soong, which is a portion of the swamps in Batalay, in Bato, Catanduanes.

Another lore commonly heard among the old folks is that some years after the death of Fray Herrera, a tidal wave inundated and swept a big portion of Batalay, and schools of a kind of swordfish, called in Catanduanes **duwal** (and Tagalogs call it **batalay!**) swam up and killed many of the barrio folks.

Another story I had often heard *ad nauseam* is that a Spaniard said something about **pandilla** (for instance, **Nos va a matar esta pandilla**), and everyone of the killers of the Castellians came to be known in the place as Pandilla.

Within less than three years from now, that is, on the forthcoming April 27, 1976, there will be solemn festivities in Batalay to pay homage and offer satisfaction to the unsung missionary of four centuries ago, who met his untimely demise there. In fact, the initial phase of such celebrations already took place, when on April 27, 1973, a civico-religious whole-day affair was held in that mentioned barrio, with the attendance of the Bishop of Legazpi, and dozens of high government officials, to erect a marker on the grave of Fray Diego de Herrera, declaring it a national historical site, and a Diocesan Shrine in honor of the Holy Cross.

A word of caution, however, is appropriate here. Fray Herrera is not a canonized Saint nor even a Blessed — thus far. He cannot be given public veneration on our altars. What is worshipped in the temple over his grave is an old cross. Whether that cross, presently encased in boards of later cut, is the cross which the Spaniards themselves made of the branches of a tree (as earlier recounted), or rather that which Manuel Grijalvo, O.S.A., twenty-fourth Bishop of Nueva Caceres (1848-1862), erected on the same site, is yet to be settled. Many knowledgeable persons, however, are of the opinion that the cross is four centuries old.

There is a local tradition about this or the original cross. When many years after the death of Fray Herrera no one could pinpoint the exact site of his burial, they found a cross lying around. Pious folks planted it on a spot some wizened woman indicated as the tomb of the Augustinian. But the following morning the cross was found lying down again. They planted it in another place. Again in the following morning it was prone again. And so on for many days, until one morning it was found still standing erect. The villagers dug the ground and found under the cross a skeleton in a vertical

position, believed to be that of Fray Herrera. However, nobody could tell now where that skeleton is.

Persons of different nationalities, from all states and walks of life, are committed to the worthwhile project of giving Fray Herrera some posthumous honor and fame. One of the most active persons in the fund-raising campaign for this purpose is a Catholic Chinese, locally called Sima, who owns a house in Bato and a store in Virac, called Acme Commercial. (Virac is the capital of the province of Catanduanes). By sheer good luck or by Fray Herrera's favor (as Sima swears), both his house and his store were spared in two different fires, because all the houses around his were razed, but his house and store stood unscathed.

At present the coordinating hand and the moving spirit behind all these collective efforts to honor Fray Diego de Herrera is no other than the first Bato-born priest, who is presently the pastor of Bato itself: the Very Rev. Alfonso Molina, who in a very real sense is beholden to Fray Herrera. Before said Father Molina entered the seminary in Naga in 1918, many dozens of talented and pious youths from Bato had preceded him. But no one had ever reached the priesthood. So it came to be bruited about in Bato that no one from the place would ever become a priest. Against this backdrop the seminarian Alfonso Molina was very much disturbed; and so he made a promise or vow which he later kept so well: during summer vacations he should repair to Batalay as a pilgrim at Fray Herrera's grave, and, moreover, as St. Christopher of old, ferry the pilgrims across a risky body of water separating the shrine from the main source of influx of pilgrims. (At present there is a bridge over this body of water, but not so in those days.) And the young, athletic, tall, sturdy Alfonso Molina, a good hand at the paddle, would not hear of accepting any fee from the hundreds he ferried across the risky channel. To make a long story short, Father Alfonso Molina became the first Bato-born priest, having been ordained in 1929. Once he pierced the wall, or broke the "jinx", dozens of others followed suit.

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN THE PHILIPPINES

PABLO FERNANDEZ, O.P.

CHAPTER 40

TAGALOG PHILOLOGY

Someone has identified as many as 11 mayor and 80 minor dialects in the Philippines. This diversity is due to the isolation and separation of the various political and tribal groups in the islands before their Christianization. At times, as in the Mountain Province, the dialects differed from valley to valley because of the fratricidal hatreds which for a long time had divided the people there. And, even after four hundred years of Christian unity and about 75 of national existence, there is still no clear single national language that would supersede the babel of dialects in the Philippines.¹

¹ In 1898, the following dialects were spoken in the Philippines:

Visayan	—	2,024,409
Tagalog	—	1,312,196
Cebuano	—	385,866
Ilocano	—	354,378
Bikol	—	312,354
Pangasinan	—	263,000
Pampango	—	193,000
Zambal	—	68,936
Panay	—	67,092
Ibanag	—	52,500
Chinese	—	30,000
Ifugao	—	22,961
Aeta	—	13,272
Coyuro	—	12,999
Igorot	—	10,325

The following were spoken by less than 10,000: Itaves, Gaddang, Tinguian, Sufhú, Benguet, Chamorro, Mandaya, Ilongot, Ibalao, Manobo, Malange, Calamian; and eight to ten more dialects spoken by even smaller groups. There was a province with a population of 17,903 in 5 towns where three dialects were spoken. In the rather insignificant district of Principe (modern Quezon Province), which had only two towns and 3,607 inhabitants, there were also three dialects. See *Las misiones católicas*, VI, 213 (Barcelona: Librería y tipografía católica, Pino, 5, 1898),

Such a variety of tongues complicated the missionary task of the preachers of the Gospel. Some, due to imperative needs, had to be assigned to different regions successively, for which they had to learn two or three dialects.

And yet, the first missionaries undertook their task with courage, learning the dialect of the people which they were assigned to evangelize. They mastered its complex syntax or construction so successfully as to cause admiration, and it makes one wonder whether they were extraordinary geniuses or whether the Holy Spirit continued being very liberal with His gifts to them. Perhaps it was a combination of these two, if one observes that frequently the more saintly missionaries were the ones who contributed more to the progress of culture in this part of the world.

Of course, they availed themselves in the beginning of the help and cooperation of the natives, the more intelligent ones whom they called "**ladinos**". Later, the secular priests were their auxiliaries who were experts in the language because they had learned it from their parents and teachers.

I. **The Augustinians.** Of the Augustinians who wrote on the Philippine dialects, Fray Agustín de Albuquerque (+ 1580) shares with Fray Juan de Plasencia the glory of having written the first schematic book on Tagalog grammar, the **Gramática tagala**. No one now can tell which of the two preceded the other in this work.

Another work, the **Arte y vocabulario tagalo** is attributed to another Augustinian, the Venerable Juan de Quiñones (+ 1587) and printed in Manila, according to Beristain. But most probably, it stayed in manuscript form and must have perished with the British occupation of Manila in 1762.

The famous scholar and historian, Fray Gaspar de San Agustín (+ 1724) found time in the midst of his multiple and varied tasks to write a **Compendio de la arte de la lengua tagala**, which had three editions: the first, in 1703, printed in Manila; the second in 1787 printed by the **Imprenta de Nuestra Señora de Loreto** in Sampaloc; and the third in 1879, printed by the **Imprenta de los Amigos del**

País. This last edition has 168 pages in octavo, and is notable for the number of rules for the proper use of passive constructs.

Finally, Fray Tomás Ortiz (+ 1742), one of the more eminent of the Augustinians who labored in these Islands, added to his own laurels that of having written an *Arte y reglas de la lengua tagala* which was published in 1740 in Sampaloc.²

II. The Franciscans. The Franciscan Juan de Plasencia or Portocarrero (+ 1590), who had gained fame in Spain as a learned and eloquent preacher, wrote within two years of his arrival in the Philippines the first (?) *Gramática y diccionario tagalos*. Both seem to have served through the years as the norm of the subsequent "*Artes*" and dictionaries written on this language. He had learned Tagalog from a youth named Miguel de Talavera who had sailed to the Philippines in the expedition of Legazpi. Years later, Fray Juan de Oliver (+ 1597) improved and augmented the *Arte y diccionario* of Plasencia.

Fray Jeronimo Monte y Escamilla, who died around 1614, wrote also a *Gramática y diccionario tagalos*.

But the first book of this genre that came out in print was the *Diccionario español-tagalo*, the fruit of the pen of Fray Pedro de San Buenaventura (+ 1627), missionary in the Laguna area and a preacher for the natives in Manila. It was the famous Tomás Pinpin who printed that book in 1613.

It was also another missionary in Laguna who authored an *Arte de la lengua tagala* and a *Diccionario tagalo-español*, Fray Francisco de San Antonio (+ 1624). Years later, in 1679, an *Arte del idioma tagalo* came off a press in Mexico, written by Fray Agustín de la Magdalena (+ 1689). There was still another *Diccionario tagalo* by Fray Domingo de los Santos (+ 1695) which appeared in print in 1703. The same friar had also written an *Arte* of Tagalog in 1695 which was not printed even if it had received the approval of the censors and the praise of the experts. Fray Melchor Oyanguren, who died in 1747, was an accomplished linguist, learned in Hebrew, Greek,

² Elviro Pérez, OFM., *Catálogo de los religiosos, etc.*, 14; 19-20; 134; 169. Cfr. also: *La Ciudad de Dios*, 1895, XXVII, 111-112; 1896 XXIX, 447; Retana, *Aparato*, I, 89, 308, 413-414.

Latin, Chinese, Japanese, and Tagalog. His knowledge of the last language was proven in his work, **Tagalismo elucidado**, which was an effort to analyze the Tagalog grammar and its possible connection with Chinese, Hebrew and Greek. It was printed in Mexico in 1742. The same author also wrote a **Diccionario trilingue castellano-tagalo-cantabro**.

The foremost Franciscan Tagalist was Fray Sebastián de Totanes. (+ 1748). While serving in Lilio and Pagsanghan, he wrote **Arte de la lengua tagala** which first came out from the Sampaloc press and was reissued several times later, because of its proven value and the erudition of its author.³

III. **The Jesuits.** The following paragraph from Father Colín shows the method followed by the first Jesuit missionaries to the Philippines:

In obedience to the instructions of Our Father, the four of them, Superior and subjects, dedicated themselves to the study of Tagalog which is the more widely spread language among the indios in Manila and the suburbs. At a specific hour, they came together everyday to review the **Arte y Vocabulario** which had already been composed and very charitably lent to them by the Descalced Fathers of the Franciscan Order. Father Ramón prepared the lesson beforehand, and then all together reviewed and discussed it with one another, noting down the rules and the vocabulary in order to master them. And with this care and diligence, within three months, without failing in their duties to the Spaniards, especially in their Sunday sermons, each one on his own, they soon found themselves in a position to communicate with the indios⁴ and set out on their ministrations and missions.

Father Pedro Segura (+ 1617) dedicated himself with such energy to the mastery of Tagalog that he turned out to be quite an expert

³ Eusebio Gómez Platero, **Catálogo biográfico de los religiosos franciscanos** (Manila, 1880), 17; 49-50; 34; 44; 60; 101; 139; 292; 294; 324; 389; 391. See also Sebastián Totanes, **Arte de la lengua tagala** (Binondo, 1865), IV, V. Retana, **Aparato**, I. 309, 433, 558, II, 788.

⁴ Francisco Colín, **Labor evangélica** (Madrid, 1663), 286-287.

and a fluent speaker of the language, but at the cost of his health and this perhaps shortened his life.

Father Simón Facundo (+ 1627), however, who was born in Manila, was such a master of Tagalog that the natives enjoyed listening to him. Fluent also in Visayan, he wrote in this language several treatises. He died in 1627.

There was also Father Tomás de Montoya (+ 1627) who took serious care to learn the Tagalog language and became a master of it. Thanks to his ability, he could settle "the quarrels and suits among the indios which, even if they were of little importance, were rather complicated matters and cannot be understood, much less decided, without knowing well their language."⁵

Father Domingo de Peñalver (+ 1629) undertook the study of Tagalog after his studies were finished that he soon mastered it, meriting the nickname of "Demosthenes in Tagalog".⁶

Father Diego de Bobadilla (+ 1648) had also written an *Arte de la lengua tagala*, but it was not published.

Finally, Fathers Juan José Noceda and Pedro Sanlúcar, in cooperation with the other Jesuits fathers, composed a *Vocabulario de la lengua tagala*, based to a great extent on the work of the Dominican Fathers Blancas, Ruiz and Ramos. It was edited three times, 1754, 1832, and 1860. The first and the third were issued in Manila, the second in Valladolid.⁷

V. The Dominicans. The Tagalog dialect, which is the base of the present national language of the Philippines, was spoken, and is still spoken, in the ancient Dominican missions in Manila, Bataan, Cavite, and Laguna. Assigned to these provinces, the Dominicans did not hesitate to learn the local dialect, and probably the first result of their efforts was the work written by Fray Juan de la Cruz (+ 1605) *Esbozo de un arte en lengua tagalog*. This was used very

⁵ Pedro Murillo Velarde, *Historia de la provincia de Filipinas de la Compañía de Jesús* (Manila, 1749), 11v; 37, 1; 37, 2; 45v, 2.

⁶ Pedro Saderra Masó, *Misiones Jesuíticas en Filipinas* (Manila, 1924), 56.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 61. Cfr. Retana, *Aparato*, I, 344-39, II, 677.

much by Fray Blancas. Fray de la Cruz also learned with great ease the Pangasinan and Zambal dialects.

In the first half of the 17th century, we find among the great Dominican figures the very outstanding Fray Blancas de San José (+ 1614), the Dominican "Demosthenes of the Tagalog dialect". He learned the dialect so perfectly that with difficulty can one be found to have mastered it more. This priest dedicated the nineteen years of his missionary life in the Philippines to spread the Gospel by his example, his preaching, and his pen. To facilitate for the missionaries the learning of Tagalog, he wrote the famous *Arte y reglas de la lengua tagala* which, in that age, demanded a special talent and a real effort of the will. In the opinion of Fray Sebastian de Totanes, that book is worth "for very many or for all."⁸ Fray Blancas also started a dictionary of the Tagalog language which Fray Miguel Ruiz (+ 1630) continued later on up to the letter "D."⁹ It was under the inspiration of Father Blancas that the Filipino printer Tomás Pinpin produced a grammar to guide the native Tagalogs how to learn Spanish, the *Librong pagaaralan nang mga tagalog nang wikang kastila*.¹⁰

From the letter "D" to the letter "O" Fray Tomás Ramos (+ 1648/9) continued the *Diccionario de la lengua tagala*, the third author to work on it after Fathers Blancas and Ruiz. This was the work that was finally brought to completion by the Jesuits Noceda and Sanlúcar.

In the 19th century, Fray Benito Rivas (+ 1884) spoke pure Tagalog, as spoken by the people themselves. His speech greatly delighted the people, and his translations were much sought after by the learned.

Special research into the language was conducted by the Fr. Ramón Martínez Vigil (+ 1904), which was published as *La escritura propia de los tagalos y los antiguos alfabetos de Filipinas*. Likewise,

⁸ Totanes, *op. cit.*, IV.

⁹ Diego Aduarte, *Historia etc.* (Zaragoza, 1693), 412, 2; 605, 1; Mariano Velasco, *Ensayo bio-bibliográfico*, I, 287, 289. Retana Aparato, I, 347, III, 793, 854, 967, 1106.

¹⁰ Araceli Pons García, "First Books on the Philippine Philology," *The Varsitarian* (Manila), August 27, 1946, 5.

Bishop José Hevia de Campomanes (+ 1904) wrote two books which are excellent linguistic treatises: **Lecciones de gramática hispano-tagala** (edited twelve times in a short period), and **Gramática comparada de las lenguas que se hablan en Filipinas**.¹¹

V. **The Recollects.** Fray Diego de San Nicolás (+ 1788) was an excellent Tagalist. Although they have now disappeared, he wrote various books in the free hours left from his apostolic ministry.

Fray Eustaquio Moreno (+ 1901) was also another good Tagalist. Besides acting as Censor of various works written in Tagalog, he was a member of the Commission that passed judgment on works presented during literary contests. Together with Fray José Rodríguez, a Calced Augustinian, he added interesting notes to Volumes I and II of the **Varios**, a series of poetic works in Tagalog which Vicente Barrantes presented in the Philippine Exposition at Madrid in 1887.

Fray Toribio Minguela wrote, while he was the Recollect Procurator at the Court in Madrid, an **Ensayo de gramática hispano-tagala**. Simple, clear, well ordered, it was written for the lay Spanish reader who looked for an efficacious guide to learn Tagalog. The ancient **Artes**, based on the Latin syntax and written for priests who were engaged in the parochial ministry, did not completely fulfill this need. The grammar written by Fray Miguel served the purpose. It was printed in Manila by the **Establecimiento tipografico de Plana y Compañía** in 1878.¹²

¹¹ Velasco, **Op. cit.**, II, 168, 176-177; IV, 103; 446-447; 422, 423.

¹² Sadaba, **Catálogo** (Madrid, 1906), 140; 528; W. Retana, **Aparato**, I, 872-875.

HOMILETICS

I. BIBLICAL NOTES FOR HOMILIES

MSGR. MARIO BALTAZAR, O.P.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (December 2)

Theme 1: SALVATION THROUGH THE MESSIAH (Jer 33:14-16)

The three verses are part of what can be described as anthology on messianism. It is said to be work of a later redactor (also inspired) who re-uses Jeremiah's oracle on the future king (cf. 23:5-6) making however the following changes: (a) he mentions Jerusalem instead of Israel; (b) he gives the title "the Lord as our righteousness" to the city instead of the king. The historical context is the rebuilding of Jerusalem after the exile in Babylon.

The author calls attention to a very solemn proclamation he is about to make, namely that of the "righteous branch." This expression became a classic term for the Messiah. All of Israel will share in the blessings of the covenant promised by God — the peace and righteousness in the holy land. The word "righteousness" should be understood to include God's presence and action to save.

Salvation will be realized through the Messiah whose coming will bring about a new era. The future happiness is fixed not so much at the end of time as at the end of a particular time that has turned bad. Jeremiah and his disciple (the redactor) predict the restoration of David's dynasty. We, who know the full course of history and being witnesses of the end of revelation, see that Jesus fully accomplished this hope.

Theme 2: CHRIST'S PAROUSIA, AN INCENTIVE TO
HOLINESS

(I Th 3:12-14-2)

The letters to the Thessalonians do not have the doctrinal importance of the four Great Letters or the Captivity Letters. But being the earliest NT writings they give us a vivid picture of a young and fervent Christian community 20 years after the Ascension.

The letters presuppose in the Christians of Thessaly a doctrinal initiation of surprising clarity and amplitude. Aside from this there is an insistence for the Christians to live a moral life in expectation of the coming of Christ as Judge and Savior. The thought of the parousia is an incentive to live a holy life.

Our pericope contains an invocation of Paul who is conscious that his apostolate includes the duty to pray for his converts. Two requests are made: (1) an increase of love among the Thessalonians; (2) the attainment of the goal of Christian life — holiness. In both of these, Jesus is considered the source and author. He is the one who increases love for one another (v.12); he it is who establishes our hearts in holiness (v.130). Holiness here refers to likeness to God. Israel was called a holy people in as much as they belonged to God and bore a likeness to him.

Theme 3: CHRIST'S PAROUSIA, THE HOUR OF
REDEMPTION

(Lk 21:25-28,34-36)

The signs and cosmic upheavals were also mentioned in verse II. It is clear from St. Luke that they are not to be associated with any contemporary event or any near future moment. "Of that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only."

The glorious parousia of the Son of Man is described in terms largely taken from OT apocalyptic passages. The cosmic disturbances are a conventional part of OT imagery, which should not be taken in a crass literal sense. They are standard biblical expressions symbolizing great sorrows that are usually

associated with the approach of God's judgments (see Is 13:10.13; 34:4; Zech 12-14).

What Luke wanted here was to describe the manifest vindication of the Son of Man as something endowed with power and glory. Faith in the eschatological victory of Jesus offers strong support to persecuted and suffering Christians of every age. Jesus' final victory brings about the definite achievement of his mission, which is redemption. This word is rooted in the OT idea of liberation by God of his chosen people from distress by means of his powerful acts.

Luke concludes his description of the parousia with an exhortation to vigilance. Sudden trials will hit everyone, hence the need for individual watching. Everyone, too, will have his day in court in the parousia, since how a person lives now will determine the way he will "stand before the Son of Man."

FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION **(December 8)**

Theme 1: MAN'S ULTIMATE VICTORY.
(Gen 3:9-14.20)

These verses explain the divine punishment consequent on the fall of man and woman as recounted by the Yahwist tradition. The characteristic traits of the Y tradition include a special vocabulary, a stylistic elegance reflected in its colorful presentation of scenes and dialogues, a perceptive psychology, deep theological insights, and a bold use of anthropomorphism.

The serpent is introduced by the Yahwist author to symbolize the power hostile to man. Man's original state was one of innocence and friendship with God. Tempted by the serpent to achieve a state beyond his nature, man sinned. His sin produced many dire consequences, among which is the constant struggle, bothersome to man, between the forces of evil and himself.

In the ensuing struggle, man (i.e. the woman's seed) will gain the clearer victory. The optimism of Y tradition, another of its characteristic trait, is evident in this announcement of ultimate victory of man in this struggle. This promise is the first message of the good news (protoevangelion) of final vic-

tory. The note of optimism is based in the Yahwist's conviction of the saving acts of God in Israel's behalf. Later revelations will confirm this vague message of victory and specify the manner in which the victory will be attained.

The woman who before was so called because of her relation to man, was henceforth called Eve (hawwah) because of her relation to all the living. Sin has introduced death, but life continues. Woman was responsible for death, but she also brings forth life.

Theme 2: GOD'S PLAN OF A NEW BROTHERHOOD OF MEN

(Eph 1:3-6.11-12)

St. Paul here breaks into a hymn of praise to God for revealing his plan of salvation. It has a strong baptismal reminiscence in its reference to sonship, forgiveness of sins, incorporation into Christ, and the seal of the Spirit.

God's plan, hidden from the beginning of the world, is to create a messianic people of God, a new community of men uniting in Christ both Jew and Gentile, and erasing the impenetrable social and religious barriers that had previously divided mankind.

St. Paul's hymn starts with the traditional Semitic form of recognition or thanks giving to God, that of pronouncing a blessing and then following it with a list of God's favors or mighty deeds. The expression "in Christ", repeated over 30 times in this epistle, emphasizes the unity of men in Christ, the leader of the visible community to which they are incorporated.

God's choice of men whom to incorporate to Christ is not accidental but from all eternity. He destined these men for a selected brotherhood of sons to be saved through Christ. Salvation comes to them in and through a community in Christ, without however precluding the possibility of individual salvation by God through some other way. Verses 11 and 12 seem to imply that for the Apostle there always has been one people of God, the Jews, and that the messianic times have made it possible through Christ to associate all men with this people of God.

Theme 3: THE VIRGINAL MOTHERHOOD OF MARY
(Lk 1:26-38)

These verses constitute a part of what is commonly described as the Lucan Infancy Narrative. Matthew and John also have their own Infancy Narratives. These "Narratives" did not originally feature in the apostolic preaching (kerygma) inasmuch as the Apostles' ministry depended only on what they had seen as eyewitnesses. The "Narratives" emerged out of the endeavor to impart an ever fuller understanding of the redemptive work and words of Jesus.

It is difficult to categorize the Lucan Infancy Narrative within any known literary genre. It shares some feature of what is called "Midrash" but it does not follow the midrashic procedure of scriptural quotation and homiletic application in story form. Neither can this narrative be classified simply as "Haggadah" for this literary genre deals almost completely with fictional stories. It manifests, however, some of the stylistic touches of both midrash and haggadah.

The Lucan Infancy Narrative, bears the earmarks of a miniature gospel of redemption, and was not written primarily to satisfy a curiosity on the details of Jesus' infancy. Luke's Narrative may have originated at Jerusalem within the early post-Pentecostal days of Jewish Christianity. Many indications point to a second stage of its evolution within Johannine group. Could John have received the Infancy Narrative from Mary, which Luke eventually used to introduce the major work of his gospel?

Mary, saluted by the angel as full of grace, is the object of God's singular favors, in whom, more than anyone else in the OT and NT, God's messianic fulfillment is achieved through anticipation of Jesus' redemptive work. She has received more and greater blessings than all others.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
(December 9)

Theme 1: GOD WILL RESTORE THE GLORY OF JERUSALEM
(Bar 5:1-9)

The evidence seems to indicate that Baruch is the work of a number of unknown authors working well after the period

of the exile. We have a question of pseudo-epigraphy, a phenomenon common enough in the OT (e.g. Ct, Wis, Eccl) and paralleled in related profane literature.

Baruch is an example of edifying history in verse, whose authors aimed to interpret the past for the men of their day i.e., to edify. Sufficiently numerous examples of this sort of devise exist in the OT (e.g., Jdt and Est). Baruch used the history of the Exile to present to the Diaspora the reason for its distress, the source of its salvation, and the certainty of its restoration. The Jerusalem to be restored is not the Jerusalem after the Return from Exile, but the new Jerusalem of the end of time. The return of year 538 was the foreshadowing and guarantee of the great event to come.

The crown that Jerusalem is told to put on (v.2) has inscribed upon it the sacred name of God, while the conferring to Jerusalem of a new name (v.4) in a context such as the present one denotes not only the giving of the name but also the bestowal of the attributes therein mentioned.

Theme 2: PREPAREDNESS FOR THE DAY OF CHRIST (Phil 1:4-6.8-11)

This letter was written during Paul's imprisonment. The Christians at Philippi had sent him money for his needs. He writes to thank them for their generosity, expressing his warm affection to this cherished community which seems to have been his "joy and crown."

God is the prevenient author of all the good that the Philippians do, which will be rewarded with the glorious destiny of the Christian, namely to be "with the Lord." The parousia is often proposed by Paul as a motive of Christian ethical conduct.

Paul prays for their progress and growth in union with Christ, which brings about an increased personal knowledge of the Christian reality, marked by a refined and keen awareness of its meaning.

The offshoot of Christian growth and development is a status of uprightness before God, which one achieves not by oneself but by God.

Theme 3: A VOICE ANNOUNCING THE GLAD-TIDINGS
(Lk 3:1-6)

Luke was a careful historian; he respected his sources. For this pericope, his sources of information were a written memorandum (Q) of the sayings of Jesus, utilized by him and Matthew, the early kerygmatic discourses in Acts, and finally Mark himself. As he writes primarily for Gentile readers, he makes many changes in the Gospel tradition for their sake and seldom quotes the OT. However, he has a way of inferring the fulfillment of OT hopes and promises.

Luke, even as his sources, introduces the preaching of John the Baptist as inaugurating the messianic lifework (public ministry) of Jesus. Although he considers John as the last and the greatest of prophets in Israel, he clearly distinguishes him from the glorious messianic moment that begins with Jesus.

Thanks to Luke's mention of contemporary rulers during John's inaugural preaching, we have precise, chronological references for dating the ministry of Jesus. Jesus accordingly was baptized towards the end of 27 A.D., at a time when Palestine was arbitrarily divided by Rome and the high priesthood granted to the scheming family of Annas.

"The word of God fell upon John in the desert." Luke considers John as continuator of Jeremiah's role, on whom also the word of God fell, who was consecrated before birth, announced the eschatological judgment and messianic glory, and predicted the new and final covenant available even to the least of men. The Evangelist also brings in the OT theme of desert spirituality: the wilderness is the place where the Lord led Israel, and there alone with his people, formed a covenant of marriage bond.

John preaches a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sin. Some kind of inferior renewal that includes sorrow for misdemeanor is a requisite to obtain forgiveness of sin.

Finally, John is introduced in this pericope with the words of Deutero-Isaias (40:3-5). Dt-Is was describing the return from Babylonian Exile as a new Exodus, leading across another desert to a new and more glorious promised land. Luke depicts John as realizing the dreams of Dt-Is, since the Evangelist will point out that the new desert will be the trial and suffering of Jesus, through whose resurrection-ascension mankind will gain the promised land and the new Jerusalem.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
(December 16)

Theme 1: THE LORD'S COMING TO ZION FILLS HER WITH JOY
 (Zeph 3:14-18a)

The age in which Zephaniah lived and prophesied was a turbulent one. Sennacherib had taken 46 cities from Judah, which had thereafter fallen continually under Assyrian influence with disastrous effects on the religious life of the people. But after Ashurvanipal's death Assyria's hold on Judah declined, and hopes for a national restoration and religious reform quickly revived.

Zephaniah announces the coming of the day of the Lord, a day full of dread for all, including the chosen people who should — practice obedience, humility and repentance to survive the divine visitation. A "remnant" however will be left to enjoy the fruits of salvation.

Our pericope is an invitation for Zion to rejoice because her salvation is at hand. Having as leader the Lord himself, the nation need fear no enemy from within or without. As her most important citizen and savior, the Lord showers on her his affection in much the same way as a bridegroom to his bride. His coming to the city will be attended by joyous shouts and dancing.

Theme 2: THE LORD IS VERY NEAR
 (Phil 4:4-7)

Paul exhorts the Christians at Philippi, whom he considers his "joy and crown," and for whom he has but the most affectionate feelings, reciprocated by them in their thoughtful solicitude over his needs during his imprisonment.

Paul hopes to see the Lord's parousia. He shares his hopes with the Christians at Philippi, stating that the Lord's appearance should be the basis of their forbearance.

The peace of God which the ordinary mind of man cannot comprehend, or which surpasses all human efforts to attain it, and therefore must be prayed for, is like a sentinel that stands guard over the hearts and minds of Christians.

Theme 3: DEEDS OF REPENTANCE

(Lk 3:10-18)

Luke presents a sample of John's preaching (good news) which he seems to have repeated on other occasions (see V. 18). The Evangelist does not fail to point out the universal aspect of redemption in the Baptist's apostolate.

To the publicans and their bodyguards, John proposes a practical spirituality and not a high mysticism. He acknowledges the superiority of Jesus' baptism over his own. Jesus is the great liberator in the war against Satan. The word "mighty" is often used in Scripture for the leader of the struggle against evil.

Regarding John's statement about Jesus baptising with the Holy Spirit and fire, it is difficult to decide whether fire (a prominent biblical theme) should be identified with the Spirit's purifying and sanctifying action or, instead, adds a new dimension of eschatological judgment.

The image of winnowing wheat is again a familiar biblical usage to signify segregation (purification) and fiery judgment. The Palestinian farmer separates the grain from the chaff by tossing the crushed stalks of wheat into the air. The chaff is then gathered and later burned.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
(December 23)

Theme 1: THE MESSIAH COMES FROM BETHLEHEM

(Mic 5:2-5a)

Micah's prophetic activity extended during the reign of the three monarchs of Judah — Joatham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. There was a time of insecurity with the ugly head of Assyrian domination threatening the horizon. Hence, Micah's oracle on the promised Messiah was most welcome.

Micah was influenced by Isaiah, Hosea and Amos. Micah repeats the truths they proclaimed, but in his own way. Denouncing vigorously the social evils of his day, he stresses greatly God's anger but doesn't fail to mention God's mercy.

Micah foretells that the Messiah will spring from the royal line of David. He delineates the qualities of the future monarch. Until the new king brings deliverance, Israel will be subject to other nations. The Israelites awaiting anxiously redemption are likened to a woman in labor. They are extremely confident that, with the Messiah leading them, they will overcome their enemies.

Theme 2: HE CAME TO DO GOD'S WILL
(Heb 10:5-10)

Many scholars agree that this epistle was intended for Jewish Christians, though there are good reasons to assume it was written for converts from paganism. The author's main pre-occupation seems to show that the sacrificial cult of the OT as well as the covenant itself were replaced by Jesus, and his sacrifice. Since God has revealed himself in Jesus, the insistence on OT cult would imply falling away from the living God with all its dire consequences.

The author of the epistle attributes to the Son at his incarnation the words of Ps 40:7-9a. The meaning of the Ps is that God prefers obedience to sacrifice: it is not a repudiation of the ritual but a statement of its relative inferiority. The Ps is peculiarly applicable to Jesus (*sensus plenior* perhaps) since Jesus' Obedience to God's will was expressed by his voluntary offering of self in death.

In verse 9 the author proceeds one degree farther: not only was the OT cult inferior, but it has been positively repudiated by God who prefers the self-offering of Jesus that became the source of the forgiveness of sin, and of salvation. Jesus came to do God's will. The will was that he offered his body, the one God prepared for him, in death.

Theme 3: THE VISITATION
(Lk 1:39-45)

The Holy Spirit occupies a prominent place in Luke's Gospel (Acts also) that it has been called the "Gospel of the Holy Spirit." The Spirit spreads joy and peace among those who listen to him. Luke wrote the "Gospel of Messianic Joy."

Hence we shall not be surprised that the present pericope exudes in the mention of the Holy Spirit and the joy that he spreads abroad.

Mary visits her kinswoman to offer assistance and seek advice. At the sound of her greeting, the infant in Elizabeth's womb leapt for JOY and she herself was filled with the HOLY SPIRIT. Both the action of the infant and Elizabeth's words of praise are highly reminiscent of as many OT messianic references.

CHRISTMAS
(December 25)
AT MIDNIGHT

Theme 1: THE PRINCE OF PEACE
(Is 9:2-4, 6-7)

No one in the OT has spoken out more openly than Isaiah in his condemnation of Judah's pride, self-indulgence, and unfeeling injustice towards the poor. He was convinced that God's anger would strike down the nation in judgment. In fact divine judgment was at hand in the form of the Assyrian armies.

Yet Judah remains "God's people," and for this reason Isaiah never believed that the nation would be completely wiped out and the divine promises cancelled. There would be a "remnant" that would inherit the promises given to David.

From this faith stems Isaiah's conviction that Yahweh, faithful to his promises, would raise up a king from David's line whose rule of peace and justice would replace the faithless and vacillating service of the kings who ruled from David's throne. Isaiah's hope was fulfilled many centuries later when God sent his Son to establish his reign of peace and justice over the whole world.

Many scholars believe that the present oracle is a liturgical piece taken from the ceremony of a royal accession. Every time a Davidic king came to the throne and was hailed as an adopted son of God there was cause for rejoicing. On this occasion the promises of an eternal covenant with David were reaffirmed, and hopes were raised for that ideal king who would perfectly realize the dynastic ideal, and who would introduce

the definitive era of peace and justice. Christian tradition has seen in Christ the fulfillment of this promise.

Theme 2: THE GRACE OF REDEMPTION
(Tit 2: 11-14)

A pastoral letter, this one intends to instruct Titus on the direction of the Christian community at Crete. The present pericope deals on the manifestation of the salvific grace of God in the incarnation and redemptive work of Christ.

The pericope contains an expression of Paul's belief in the divinity of Christ. He is the blessed hope that we await. Blessedness belongs properly to God by reason of his perfect, eternal, and unchangeable nature. God allows man to participate in this beatitude, constituting Christ as men's hope and means to attain happiness. The happiness will be ours in the manifestation of Christ, who is called here openly "great God and Savior."

Even the word "manifestation" (GK *epiphaneia*) is used in connection with divine honors. It was frequently employed in reference to the "manifestations" of pagan emperors who falsely claimed divine honors. Paul may have used the term out of opposition to these "manifestations."

Theme 3: A SAVIOR IS BORN
(Lk 2:1-14)

A Roman census was responsible for the privileged couple to direct their steps towards Bethlehem where Mary delivered her "first-born" son, the expectation of centuries of longing and prayer. That Jesus is called "first-born" (GK *prototokos*) in no way demands that Mary had other children by Joseph. The word is consistently used throughout the OT for the child who will continue the name and receive the double portion of property of the ancestral line. In certain cases the name carried strong Messianic significance; through the first-born the patriarchal blessings or religious heritage of Israel were transmitted.

Through the ministry of the angels, the good news was proclaimed and God's praise was sung. The good news centered on the fulfillment of the OT promises about a Davidic

Messiah, who is at the same time Lord and Savior. Men of good-will, i.e. on whom God chooses to bestow his favors are recipients of peace as God's glory is made manifest in his act of mercy and redemption.

AT DAWN

Theme 1: JERUSALEM, GOD'S DELIGHT (Is 62:11-12)

Most Catholic scholars maintain that Chs. 40-66 of the book of Isaiah were written by a different author, living some 150 years later during the Babylonian exile. He probably belonged to an Isaiah school of religious thought, for we hear some echoes of the great prophet's thoughts. Deutero-Isaiah or Dt-Is (as the scholars named him) may have been principally responsible for the preservation and arrangement of his master's "book", keeping it alive by adapting its message to the needs of the Exile.

Dt-Is saw a people discouraged, dazed, and destitute. They must be consoled, not punished; their faith must be sustained, not further tried. Because their situation seemed humanly hopeless, Dt-Is realized that God must intervene as king and creator of a new world.

The songs of Dt-Is reveal a man pensive, earnest, sincere and sympathetic. Our present pericope is part of a song which could be titled "Jerusalem, God's delight." Although it is difficult to determine who sings this song, most commentators consider the entire poem to have been spoken by Dt-Is, who enthuses over the messianic Jerusalem that will dawn the moment that the Savior comes and God's people become fully obedient and trustful.

Theme 2: HE SAVED US IN HIS MERCY (Tit 3:3-7)

Verse 3 describes the general condition of humanity before the coming of Christ: all men, Jews and Gentiles, were in the same deplorable state of sinfulness, disobedience and viciousness. With the coming of Christ a great change has come over mankind. Baptism referred to here as a bath of regeneration and

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renewal in the Holy Spirit, brings about a new life. We are made just, and became heirs of eternal life.

Theme 3: THE SHEPHERDS FIND THE SAVIOR (Lk 2:15-20)

The shepherds, the destitute class of the population, are the first to receive the message of salvation in the appearance of Jesus among men. They set out to verify the truth of the message, and they find the babe in a manger. Jesus was born in one of the caves in the hills around Bethlehem. These caves were at times used as homes for families by adding a lean-to at the entrance of the cave. The livestock ordinarily rested inside the cave, hence the presence of mangers.

ON THE DAY

Theme 1: ALL THE EARTH SAW GOD'S SALVATION (Is 52:7-10)

The pericope is part of an enthronement hymn which Dt-Is entones in honor of Jerusalem. The throne room of God, Jerusalem is assured of salvation to be accomplished by her king.

While her enemies scorn her as no less better than a dead corpse, a shout rings out from the mountain ridges. A messenger runs telling the good news that the Lord himself has come to save Jerusalem from her sufferings.

This shout is repeated by the watchmen who guard the ruined walls of Jerusalem. As the message is absorbed by the people and the land, they see directly before their eyes the Lord restoring Zion.

Theme 2: GOD SPOKE TO US THROUGH HIS SON (Hb 1:1-6)

God's speaking to men in the past is contrasted to his speaking to us of the final age, not in the sense that the former way concerned the announcement of truths unconnected with history while the latter involved deeds. But in this sense, while the the OT revelation was predominantly a prophetic interpretation of certain events of Israel's history as acts of God, the

revelation of God by his Son is primarily the manifestation of his saving purpose in respect to mankind through the coming of Jesus and the eternal redemption achieved through his death and exaltation.

By his exaltation Jesus inherited a more excellent name than the angels. The reason for introducing the superiority of Jesus to the angels is connected with the purpose of the letter to the Hebrews: the addressees are in danger of falling away from the faith. The consequences of that would be more fearful than what the Hebrews suffered in disobeying the mosaic revelation. The former was revealed by the Son, while the latter employed the ministry of the angels. The Son, through whom the final word of God was spoken, is superior to the angels, mediators of the Law.

Theme 3: THE WORD BECAME FLESH (Jn 1:1-18)

John begins his gospel with a "genealogy," like Matthew and Luke, but here it is a history of divine, not human origins. He goes on to show that Jesus is truly the creative Word of God who already existed at the beginning of time. The Word existed along with God: a distinction in Godhead is asserted. Unlike created things, of which Jn is about to speak, there never was a time when the Word was not.

Through the Word all things came into being. Creation, in distinction to the Word, came into being, and the Word is the cause for its existence. Life and Light are the other attributes of the Word.

John now reaches the climax of his Prologue in relating the ultimate manifestation of the Word. And what a paradoxical climax! The Word of God manifests itself in what at first glance seems incompatible with God, namely in the "flesh" which implies all that is transitory, mortal, and imperfect. John had deliberately chosen a term (flesh) connoting man in his concrete, fallen state, to express the mystery of incarnation and redemption, by which the Word became man in the fullest possible sense, except sin.

The mission of the Word become flesh into the world is to enable men to become God's children, to share in the divine

life. Although the Law, in which God revealed himself, was God's gift through Moses, the fulness of God's revelation has come only through Jesus Christ. And although God was an invisible God and could not be seen by man, yet in the incarnate Word God has been revealed completely. Only the Son sees the Father; through the Son, we, too, see God with the eyes of faith.

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY (December 30)

Theme 1: HONOR YOUR PARENTS TO HONOR GOD
(Sir 3:3-7.14-17a)

The book where this pericope was taken, is written circa 180 by one author who signed his name as Jesus, son of Eleazar, son of Sirach. Born and bred in Jerusalem, ben Sirach was a highly respected scribe and teacher, a man of culture and means, who traveled much in his life possibly as an ambassador to foreign courts. In later years he ran a school in Jerusalem, imparting to youth his deep knowledge and love of the Scriptures as well as the practical wisdom he had acquired empirically.

Among the particular virtues implied in the service to God, ben Sirach gives precedence to duties towards parents. In a truly moralistic way, he comments on the commandments of Ex 20:12 concerning the honor due to parents, and goes beyond Ex by promising atonement for sin. The traditional blessings for one who keeps the fourth commandment, are enumerated by ben Sirach.

Theme 2: FAMILY LIFE IN THE LORD
(Col 3:12-21)

We have in this letter a magnificent sketch of Christ in his full role as Lord of the universe. Our pericope offers for consideration the general principles for a life in Christ and certain applications of the same for the Christian home.

The pericope could very well have been an early baptismal instruction in compendious form. The "putting on" of the new man, representing the life of Christ himself, suggests a bap-

tismal symbolism. The pericope describes the Christian community life which a member embraces through his baptism.

Christians must recognize Jesus as Lord both in word and in action. In words, they will show this recognition best when they call upon him in prayer as Lord. In action, by personal engagement to him, by conforming one's life to the pattern that he has left.

Theme 3: THE BOY JESUS IN THE TEMPLE
(Lk 2:41-52)

The Law prescribed a pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the three major feasts of the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. Custom however excused those who lived at a distance from all feasts except the Passover. In these pilgrimages entire villages would join.

Luke relates the incident in a reserved and unassuming manner showing how Jesus acted as any normal boy would act in similar circumstances. He stresses likewise the connatural condition accompanying the growth of the boy not only in his physical stature but also in his spiritual qualities, singling out in particular his obedience to his parents.

II. HOMILIES

MSGR. MARIO BALTAZAR, O.P.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT (December 2)

**Unified Theme: REDEMPTION AND HOLINESS THROUGH
CHRIST'S PAROUSIA**

One may curiously ask why Mother Church to prepare us for Christmas (that is what the time of Advent is for) treats us to a Gospel reading (Luke's Ch. 21) that mentions horrendous signs and cosmic upheavals. What have the charms of Christmas to do with the cataclysms of the world's end?

We need the penetrating insight of the Evangelist into the mystery of Christmas in order not to be carried by "contradictory" appearances. For Luke, the Infancy Narrative is a miniature gospel of redemption. When he contemplated the truth of Christmas, he saw not only a helpless Babe but a glorious Judge and Lord.

Redemption, or the overturning of evil, was brought about by the Messiah (Jer Ch. 33). A new era has been definitely established. Jesus' victory is final. His Judgment is conclusive. He meant to liberate his chosen ones through his powerful acts. While the forces of evil grow and whimper in sorrow at the spectre of Christ's parousia, the men of good-will (on whom God chooses to bestow his favors) raise up their heads because their liberation is at hand.

So holy Mother Church in presenting us the Last Judgment scene at Advent time, does not intend to strike terror into our hearts (this is for the evil people) but to stir hopes in our hearts on the contrary.

St. Paul, steeped in the same spirit as Luke (or was it Luke who learned from him?) does not regard Christ's parousia

as a reason for quaking with fear, but as an incentive for holiness (1 Th. 3).

FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
(December 8)

Unified Theme: THE VIRGINAL MOTHER OF GOD
BRINGS ABOUT MEN'S ULTIMATE
VICTORY

Mary is saluted by God's angel as full of grace. In her God has showered his favors as to nobody else in the OT or NT. Among these favors are: that she should conceive in her womb, without the intervention of man, the Son of God; and that she herself be conceived without original sin in order to be a future worthy Mother of God.

In becoming the Mother of Christ, Mary became as a consequence the Mother of men, those especially whom God has chosen from all eternity to incorporate to the mystical body of his Son, i.e. the messianic people of God. For thus was God's plan from the beginning (we should say from all eternity), namely that he was to create a new community of men who would be brothers to one another, pulling down all barriers of race, religion and racial distinction. Salvation would come to them as it came to the Virgin Mother through redemptive acts of Christ.

As God's salvation descends upon the new People of God, where Mary occupies a singular place as she is a singular recipient of the blessing of redemption, the *protoevangelion* (or the first announcement of salvation) is gradually and surely being fulfilled. Mary's children achieve victory over the forces of evil, against whom mankind had been pitted in punishment of its own transgression.

Of all her children, Mary's one and only true Son, Jesus Christ, achieved an absolute victory over Satan, thus fulfilling God's first promise of ultimate victory of mankind.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
(December 9)

Unified Theme: **THROUGH OBEDIENCE AND WATCHFULNESS, ONE WILL SHARE IN THE GLORY OF THE MESSIAH**

John the Baptist announces the glad-tidings of the Messiah's impending arrival. He calls his listeners to repentance as a necessary condition to sharing in the blessings the Messiah was to bring.

The Messiah would lead his people back to the new promised land from their captivity of sin. This victorious march through the desert of trial and sufferings towards freedom, will be as certain as the trek of the ancient Hebrews into their promised land after their exodus from Egypt.

Just as the recalcitrant and the unrepentant among the people of Israel were excluded from entering the land of promise, so now obedience and repentance are the requisites for sharing in the blessings of the Messiah.

Holy Mother Church is announcing (remembering) to her children the mystery of the coming of the Savior. She wishes all her children to participate in the joys that his arrival would bring. Like Paul, she presents the parousia of the Lord as a motive for reconciliation with God and repentance for misdemeanor.

She also would like her children to be the bearers of the name of God, and that to be worthy of this they must practise righteousness and godliness. She longs for that day when her glory will be restored like a new Jerusalem, as God gathers her children from east to west, and personally leads them joyfully to her.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
(December 16)

Unified Theme: **AS THE LORD DRAWS NEAR LET US PERFORM DEEDS OF REPENTANCE TO SHARE IN THE JOYS OF HIS PAROUSIA.**

Peace is a commodity very hard to get these days. Governments and peoples spend money, time and effort to bring it

about, and to consolidate the possession of it. The price is worth all their efforts, but nonetheless peace is an elusive item.

Paul reminds us that the ordinary mind of man cannot comprehend peace, and that all human efforts to attain to it are in the end fruitless. Peace is a blessing of God that must be prayed for. These considerations are not an invitation to laziness. Paul wants us to remember that God is the source of peace, and consequently he who would enjoy it must abide with the stipulations of God.

Among these are the deeds of repentance a men must perform. Like the Palestinian farmer, whose manner of winnowing is described by the Baptist, we must separate the evil in us from what is good in order to eliminate forever the former. A baptized Christian is committed to that duty of purification. The imminent arrival of the Savior should intensify in us the feeling for such a need.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (December 23)

Unified Theme: **CONSTITUTED A PRIESTLY, PROPHETIC
AND ROYAL PEOPLE BY THE MESSIAH,
WE ABOUND IN JOY AND THE HOLY
SPIRIT.**

Like a woman in labor, Israel awaits its deliverance by the Messiah. When that will take place, the pangs of labors will give way to shouts of joy. Israel is as sure of this deliverance as it is aware of its unique status before God since it is his priestly and royal people

And true to his faithfulness, God fulfills his promises. He constitutes a new people; on whom he bestows a priestly, prophetic and royal dignity, having Jesus as its pattern. As a priestly people, we have the duty to offer ourselves and our activities as an act of adoration to the Almighty. Hence not dissimilarly to what Jesus did when he offered his body as sacrifice to God.

As a royal nation, we are confident, under the leadership of our Messiah to overcome the forces of evil. We must struggle against the sense of pessimism that is trying to engulf the

world and the Church. Our royal dignity prevents us from giving in to such feelings.

Finally as a prophetic race, we are expected to give clear and simple witness to God's presence in the world. Like Mary who bore the child Jesus in her womb, spread the joy that was fontally in her and was instrumental for the communication of the Spirit to others, no dissimilar role is demanded of us.

CHRISTMAS

(December 25)

AT MIDNIGHT

Unified Theme: THE SALVIFIC GRACE OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE ON THE DAY OF HIS BIRTH.

God's ways are not man's ways. He chose a race to be his people with whom he concluded a covenant of eternal friendship. His people reneging on their obligation, God could have dissolved the covenant. He didn't do so, however, but while rejecting the majority of his people, he reposed the blessings of his promises on a "remnant".

It is this "remnant" which fostered the hopes that God would raise up a king from David's line who would take the place of the many other unworthy kings who were responsible for the overthrow of the nation. This king would establish forever a reign of peace and righteousness.

As happened, this king, although of David's line, was also of divine origin — in Paul's words, "great God and Savior". His appearance, or better his "epiphany" (manifestation), a word which connotes divine honors, was done in a manner that only a divine power and mind could have imagined.

A mortal dignitary would have arranged for the trappings of pomposity to announce the birth of a son. God chose a cave in the lustreless town of Bethlehem as the theatre for his Son's manifestation. Born of a poor mother in a poor surroundings, this babe is hailed as the Prince of Peace by Heaven's legions of angels.

AT DAWN

Unified Theme: IN THE NEW JERUSALEM, THE POOR IN SPIRIT DISCOVER THEIR SAVIOR.

At dawn, light and darkness intemarry to produce a pleasant sensation, an invigorating experience that promises a fruitful day full of adventures and surprises. Dawn lacks the brightness of day that sometimes dazes the eyes; on the other hand, it is spared of the frightfulness or emptiness of a dark night. Dawn is the harbinger of fresh hopes in the life of a men.

Something similar do we experience at the birth of our Savior: it does not have the dazzling brightness of the transfiguration on Mt. Tabor which sent Peter and his companions face-prone on the ground; it however is spared of the darkness of the Crucifixion which covered Mt. Calvary with its mantle of gloom and forebodings.

Christ's birth was the pleasant light of dawn, that enabled the humble and poor shepherds to unashamedly scan the face of a sleeping babe and hear the sweet melody of angels proclaiming God's goodness upon the men of His choice. It covered the new Jerusalem (i.e. the Church) with its protecting mantle of peace and righteousness, as it assures its inhabitants with the blessing of eternal life.

AT DAY

Unified Theme: THE WORLD'S SAVIOR IS GOD'S WORD BECOME FLESH.

God planned to save the world which He had lovingly created and which had ungratefully repudiated him. He meant to unfold his economy of universal salvation through the prophetic prediction of his salvific intentions for Jerusalem. This city, considered by its enemies hardly better than a rotting corpse, will be preserved by no less than God himself. Assuredly, if it was God's will, an angel could save Jerusalem. But God will settle for no less a savior than a divine one.

And so God's Word, through whom the world was created, and by whom the world would be re-created became flesh i.e. man, in all that word meant of finiteness, of concreteness, of imperfection, excepting of course sin. The Word became part of

the world, a member, a citizen of the world so that he may restore it to whence it came — God!

FEAST OF HOLY FAMILY

(December 30)

Unified Theme: THE HOLY FAMILY, MODEL FOR
CHRISTIAN FAMILIES

Today's feast is an excellent instruction in Christian family life. Parents have in Mary and Joseph their models to follow; while children and teen-agers could pattern their conduct after that of Jesus.

Jesus, while acting and growing up normally as any other boy did, showed a correct sense of values. He wouldn't let even the most understandable sentimental reasons prevent him from acknowledging the supreme rights of his Father. From this stem his fidelity to the ordinary duties of temple worship, and his keen interest in religious matters.

Mary and Joseph took care of their "gift-trust" in a manner that Christians parents could hold up for their own imitation and inspiration. While stating their legitimate rights over the child, for which they expected the normal consideration, Mary and Joseph knew how discreetly to withdraw them in favor of God's own right when they saw these clearly being put forward. While children are expected to acknowledge the rights of parents, these in turn should respect the rights of God.

A REMINDER ON

ST. PETER PENCE

Bishop's Residence
P.O. Box 55
Baguio City, B-202
Philippines

October 22, 1973

Rev. Fr. Director
Boletin Ecclesiastico
Santo Tomas University
Manila

Reverend and dear Father:

May I ask your kindness to make mention in one of the issues of the Boletin Ecclesiastico of the obligation to have the collections in all the parishes and churches in the Philippines during all the masses on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8 of each year, for ST. PETER PENCE. This was decided by the Bishops' Conference of the Philippines in 1971 and again stressed during the Bishops' Conference of July 1972.

With sincere thanks.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

W. BRASSEUR, C.I.C.M.
Vicar Apostolic of the Mt. Prov.
Chairman of the National
Commission on the Liturgy

EVENTS AND INFORMATIONS

VATICAN DIPLOMATS CONVENE

VATICAN CITY — A three-day meeting of chiefs of mission of the Holy See and top-ranking Vatican Curia prelates took place in mid-September at Frascati in the outskirts of Rome. It was a low-key meeting, with only 33 (less than one third) of the Holy See's nuncios, pro-nuncios, apostolic delegates and accredited observers present.

The purpose of the meeting was not to question the present direction of Vatican diplomatic approaches, but how the papal diplomat may better represent the Pope with both the nations to which he is accredited and to the local hierarchies of the Church.

Major policy lines were reviewed and discussed, not questioned, since these lines were laid down by the Pope himself within months of acceding to the pontificate in June 1963. Pope Paul implemented and strongly supported the initial attempts of his predecessor, Pope John XXIII, to establish contact with East Europe and the Soviet Union. Under Pope Paul, the Vatican's "extraordinary affairs" branch of the Secretariat of State was formed into the Council for Public Affairs, headed by Archbishop Agostino Casaroli who negotiated successfully in the past with several countries of Eastern Europe for better and improved Church-State relations.

During the meeting, Pope Paul personally addressed the participating Vatican diplomats. He was reported to have stressed the "personal" representation side of their mission as "his" representatives. He was further reported to have emphasized that the Church must make its presence felt to an ever-greater extent in mundane affairs which concern the spirit, that is, the moral attitudes of peoples.

The meeting was moderated by Archbishop Domenico Enrici, former Apostolic Delegate to Great Britain and recently named Inspector of Pontifical Diplomacy.

THE POPE MEETS THE DALAI LAMA

VATICAN CITY—The Dalai Lama, exiled Tibetan Buddhist leader, was received by Pope Paul VI in a 30-minute meeting last September 30. The Dalai Lama and the Pope exchanged wishes for greater brotherhood in the world and an increase of respect for all religions.

Addressing his visitor as "Your Holiness", Pope Paul said: "You come to us from Asia, the cradle of ancient religions and human traditions which are rightly held in deep veneration. The Catholic Church sincerely respects these ways of conduct and those teachings of other religions which mirror the ray of eternal truth enlightening all men".

At a press conference after the audience, the Dalai Lama said he and the Pope discussed the benefits of accord among differing religions and the importance of love and brotherhood in the world.

The Dalai Lama dates his spiritual legacy to the 14th century when a reformed version of Buddhism was founded in Tibet by a Buddhist monk who gained the title of Dalai Lama, meaning universal superior.

Before the audience the Dalai Lama was escorted on a two-hour tour of the Vatican by Cardinal Sergio Pignedoli, president of the Vatican's Secretariat for Non-Christians.

COUNCIL OF THE LAITY MEETING

VATICAN CITY—Twenty-five members and consultants of the Vatican's Council of the Laity met in Rome on the first week of October for a series of meetings to discuss problems facing the laity today and to convey their views to top officials of the Vatican.

The problems of promoting a "mood of reconciliation" during the Holy Year in a world torn by social, economic and political discontent was one of the principal subjects for this year's plenary meeting of the Council.. Questions were asked in abundance about the relevance of the Holy Year to the Christian life today. Representatives from America, for example, asked how will it be possible to

establish a mood of reconciliation in political and social situations which call for radical change.

Some of the meetings were held jointly with the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace. During these meetings discussion centered on Christianity and politics and on how a Christian can make himself felt and heard in the present-day world.

Another subject on this year's agenda was the contribution that the Council of the Laity can make to the 1974 world Synod of Bishops discussion on evangelization.

The Council of the Laity began work on a statement of policy along those lines that will be added eventually to the total preparation for the 1974 Synod. The statement, still in draft form, is expected to be completed by the end of February next year.

ZEN AND CHRISTIAN PRAYER

SAN FRANCISCO — "Recall how the disciples said to Jesus: Teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples to pray. They expected spiritual leaders to be masters of prayer. Now the sad fact is that, while Catholic priests and nuns are teaching all kinds of things from botany to business English, not many are teaching people how to pray. Zen can teach us how to pray".

This statement was made by Fr. William Johnston, a Jesuit on the faculty of Sophia University in Tokyo, who taught about Zen — a school of Buddhism that seeks enlightenment through meditation — at the University of San Francisco summer school.

To prove his claims about Zen, Fr. Johnston asked his students to come to class an hour early each day to "sit" in Zen-style meditation. "You can't just hear about Zen or read about Zen — you have to experience it to understand the benefits".

Fr. Johnston helped found a centre in Tokyo where Japanese Christians attend Mass and practise Zen-style meditative prayer. The Zen master who gives instruction is a Japanese Jesuit. Japanese Christians who begin practising Zen often report that they now read familiar Bible passages with new and deeper understanding. They also begin to enjoy a more "full-bodied", intuitive communion with God. Fr. Johnston adds: "Even non-Christian Zen monks are coming to see the Catholic Church as the only institution which may be able to capture the precious gift of Zen and pass it on to posterity".