

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

MESSAGE FOR WORLD VOCATIONS DAY

Paul VI

A PASTORAL APPROACH TO THE VOCATION APOSTOLATE

CBCP Commission on Vocations

INTERVENTIONS ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS OF WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE

Holy See Delegation

ON TWO BOOKS OF HANS KUNG

S. Cong. for the Doctrine of the Faith

THE TEACHING OF JESUS AND THE APOSTOLIC KERYGMA

Basilio P. Balajadia

NEW RITES FOR THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Herman J. Graf, S.V.D.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	162	THEOLOGIAN'S ARE NOT INFALLIBLE
	163	IN THIS ISSUE
DOCUMENTATION		
• Paul VI	165	MESSAGE FOR WORLD VOCATIONS DAY
• CBCP Commission on Vocations	168	A PASTORAL APPROACH TO THE VOCATION APOSTOLATE
• Paul VI	179	ADDRESS TO PARTICIPANTS OF WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE
• Holy See Delegation	188	INTERVENTIONS AT WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE
• S. Cong. of the Doctrine of Faith	192	DECLARATION ON TWO BOOKS OF PROF. HANS KÜNG
BIBLE STUDY		
• Basilio P. Balajadia	195	THE TEACHING OF JESUS AND THE APOSTOLIC KERYGMA
LITURGY		
• Herman J. Graf, S.V.D.	201	NEW RITES FOR THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE
COMMUNICATION	219	ON COMMUNION IN THE HAND
HERE AND THERE	222	PHILIPPINE AND FOREIGN NEWSBRIEFS
OUR MOTHER	226	FACTS RELATED TO THE VENERATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY IN THE PHILIPPINES — II
HOMILETICS	228	I. BIBLICAL NOTES
	234	II. HOMILIES FOR JUNE
BOOKS	239	SHORT NOTICES ON BOOKS

RP Food Conservation Year 191 • Directors of Vocations in the Philippines (DVP) 194 • Rice-throwing Prohibited in Marriages 225 •

EDITORIAL

Theologians are not infallible

On February 15 this year the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a Declaration on two books of Professor Hans Küng, a Swiss Catholic priest who teaches theology at Germany's Tübingen University. The two books, *Die Kirche* (The Church) and *Unfehlbar? Eine Anfrage* (Infallibility? An Inquiry), according to the Sacred Congregation, "contain certain opinions which, in varying degree, are opposed to the doctrine of the Catholic Church that must be professed by all the faithful."

In particular, the Declaration singled out three points in Professor Küng's writings which are incompatible with defined dogma, namely: his doubts about infallibility in the Church as defined by Vatican Council I and confirmed by Vatican Council II; his opinion on the Magisterium of the Church by which he opposes *Lumen Gentium*, 25, and *Dei Verbum*, 10, which affirm, respectively, that Bishops in the Church are "authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the authority of Christ", and that "the task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed down, has been entrusted exclusively to the teaching office of the Church"; and his opinion that the Eucharist can be validly consecrated, at least in cases of necessity, by baptized persons not in priestly Orders.

Notwithstanding the serious character of these opinions the Sacred Congregation limited itself to a *Monitum* or warning, by which it admonished him "not to continue teaching these opinions" and reminded him "that ecclesiastical authority has granted him permission to teach sacred theology in the spirit of the doctrine of the Church, but not opinions that subvert this doctrine or call it to question."

The restraint of the Sacred Congregation is all the more admirable because its decision came after seven years of consideration and after it had, in May 6, 1971, July 12, 1971, and July 4, 1973, asked Professor Küng to explain how his opinions were not in contradiction with Catholic doctrine. The Professor refused to comply with the requests. Reportedly he stipulated for open hearings and what he considered as "due process".

The Sacred Congregation's meekness contrasts sharply with Professor Küng's arrogant reaction. Reportedly, he said, "I will not

tolerate being prevented from pursuing my theological services to my fellow man."

So here we have a case of a man — a Catholic priest — who has no qualms in attacking the infallibility of the Pope and yet refuses to consider seriously, even for a moment, that he himself might be mistaken.

The trouble is that Professor Hans Küng has become immensely popular among "progressive" theology students because of his attacks on Catholic beliefs. Thanks mostly to him, for many people today determining who is who in Theology is largely a popularity contest.

History tells us that truly great theologians are not the popular ones but the faithful ones who built up rather than attacked the faith of the Church.

In This Issue

Vocations, Food, Penance, are the themes of this issue. Are they in any way connected? Certainly. The middle theme provides the connecting link.

To feed God's people the "ministries" and forms of witness provided by lay people, no matter how numerous and active they may be, are not enough. The ministry of the priest and the witness of consecrated persons remain indispensable. Hence the Holy Father says in his **Message for the World Day for Vocations**: "If the problem of vocations were neglected, there would be a very serious danger for the church."

Happily the Church in the Philippines has undertaken a **Pastoral Approach to the Vocation Apostolate**. While emphasizing the need for prayer and theological deepening, it also tackles organizational problems and gears for well planned and persevering activities to attract and foster vocations.

While "the harvest is rich but the labourers are few" in the spiritual order, the opposite is true in the material sphere: the labourers are many but the harvest is poor. Yet this need not be so. The Holy Father said in his **Address to Participants of the World Food Conference**: "The threat of hunger and the burden of malnutrition are not an inevitable destiny. In this crisis nature is not unfaithful to man." The food crisis is just a symptom of "a crisis of civilization and of solidarity." Modern civilization has tagged the highest

value to "the quest for mere economic success deriving from the large profits of industry, with a consequential almost total abandonment of the agricultural sector, and the accompanying neglect of its highest human and spiritual values." The Holy Father uses the term "crisis of solidarity" to designate the injustice and selfishness of the rich who refuse to lift a finger for the equitable distribution of resources. When he touches on the right of all men to sufficient food he says that it is "based on the fact that all the goods of the earth are destined primarily for universal use for the subsistence of all men, before any individual appropriation. Christ based the judgment of each human being on respect for this right (cfr. Mt. 25:31 ff.)." In other words, the right to private property cannot be used as an argument to prevent society from taking drastic measures to solve the crisis.

Penance, apparently has nothing to do with food. But as we just pointed out, the root cause of the food crisis is injustice — lack of solidarity with one's brothers. The sacrament of Penance (Reconciliation) helps a man regain this solidarity. In his discussion of the *New Rites for the Sacrament of Penance* Fr. Graf, following K. Rahner, points out that "reconciliation with the Church is the 'res et sacramentum' for the forgiveness of sins in the sacrament of Penance." This, of course, is balanced by the equally important facts that sin is not only an offense against our fellowmen but, in the first place, an offense against God, and that the Sacrament of Penance, like all the other sacraments, effects an encounter of man with Christ in his Paschal Mystery. All these doctrinal points are given a practical or pastoral dimension in the new rites.

We hope that this issue of our publication will give readers food for thought and for a more vigorous Christian life.

MESSAGE OF THE MOST HOLY FATHER FOR THE WORLD DAY FOR VOCATIONS APRIL 20, 1975

Dear sons and daughters of the Church

"The harvest is rich but the labourers are few" (Mt. 9:37; Lk. 10:2).

Surely none of you is unaware of the burning relevance of these words of the Lord Jesus.

It is a fact that you all know: the need for priests, religious and consecrated persons is immense. In some places there is a heartening renewal, but in many other places there has been a disturbing decline in vocations — a decline that weighs heavily on the future.

There is no doubt that in some cases the lessening of vocations is evoking a salutary reawakening in Christian communities. Catechists, the members of Catholic Action and many other lay people outstanding in faith and witness are taking on responsibilities and carrying out "ministries" that assist the Christian vitality of their brethren and make the Christian message concrete in the midst of the realities of daily life. Their role is irreplaceable. The Holy Spirit animates them. We are the first to rejoice at this advancement of the laity and to encourage it.

But, needless to say, all this does not replace the indispensable ministry of the priest or the specific witness of consecrated persons. It demands their presence. Without them, Christian vitality runs the risk of being cut off from its source, the community runs the risk of breaking up and the Church runs the risk of becoming secularized. If the problem of vocations were neglected, there would be a very serious danger for the Church. It would mean diverging from the very clear will of the Lord when he said to his Apostles: "Follow me, and I will make you into fishers of men" (Mk 1:17) (and they did leave their nets to follow him), and when he said to some of his disciples: "Go and sell everything you own and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me" (Mk. 10:21).

This call from the Lord is a priceless grace. Let us realize that the Lord continues to make it heard in the hearts of many young people and adults. Through the Church, Christ presents himself, today as yesterday, as the one who proclaims the measureless love of God the Father, as the one who brings pardon, who heals the heart and brings fullness of life, as the one who invites us to build upon truth and love a new world, a world of sons of God and of brothers and sisters. This is the Good News which is in fact proposed to the faith of every Christian.

But when the Lord calls someone in a special way, through an interior illumination and the voice of the Church, to serve him as a priest, as a religious or as a member of a Secular Institute, he stirs up in him or her and demands an absolute choice for his person and for the work of his Gospel: "Follow me". This choice is enthralling; it can really overwhelm the human heart. It presupposes a very firm attitude of faith. **And here, dear sons and daughters, is the crux of the problem of vocations. In our time, when serenity of believers is to a certain extent shaken, the willingness to commit oneself totally and definitively to following Christ seems still more difficult.** This choice also presupposes a willingness to **make a break, in the first place of course with sin — deceit, impurity, selfishness and hate — but also with certain human values which are not ends in themselves, but means: the satisfactions of human love, wealth, professional advancement, pleasure, success and power.** For a person who is serious, upright, and generous the values of God's Kingdom can win the day: pure and simple joy, the thirst for God encountered in prayer, the service of others, concern for their spiritual needs. **An effort must also be made to free oneself from the materialism of the times in order to make this judgment and take this decision. Thus it is a question of creating a whole new climate if vocations are to spring up and grow strong.** This is a matter that concerns those who are called. And it is a matter that concerns the whole Christian community. The Holy Year is truly the favourable time: "Repent, and believe in the Gospel" (Mk 1:15).

It is therefore under the sign of this Holy Year, the year of conversion and renewal in faith, that we, the Successor of the Apostle Peter, charged, as he was, with the task of confirming our brethren, address this message to you. It is a serious message for World Vocations Day — a message full of hope.

We address it to you, **our Brothers in the Episcopate**, who share our preoccupation in face of the abundance of the harvest and the fewness of the labourers.

VOCATIONS DAY MESSAGE 167

We address it to you, the **priests**, so that, reviving in yourselves the pride of serving Christ, with the tribulations and joys of the apostle, you may stir up esteem and a desire for the priesthood. May your fidelity, your hope and the unity among you bear witness to the fact that it is a priceless grace.

We address it to you, the **religious**, that the freedom and free gift of your exclusive consecration to Christ, with the devotion open to all that it permits, may spread far and wide the **taste for the Kingdom of God** and make the Gospel relevant, credible and attractive.

We address it to you, the **teachers**, and to you especially, the fathers and mothers of families, that the firmness of your faith, the depth of your generosity and your love for the Church may enable you to prepare strong souls, capable of hearing the call of the Lord.

We address it especially to you, the **young people**, who are attracted by the message of Christ and moved by the spiritual needs of your brethren. Man does not live on bread alone. Question yourselves under the gaze of Christ.

We address it to you too, the **children**. Christ loves you in a special way. You are already able to give preference to God, a choice that can take up your whole life in following Jesus. Look for him with all your hearts, in deeper prayer, in the offering of your lives, in an apostolate that matches your abilities.

Let us all pray to the Lord of the harvest: "Lord, come to the aid of your Church!" The needs are immense. Much generosity is shown. The Lord's call and his grace never fail. Let us not fail him. And on our part, we bless you in the name of the Lord.

A PASTORAL APPROACH TO THE VOCATION APOSTOLATE

Introduction:

The Spirit is breathing fresh wind, invigorating and uplifting, into the vocation apostolate of the Church in the Philippines.

The sign of vitalism has tangibly manifested itself these past months, particularly at the National Convention of Diocesan and Religious Vocation Directors and Directresses which was sponsored by the Episcopal Commission on Vocations last May 20-22, 1974.

Currently the dynamism in the field of vocation promotions springs from the newly-organized Directors of Vocations in the Philippines (D.V.P.)

The Convention delegates entrusted to the D.V.P. officers full power to work on a Philippine pastoral plan of action expressive of the delegates' comments and suggestions as well as faithful to the guidelines given at the World Congress on Vocations in Rome last November, 1973.

Fruit of much labor, study, and prayer, the pastoral approach to the vocation apostolate was presented by the Episcopal Commission on Vocations to the Catholic Bishops' Conference in the Philippines this July, 1974. With the C.B.C.P.'s endorsement it is now given to the entire Philippine Church for creative implementation.

May the Spirit who inspired this work assure us of its fruition!

The Philippine Episcopal Commission on Vocations Directors of Vocations in the Philippines

I. THE NEED FOR A SOLID AND RELEVANT THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

1. Every particular vocation in the Church is an extension of the grace of baptism. The nurturing of this baptismal grace is essential in predisposing Christians to listen and to

respond to God's call to consecrated service (cf. **Presbyterorum Ordinis**, No. 2; **Perfectae Caritatis**, No. 5).

2. God is the author of all vocations. It is He who calls and it is He who inspires the free response of men. He gives the ability to fidelity. His call

and our fidelity exist in time and thus permit the construction of a better world and the gradual coming of the Kingdom of God. Christ wants His Church to participate in His priestly, prophetic, and royal office (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, No. 13). Furthermore, He wants to give her the various gifts of the Spirit. The ministries of bishop, priest, and deacon, as well as the various forms of consecrated life, manifest the richness of the grace of Christ. The richness allows us to think that the Church, inspired by the Spirit, can respond creatively to pressing needs that confront her with new forms of ministry and of consecrated life.

The Lord invites us to pray the Master to send laborers into the harvest. It is essential to accept this invitation to pray in faith full of hope. Without habitual prayer, insistent and confident, there is no real pastoral work for vocations.

3. All vocations must be situated within the plan of God who is the Master of history. God, in the growth of personal vocations, leads the entire world to the final regeneration which will inaugurate a new world. Christ, Man and God, recapitulates in Himself all the values of the world and of men in order to give them their real signification.

4. Vocation must also be understood within the context of the Church. Every vocation,

in effect, be it ministerial or charismatic, is for the Church, which in turn is for the world and for men.

For the Philippine Church, vocations to the priestly ministry and to the consecrated life can be meaningful and challenging only if they lead to the building of the local church in consonance with the recent statement of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference in Taipei. Concretely, this means acceptance of Philippine culture, openness to religious traditions, and identification with and service to the vast majority who are poor, deprived, and oppressed. Thus will emerge a Philippine Church that is incarnate and redeeming. Service in an indigenized Church committed to the poor is an attraction to many generous Filipino youth who have long embraced Christ and His gospel. Thus, insertion into the Church's mission today means immersion in the people of God, struggling with them in establishing a world of justice and love (cf. Synod of Bishops, 1971, *Justice in the World*).

II. PASTORAL WORK SPECIFICALLY FOR VOCATIONS

5. General Pastoral Work and That Which Is Specifically for Vocations:

It is important to stress that the pastoral work for vocations is an essential dimension of the general pastoral work. The en-

tire Church is interested in the birth and growth of every vocation.

In the 1973 World Congress on Vocations, it was strongly reaffirmed that all pastoral work must concern itself with all Church vocations to the consecrated life: vocations to the priestly ministry and the diaconate, to the religious life, both active and contemplative, to secular institutes, and also to new ministries and new forms of consecrated life inspired by the action of the Spirit.

Furthermore, those who live a particular vocation have the duty to promote equally other vocations. This imperative for concerted effort is being done by the Directors of Vocations in the Philippines who work together, *bayanihan* style. Motivated by recruitment for the Church rather than solely for one's diocese or institute, the members strive to be united and large-hearted. They also seek to articulate a solid and indigenized theology of vocations to the consecrated life in general. In all these endeavors they develop a sense of the Church and a facility in the discernment of spirits.

6. The Situation of the Society, of the Church, and of the Youth:

The realization of the actual situation of the Church and of society in our day is an indispensable condition for the

establishment of a pastoral plan for vocations.

Let us therefore take cognizance of the signs of our times:

Our people, in their hearts, are reaching out to God; they are searching for deep spiritual values in a world dominated by commerce and industry; they are not only hungry for food; they are hungry for freedom, for dignity, for a life that is human.

(Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference, 1974)

This is Asia today. Millions of Asians are waiting for the Gospel to be proclaimed to them who are poor. This is the urgent need crying for manpower.

We believe in the immense source of latent energy in the youth of our time, so open to the great ideas of justice, so thirsty for authenticity, so ready to give themselves to their brothers.

If we see them so sensitive to the humanity which suffers injustice, hunger, and violence, how can we be resigned to think that they cannot be as sensitive to a humanity which is calling with such urgency for the presence of God, the distribution of His graces through the priestly ministry?

Let us keep in mind therefore that there are still many young

people capable of embracing with great enthusiasm and fidelity a life consecrated to Christ and to men, even to the point of heroism.

(Pope Paul VI, World Congress on Vocations, 1973)

In the Philippines 67% of the people are under 25 years old. About a million and a half are in fourth year high school to fourth year college.

The question is: Do the youth find in the Church in the Philippines forms of ministries and of consecrated life responsive to the authentic message of the Gospel and relevant to the challenges of the present situation?

Perhaps it is good for dioceses and congregations to reflect whether they are attuned to the world, to Asia, to the Philippines; whether they sincerely embrace the simple lifestyle of Christ; whether they offer the young possibilities for real service to the 90% who live by the sweat of their brow.

7. Efforts at Evangelization in General:

Unless the Word of God is truly lived and communities are witness to Christian love, the pastoral work for vocations becomes almost impossible. Thus the general effort at evangelization and spiritual formation is a preliminary and continuing task. Of importance are catechesis and spiritual direction,

as well as every other special experience where, under the action of the Spirit, the soul savors listening to the word of God, interior silence, and prayer.

8. The Family:

At the heart of Christian communities the family assumes a fundamental responsibility in the promotion of vocations. Every pastoral action must find its strength there and help the family be aware of its proper vocation and of its essential role in awakening and encouraging consecrated vocations. The family should be assisted to become a milieu that fosters intimacy with God in prayer, vital attachment to the mission of the Church, and the gift of self to the poorest of our brothers.

We should also urge the Filipino families to look upon a priestly or religious vocation of one of their members as the most precious gift that God can bestow on them.

It may be true that along with this offering is sacrifice, but they should be convinced that such sacrifice is nothing compared to the joy and pride of having a son (or daughter) as Christ's co-worker.

(Archbishop Jaime Sin to the Clergy and People of Manila).

Such an evangelical climate makes the family not only a

source of vocations, but also a milieu of moral support useful in the more difficult hours of any spiritual pilgrimage.

The importance of Christian family attitudes as a source and support of vocations is more keenly felt in the Philippines. Our strong family ties and the social pressures that spring from them are strong factors for confirming or shaking the vocations of our youth. On the other hand, authentic Christian attitudes are easily formed among our Filipino families. More often, the family's social image or economic advantage is given more weight than real service to the People of God.

The challenge is urgent, and the task is difficult. But we should not easily give way to a pessimistic compromise, nor try to isolate our future apostles from the influence of their own families (with disastrous results to their growing personalities). Rather we should accept the challenge of Christian family formation as a task of highest priority even in our pastoral work for vocations.

9. The Parish and the Community of Faith:

Every Christian life needs to develop from a community of faith. This applies to all vocations. For this end, anyone called by God should find the community which suits him: the parish, Catholic action groups, or other groups in-

terested in the spiritual life. To be authentic and credible, a parish or community of faith must be joyful, prayerful, attentive to the Word of God, and open to the poor.

10. The Pastoral Work for Youth:

The pastoral work for youth has for its purpose to integrate youth more into the mission of the entire Christian community. To do this, it must meet them where they are and show them how their aspirations find their true place within the Christian life. A courageous presentation of the whole evangelical message will bring them to a deeper understanding of the role that each one of them can play in the mission of the Church in all realms of contemporary life. The young count on us to help them discover gradually the Christian sense of the total liberation of men. They must have the opportunity to see a living Church and to share its life, especially its liturgical life. They should be invited to involve themselves in the apostolic work of their parish or of their community of faith.

Some youth groups manifest a greater openness to spiritual values. They would benefit by sharing in the life of prayer and the apostolate of ecclesiastical communities, religious or lay, which are truly evangelical. We believe that those who

benefit from the exchange will not only be the youth.

Here in Asia there are more young people than all the rest of the world put together, the Church must also be young.

The Apostle in Asia must speak the language, and think the thoughts, and feel in his heart the emotions of those who are under seventeen. He must be patient when they are impulsive, and understanding when they are unreasonable. Above all, he must appreciate their real contribution: freshness of outlook, vitality, creativity, courage, compassion, integrity, generosity, the open heart, their willingness to learn.

(Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference, 1974)

11. The Pastoral Work for the Adults:

The call of God to the priesthood or to the consecrated life is never limited to the youth; it often addresses itself to adults of all ages and of all professions. A pastoral work for vocations requires a particular attention to these persons of mature age, and it should know how to profit from the richness of their experience. It is through their life and through their work that their vocation is affirmed. And therefore, their style of formation and their course of studies should be adopted according to the spirit of *Optatam Totius*, No. 3.

III. SOME PRINCIPLES FOR A PEDAGOGY OF THE PASTORAL WORK FOR VOCATIONS

12. Those Responsible for the Pastoral Work for Vocations:

The Bishops are convinced that this is one of their essential responsibilities which demands courage, imagination, and perseverance for its realization. They are the ones who are principally responsible for the pastoral work for vocations. The major religious superiors and those responsible for secular institutes must also actively participate in this concern of the bishops of the Church, according to the spirit of *Christus Dominus*, No. 35.

As a manifestation of their deep concern for the promotions of vocations as of prime importance, Bishops and Major Religious Superiors should set aside personnel to work for this cause and support not only morally, but financially as well, worthwhile vocation projects. For the next five years, there are concrete action programs the Directors of Vocations in the Philippines will execute. *MISSIO* has given a grant, but a local counterpart is expected to double the amount. For this nationwide and common endeavour, it is requested that diocesan and congregational contributions to the Directors of Vocations in the Philippines be given to take care of the

operational expenses of the National Center, the formation program, and the promotional work that would benefit all parties concerned (cf. Appendix, II; F, nos. 1 and 2).

We should not forget that Bishops and Superiors are not the Church by themselves. It is the entire Christian community which must carry this responsibility with them: parents, educators, and consecrated persons themselves.

13. Necessity of a Formation in Prayer:

A vocation grows in intimacy with the one who calls. Also the fidelity of the call of God supposes much and constant prayer. Without prayer there will be neither response nor perseverance in vocations.

"Therefore, from the very beginning, a life of prayer must be awakened among youth especially by the experience of the presence of God in the humdrum of life."

"Some ways would be family prayer, the formation of small groups that regularly come together for sharing and communitarian prayer, greater creativity and participation in the liturgy, and more opportunities for reflective and affective prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.

14. The Witness of the Priests and Consecrated Persons:

Personal witness of priests and religious is of paramount importance. The life-style of priests and religious should convey the true image of the Gospel and should be meaningful to the people of God. It is not in books but through living persons that men learn what the life of a priest is or that of a consecrated person. People should discover in them Christ the Servant of men, completely dedicated to His Father and to the mission of salvation.

For to preach the Gospel is first and foremost to communicate the experience of the Risen Christ. "What we have heard, what we have seen, what our hands have touched..." "It is the encounter with the Lord in our hearts, in the midst of His community, an encounter in faith and in the Spirit, which will in turn awaken faith in those to whom we announce His Word.

(Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference, 1974)

It is not only with real conversion of individuals and perhaps of institutions that such a witness is possible. Personal conversion is a life-long task. Consecrated persons have a right to periods of deepening in their faith in Christ and in their commitment to their mission. The beauty of their vocations will be more apparent when it appears very naturally

in the joy and the conviction with which they speak of it and live it. There must be a certain freshness in their everyday life, a freshness that is expansive and foster growth.

To bring all this about, the Directors of Vocations in the Philippines places a great emphasis on the formation program which is geared towards the full and integrated development of vocation personnel. Using the experiential approach, the program begins with the growth of self in community where the discovery of self and the other leads to a faith experience of God. The significance of contemporary realities will hopefully stand out and make real impact after social exposure among the rural and urban poor. Opportunities to reflect and guided analysis will be provided so that the vocation personnel will be firmly grounded in the mission of the Church today and will be able to present to prospects the kind of priestly or religious stance that inspires and challenges. There definitely is a need to deepen the Christian and priestly/religious commitment of vocation directors. They should know clearly the salvific and ethical thrusts. The facility of discernment and the ability of making an election will help them be authentic in the priestly ministry and the vowed life. Thus they are encouraged to make guided retreats and to take a course in

spiritual direction. Finally, they should be taughts skills in reaching out to the modern youth like courses in psychology guidance and spirituality, techniques of human interactions, communication through mass media, the theory and and practicum of interviewing, screening and testing candidates, and the ability to conduct the different exercises prepared for the build-up of prospects.

With the aid of the monthly formation newsletter, BAYANIHAN, the Directors of Vocations in the Philippines can communicate organized activities and articles on the above topics (cf. Appendix, no. 2, b.).

15. The Call to Service and the Proposal to Lead a Consecrated Life:

All vocation prospects should be brought to a knowledge of the priesthood and various forms of consecrated life. The publications on the topic should reconcile the rigor of doctrine with the clarity needed for its popularization.

In line with this, the Directors of Vocations in the Philippines has a publication committee that will take charge of an external newsletter, TAMBULI, posters, hand-outs, calendars, prayer-leaflets, and a vocation book (cf. Appendix, p. 5, no. 2, b.).

At the opportune moment one must also know how and when

to invite directly a certain individual to think about a priestly ministry or the call to the consecrated life. Our epoch, characterized by its attention to the "person", invites us without doubt to a greater respect for each individual. But respect is not indifference and to have this call more clearly heard, the Lord surely attends to us, using prudent but evangelically courageous calls.

For this purpose, the Directors of Vocations in the Philippines has a program which builds up towards shifting prospects to find out possible qualified persons for consecrated service as a priest, religious or a member of a secular institute (cf. Appendix, IV and V).

16. The Follow-Up of Vocations:

A vocation progress with time and presupposes a vigilant follow-up. It needs the help of a spiritual guide and the support of a group.

Tradition in the Church has provided for this by the institution of seminaries and various houses of formation. The Holy Father in his discourse at the World Congress on Vocations affirmed that such centers must be truly special places of piety, study, and discipline. It is of the greatest importance that seminaries and other such houses pursue their objective of formation and give to the

priest or to the consecrated life a clear and attractive image.

At the workshops of vocation directors, it was pointed out that one task of the Directors of Vocations in the Philippines is to feed seminaries and formation houses with the aspirations of prospects. Vocation directors are like bridges between the seminary and formation houses on one hand and the outside world on the other.

IV. ORGANIZATION OF PASTORAL WORK FOR VOCATIONS

17. Coordination of the Pastoral Work for Vocations:

On the international level, there are the following Roman departments whose role is to study questions relative to vocations, namely: the Sacred Congregations of Bishops, of Oriental Churches, of the Clergy, of Religious and Secular Institutes, of the Evangelization of Peoples, of Catholic Education, and the Secretariate for Social Communication, of the Laity, and of the Family.

Last November 20-24, 1973, there took place the Extraordinary Congress of Bishops on Vocations in the Vatican City under the auspices of the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. From this body emerged a document on vocations on which this pastoral

approach to the vocation apostolate has been based.

The World Congress on Vocations stressed the necessity of real collaboration among various parts of the Church so that those whom the Lord blesses by sending numerous laborers to the harvest would come to the aid of those regions which are lacking in vocations.

On the national level, the delegates to the National Convention of Diocesan and Religious Vocation Directors and Directresses, 1974, formed an association — the Directors of Vocations in the Philippines — worked out projects to express this coordination and cooperation regarding our pastoral work for vocations.

The creation of diocesan and parish centers is necessary for better and more effective coordination for an all-out concerted effort in vocation promotions, for solidarity, and for a wider and greater involvement of various groups and the entire Christian community (cf. Appendix, III, IV).

18. World Day for Vocations:

Although the Church is concerned with vocations throughout the year, she wishes to consecrate special times for stirring up greater awareness on the part of the faithful and for prayer for vocations. The Holy Father has very often recommended the celebration of a

World Day of Prayer for Vocations. The 4th Sunday of Easter, Good Shepherd Sunday, is yearly designated as such. This provides pastors with the opportunity of telling their flocks about the importance and the beauty of priestly service and of other ministries as well as of a life consecrated to God in the Church. For all it is a day of prayer to respond to the invitation of Christ (cf. Appendix, p. V, no. 3).

19. Use of Mass Media:

Today's society is profoundly influenced by modern means of communications. We live in an age of the picture and of instantaneous communications. The young above all are influenced by this. It is from what they see and hear that they form their own idea of the priesthood and of a life consecrated to God.

The Church must make an effort, which is difficult and rarely realized, to talk to the young in their own language. As the Asian Bishops (1974) put it:

The Church in Asia must keep pace with the swift advance in the media of social communication: radio, television, press, film. We must accept the passion of the young for records, for cassettes — and use it to bring them to God. We must find a place in the satellite communication, in cable television, in video-cassettes. We must

use these gifts of God for the education and development of our people.

For the detailed use of these mass media, consult the Appendix, no. 3.

CONCLUSION:

Just as the World Congress on Vocations did not reflect under sway of fear or defeatism but rather under the stimulating vision of the action of delegates Christ and of His Spirit, the delegates to the National Convention of Diocesan and Religious Vocation Directors and Directresses, May, 1974, also felt the tangible presence of the God-head. Far from feeling depressed by the scarcity of vocations, they too saw in the current situation a real intimate solidarity with the history of man in the spirit of *Gaudium et Spes*, No. 3. They can make their own what the World Congress expressed:

We consider that the purifications which the Lord permits in His Church today can and must be the occasion of healthy reactions and progress which would be impossible in easier times. Our era also, following

after so many in history, must proclaim that the mystery of the Death and Resurrection of Christ is the unique model according to which the events of the world, as well as the unfolding of individual lives can be saved.

This optimistic feeling sprung from the outstanding phenomenon of finding themselves of one heart and one mind. As an organized body, the Directors of Vocations in the Philippines gives an assurance of continuity in the realization of the convention theme: to improve the vocation apostolate in the Philippines.

One cannot help but see the hand of Providence in the ordering of events: concrete vocation projects, funds, personnel, and an organization to carry them out, fellowship and unity, high spirits and hard labor, diocesan, religious, and lay, men and women, all involved in a common cause. If God has initiated this and sustained it this far, can we not trust that He will certainly let the work, His work, bear fruit abundantly?

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS, PAUL VI, TO PARTICIPANTS OF WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE — 9 NOVEMBER 1974

Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are happy to greet you, the participants at the World Food Conference assembled in Rome under the auspices of the United Nations. There is no need to tell you that we share intensely in your preoccupations, for our mission is to carry on the teaching and activity of Christ from whom the sight of a hungry crowd prompted the moving exclamation: "I feel sorry for all these people; they . . . have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them off hungry, they might collapse on the way" (Mt. 15:32).

1. In the course of recent years, the situation that we described in the Encyclical **Populorum Progressio** has reached still more alarming proportions, and what we said at that time has gained in relevance: "Today no one can be ignorant any longer of the fact that in whole continents countless men and women are ravished by hunger, countless numbers of children are undernourished, so that many of them die in in-

fancy, while the physical growth and mental development of many others are retarded and as a result whole regions are condemned to the most depress-despondency" (45). The documentation prepared by your Conference describes the various aspects of hunger and of malnutrition, uncovers their causes and attempts to foresee their consequences, by recourse to statistics, market research and indices of production and consumption. In their accuracy, these indications take on a tragic eloquence: but what is it like then to come face to face, on the spot, with the realities that they represent? Recent disasters of every kind — drought, floods, wars — immediately give rise to pathetic cases of food scarcity. In a less spectacular but equally painful way all are faced by the hardship created in the deprived classes by the rise in the cost of foodstuffs, which is a sign of their impending scarcity, and by the ever more marked lessening of international aid — given in the form of foodstuffs — which had powerfully contributed to the rehabilitation and progress of peoples after the last war.

LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

Lack of proper nourishments has long-term and sometimes unforeseeable effects. It has serious consequences on future generations and presents ecological and health hazards which cause damage to populations, more deep-seated than the maladies immediately apparent. It is truly painful to come to such a realization and to admit that, up to now, society seems incapable of tackling world hunger, although unprecedented technical progress has been achieved in all spheres of production. This is the case, for example, in regard to fertilizers and mechanization, and in regard to distribution and transport. A very few years ago, in fact, it was hoped that is one way or another the rapidity of the transmission of information and of goods, as well as the technological ad-

vances achieved, would be able speedily to eliminate the dangers of the ancient scourge of famine afflicting for a long period a nation or a whole region. That these hopes have not been realized explains the grave atmosphere surrounding your work. Hence also comes the hope mingled with anxiety with which the peoples of the world are watching your work. To use once again the words that we addressed in 1965 to the World Assembly of Youth gathered under the standard of the world campaign against hunger: "It is a drama of life or death for mankind, which must unite in order to survive and therefore must first learn to share the daily bread", which the Lord teaches us is ours, that is, for each and for all (Allocution of 15 October 1965: ASS 57 [1965], p. 910).

FACING THE ISSUE COURAGEOUSLY

2. To you who are engaged in a task at once so difficult yet so rich in promise, we put forward two principles to guide your work: on the one hand, to face up to the data of the problem without allowing yourselves to become bewildered in your evaluation of them through panic or through excessive timidity; and on the other hand to feel yourselves sufficiently stimulated by the absolute urgency and priority of the needs in question so that you

will not be satisfied in any single case by delays or by half-measures. This Conference will not resolve everything on its own; it is not in its nature to do so. However, through the clarity and energy of its conclusions it will give the impetus to a series of effective and sincerely accepted commitments; or, contrary to the expectations placed in it and in spite of the good will of its members, it will have been held in vain. In

order to beg you to avoid such a result, we do not hesitate to repeat, and adapt, the appeal that we made from the tri-

bute of the United Nations: "No more war, war never again!" And we say to you: "No more hunger, hunger never again!"

NATURE NOT UNFAITHFUL

3. Ladies and gentlemen, this objective can be attained. The threat of hunger and the burden of malnutrition are not an inevitable destiny. In this nature is not unfaithful to man. Its productive capacity, on land and in the seas, remains immense and is still largely unexploited. While on the one hand fifty per cent of arable land has, according to the generally accepted view, not yet been put to use, on the other hand we are faced by the scandal of enormous surpluses of foodstuffs that certain countries periodically destroy, because of the lack of a wise economy which would have guaranteed the useful employment of these surpluses. Here we have merely illustrations of a fact which no one challenges in its stark reality, even if some doubt whether it is possible to draw quickly enough from this potential what is needed to allay the hunger of expanding mankind.

And when we speak of "allaying hunger" we are all in agreement that it is a question of more than just prolonging a minimal and subhuman biological existence. What is in question is "to provide each man with enough to live — to live a truly human life, to be capable by his own work of guaranteeing the upkeep of his family and to be able through the exercise of his intelligence to share in the common goods of society by a commitment freely agreed to and by an activity voluntarily assumed" (Speech to FAO, 16 November 1970: AAS 62 (1970), p. 831). It is of course with a view to this level of life that you have drawn up the calculations of your reports, according to which a campaign capable of feeding expanding mankind is possible on a technical level, but demands considerable effort.

CRISIS OF CIVILIZATION

4. The present crisis appears in fact above all to be a crisis of civilization and of solidarity. A crisis of civilization and of method, which shows itself when the development of life in society is faced from a one-sided point of view, and when

only the model of society that leads to an industrialized civilization is considered, that is to say, when too much confidence is placed in the automatic nature of purely technical solutions, while fundamen-

tal human values are forgotten. It is a crisis that shows itself when the accent is placed on the quest for mere economic success deriving from the large profits of industry, with a consequential almost total abandonment of the agricultural sector, and the accompanying neglect of its highest human and spiritual values. It is also a crisis of solidarity, a crisis that sustains and sometimes accelerates the imbalances between individuals, groups and peoples, a crisis that is unfortunately the result — as is increasingly evident — of the insufficient willingness to contribute to a better distribution of available resources, especially to the countries that are least well provided for and to the sections of mankind that live essentially on an agriculture which is still primitive.

We thus touch upon the paradox of the present situation: mankind has at its disposal an unequalled mastery of the universe. It has means capable of making the resources of the universe yield their full potential. Will those who possess these means remain as though struck by paralysis when confronted with the absurdity of a situation in which the wealth of some can tolerate the enduring poverty of so many? Or a situation in which the highly enriched and diversified food consumption of some peoples can be satisfied at seeing the minimum necessary for existence doled out to all the others? Or a situation in which human intelligence could come to the aid of so many people afflicted by sickness, and yet evade the task of ensuring an adequate nourishment for the most defenceless sectors of mankind?

THE RIGHT TO SUFFICIENT FOOD

5. One could not have arrived at that point without having committed serious errors of orientation, even if sometimes only through negligence or omission. It is indeed time to find out where the mechanisms have broken down, so that the situation can be corrected, or rather reordered from beginning to end. The right to satisfy one's hunger must finally be recognized for everyone, according to the specific requirements of his age and activity. This right is based on

the fact that all the goods of the earth are destined primarily for universal use and for the subsistence of all men, before any individual appropriation. Christ based the judgment of each human being on respect for this right (cf. Mt 25:31 ff.). In examining the data of the problem, some facts are immediately evident. One of the most obvious causes of the present confusion is to be found in the increased prices of footstuffs and of the materials needed for their production. An example

is fertilizers. Their high price and scarcity are perhaps watering down the beneficial effects that were rightly hoped for from the "Green Revolution". Is not this a case intimately bound up with the fluctuations of a production based more on the calculations of profits to be gained than on satisfying the needs of mankind? The reduction of food supplies, which is also at the root of present worries, is at least partially due to certain commercial decisions which result in the lack of available reserves for victims of sudden and unforeseen shortages. A general food crisis is apparent and it is foreseen that it will worsen, while in some regions which are particularly well situated to ensure a surplus and emergency reserves the arable acreage has been reduced in an astonishing degree. Here we are face to face with the contradictions which characterize this acute crisis of civilization. At least when these phenomena are the result of ill-advised actions it must be possible to

correct them and to put them right, provided that one employs the necessary wisdom and courage.

We have spoken of the quantity of food necessary for the life of each and every man. But the problem of quality is equally important and also depends on an economic choice. In this matter the more industrialized nations are particularly concerned. In an atmosphere which is becoming polluted and in the face of the frenzied rush to create artificial substitutes, capable of quicker production, how shall we manage prudently to safeguard healthy nourishment with no serious risk for the health of the consumers, especially children and young people? And how, in these same nations, can we break with a consumption which is excessive because of the rich abundance of foodstuffs, which proves to be damaging to those concerned and which leaves others unprovided for? In this field too the situation calls for vigilance and courage.

FORBIDDING THE POOR TO BE BORN

6. Other observations concern the flow of the resources which would allow the present situation to be remedied. All are agreed that multilateral and bilateral aid to the agricultural sector has been notoriously insufficient. In preparation for your Conference great care has been taken to list the requirements which would be entailed

by the intensification of food production in the developing countries, by the drawing up of policies and programmes aimed at improving nutrition, and by measures for strengthening world food security. The sums arrived at by these calculations for the next ten years undoubtedly far surpass the effort so far made. But they are still

quite modest in relation to the national budgets of the wealthy countries or those with international liquid assets. A recent crisis has modified the balance of these liquid assets but it has not reduced their volume. As far back as 1964, on the occasion of our journey to India, we launched an appeal to the nations, asking that, by a truly substantial commitment — the result mainly of a reduction in expenditure on arms — there be set up a Fund with the aim of giving a decisive impulse to the integral advancement of the less well-endowed sectors of mankind. Today the time has come for an energetic and binding decision along the same lines. Will such a decision — not yet obtained by a sense of solidarity or rather elementary social justice, which consists not only in not "stealing" but also in knowing how to share — finally be imposed by the perils of the present moment? Or will men obstinately close their eyes to their own fate and look for alibis, for instance an irrational and one-sided campaign against demographic growth, rather than get down to the essential point?

It is inadmissible that those who have control of the wealth and resources of mankind should try to resolve the problem of hunger by forbidding

the poor to be born, or by leaving to die of hunger children whose parents do not fit into the framework of theoretical plans based on pure hypotheses about the future of mankind. In times gone by, in a past that we hope is now finished with, nations used to make war to seize their neighbours' riches. But is it not a new form of warfare to impose a restrictive demographic policy on nations, to ensure that they will not claim their just share of the earth's goods?

We renew our full moral support for those who have repeatedly declared at international gatherings that they are not only ready to recognize the right of every man to enjoy the goods necessary for life but are equally ready, by agreeing voluntarily to a proportionate sacrifice of the resources and potential to place these goods effectively at the disposal of the individuals and peoples who need them, without any exclusion or discrimination. Thus we have the prospect of courageous reforms aimed at eliminating the obstacles and imbalances stemming also from out-of-date structures, which perpetuate unacceptable injustices or impede the dynamism of production and the impetus needed for an adequate circulation of the goods necessary for life.

ATTITUDES TOWARD AGRICULTURE

7. But the most widespread international aid, the increased tempo of research and of the

application of agrarian technology and the most detailed planning of food production

will have little effect unless one of the most serious gaps in technical civilization is filled as quickly as possible. The world food crises will not be solved without the participation of the agricultural workers, and this cannot be complete and fruitful without a radical revision of the underestimation by the modern world of the importance of agriculture. For agriculture is easily subordinated to the immediate interests of other sectors of the economy, even in countries which at present are trying to initiate the process of growth and economic autonomy.

Our predecessor John XXIII, who devoted a chapter of his Encyclical *Mater et Magistra* to agriculture, spoke of it in these terms: "The farming sector, almost everywhere, is a depressed area, whether as regards the index of productivity or the labour force, or as regards the standard of living of the agricultural rural populations" (AAS 53 [1961], p. 432). From this depression we shall only note two indices: first, the drop in the number of agricultural workers and sometimes also the reduction of cultivated land in the industrialized countries; secondly, the fact that in the developing nations of the world, although the great majority of the population work on the land, agriculture is the most underdeveloped of the sectors of underdevelopment. Whatever may be the value of the technical means employed, nothing

will be achieved without the true reform represented by the rehabilitation of agriculture and the reversal of present attitudes towards it.

It is the dignity of those who work on the land and of all those engaged in different levels of research and action in the field of agricultural development which must be unceasingly proclaimed and promoted. We said as much when we received the FAO Conference in 1971: "It is no longer sufficient to stem the growing distortion of the situation of the members of the rural community in the modern world; it is necessary to make them an integral part of it in such a way that coming generations will no longer experience this debilitating feeling of being left aside, of being on the sidelines of modern progress where improvement is concerned." (AAS 63 [1971], p. 877).

This will be achieved through a worldwide and balanced process of development supported by a political desire on the part of governments to give agriculture its rightful place. It is a question of putting an end to the pressure of the stronger economic sectors — a pressure which is stripping the countryside of those very energies which would be able to ensure high productivity agriculture. There must be established a policy which will guarantee to the young people of rural areas the fundamental personal right

to a deliberate choice of a worthwhile profession, equal both in conditions and advan-

tages to what only the exodus to the city and industry seems able to guarantee them today.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

8. Without any doubt, here again the reforms will have value only if individuals adapt themselves to them. That is why education and training have a fundamental role to play, by ensuring that proper preparation is not lacking. "The collaboration of the rural population is necessary; ... agricultural workers must be faithful to the profession which they have chosen and which they value; ... let them follow the programmes of cultural improvement which are essential if agriculture is to break out of its rooted and empirical immobility and adopt, new forms of work, new machines, new methods." (Address to Italian Agricultural Workers, 13 November 1966: *L'Osservatore Romano*, 14-15 November 1966).

What is especially important therefore to those afflicted with hunger is that governments should offer all agricultural workers the chance to learn how to cultivate the land, how to improve soils, how to avoid diseases in farm animals and how to increase yield. It is also important finally that, within the framework of an adequate preparation, agricultural workers should be granted the credit they need. In a word, it is necessary to give to the members of the farming community responsibility in their production and progress. Thus we find ourselves brought back to the notion of integral development embracing the whole man and all men. For our part we have never ceased to exhort humanity to work towards this goal.

ACTION UNITED TO CHARITY

9. These are the thoughts which we offer you as our contribution to your work. They come from the awareness that we have of our pastoral duty and they are inspired by confidence in God who neglects none of his children, and by confidence in man, created in God's image and capable of accomplishing wonders of intelligence and of goodness. Faced with the hungry crowds, the

Lord did not content himself with expressing his compassion. He gave his disciples a command: "Give them something to eat yourselves" (Mt. 14:16), and his power came to the aid only of their helplessness, not of selfishness. This episode of the multiplication of the loaves, then, contains many lessons that are applicable in view of the grave needs of the present moment. Today we wish pri-

marily to re-echo this call to effective action. We must envisage the creation, on a long-term basis, of the possibility, for each people, of accurately ensuring its subsistence in the most suitable way. Nor must

we forget in the immediate future to remedy, by sharing, the urgent needs of that are ex-mankind. Action must be perienced by a great part of mankind. Action must be united to charity.

THOUGHTLESS WASTE

This progressive reorientation of production and distribution also involves an effort which must not be simply a constraint imposed by fear of want, but also a positive will not to waste thoughtlessly the goods which much be for everyone's benefit. After freely feeding the crowds, the Lord told his disciples — the Gospel relates — to gather up what was left over, lest anything should be lost (cf. Jn. 6:12). What an excellent lesson in thrift — in the finest and fullest meaning of the term — for our age, given as it is to wastefulness! It carries with it the condemnation of a whole concept of society wherein consumption tends to become an end in itself, with contempt for the needy, and to the detriment the needy, and to the detriment, in the end, of those very people who believed themselves to be its beneficiaries, having

become incapable of perceiving that man is called to a higher destiny. May our appeal then be clear and may it reach men's hearts. If the potential of nature is immense, if that of the mastery of the human genius over he universe seems almost unlimited, what is it that is too often missing — in order that we should act with equity and with a desire for the well-being of all our brothers and sisters in the human race — except that generosity, that anxiety which is stimulated by the sight of the sufferings and the miseries of the poor, that deep conviction that the whole family suffers when one of its members is in distress? It is this solidarity which we hope to see inspiring your work and, above all, your decisions. And we implore the Father of all light to grant you his grace.

INTERVENTION OF HOLY SEE DELEGATION AT MEETINGS OF "WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE"

TWO PERSPECTIVES

In the course of the discussion by the Second Commission on draft resolution n. 7, "World food security", the Holy See Delegation made the following intervention:

"In their speeches, all the delegates have recognized the absolute need to set up **food reserves or stores**, in order to create an effective system to ensure all peoples on the earth basic food.

"Numerous delegates also state that these reserves should be set up not only for use in emergencies or as relief, but also to provide an effective means of intervention on national or international markets to re-establish balance when necessary.

"The Holy See Delegation, recognizing the moral and material validity of this system to prevent the harm done by hunger in the world, considers it its duty to call the attention of Delegates to two perspectives of this important point on the agenda.

"1. The system of reserves can take on the importance due to it if these food stores

are distributed, independently of the areas of production, in strategic points of the various regions opportunely chosen, so that the products can be gathered easily and transported towards the places for which they are intended.

"2. Excluding the stores set up by each producing country, individually, for its own domestic needs, the stores intended for interventions, aid and the regularization of the international market can represent a valid system and absolute tranquility as regards their use only if, independently of the persons responsible for their management, they are put at the complete disposal of a multilateral organism, of technical inspiration and content, as far as possible extraneous to the direct influence of the economic and political interests of each country.

"The Holy See Delegation recognizes that these solutions are difficult to carry out, because they presuppose the existence in the world of a spirit of real and disinterested collaboration among peoples and nations, but it has the duty to

affirm that this is the only right way that can be seen to lead to a complete and moral solution of the problem that

this Conference has set out to solve: to overcome the spectre of hunger and malnutrition in the world."

SUPPORT OF ARMS REDUCTION RESOLUTION

During the discussion by the First Commission, dealing with agricultural production and consumption, on the draft resolution proposed by Peru for a ten per cent reduction of military expenses to aid the development of food production in the developing countries, the Holy See Delegation made the following intervention.

"The Holy See Delegation cannot let this draft resolution pass without expressing its explicit approval of the motives inspiring it. The gap between the funds allotted for armaments and the efforts undertaken in

the war against hunger, is sadly disproportionate and, let us admit, scandalous.

"The Holy Father spoke out forcefully once more in his address on 9 November.

"Any progress the Conferences makes towards this reduction will be a positive contribution to the future of mankind.

"For this reason the Holy See Delegation supports the proposal presented by Peru and expresses the wish that, even if it were necessary to adjust the percentage proposed in order to obtain a unanimous vote, this vote should be obtained."

NO SUPPORT ON BIRTH CONTROL

During the discussion of the draft resolution proposed by a group of countries on bringing about a stable balance between the population and the food available, the Holy See Delegation made the following intervention.

"The fundamental positions of the Holy See on the problem touched by this draft resolution are well known. In the course of his speech during the general discussion the head of our Delegation defined as follows the attitude we will take if the

Conference were to take a decision on the subject.

"The Holy See Delegation will never be able to approve proposals for birth control campaigns, or an ambiguous promotion of the regulation of births that does not ensure rightful consideration and full respect for the ethical, cultural and spiritual factors connected with protection of life and the laws that regulate its transmission".

"Consequently we make the following brief observations on

draft L. 14. Since the Holy See did not consent to the World Plan of Action at Bucharest, consideration n. 4 cannot obtain our support.

"With regard to consideration n. 3, we expressed a warning at Bucharest against the tendency to transform scientific hypotheses into political certainties, including them in texts ratified by governments. Now, the constant growth of the population at the rate described here is one of these hypotheses, especially if it is asserted in the context of an intermedite and long term projection.

"As regards its contents, a long experience of the use made afterwards of resolutions taken at international meetings which promote population policies that do not clearly contain the ethical requirements imperative in this matter, forbids us from accepting generic formulations.

"Concerned with the pace and overall result of the work of this Conference, our Delegation does not intend to bring this point up for discussion. It will be content to request that it should be indicated, in the report of this Conference, that it did not take part in the vote that will be taken on this resolution."

During the discussion by the third Commission of the draft resolution proposed by Mexico on "International food trade, access to markets, price, mobilization and adaptation", the

Holy See Delegation made the following intervention.

"The Holy See Delegation considers it its duty to express its agreement with the motivations formulaed in the fourteen considerations of Document C3/L2. Even in the difficult and thorny sector of world trade in food products, it is necessary to arrive at constructive and carefully prepared initiatives in favour of the developing countries; in fact, the common anxiety is an invitation to attract the world of ultra-conservatism, with its lack of tolerance for all those who are struggling for a better human justice. The Pope said so to participants in the conference on 9 November.

"Thus we have the prospect of courageous reforms aimed at eliminating the obstacles and imbalances stemming also from out-of-date structures, which perpetuate unacceptable injustices or impede the dynamism of production and the impetus needed for an adequate circulation of the goods necessary for life."

"As regards the measures proposed in the resolution, it is not within the province of the Holy See to express an opinion on some technical solutions with regard to their economic and political significance, about which general agreement will perhaps not be reached in the long and delicate negotiations. However, our Delegation cannot fail to point out that it is in full

accord with those countries that do not wish to pass over in practice a sector full of difficulties but essential for the aims of the Conference, and which

calls for advances to be made on this very occasion, advances that will have the character of at least moral commitments..."

NO SUPPORT ON POPULATION POLICIES

During the discussion on the draft resolution "Realization of a stable equilibrium between population and food supplies", the Holy See declared it could not approve this resolution.

The first Commission of the Food Conference examined a draft resolution on the "realization of a stable equilibrium between population and food supplies." The text of a first draft had been revised by a working group.

The Holy See Delegation, pointing out that the draft refers in its motivations to the Bucharest World Action Plan, in the approval of which it did not take part, said it could not

accept this draft. All the more so in that, in spite of the moderation of the terms of the decision taken on population policies, there is no explicit mention of the ethical and moral factors that the Holy See considers binding and indispensable in such an important subject.

The Holy See Delegation added that it was afraid that the inclusion in the Considerations of terms open to misinterpretation, would give the public the impression that the main cause of the food crisis is the increase in population, and that an insuperable imbalance between the potential of world resources and the expanding population is inevitable.



RP FOOD CONSERVATION YEAR

On March 17 President Marcos proclaimed 1975 Food Conservation Year to keep the people "concerned about programs aimed at food sufficiency."

Moreover, every January of each year will from now on be known as Food Conservation Month.

The President called on all institutions, organizations, and agencies, public and private, to complement the government's efforts "not only to increase the country's food supply but also to promote food Conservation."

Declaration of Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on two Books of Prof. Hans Küng

The Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in fulfillment of its duty to foster and defend the doctrine of faith and morals in the universal Church, has examined two works by Professor Hans Küng, *Die Kirche* (The Church) and *Unfehlbar? Eine Anfrage* (Infallibility? An Inquiry), which have been published in several languages. In two separate letters, dated respectively 6 May 1971, and 12 July 1971, the Congregation notified the author of the difficulties it found in his opinions and requested that he show in writing how these opinions were not in contradiction with Catholic doctrine. In a letter of 4 July 1973 the Congregation offered Professor Küng further opportunity to explain his ideas orally. Finally, Professor Küng, in his letter of 4 September 1974, omitted any mention of this possibility. On the other hand, he offered no proof in this reply that certain opinions of his regarding the Church were not in contradiction with Catholic Doctrine, but continued to maintain them even after the publication of the Declaration "Mysterium Ecclesiae."

Therefore, so that there may be no doubt concerning the doctrine which the Catholic Church holds and that the belief of Christ's faithful may be in no way obscured, this Sacred Congregation, recalling the teaching of the Magisterium of the Church set forth in the Declaration "Mysterium Ecclesiae", states:

The two works of Prof. Hans Küng mentioned above contain certain opinions which, in varying degree, are opposed to the doctrine of the Catholic Church that must be professed by all the faithful. The following opinions only are selected for mention, as being of greater importance, prescindng for the time being from a judgment on certain other opinions held by Professor Küng.

The opinion which at least casts doubt on the dogma of the faith concerning infallibility in the Church or reduces it to a kind of basic indefectibility in truth on the part of the Church, together with the possibility of error in the doctrines that the Magisterium of the Church definitively teaches as necessary to be believed, contradicts the doctrine defined by Vatican Council I and confirmed by Vatican Council II.

Another error that seriously compromises the teaching of Professor Küng concerns his opinion with regard to the Magisterium of the Church. In fact, he does not present a true concept of the authentic magisterium, according to which the Bishops in the Church are "authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the authority of Christ, who preach to the people committed to them the faith they must believe and put into practice (*Lumen Gentium*, 25); for "the task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed down, has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church" (*Dei Verbum*, 10).

Again, the opinion suggested by Professor Küng in his book *Die Kirche* (The Church), according to which the Eucharist can be validly consecrated, at least in cases of necessity, by baptized persons not in priestly Orders, cannot be reconciled with the teaching of the Fourth Lateran Council and of the Second Vatican Council.

Nevertheless, notwithstanding the serious character of these opinions, since Professor Küng, in his letter of 4 September 1974, did not at all exclude the possibility that after an adequate period of deeper study, he might bring his opinions into harmony with the doctrine of the authentic Magisterium of the Church, this Sacred Congregation, by order of the Supreme Pontiff Paul VI, for the present admonishes Professor Hans Küng not to continue teaching these opinions and reminds him that ecclesiastical authority has granted him permission to teach sacred theology in the spirit of the doctrine of the Church, but not opinions that subvert this doctrine or call it into question.

The Bishops of Germany and those in other places where particular necessity requires it, especially where the aforesaid opinions are maintained in theological faculties, in seminaries and other institutions for Catholic or clerical instruction, are asked to see to it that the faithful are suitably instructed in the doctrine of the Church and in the Declaration "*Mysterium Ecclesiae*", as well as in this present declaration.

Priests, preachers of the gospel, teachers of Catholic doctrine and catechists are *ex officio* bound to profess faithfully the doctrine of the Church in these questions and so to present it to others.

Finally, theologians are asked once more to study and expound the mystery of the Church and the other mysteries of faith in the obedience of faith and for the genuine edification of the Church.

In an audience granted to the undersigned Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on 14 February 1975, Pope Paul VI approved and ordered to be published this declaration, which for the present completes the action taken by the aforesaid Congregation.

Given at Rome, at the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the 15th day of February 1975.

Franjo Card. Seper

Prefect

✠ Archbishop Jérôme Hamer, O.P.

Secretary



DIRECTORS OF VOCATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES

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BIBLE STUDY

Tenth of a Series

THE TEACHING OF JESUS AND THE APOSTOLIC KERYGMA

by

Basilio P. Balajadia

I. THE GOSPELS AND THE APOSTOLIC KERYGMA

The Nature of the Gospel Materials

From the previous discussion on the biblical sources for the historical Jesus, it appeared that the gospels as well as the rest of the New Testament books are not a homogenous group of writings. Rather, they are pieces of writings that were the end result of a long evolutionary process from what Jesus did and taught to his disciples to the gradual deepening of the understanding of these occasioned by among others the apologetical, pastoral, and circumstantial needs of the early Christian community. To be able to identify and possibly define the links in the evolution of the faith is the task of the Biblical scholar. Which elements can be said to originate from Jesus and which come from the Church? This still remains the problem. The resources at hand necessitate that such a task for the Biblical scholar be not easy one nor completely free from error since the scholar will have to operate on the logical level rather than on the chronological, on the ideal rather than on the real.

The Kerygma to the Jews and Its Development

The common consensus among scholars who follow this historical approach to the New Testament writings is to assign the earliest traditions closest to the actual teachings of Jesus, to the Kerygma, or the proclamation of the apostles, to the Jews. Hence, if one can recover the basic elements in this kerygma to the Jews the teachings of Jesus in its original freshness can be reconstructed. We will therefore, set aside the consideration of the later Kerygma to the Gentiles which is already the adaptation and development of the Kerygma original to the Jews, and concentrate only on the Kerygma to the Jews as representative of Jesus original message.

This, however, does not mean the denial to include the subsequent development of this Kerygma to the deposit of Christian revelation.

II. THE DOCTRINAL BACKGROUND OF THE APOSTOLIC KERYGMA

Before we go into the discussion of the kerygma to the Jews, it is worthwhile to take a quick glance at the doctrinal situation to which the kerygma was directed.

The Doctrinal Preparation of the Jews

The ordinary visitor to the synagogues during the time of Jesus and his disciples was more or less well grounded on what had been discussed in the chapter concerning the Jewish legacy. He accepted the teachings of the Mosaic law and the prophets that there is one personal God, who is the Lord of all, the only living and true God unlike the idols of the gentiles. He is the creator of all things in the universe and he rules with justice and mercy. Men have no right to argue with God who created him. God chose Israel over all nations out of his own initiative and generosity in order that He may bless them and the world, through them. This choice was sealed by means of the covenant whereby Israel pledged to do as the Lord wills i.e., worship no other God but Yahweh and to obey the Law which God gave to Moses. God, on his part, will protect and bless Israel as his peculiar possession. The history of Israel bears witness to God's faithfulness to his part of the bargain and to the vacillation of Israel in her allegiance to God. Punishment and forgiveness alternated as the Jews violated or turned back to the covenant. Thus, Yahweh the Lord of history acts with a purpose. The right attitude in life is to accept unconditionally the commandments and to have an unlimited faith in God's initiative and generosity. Idolatry, unbelief, and social injustice are the bane in life which man should avoid. The repentant sinner, however, can always turn to God for forgiveness. The present disorder, both in political as well as in individual spheres, is due to sin which enthralls men. But the day will come as the prophets predicted when God will send a king the Messiah to re-establish the ideal order which prevailed before sin came and will restore Israel to its original dignity and bring judgment to nations and individuals who are not God-fearing. The sign and means of the coming kingdom of God is the generous outpouring of the Spirit of God in Israel.¹

¹ Prosper Grech. "Tradition and Theology in Apostolic Times," *A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*. Pp. 845-846.

The Influence of Rabbinism

Although there existed in Palestine during the time of Jesus various groups with their own peculiar religious and political tendencies, such as the Pharisees, Sadducees, the Essenes, the Herodians and the Zealots, the sect of the Pharisees is considered by for the most influential political and religious authority in the land and times of the New Testament. Although they retained the main lines of the faith of Biblical Judaism, and developed some points in it, they were also guilty of distorting others by either over-emphasizing or under-emphasizing them. Thus, although God's unity was never questioned by them the idea of the Jews as the chosen people was given more than its due prominence that it overshadowed God's absolute gratuitousness in the election of Israel. The life of the individual was seen in its strictly legal relationship with God, especially with the insistence of observing the minutes detail of the Mosaic Law. It thus happened that in the final analysis mere membership to the community of Israel was regarded as sufficient to save one from the wrath and judgment of God. Only pure Jews will be saved on the last days predicted by the prophets. On that day, the immutable and eternal Mosaic Law will be glorified since it is for this that God created the world.²

III. THE KERYGMA TO THE JEWS

Kerygma to the Jews and Kerygma to the Gentiles

Against this background, we can now proceed to explain the Kerygma or the proclamation of the apostles. As mentioned earlier there are two types of Kerygma evident in the New Testament writings: the Kerygma to the Jews and the Kerygma to the Gentiles. Both these Kerygma can be detected if one tries to provide a mental construct of the audience to which they are being addressed. Thus Acts 2:14-39 will be an example of the Kerygma to the Jews while Acts 14:15-18 and Acts 17:22-31 of the Kerygma to the Gentiles.

The Structure of the Kerygma to the Jews

The general structure of the Kerygma to the Jews can be represented by Mark 1:45 — "The time is fulfilled; the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the gospels." Here, one can find the three important elements of the apostolic preaching to the Jews, namely, (1) the proclamation of the arrival of the last

² Ibid., p. 846.

days, (2) the witnessing to the fulfillment of these in the life of Jesus, (3) the exhortation to orient one's life in accordance to this new perspective, which necessarily leads to joining the new community.

Taking Acts 2:14-39 as an example, one finds the three elements of the apostolic Kerygma to the Jews being developed, thus:

(1) What the people were witnessing that day of Pentecost is the abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the fulfillment of what the prophet Joel said concerning the coming of the "Last days":

But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. For these men are not drunk, as you supposed, since it is only the third hour of the day; but this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

'And in the last days it shall be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams;
yea, and on my menservants and my maidservants
in those days

I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.
And I will show wonders in the heaven above
and signs on the earth beneath,
blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke;
the sun shall be turned into darkness
and the moon into blood,
before the day of the Lord comes,
the great and manifest day.

And it shall be that whoever calls on the name
of the Lord shall be saved.'

(Acts 2:14-26)

(2) The events are happening because of Jesus whom they had crucified. The apostles, however, witnessed how God raised him from the dead. He constituted Jesus as Lord and Messiah by exalting him up in heaven to his right hand. He is the New Moses who will come to lead the eschatological Israel to final redemption as the Son of Man.

"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs which God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—this Jesus, delivered up according

to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. But God raised him up, having loosed the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. For David says concerning him,

'I saw the Lord always before me,
for he is at my right hand that I may
not be shaken;
therefore my heart was glad, and my
tongue rejoiced;
moreover my flesh will dwell in hope.
For thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades,
nor let thy Holy One see corruption.
Thou has made known to me the ways of life;
thou wilt make me full of gladness with thy
presence.'

"Brethren, I may say to you confidently of the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants upon his throne, he foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this which you see and hear. For David did not ascend into the heavens; but he himself says,

'The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand,
till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet.'

Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

(Acts 2:22-36)

3) If the people believe the words of the Apostles, then having repented and received baptisms, theirs is salvation.

Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the

gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God call to him." And he testified with many other words and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

(Acts 2:37-41)

Re-interpretation of the Scriptures and Proof-Texts

These and similar pronouncements by the apostles were had sayings to the Jews of the Apostles' time. A crucified Messiah is inconceivable. That Jesus is the Son of Man of Daniel is outright blasphemy. The relegation of the Mosaic Law to the non-absolute requirement for salvation is too radical an assault on the very foundation of the "chosen" peoples' religious life.

To sustain this newly found vision of the Apostles which affect the interpretation of the whole of scriptures, a need was created for a sufficient supply of link-ups between the prophets' words and the events in the life of Jesus. It is quite possible that at the time of the writing of the gospels there was already existing a collection of such link-ups in the form of proof-texts. Such proof-texts might have been used not only in the preaching of the apostles but also more often in their controversy with the Jews as well as in their teachings to the postulant. Some of these are as follows:

Gen. 12:13; 22:18

Deut. 18:15-19

2 Sam. 7:13-16

Ps. 2; 8; 31; 34; 38; 41; 42

Is. 6:3-10; 9:1-7; 28:16; 29:9-15

Jer. 31:10-34

Dn. 7:9-22; 9:27; 12

Am. 9:11

These passages although not the only ones but definitely very current at that time are now popularly known as messianic texts. It can be noticed that it is not only the verses that are directly quoted but oftentimes references are made to whole passages giving emphasis on the context rather than the explicit words of such passages.³

³ Ibid., p. 847.

LITURGY

NEW RITES FOR THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

By H. J. Graf, S.V.D.

A. The Sacrament of Penance at Vatican I and the History of the Reform.

I. The Constitution on the Liturgy

A rather laconic article of the Constitution on the Liturgy deals with the reform of the sacrament of Penance: "The rite and formulas for the sacrament of Penance are to be revised so that they give more luminous expression to both the nature and effect of the sacrament" (art. 72). The commentaries which soon appeared reveal a certain helplessness concerning sacramental Penance. Only a few bishops had spoken on the sacrament of Penance in the Council Hall. Some said that any change of its ritual was superfluous; others, admitting a reform, wished that the revision should not prolong the sacramental celebration. Only T. Botero Salazar, bishop of Medellin in Colombia, asked on November 6, 1962 "with fear and in question-form" for an extension of general absolution. He spoke in the name of all the bishops of his country.¹

II. From Vatican II to the "Ordo Paenitentiae"

After the publication of the Constitution on the Liturgy and even more after the publication of the Constitution on the Church common penitential celebrations spread rapidly in the whole world, usually held without but sometimes also with general absolution.² At the same time the strictly theological discussion continued and became at times even more intense. Its main themes gradually became the personal self-accusation of individual sins, especially mortal sins and sacramental, general absolution. Finally these themes assumed center place.

But fully ten years passed between the publication of the Constitution on the Liturgy (December 4, 1963) and the appearance of

¹ Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani Secundi, Vol. I. Periodus I. Pars II (Città del Vaticano 1970) p. 179.

² Cf. the concession for New Guinea: A Request and a Reply, *Teaching All Nations* 4 (1967) 432-434. — For some other countries, D. Morisson, Confession and the New Code, *The Furrow* 1969, 526.

the new "Ordo Paenitentiae" (December 2, 1973). At first the Council for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Liturgy had its hands full with other, seemingly more important and urgent matters. Only in December 1966 a special study group (*coetus a studiis*) was established for the reform of the sacrament of Penance, with K. Rahner, C. Vogel, P. Anciaux, Z. Alszeghy and others as members. They finished their work by the end of 1969.

Since the document prepared by these scholars touched on dogmatic questions which were not within the competence of the postconciliar Council for the Reform of the Liturgy, these dogmatic problems had to be referred to the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith. Its answers were slow in coming. Only in June 1972 did the same Congregation publish "Pastoral Norms" on general, sacramental absolution which paved the road for the reformed ritual of the sacrament of Penance.

After the publication of these "Pastoral Norms" the Congregation for Divine Worship which had taken over from the Council for the Reform of the Liturgy, did not call the original commission, but created a new one under the chairmanship of the well-known French liturgist P. Journel. Its revised version of the "Praenotanda" had then to be handed over for "further suggestions" not only to the members of the Congregation for Divine Worship, but also to those Congregations of the Roman Curia who "were interested in the Ordo Paenitentiae."

These "suggestions" were very numerous, exceeding three hundred. They led to many and important changes of both texts and rites. In this form the new ritual obtained the approval of the Pope who published it on January 28, 1974 under the date of December 2, 1973.³

B. The Theology Underlying the Reform of the Sacrament of Penance

I. The Church is in Permanent Need of Purification

One of the essential attributes of the Church is her holiness. But this holy Church "also embraces sinners in her bosom." By their sinfulness they obscure the sign-aspect of the Church's holiness before the world. Their sins inflict wounds on her. She has not yet reached the state when she is "without spot, or wrinkle or any such thing" (Eph 5:27). Vatican II sums up this state by saying that the Church is "at the same time holy and always in need to

³ A more detailed history of the reform is found in F. Sottocornola, II nuovo "Ordo Paenitentiae", *Notitiae* 10 (1974) 63-79.

be purified. Incessantly she pursues the path of penance and renewal" (Const. on the Church, art. 8).

The people of God tries in many and various ways to live a life of penance: they perform works of mercy and charity; they try to live the gospel in their daily lives, thereby associating themselves ever more to the sufferings of Christ in patience. What the Church lives in her life she celebrates in her liturgy: in penitential celebrations, in the proclamation of the word of God, in prayer, in the penitential elements of the eucharistic celebration, and most of all, in the sacrament of Penance, in sacramental reconciliation.

It is strange that the general introduction to the new "Order of Penance", when it deals with "penance in the life of the Church" (no. 4) does not state that in liturgical celebrations outside the sacrament of Penance, true forgiveness of sins can be granted. Were the drafters of this document afraid that such a obvious statement would obscure the dignity and popular esteem of the sacrament of Penance? When he defended the practice of devotional confession thirty years ago, Pope Pius XII had openly stated in his encyclical letter on the Mystical Body of Christ (1943) that sins can be forgiven in various ways outside the sacrament of Penance: "Venial sins may be expiated in many ways which are to be highly recommended" (no. 95).

Consequently, venial sins are forgiven in those liturgical celebrations mentioned earlier, which are not strictly sacramental. The Church expresses in her life, and celebrates in her liturgy her penance and continual conversion to God whenever the faithful sincerely admit their sinfulness and thereby obtain forgiveness from God.

For this reason the Church inserted into many liturgical celebrations penitential acts or elements. The best-known of them is the penitential rite at the beginning of Mass. We might mention here also the penitential rite at the beginning of the Church's Night Prayer (Compline), and the penitential rites inserted into liturgical functions on certain occasions in the course of the liturgical year. The best-known from among them is the blessing and giving of ashes on Ash Wednesday. In almost all of these celebrations the faithful not only confess their sinfulness, but also ask God and their fellowmen for the forgiveness of their sins. In each Mass the priest (or deacon) says quietly after the reading of the gospel: "May the words of the gospel wipe away our sins." He adds, when washing his hand: "Lord, wash away my iniquity; cleanse me from my sin."

II. Reconciliation with God and the Church

In the sacrament of Penance the faithful "obtain pardon from the mercy of God for offenses committed against him. They are at the same time **reconciled with the Church** which they have wounded by their sins" (Const. on the Church, art. 11).

Sin has first to be considered as an offense against God. The emphasis of the "Praenotanda" of the "Ordo Paenitentiae" on this point is obviously occasioned by the sometimes one-sided considerations of sin as offense against one's fellowman. The Constitution on the Liturgy reacted in the same way to this contemporary one-sidedness when it states that religious instruction should not only impress on the mind of the faithful the social consequences of sin. The essence of the virtue of penance is the "detestation of sin as an offense against God" (art. 109, b). On his way to conversion the sinner "returns to the Father 'who first loved us', to Christ who gave himself for us, and to the Holy Spirit who has been poured out in abundance on us" (Order of Penance, no. 5).

A Christian never stands alone. We proclaim this truth in the Apostles' Creed, in the article on the "communio sanctorum" which refers not only to persons (saints), but in the first place to holy gifts and means granted to the Church by God. The Creed then continues with the article of "the forgiveness of sins" which is obtained in the Church.

Sin disrupts the unity of the holy Body of Christ, the Church. The holiness of one member of the Church contributes to the holiness of the whole Church, while the sin of a member of the Church wounds the whole Church and its different members. Conversion and penance always imply also a reconciliation with the Church. As a matter of fact, reconciliation with the Church is the "res et sacramentum" for the forgiveness of sins in the sacrament of Penance.⁴

III. Criteria for the Revision of the Ritual of Sacramental Penance

The rite of sacramental Penance in the former Roman Ritual was a poor one. It consisted of four prayers (*Misereatur*, *Indultiam*, *Dominus noster Iesus Christus*, and *Passio Domini nostri Iesu Christi*). These prayer formulas were repetitious, asking for and

⁴ K. Rahner, *Forgotten Truths Concerning the Sacrament of Penance*, Theological Investigations, Vol. II (1963) 135-174. — K. Rahner, *Penance as an Additional Act of Reconciliation with the Church*, Theological Investigations, Vol. X (1973) 125-149. — Both articles with abundant further bibliography.

granting absolution. The role of the Church in the forgiveness of sins was not mentioned. Only implicitly was the Paschal Mystery referred to in the Prayer "Passio Domini nostri Iesu Christi" which most often was omitted by the minister of the sacrament.

The poverty of the rite of sacramental Penance was felt even more when priests had to hear confessions for many hours on days of great conflux. Because of the many penitents they cut down the rite to its bare minimum, relying on the Council of Trent which states that "the prayers laudably added according to the custom of the holy Church" do "not by any means belong to the essence of the form nor are they necessary for the administration of the sacrament" (Denz. 896/1673).

There was a need, consequently, for the reform of the ritual of sacramental Penance. What were the theological criteria according to which the post-Vatican II reform tried to remedy the situation?

1. Meeting Christ in his Paschal Mystery

Man is unable to procure reconciliation with God by his own powers alone. God himself had to take the initiative and come to his aid: "It is all God's work. It was God who reconciled us to himself through Christ" (2 Cor 5:18). In virtue of this reconciliation we are at peace with God and "have in the one Spirit access to the Father" (Eph 2:18).

In the sacraments Christ is actively present so that "when a man is baptized, it is Christ himself who baptizes" (Const. on the Lit., art. 7). Our former formula of absolution expressed the fact that Christ is lastly the one who absolves the penitent. The priest's word is effective only because it is spoken in his authority (*et ego auctoritate ipsius te absolvo*).

Sacred Scripture attributes the forgiveness of our sins to the passion of Christ (Mt. 26:28; Rom. 4:25). The former sacramental form did not mention this at all. It is the Lord who passed through passion and death to the glory of the resurrection, whom the sinner meets in the sacrament of Penance. It was his passing from death to life "for us and our salvation" which opened for us the possibility to obtain the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, the new sacramental formula places the forgiveness of sins in a trinitarian and paschal context.

2. The Ecclesial Dimension

For centuries the sacrament of Penance has been celebrated in a private form. But according to Vatican II "liturgical services are not private functions; they are celebrations of the Church... Liturgical services pertain to the whole body of Christ; they manifest it and have effects upon it" (Const. on the Lit., art. 26). Obviously, the communal, ecclesial dimension of the sacrament of Penance had to be brought to the fore in a manner adapted to our time.

Another aspect must not be forgotten. According to Vatican II the sacraments are vital acts of the Church. Their purpose is not only "to sanctify men" — this refers to the sacrament as means of grace — but also "to build up the body of Christ..." (Ibid., art. 59).

By sinning grievously man cuts himself off from the very life of the Church, and thereby wounds the Church. As a good mother, the Church comes to the sinner's aid, helping him to reach reconciliation. This she does "by charity, example, and prayer" in which the Church seeks the sinner's conversion (Const. on the Church, art. 11). Both, the sacrament as act of the Church, and sin as wound inflicted on the Church, should be made manifest in the rites and formulas of the different forms in which the sacrament of Penance is to be celebrated in the future.

The whole Church, Head and members, are active in the celebration of the sacrament of Penance. This fact, so dear to the early Church, had been almost completely forgotten during the last centuries. History shows that in the celebration of public penance the emphasis lay — during the first five centuries — more on the intercession of the Christian community for the sinner than in the sinner's personal atonement. This is the reason why Vatican II stated that "the role of the Church in penitential practices is not to be passed over, and the people must be exhorted to pray for sinners" (Const. on the Lit., art. 109, b). In their prayers the people of God help to bring about the sinner's reconciliation. In Christian antiquity the public sinner, separated from the Church's community of worship, at the entrance of the Church asked the faithful in good standing to intercede for him before God. Here we have an additional reason why the new sacramental formula speaks of "the ministry of the Church."

3. Sacrament of Faith

Sacraments are signs of faith. They presuppose faith and nourish faith. Faith comes from hearing the word of God (Rom

10:17). Here we have an important reason why the ongoing reform of the Liturgy inserted into all sacramental rites at least a short service of the word of God (cf. Const. on the Lit., art. 24, 33 and esp. 35) and wanted that a short homily be added to those celebrations of the sacraments which are held in common.

The word of God, read during the celebration, helps the sinner to recognize and see his sins and come to sincere contrition more easily. It is difficult for modern man to see and acknowledge his sins as sins, as offenses against God and his fellowmen. Sin is often belittled these days, and explained away as illness, as some kind of misbehavior caused by social and other circumstances under which the "sinner" suffers, but which is hardly attributable to his malice. Here, the homily, the common examination of conscience and common help for attaining contrition have to give a helping hand.

Until now the Roman Ritual did not know any reading from Sacred Scripture in the celebration of the sacrament of Penance. This has been changed in the new ritual, though in the celebration of "sacramental reconciliation of individual sinners" this element has been watered down by the addition that the reading from Sacred Scripture is only "optional."

C. The New Penitential Ritual

I. Preparation of the Priest and the Penitent

Prayer is the first and indispensable preparation of both priest and penitent. Before he enters the confessional the latter has to examine his conscience. In its "Appendix" the new ritual contains a model examination of conscience, divided into three parts, each one under a motto, taken from Sacred Scripture. The first says, "Love the Lord your God with your whole heart." Its second section stands under the heading, "Love one another, as I have loved you," while the third part exhorts the penitent to "Be perfect as your heavenly Father." Obviously, such a model needs further adaptations to local circumstances and to the individual's special needs.

Concerning the place and the liturgical vestments the new "Order of Penance" is reticent: "The sacrament of Penance is celebrated in the place and location prescribed by law" (no. 12). This leaves room for local legislation of the bishops' conference. The local ordinaries are supposed to prescribe to what extent liturgical vestments should be used for the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation (no. 14). If it is celebrated in common the priest should be dressed in cassock, surplice and stole. But if individual

penitents are reconciled, the stole will certainly remain also in future the only sign of the priestly office: custom limited effectively the prescription of the former Ritual in this sense.

Also the confessional will be kept; its form may change, and has changed in some places and countries already, where it became a kind of parlor. But there will always remain people who want to confess in the anonymity of the old-style confessional, and so it will be kept.

If the prescription of the new ritual will be implemented that the priest has to extend both hands over the penitent when he pronounces the prayer of reconciliation, the separating grills may eventually disappear. It was certainly an over-hasty conclusion of some journalists that with the prescription of the imposition of hands also the confessional as such had been abolished. "The confessional, as a protective screen between the minister and the penitent is to guarantee the absolute secrecy of the conversation imposed on them and reserved for them" said Pope Paul VI in a general audience on this topic.⁵

II. Reconciliation of Individual Penitents

1. The Reception of the Penitent

With fraternal love and consideration the priest is to welcome the penitent, and greet him with kind, personal words. The sacrament of Penance should not be the place of stiff formality. With the sign of the cross the penitent then begins the sacramental celebration. The priest may join the penitent in saying "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

A short exhortation to trust and confidence in God is then added by the confessor. He may choose freely from the different formulas offered in the ritual, e.g.,

**May the Lord Jesus welcome you.
He came to call sinners, not the just.
Have confidence in him (cf. Lk 5:32).**

If the priest does not know the penitent personally, the latter should inform him about his personal status, his last confession, the particular difficulties in his life as Christian, and other things that may be a help for a more fruitful ministry of the priest.

2. Reading of the Word of God

The priest may read, or recite by heart a text from Sacred Scripture, which contains a proclamation of God's loving mercy or

⁵ *L'Osservatore Romano* (English Weekly Ed.) of April 11, 1974, p 13.

a call to conversion. More than a dozen texts of this type are found in chapter Five of the new "Order of Penance", some of them full-length readings, others very short exhortations, like

**The Lord tells us:
If you forgive others the wrongs they have done you,
your Father in heaven will also forgive you.
But if you do not forgive the wrongs of others,
then your Father in heaven
will not forgive the wrongs you have done (Mt 6:14-15).**

This short Scripture service is optional, and so many priests are going to omit it in the celebration of the sacrament of Reconciliation. Wisely, therefore, the "Praenotanda" advise that the penitent himself should read such a text during his personal preparation. The parish or the one responsible for the place of celebration could provide sheets with suitable texts. The word of God is to shed its light on the heart of the penitent that he may more easily see his sins, come to true conversion, and to full trust in God's forgiving mercy: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Ps 118:105).

3. Confession of Sins and Acceptance of Satisfaction

Where it is customary, the Confiteor may be said by the penitent before he confesses his individual sins. The word "confession" has here a threefold meaning: it is an admission of one's guilt (Jas 5:16), a confession of faith (1 Jn 2:23) that God is willing to forgive our sins, and a proclamation and praise of the mercy and love of God shown in this sacrament (cf. Mt 11:25).⁶ Man confesses his sins in full faith that God has the power to forgive, and that in his loving kindness he will use his power to the sinner's full advantage. Confession in this fuller meaning of the word is an outward sign of conversion, an expression of the sinner's trust that God will forgive; at the same time it is an act of glorification of God.

The ritual exhorts the priests to help the penitent to make an integral confession, to lead him to contrition, and to give him suitable advice for his future life. He has also the task to point to the penitent's obligation to repair the damage he may have caused, material or spiritually, by his sins.

Satisfaction should not so much be "imposed" as "proposed" which the penitent accepts. Prayer, works of self-denial and practical charity are mentioned in the "Order of Penance" as works of satisfaction. If a heavy smoker smokes daily a pack of cigarettes less for a given period of time and gives the money saved to a

⁶ Jounel, *La liturgie de la réconciliation*, *La Maison-Dieu* 117 (1974) 26.

charitable work, he is made aware of the social dimension of sin and of good works.

4. Prayer of the Penitent and Absolution

Confession, contrition and satisfaction are the penitent's acts. All of them, including contrition should become manifest in the sacramental process. The model formula of contrition given in the ritual is merely one of those well-known, conventional prayers as they were formerly found in children's catechisms. It has been criticized that this prayer does not follow the rule of the "Praenotanda": "It is desirable that this prayer should be based on the words of Scripture" (no. 19).⁷ The texts of the "Appendix", however, present beautiful and moving biblical texts, like:

**Father, I have sinned against you
and I am not worthy to be called your son.
Be merciful on me, a sinner (Lk 15:18; 18:13). — Or:
Lord Jesus, Son of God,
have mercy on me, a sinner (cf. Lk 18:13).**

In the priest's prayer of absolution we find the greatest change in this new rite of an individual's sacramental reconciliation. One, single prayer now takes the place of the three first prayers of the Roman Ritual of 1614, mentioned earlier.

**God, the Father of mercies,
through the death and resurrection of his Son
has reconciled the world to himself
and sent the Holy Spirit among us
for the forgiveness of sins;
through the ministry of the Church
may God give you pardon and peace
and I absolve you from your sins
in the name of the Father, and of the Son, +
and of the Holy Spirit. — R. Amen.**

God the Father is the source of all goodness. He who took the initiative for the salvation of mankind by sending his Son in the likeness of our sinful flesh, takes also here the initiative to grant forgiveness to the individual sinner. There exists an intimate connection between the reconciliation of the penitent and Christ's Paschal Mystery: the Father brought about our reconciliation through the death and resurrection of his Son. The grace of this reconciliation has been given to us through the Holy Spirit. His bestowal on us is the fruit of the Lord's Pasch. The encounter between God and man takes place in the Church and through her ministry.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

In this way the new formula leads to the essential words, sanctioned by the Council of Trent: "I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, + and of the Holy Spirit" (Denz. 896/1673).

If the penitent should be burdened by an ecclesiastical censure which has to be taken away before the sacramental reconciliation, the confessor in future is not obliged to change the formula of absolution, nor is there any need for a special formula of absolution "a censuris". It is sufficient that the priest *intends* to absolve the penitent also from reserved sins or excommunication, suspension or interdict. But he may also first absolve from censures, using this formula:

**By the power granted to me,
I absolve you
from the bond of excommunication
(or suspension or interdict).
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, +
and of the Holy Spirit. — R. Amen.**

While he pronounces the prayer of absolution the priest is supposed to stretch out his hands (or at least one hand) over the penitent. The imposition of hands was the classical gesture of reconciliation in the ancient penitential discipline of the Church. It is mentioned in the writings of Sts. Cyprian, Augustine, Leo the Great and a number of ancient councils. In 1614 the Roman Ritual prescribed this imposition of hands, but made it at the same time impossible by the compulsory introduction of the grills (at least for women). It became subsequently the stylized raising of the hand from the "Indulgentiam" on. Originally the imposition of hands signified here the re-admission to the ecclesial community.

At the same time it is an epicletic gesture. It indicates the gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed in the sacrament of reconciliation. On the evening of Eastern Sunday the risen Christ "breathed on" his disciples, "and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive men's sin, then they are forgiven'" (Jn 20:22). The imposition of hands is here an outward sign of the sinner's reconciliation with God and the Church which the sacramental formula proclaims and effects, at the same time. That this rite can obtain its complete expressive value, the penitent should kneel at the feet of the priest — or at least bow his head before him — while the priest stands.

5. Proclamation of Praise of God and Dismissal

The ritual of individual, sacramental reconciliation ends with a short dialogue between the priest and the reconciled penitent.

It is praise and thanksgiving to God who "manifests his power above all in forgiving".⁸ With the assurance that the Lord has forgiven his sins the priests dismisses the penitent with the wish of peace:

Priest: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

Penit.: His mercy endures for ever.

Priest: The Lord has freed you from your sins.
Go in peace.

III. Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution

During the first five centuries of the Church the celebration of sacramental reconciliation in the Church was public. Afterwards this practice was gradually abandoned in favor of private confession, the subsequent performance of satisfaction, and the individual reconciliation (absolution).

The principal reason which led to the abolition of public penance (not public confession) was the fact of not being able to repeat public penance: it could be received only once in a lifetime. Since people came to know themselves and their weakness they delayed the reception of public penance — which was burdened with grave consequences for life — until the end of their life. This was the so-called death-bed penance.

"Private confession" as introduced in the sixth and seventh centuries had the advantage that it could be received repeatedly. It led finally — especially when satisfaction could be performed after absolution — to frequent confession.

The liturgical movement and Vatican II led to the rediscovery of the communitarian aspect of all liturgical celebrations (Const. on the Lit., art. 26 f). One of the most frequently used accusations against the ritual of the sacrament of Penance was its individualism and privacy.⁹ Man should become aware of his solidarity with others in the Church in good and evil things. This had to be shown in the ritual of the sacrament of Penance.

1. Introductory Rites

The introductory rites consist of an entrance song, a greeting of the celebrating priest (for which the ritual offers several models), a freely formed introduction to the celebration, and finally an opening prayer after an invitation. Here is a model for this prayer:

⁸ Collect, 26th Sunday of the Year.

⁹ B. Bischer, "Durch den Dienst der Kirche" *Gottesdienst* 8 (1974,) 137.

**Brothers and sisters, God calls us to conversion;
let us therefore ask him for the grace of sincere repentance.**

**Lord,
hear the prayers of those who call on you,
forgive the sins of those who confess to you,
and in your merciful love
give us your pardon and your peace.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. — R. Amen.**

2. Celebration of the Word of God

Both the introduction and the subsequent celebration of the word of God follow the usual plan for Bible services. Through his word God calls to conversion and penance, to an ever greater conformity with Christ. Preferable in this second mode of celebrating the sacrament of Reconciliation is a full service of the word of God, with more than one reading, a responsorial psalm between the readings (or another appropriate song or a period of sacred silence), and a homily which is to help man to recognize his sins, to examine his conscience and to come to sincere conversion of heart.

It is also possible to omit the homily and put in its place a communal examination of conscience, led by the priest or deacon. This can be done in short questions, or in the form of a litany prayer to which the penitents answer. It is obvious that the leader of the celebration has to adapt himself to the penitents' situation, age, profession, etc.

3. Rite of Reconciliation

This part of the celebration begins with a formula of general confession said by all in common (Confiteor). Afterwards all say together a Litany prayer or sing a suitable penitential song. This is followed by the communal recital or singing of the Lord's Prayer, introduced by the priest (as at Mass) and concluded with a kind of collect for which the ritual offers several formulas.

Originally it had been intended that in this second form of celebrating the sacrament of Penance, everything was to be held in common, except confession and absolution. Why, after a full communitarian celebration a sudden interruption by individualistic acts?

This argument does not hold water. Recent theology stresses in the celebration of the sacraments both the ecclesial and personal aspect. Man is a person in a community. In the celebration of Baptism the culminating points are the profession of faith and the

washing with water under the invocation of the Trinity. The first of these two rites is held in common, the second, under the invocation of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is done individually. In the most communitarian celebration of all, the celebration of the eucharist, the culminating act is the eating of the eucharistic food, done individually by each participant.

It seems to be better, therefore, to bring into prominence these two aspects in the normal celebration of the sacrament of Penance when held in common: the personal aspect should be brought to the fore in the individual self-accusation, and in the individual absolution: man wants to hear individually that his sins are forgiven.

4. Proclamation of Praise for God's Mercy

When the individual confessions are over, the presiding priest, the assisting priests who heard confession together with him at his side, invites all to a communal praise of God's mercy, preferably with a hymn (psalm). A litany prayer may be used instead. Then follows a prayer of thanksgiving, in grateful remembrance of the divine intervention in the forgiveness of sins. The blessing and dismissal follows.

Unfortunately, this concluding part of the celebration, whose center is praise and thanksgiving, often cannot be held, because not enough priests are available. If the participants had to wait for a longer time to take part in this communal thanksgiving, it would be too great an inconvenience for them.

The participants of this celebration may, therefore, go to confession also on one of the subsequent days. In this case the celebration described here would be for many "de facto" a simple penitential Bible service with all the theological problems and difficulties with which it is burdened these days.

In view of these problems chapter Two of the new ritual of sacramental Penance comes under attack a third time. Apart from the theological difficulties we have to mention the scarcity of priests in the Philippines. Even for Italy Pope Paul VI admitted this problem. Shortly after the publication of the new ritual for the sacrament of Penance he said in a general audience: "This is the best form for our people when it is possible. But usually it presupposes the simultaneous presence of several ministers of this sacrament, and that is not always easy..."¹⁰

¹⁰ *L'Osservatore Romano*, Engl. weekly d., April 11, 1974, p. 1.

IV. Reconciliation of Several Penitents with General Confession and Absolution.

1. The Discipline of General Absolution

Individual and integral confession and absolution remain also in future the only ordinary way for the faithful to be reconciled with God and the Church unless physical or moral impossibility excuses from such confession (I).¹¹ Consequently, it can happen that general absolution may or should even be given to those who made only a general confession of their sins (II).

Apart from the cases of danger of death, it is lawful to give sacramental absolution collectively to a number of faithful who have confessed only generically, provided there is a serious necessity: namely, when in view of the number of penitents there are not enough confessors at hand to hear properly the confessions of each within an appropriate time, with the result that the penitents, brought no fault of their own would be forced to do without sacramental grace, or holy communion for a long time. This can happen especially in mission lands, but in places also and within groups where it is clear that this need exists. Consequently, the lack of confessors **alone** (as on a First Friday in a town) is not a sufficient reason for general sacramental absolution. Only if the penitents would have to go **for a long time without sacramental grace or holy communion**, may general sacramental absolution be given (as in a barrio visited perhaps once or twice a year by a priest). Rome feels that it is bound here by a condemnation of Bl. Innocent XI declaring it unlawful to grant general, sacramental absolution "simply because there happens to be a huge gathering of penitents, such as may happen, for instance, on a day of special festivity or indulgence" (Denz. 1209/2159).¹²

The judgment as to whether the conditions for general, sacramental absolution, mentioned above, are fulfilled, is reserved to the diocesan bishop after he has conferred with other members of the respective bishops' conference.

If a serious need arises for giving general, sacramental absolution, apart from the cases laid down by the diocesan bishop, the priest is obliged whenever it is possible, to have previous recourse

¹¹ The numbers in parentheses refer to the Pastoral Norms of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith of June 17, 1972.

¹² M. Zalba, *Commentarium*, ad Normas pastorales circa absolutionem sacramentalem generali modo impertiendam, *Periodica* 62 (1973) 193-213. In view of the document and the officials commentaries the article of T. O'Neill, *Pastoral Norms for General Absolution. A Commentary*, Amen, Sept.-Oct. 1972, 213-228 in some cases goes beyond the norms.

to the local Ordinary, in order to grant the absolution lawfully; if this is not possible, he is to inform the same ordinary as soon as possible of the need and of the granting of the absolution (V).

In order that the faithful may take advantage of general, sacramental absolution, it is absolutely (*omnino*) required that they be suitably disposed: each one should repent of the sins he has found, have the purpose of keeping from sin, intend to repair any scandal or loss caused, and also have the purpose of confessing in due time each serious sin that he is at the present unable so to confess.¹³ Priests should carefully remind the faithful of these dispositions which are required for the validity of the sacrament (VI).

Those who have serious sins forgiven by general absolution, should make an auricular confession before receiving absolution in a collective form another time, unless a just cause prevents them. They are strictly obliged (*omnino debent*), unless prevented by moral impossibility, to go to confession within one year. They too are affected by the precept that obliges every Christian to confess individually to a priest once a year at least all his serious sins that he has not yet individually confessed (VII).

2. The Rite of General Absolution

The rite of the reconciliation of penitents by general absolution is the same as the rite of the reconciliation of several penitents with individual confession and absolution. Only the following elements are different:

a. Admonition

After the homily — or as part of the homily — the priest has to admonish those who want to receive general, sacramental absolution to prepare themselves properly: they have to be contrite, have a firm purpose of amendment and the will to repair the damage and scandal which they may have caused. The priest should also mention the fact that they have to confess in due time individually the serious sins which they cannot confess at the moment. Also a penance as satisfaction should be imposed by the priest. The individual penitent may add something personal of his own.

b. General Confession

Sacraments are necessarily sensibly perceptible signs. Therefore, the priest first asks the penitents to show by some outward

¹³ The problem of the meaning of "ius divinum" concerning sacramental Penance at the Council of Trent seems to have been solved: K. J. Becer, Die Notwendigkeit des vollstaendigen Bekenntnisses in her Beichte nach dem Konzil von Trient, *Theoloige und Philosophie* 47 (1972) 161-228, a.l. 227 — Shortened in *Theology Digest* 21 (1973) 204-209. It has the meaning of our present-day "ius divinum."

sign that they want to receive general, sacramental absolution. Then the same persons admit their sinfulness publicly in a formula of general confession (e.g., the Confiteor). The same thoughts of sinfulness and sorrow for their sins may be expressed in a litany or song, as mentioned earlier for the reconciliation of several penitents with individual confession and absolution. At the end the Lord's Prayer is always added.

c. General Absolution

With hands outstretched over the penitents the priest then grants general, sacramental absolution. He may use the formula for the absolution of individual penitents, or also the more solemn form given here:

**God the Father does not wish the sinner to die
but to turn back to him and live.
He loved us first and sent his Son into the world to be its Savior.
May he show you his merciful love and give you peace.**

R. Amen.

**Our Lord Jesus Christ was given up to death for our sins,
and rose again for our justification.
He sent the Holy Spirit on his apostles
and gave them power to forgive sins.
Through the ministry entrusted to me
may he deliver you from evil
and fill you with his Holy Spirit.**

R. Amen.

**The Spirit, the Comforter,
was given to us for the forgiveness of sins.
In him we approach the Father.
May he cleanse your hearts and clothe you in his glory,
so that you may proclaim the mighty acts of God
who has called you out of darkness
into the splendor of his light.**

R. Amen.

**And I absolve you from your sins
in the name of the Father, and of the Son, +
and of the Holy Spirit.**

R. Amen.

This solemn prayer consists of a threefold anamnesis which leads to an epiclesis, the calling down of God's grace, mercy and forgiveness. God does not want that sinners perish. In the history of salvation he always took the initiative so that man would return

to him and find life. The most outstanding example of this divine initiative is the Incarnation, when the Father sent the Son, who became man "for us and our salvation." He continues to show his mercy and to grant peace and reconciliation.

Sent by the Father and in obedience to him Our Lord Jesus Christ died for us and rose again that we might walk in the newness of life. To make this new life which he had acquired in his resurrection accessible to us, he sent to his apostles and their successors the Spirit as fruit of his Paschal Mystery. As he had been sent by the Father so he sent his apostles, bestowing on them the Spirit and the power to forgive sins. The priest who stands before the congregation shares in this mission of the apostles. In the authority of this mission he asks Christ to free the penitents from their sins and fill them with the power of the Holy Spirit.

In the Holy Spirit, who "is the forgiveness of all our sins"¹⁴ we have access to the Father. Coming into our hearts the Spirit cleanses us, makes his light shine upon us. He enables us to proclaim the great deed of the forgiveness of our sin, both now here on earth and especially in the glory of heaven, since he is "the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it" (Eph 1:14).

d. Proclamation of Praise and Conclusion

At the end of the celebration the priest invites the participants to an act of thanksgiving and praise for God's mercy. This can be done in a suitable song or hymn. The concluding prayer proposed for the rite of communal reconciliation and individual confession and absolution is omitted here. Right after the song the priest blesses the congregation with the same formula proposed for the conclusion of the rite for reconciliation of several penitents with individual confession and absolution, and dismisses them.

¹⁴ Roman Missal, Saturday before Pentecost, Morning Mass, Prayer over the Gifts.

COMMUNICATION

Originally, the word "communicate" meant "to make (some-thing) common, to participate, to share." This Section serves as a forum for exchange of views and for appeals. It also attends to questions that do not require scholarly study but call for practical advice.

COMMUNION IN THE HAND

For the sake of clarification, and to prevent possible misunderstandings about the question of "communion in the hand" in the Philippines, I wish to make the following remarks.

In the **Boletín Eclesiástico**, October 1974, p. 687 it is said: "communion on the hand seems to be the most authentic form"; and in the **Boletín Eclesiástico**, January 1975, p. 54, it is said that such form "is allowable". Whatever we may think of the first statement, the second is not entirely correct.

Communion in the hand may be permitted **only** in those countries where the **episcopal conference** (not any particular bishop) has asked the Apostolic See and **obtained** the permission for it. And the **episcopal conferences** cannot ask the permission from the Apostolic See unless a **two-thirds majority** vote is obtained from the members of the Hierarchy; and the Holy See will not grant the permission asked by any episcopal conference, without examining individually every application presented (Cf. **L'Osservatore Romano**, English ed., June 14, 1973, p. 7).

The Instruction "**Memoriale Domini**" of 29 May 1969 gives an account of the consultation made to the Bishops of the whole world about the matter, and after declaring that **only** a good **one-third** of the bishops of the whole Christendom was in favor of communion in the hand, exhorts all bishops, priests and faithful to abide by the traditional custom, in obedience to the judgment of most of the Bishops, out of respect for the present liturgical legislation and out of concern for the common good of the Church (Cfr. **Acta Apostolicae Sedis**, Vol. LXI, a. 1969, pp. 544-545).

As a matter of fact, today in most countries of the world communion in the hand is **not allowed**, and may **not be permitted**. In Italy and in Spain it is not permitted; the episcopal conferences

have not been able to ask the required permission, although some bishops might favor it. In the United States, back in 1970, 54% of the Bishops voted in favor of communion in the hand; three years later, in 1973, there were 54% opposed to communion in the hand (113 in favor, 121 opposed) which reveals an unexpectedly large erosion of previous episcopal support for the new practice. But since neither in 1970 nor in 1973 a two-thirds majority could be obtained, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) of the United States has not been able to present a request to the Holy See for permitting communion in the hand. And the growth of the episcopal opposition makes it exceedingly unlikely that this question will ever be paced before the bishops again in the foreseeable future, according to reliable sources.

In the Philippines, this question was brought to the CBCP in 1973. The Most Reverend Chairman of the Episcopal Commission on Liturgy in the Philippines presented a query to the Sacred Congregation of Divine Worship as to whether or not **any Residential Bishop** in the Philippines could grant **permission** for the giving of Holy Communion in the hand, **in his own Diocese** and **for purposes of experimentation**. Apparently the Episcopal Conference of the Philippines was not able to get a two-thirds majority vote on this matter.

The reply of the Sacred Congregation in its letter of August 24, 1973 (Prot. No. 479/73) stated:

".... the Congregation must reply **negatively** to your request, **even in the experimental form suggested**. The norms given by the **Holy See** in this matter are **precise**, and it is the '**mens**' of the **Supreme Authority** that this should be **upheld**. The Sacred Congregation cannot neglect the expression of the **will of the Bishops** in this matter, as expressed **by their voting**". (Stress, ours).

Hence, in the Philippines, as in many other countries, communion in the **hand cannot be allowed**, even by a bishop in his own diocese (much less, by any priest), even for experimentation among priests, sisters or seminarians. Anything on the contrary is evidently an abuse, which might be perhaps explained (though hardly excused) through ignorance of the above ruling given by the Supreme Authority of the Church. That is why we deem it important to publish such ruling in the **Boletin Eclesiastico**. As Bishop Floyd Begin of Oakland, U.S.A. said on Nov. 13, 1973: "The issue is not liturgical; it is disobedience and defiance to the Church." (Cf. **NOTITIAE**, n. 77, Nov. 1972, p. 343)

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Comment. — We invite the attention of our readers to the context of the two citations of the Boletín in Fr. Cavanna's Communication. In page 687, October 1974 referring to the way the Lord gave communion during the Last Supper, Fr. Graf said: "If we want to follow this literally, then communion on the hand seems to be the most authentic form: both the 'giving' and the 'taking' is being preserved." Fr. Graf spoke conditionally: "If..." He does not say that he wants priests to imitate every detail of what Christ did at the Last Supper. In fact the thrust of his argument is that while preserving essentials, we should not hesitate to set aside servile adherence to every detail of Christ's Last Supper, in favor of helping the people have a better grasp of the sacramental sign. But precisely because the practice of ministers giving the host to communicants helps them understand better the **gift-aspect** of the Eucharist, it should be preserved. Hence Fr. Graf argues on the basis of the catechetical value of the gesture of giving. Archbishop Bugnini, in the article quoted in the Boletín, January 1975, p. 53, attaches another value to the gesture: it preserves, according to him, what Jesus actually did. Both authors, therefore, defend the same conclusion, but they offer different arguments.

It should be noted that Fr. Graf did not discuss whether or not it is allowable for the communicant to receive in his hand a host given by a minister. This was, however, mentioned by the editor in a footnote in the January 1975 issue, p. 54. In the context, a contrast is made between what is allowance (communion in the hand) and what, according to Archbishop Bugnini, 'has never been given and will not be given' (the faculty for eucharistic "self-service" by non-priests). We did not make the statement that communion in the hand is actually allowed. But we concede that readers might misunderstand the potential for what is actual. As Fr. Cavanna points out, right now communion in the hand for the faithful is not allowed. But we must leave the door open. If ever a two-thirds majority would opt for this form of communion, a change of practice could materialize.

The point we wanted to stress in our editorial footnote (January 1975, p. 54, is that there is greater opposition to Eucharistic "self-service" than to communion in the hand (though both are presently not allowed). — **Editor.**

HERE AND THERE

BISHOP CALLS FOR FAIRNESS

Msgr. Antonio Y. Fortich, Bishop of Bacolod, has reacted to an Open Letter to President Marcos on the Sugar Industry dated 11 January, 1975 purportedly signed by the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines.

The letter denounces the abuse of workers by rich sugar planters. It bases its denouncements on a report supposedly prepared for Association of Major Religious Superiors of Men and Women in the Philippines.

Bishop Fortich said: "It gives us so much grief that general statements like those contained in the study are circulated without proper identification of the persons and the haciendas concerned. We know for sure that most planters are socially oriented and are indeed trying their very best to improve the lot of sugar workers..."

"There is no denying the fact however, that there are a few planters who remain stagnant in the old structure of injustice,

underpaying their workers and exploiting the dignity of their workers. They are those who betray and destroy the image of the sugar industry. They are those who are urge earnestly to institute immediate reforms. However, realizing that no matter how much is being done there is still so much left for everyone to do to achieve a truly Christian community, we urge our faithful, clergy and laymen, to avoid name-calling and labelling. Violence in feeling and language should have no place in the common task to help one another realize in deed and in truth that we are brothers in God."

"Finally, no less important is it for the institutional church to be conscious of the responsibility that as we preach God's justice there is need for us to beware, that in our own sphere including those who work with us there can be occasions when we too can be guilty of the faults which all too easily we find in others. Let us ourselves correct these conditions with as much zeal as we work to correct injustices elsewhere."

TROUBLE BREWING IN KALINGA AND BONTOC

The Most Rev. Francisco Claver, S.J., Bishop of Malaybalay (Bukidnon), a Bontoc by birth, has strongly expressed his objection to the way the Government is using the Military to compel the Kalinga and Bontoc mountain people to leave their ancestral lands because they will soon be flooded

by the Chico River Dam Project being undertaken by the Government.

The government has granted to the National Power Corporation the right to undertake the Chico River Basin Development Project. The river will be damned in four

places: Bontoc, Bontoc (Chico I); Sadangga, Bontoc (Chico II); Basaw, Kalinga (Chico III); Tomiangan, Kalinga (Chico IV). The last dam alone will be the biggest in Asia. It will be larger than Ambuklaw, Pantabangan, Binga and Kaliraya all put together. Electricity (400,000 Kilowatts) and irrigation are the purposes of the project.

The human price of the dam will be the displacement of 15,000 Bontoc and Kalinga families, or more than 100,000 people. They have started to resist relocation. Five times their leaders have gone to Manila to plead their cause but they have yet to win an audience with the President. However, a dialogue with the NPC officials has been initiated.

Meanwhile, work has begun on the project. When the Kalinga elders organized resistance to the government engineers the Philippine Constabulary came, gathered them, took them to town and scolded them like children.

Bishop Claver, speaking for his people, said: "Despite apparent

initial successes, on the part of the Military, to compel them to go along with the government plans regarding the use of their land — those primitive mountain people, the Bontoc and the Kalinga, are not going to give in without a struggle. To put it very simply and bluntly, we have in the Chico River Basin the dreadful potential for another Mindanao. Perhaps, even worse."

Bishop Claver urges the government to dialogue with the people: "The Bontoc and the Kalinga — for all their primitiveness — are intelligent and reasonable people. If it can be shown to them that the sacrifice of their land — tremendous as it is — will, in the long run, work to their ultimate good, then their resistance to the Government's program should become more manageable."

"It will take time to convince them, to make them see the Government's point of view, to arrive at a common consensus. Indeed it will. But it is a people we are dealing with — not automatons."

6 TO BE CANONIZED DURING THE HOLY YEAR

At a consistory of cardinals and bishops Pope Paul VI decreed that 4 blessed men and 2 blessed women are to be canonized in St. Peter's during the Holy Year.

Up for canonization are: Blessed Vincenza Maria Lopez Vicuna (Spanish Foundress), Blessed Juan Bautista de la Concepcion (Spaniard), Blessed Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton (American Foundress), Blessed Juan Macias, O.P., (Dominican lay Brother), Blessed Oliver Plunkett (Irish Archbishop, martyr), Blessed Justin de Jacobis, C.M., (Italian missionary, first Apostolic Vicar of Abyssinia).

Mother Elizabeth Bayley Seton, born a socialite in colonial New

York, will become the United States' first native saint (St. Frances Cabrini, who worked and died in America, was an immigrant from Italy). Father Robert Ray Parks, Episcopalian rector of Trinity parish, New York, where Elizabeth was a member before her conversion to Catholicism, hailed the forthcoming canonization as an event "of great ecumenical significance." He pointed out that "Mrs. Seton's baptism in the Episcopal Church was regarded as valid and sufficient by the Roman Catholic Church as she was not rebaptized, according to the Rev. Charles T. Bridgeman, the late historiographer of Trinity."

Mother Seton was born August 28, 1774 in New York City. Her

father, Richard Bayley, was a colonial physician and New York's first health officer. Her mother, Catherine Charlton, was the daughter of the Episcopal rector of New York City. Elizabeth was married at 19 to William M. Seton, the eldest son of a wealthy New York importer. The couple had five children. While on a trip to Italy in 1803, her husband died and Elizabeth received instructions in the Catholic faith. Returning to America as a young widow and a new convert, she showed extraordinary virtues in starting a new life. She eventually founded the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph, whose work in American parochial schools has contributed greatly to the strength of American catholicism.

Blessed Juan Macias was a poor orphan who, as a young man, emigrated from Plasencia, Spain, to Lima, Peru. He became a Dominican lay Brother and devoted

his life to relieving the sufferings and difficulties of thousands of Spanish immigrants who had gone to the New World to seek their fortune. His canonization becomes a unique occasion to reflect on the role of Christian in the solution of the grave problem of emigration which touches the lives of millions of men today.

Born in Rivera, a village of Plasencia, Spain on March 2, 1585, Juan Macias died in Lima, Peru on September 26, 1645. He was a contemporary and companion of St. Martin de Porres (1579-1639), another Dominican lay Brother.

The dates for the canonizations are: May 25 for Blessed Vincenza Ma. Lopez Vicuna and Blessed Juan Bautista de la Concepcion; September 14 for Blessed Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton; September 28 for Blessed Juan Macias; October 12 for Blessed Oliver Plunkett; October 26 for Blessed Justin de Jacobis.

GENFEST AND PILGRIMAGE

The "Gen Gloria," a group of girls from the Philippines travelled all the way to Rome to join twenty thousand members of the GEN movement who converged in the Holy City for a pilgrimage and a "Genfest" March 1 and 2.

The title "Gen" comes from the phrase "New Generation". But for the members it means more than a phrase or a title they believe that through the message of the Gospel it is possible to arrive at their ideal of a "new generation" where the higher values of love and respect will reign.

Chiara Lubich, foundress of Focolare and GEN, joined the pilgrims for whom the Pope celebrated Mass and held an audience.

The Pope said: "It is often disturbing to see how many people,

calling themselves followers of Gospel, are incapable of deducing from the Gospel itself a social life founded on love. Perhaps they are afraid that if they are armed only with the Gospel they will be weak, abstract, incapable of the great mission of making people brothers. They think that they can find additional strength and principles by seeking effectiveness in the school of materialism and atheism, which draw their energy and their logic from the struggle of men against men. These are contradictory substitutes for educating the modern world to a just and brotherly social life. You, the New Generation, be faithful and coherent. If you have chosen Christ for your Master, have confidence in him and in the Church, which brings and presents him to you. Prove with facts the power for realization which is

in charity, in social love, established by the Master. It will be an experience, yes, a new experience. It will call for resistance, sacrifice, and possibly heroism. It will call for you too to be strong and willing Cyreneans, offering your own shoulders to hold up the Cross of Jesus. Yes, you will also have to suffer with him, like him, for him. But do not be afraid GEN! Be confident! You will have obtained your salvation and the salvation of our modern world. And always, like today, you will be good and happy"

The "Genfest" was held at the "Palazzo dello Sport" in the EUR quarter of Rome. It was a six hour long festival of folk dance and religious music. Over 40 different nationalities were represented in the group and many of the participants performed in traditional costumes of their countries.

Different from many other festivals of young people, the "Genfest" was marked by the orderly and cheerful way in which the young people participated and by the spirit that pervaded among all those present.



RICE-THROWING PROHIBITED IN MARRIAGES

To show his support for the efforts of the National Grains Authority to save rice, the Archbishop of Manila, Jaime L. Sin, has appealed to his Parish Priests to prohibit in their churches the pagan practice of throwing rice to newly-wedded couples.

The Archbishop explained the reason for the prohibition in a Circular which said: "The clamor for food, especially for staples like rice is worldwide. Our own rice-growing nation is not spared from this want. It grieves us to be a witness to the dire need of rice among our less fortunate brethren. It is certainly very cruel of us to permit this precious grain to be wasted wantonly."

The Circular Letter added: "Likewise we ask you to convey to the people in the name of charity and love to see to it that rice is not wasted in the preparation and disposal of this precious commodity."

OUR MOTHER

Eleventh of a Series

FACTS RELATED TO THE VENERATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY IN THE PHILIPPINES — II*

- * At Christmastime, in some barrios, statues representing Joseph and Mary go from house to house — knocking on the doors, looking for shelter — ending in the church for Midnight Mass. This is the *panunuluyan*.
- * Caroling, at Christmastime, commemorates this search of Mary and of Joseph for a place to spend the night on the first Christmas Eve.
- * *In lonely places, where there is no priest, the religious preparation for Christmas consists in the recitation of the Rosary, with hymns between decades, and the litany of Loretto, sung at the end. This ceremony takes the place of the Aguinaldo Mass, and sometimes of the Midnight Mass on Christmas.*
- * In the Filipino home, all through the Christmas season, Mary is seen in the *belen*.
- * The **Pabasa Ng Pasiyon**, sung during Holy Week, begins with a prayer to God and to the Virgin Mary. It tells of the birth of Mary, of the birth of Christ, and after His Passion and Death, the Assumption of Mary into Heaven, where she is crowned as Queen. When the Passion is sung, in private homes, there is an image of Our Suffering Lord, and a statue of Our Lady of Sorrows.
- * The last statue, in the processions of Holy Week, is the *Mater Dolorosa* — the Sorrowful Mother. On Good Friday, the end of the procession is the *Pieta* — the image of the dead Christ in the arms of His mother, at the foot of the cross.
- * *Before dawn on Easter Sunday, we celebrate the salubong — the meeting. The image of the Mater Dolorosa is carried down one street by the women. The image of the Risen Christ is carried down another street, by the men. They meet! A little girl, dressed as an angel, singing the Regina Coeli, removes the black veil of Our Lady. Then*

* Summary of the First Part of "Ang Mahal na Birhen," Pastoral Letter on the Blessed Virgin Mary by the Bishops Conference of the Philippines. Second Installment. Reprinted from "The Communicator" published by the National Office of Mass Media.

the people follow the statues, with the band playing, to the church, for the Mass of the Resurrection on Easter Morning.

- * Christmas and Easter feature the family. Both are rich experiences for the Filipino.
- * **In May, we celebrate the *Flores de Mayo* with all the beauty of the Gospel.**
- * *In October, our Catholic schools have Rosary devotions, and we march in the historic procession of La Naval.*
- * The principal patroness of the Philippines is the Immaculate Conception, celebrated on December 8.
- * **After the suppression of many holy days in the Catholic calendar, this feast of the Virgin remains as one of the three holy days of obligation during the year. The other two are:**

Christmas — the birth of Christ to the Virgin Mary

New Year's Day — the solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

- * In the middle of the 18th century, the devotion of our people to the Virgin Mary blossomed in the foundation of the first Filipino congregation for religious women — the Congregation of the Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Philippines — the Religious of the Virgin Mary.

- * **Out of the same deep devotion sprang:**

The Barangay sang Birhen

The Sodality of Our Lady

The Legion of Mary

The Association of the Children of Mary

- * **Even the followers of the late Gregorio Aglipay — the Philippine Independent Church — venerate Mary. Their official stand is:**

"The Blessed Virgin Mary was chosen by God to be the mother of Jesus Christ. As Jesus Christ is truly God and Mary is the mother of Jesus Christ, she is the Mother of God in his human generation. She whom God honored is to be honored above all."

- * The Philippine Episcopal Church celebrates the feasts of the Annunciation, and of the Purification. They sing the *Magnificat* in their Evening Prayer. Their cathedral in Manila is dedicated to Saint Mary and Saint John.
- * **The people of the Philippines, down through the centuries, have been close to the Virgin Mother of God.**

HOMILETICS

by

Fr. Efren Rivera, O.P.

I. BIBLICAL NOTES

SOLEMNITY OF THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

(June 1, 1975)

First Reading: Deuteronomy 8:2-3.14b-16a

Second Reading: I Corinthians 10:16-17

Gospel Reading: John 6:51-59 (Greek 6:51-58)

A. **The First Reading** gives us parts of Moses' appeal to the people to remember the Exodus and the wonders God worked for his people during the desert period. It is an *anamnesis*.

The reading is relevant to the Solemnity of **Corpus Christi** specially because it underlines that the giving of manna by God was not only intended to satisfy the hunger of the people but also, to **teach** them that "man does not live by bread alone, but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord." From God's mouth come his Word and Law. If a man keeps these he will surely live. Jesus takes up this teaching in Mt. 4:4, and in John 6:26-50 (first part of the Discourse on the Bread of Life).

B. **The Second Reading** brings out the two meanings of the term "Body of Christ". It means the real body of Christ which died and resurrected to glorious life; and it also means the "mystical" body of Christ, the Church. Christians "participate" in both when they partake of the eucharistic bread.

C. **The Gospel Reading** is the second part of the Discourse on the Bread of Life. Whereas the first part (John 6:26-50) can be interpreted to show that Jesus himself, and in particular his doctrine, but not any sacrament, is the Bread of Life, it is impossible to interpret this second part without identifying the Bread of Life with the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

Those who deny that Christ instituted as Sacrament that truly contains his Body and Blood as food for the faithful, have to deny the authenticity of John 6:51-b-58. They say it is an "ecclesiastical interpolation" but have no way of proving this.

TENTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

(June 8, 1975)

First Reading: Hosea 6:3b-6 (Hebrew 6:3-6)

Second Reading: Romans 4:18-25

Gospel Reading: Matthew 9:9-13

A. The connecting link between the **First Reading** and the Gospel is the sentence, "What I want is love (mercy), not sacrifice" (Hosea 6:6; Matthew 9:13). In Hosea it concludes a pericope (6:1-6) on false repentance.

Israel and Judah apparently decide to repent and turn to Yahweh signifying this with ritual sacrifices and holocausts. These, in fact, signify only a love "like a morning cloud, like the dew that quickly disappears".

God wants true HESED — the love which is the faithfulness to God's covenant.

B. **The Gospel Reading** narrates the call of Matthew, named Levi in Mark 2:14 and Luke 5:27-29. A contrast is made between him and the Pharisees. His response to Jesus is prompt and whole-hearted; his generosity is total, involving both himself and his possessions. The Pharisees, on the other hand, refuse to follow Jesus: they include him in their blanket condemnation of all who do not follow their ways.

It should be noted that Matthew, being a publican, was a rich man. If it is true that "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 19:24). Matthew's example demonstrates that "for God everything is possible."

While a rich man made it to the chosen circle of the Twelve Apostles during Christ's earthly ministry, we have to wait until the conversion of Paul, after Jesus' Ascension, before a Pharisee becomes an Apostle.

C. **The Second Reading** is the concluding portion of Paul's explanation of how Abraham's faith is the model of the Christian

230 BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS

faith. This can easily be tied up with the thought in the Gospel reading that, as long as man has true faith, nothing is impossible with God.

ELEVENTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

(June 15, 1975)

First Reading: Exodus 19:2-6a

Second Reading: Romans 5:6-11

Gospel Reading: Matthew 9:36-10:8

A. **The First Reading** is connected with the Gospel Reading because of the theme of Choice or Election. Although all the earth belongs to God, he chose the Israelites to be his own in a special way, constituting them as "a kingdom of priests, a consecrated nation."

B. God's faithfulness to his Election of Israel continues even in the New Testament — "as the chosen people, they are still loved by God, loved for the sake of their ancestors; God never takes back his gift or revokes his choice." Christ and the Twelve Apostles are first sent "to the lost sheep of the House of Israel."

Christ is interested in sending many labourers to the harvest but he limits the choice of Apostles to only Twelve, most surely to represent the Twelve Tribes of Israel. They are the ones (the Twelve Tribes as well as the Twelve Apostles) destined to bring all the nations to the People of God. Ironically, the Twelve Tribes are now only representatively — through a "remnant" (see Romans 11:1-10) — enjoying the privileges of the People of God.

C. **The Second Reading** makes it clear that God's love is all embracing because he gave his Son to all men and he died for all men. All of us "can count to be saved by the life of his Son."

TWELFTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

(June 22, 1975)

First Reading: Jeremiah 20:10-13

Second Reading: Romans 5:12-15

Gospel Reading: Matthew 10:26-33

A. The theme of the persecuted prophet trusting in God for protection unifies the **First Reading** with the Gospel.

The pericope interrupts Jeremiah's lament and despair at being reduced to a prophet of doom, always proclaiming "Violence and ruin!" (20:8), "Terror from every side!" (20:10). For just a little while before he lapses again into depression, Jeremiah sees himself as a "poor man" who has "committed his cause to God" and can be sure that God will be his "mighty hero" against his enemies.

B. The Gospel Reading is that part of the Apostolic Discourse in Matthew (10:1-42) wherein Christ instructs his disciples to speak openly and fearlessly.

Christ's teaching before his Resurrection was "covered" inasmuch as it was accepted only by the close circle of the disciples. Christ, however, instructs them to eventually "uncover" and proclaim it everywhere (after his Resurrection).

To be fearless in the face of persecution with the prospect of violent death, three motives are pointed out to the disciples.

1. Life does not end with the death of the body; the soul will live on and it is accountable to God.
2. God will not abandon those who are faithful to him: he takes care of each of them personally and in the smallest detail.
3. The disciples are also accountable to Jesus: the unfaithful ones he will reject, the faithful ones he will take with him to the Father.

C. The Second Reading touches on many themes:

1. Verse twelve has often been quoted to support the Catholic doctrine of original sin and the theory of monogenism. As we pointed out in our article in the Boletín, August 1974, p. 535-539, the doctrine of original sin need not be tied up with monogenism, and while we are bound by faith to accept original sin, we can still investigate the pro and con of monogenism.

2. Death is the sign of sin in much the same way as smoke is a sign of fire. Where there is death there is sin.

3. Adam was the head of the human race in its fall; Christ is the head of the same human race in its redemption.

4. The power of grace given to men by Christ is far superior to the power of sin unleashed by Adam.

SOLEMNITY OF STS. PETER AND PAUL

(June 29, 1975)

First Reading: Acts 12-1-11**Second Reading:** 2 Timothy 4:6-8. 17-18**Gospel Reading:** Matthew 16:13-19.

A. The First Reading is the first part of the narrative about Peter's miraculous deliverance after Herod put him in prison to be executed shortly. At the end of the narrative we are told that Peter left Jerusalem and "went to another place". This practically ends the Peter-cycle of the book of the Acts of the Apostles. From chapter 12 onwards Paul is the leading character of the book.

Clearly, Peter was the leader of the Church. Still he needed the prayers of the faithful and the author of the book suggests that it was due to their "unremitting" prayer that Peter was set free.

B. The Gospel Reading is the famous pericope about the Confession of Peter, of which verse 18 is said to be "the most vigorously discussed passage of the Gospel".

Some people try to argue against the Primacy of Peter by saying that in the Greek text Simon is called "petros" — which they interpret as a small rock — whereas Christ said that he will build his Church on a "petra" — a boulder — and this is Christ himself. According to this argument Christ instituted a contrast: "You Simon, are a Petros; I am a Petra. I will not build my church on a Petros but on a Petra." This argument is gratuitous. Christ is not at all pointing out a contrast between Peter and himself — he did not say "You are Petros but I am Petra and on myself I will build my Church."

What Christ evidently did was to give a new name to Simon Bar-Jona: the Aramaic name **Kepha** which will later on be Grecized as **Kephas** and translated in Greek as Petros. Then he proceeded to explain the reason for the change of name: Peter will be the foundation on which the Church will be built.

But in what sense is Peter the foundation of the Church? This is the crux of the problem in the discussion of Peter's Primacy.

In the context, Peter will be the foundation of the Church because of his faith. Because of Peter's faith in Jesus the apostolic group will endure the onslaughts of Death. "The gates of Sheol" is commonly translated as the "gates of Hell" but this is misleading since the phrase means not the powers of evil but the power of death.

An understanding of what really happened to the apostolic group after the death of Christ is necessary to understand Peter's primacy. It must be admitted in the first place that the narratives of the Gospels on the Resurrection of Christ synthesize events that were historically spread out over a period of time — about "forty days".

Christ's death on the cross caused the dispersal of the apostolic group in fulfilment of Christ's prophecy: "You will all lose faith in me this night, for the scripture says: I shall strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered" Mt. 26:31). On Easter Day, Christ's tomb was found empty but, historically speaking, Christ did not appear to the Apostles as a **group** on that day. Rather, on that day or soon after, he appeared to Peter: "He first appeared to Cephas..." (I Corinthians 15:5; see also Luke 24:34b). Then, through Peter's efforts of "confirming" his brothers (Luke 22:32), over a period of days or weeks — "forty days" — the Apostles again gathered together and Jesus appeared to them ("secondly" he appeared to the Twelve: I Corinthians 15:5b). Were it not for Peter, the disciples would have dispersed permanently. Because of him, they gathered together and the building of the Church began.

The death over which the Church of Christ prevailed was first of all Christ's own death. Then the Church also prevailed over the death of the Apostles because by the time this happened they had brought many to the faith to continue their work.

The conferring of the keys, in verse 19, clearly shows that Christ gave Peter a position of leadership and authority in the Church.

C. **The Second Reading** gives a capsule history of Paul's labours and trails in preaching the gospel.

II. HOMILIES

June 1, 1975: Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ

GOOD NEWS OR BAD NEWS?

THEME: The invitation to the Eucharist is in itself good news but it can become bad news to those not properly disposed.

OUR HUMAN CONDITION. Sometimes a piece of information that is intended as good news is received as bad news. For example, the weatherman says it will be bright and sunny tomorrow. This would normally be good news. But it is bad news for those who are desperately waiting for rain for their crops, or for those who are suffering from too much hot weather, or for those who do not want to go to an unpleasant field trip that could be cancelled because of rain.

THE GOOD NEWS AND THE RESPONSE TO IT. So also when Christ announced: "My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him" — he intended this to be good news. But the Jews received it as bad news. Even some of his disciples were so shocked by it that they "left him and stopped going with him."

In the case of the Jews, good news became bad news because of misunderstanding. They thought Jesus wanted them to become cannibals.

But for us, there is no reason why the words of Christ should be taken as bad news. It is clear to us now that the flesh and blood of Christ is to be taken sacramentally, in the forms of bread and wine. There is nothing cannibalistic or repugnant about this.

Yet, the invitation to eucharistic communion is still bad news to some people — to those who are not reconciled with God or with their brothers. It's like being invited to a grand party but being unable to go because of not having presentable clothes.

If you are counted among these people my friends, do not despair. For our eucharistic banquet Christ gives us not only the food but also the clothing: his pardon and grace. Go and confess in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and then you can come to the Sacrament of Thanksgiving or Eucharist.

June 8: Tenth Sunday of the Year

THROUGH THE NEEDLE'S EYE

THEME: Humanly speaking it is well nigh impossible for the rich to give up their riches. But Matthew, the publican, was rich and yet he gave up everything to follow Christ.

OUR HUMAN CONDITION. When you talk with people engaged in social action and especially in the liberation of our people from oppression and exploitation, you will often hear the opinion that it is impossible for the rich to stop oppressing the poor unless violence is used against them. This view has a foundation in our Lord's own words when he said, "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 19:24).

THE GOOD NEWS AND THE RESPONSE TO IT. Let us not forget, however, that Christ also added: "for God, everything is possible."

Our Gospel Reading for today gives us the example of a rich man who became a true follower of Christ.

Matthew or Levi was a publican and therefore a very rich man. Publicans at the time of Christ were those authorized by the Romans to collect the people's taxes. They were paid handsomely for this work and they had many fringe benefits because they could easily take advantage of their authority to enrich themselves dishonestly. Yet Matthew the Publican, by the grace of Christ, became Matthew the Apostle.

So also today, we may indeed find it very hard to convince the rich to share their wealth with their suffering brothers. But let us not despair about this. In spite of everything that we see and hear about the injustices of the rich, let us still hope and pray for God to touch their hearts as he touched the heart of Matthew, so that they would do something to make social justice prevail.

June 15, 1975: Eleventh Sunday of the Year

ROOTS HAVE VALUE

THEME: Christ limited his choice of collaborators to Twelve Apostles to maintain a link with the Twelve Tribes of Israel and teach the value of having roots.

OUR HUMAN CONDITION. The desire for novelty is very strong, especially in modern man. But even stronger and deeper is the desire for roots — for continuity with the past. A new book, published in condensed form in the Reader's Digest (June and July 1974) gives us a very interesting story of an American Negro who succeeds in tracing his ancestry to Gambia, West Africa, and reconstructs the events that brought his african ancestor to America. But we do not have to go that far. We only have to think of how a child is shocked and cries desperately when he is 10 years old and is then informed that he is an adopted child. No matter how dearly his foster parents love him, he wants to know his own father and mother.

THE GOOD NEWS. Jesus wanted his followers to have spiritual roots. He wanted Christians to know that they are the New Israel, and if they are to understand their vocation well, they must look back to the history of Israel.

This is the reason why Jesus chose not a hundred or fifty Apostles but only twelve. In our Gospel reading for today, are you not struck by the fact that Jesus at first complains because the labourers are few, and then when he does pick his closest collaborators, he chooses only twelve? Wouldn't it have been more reasonable for him to have chosen many more Apostles?

Jesus chose only twelve Apostles because he wanted to make it clear that they will be the new patriarchs of the new Twelve Tribes of Israel. He followed the wisdom expressed in our own proverb: "**Ang hindi marunong tumingin sa pinanggalingan ay hindi makarating sa pinaroroonan.**"

Today, this lesson is still relevant. Many people say: you are always complaining that you have few priests and vocations are dwindling. Why not abolish the rule of celibacy? Why not let priests marry and have children? You'll have more priests that way!

We might have more priests that way, but we will lose our roots. And when we lose our roots we would not last long. When disaster strikes we will be swept away.

But when you have roots you can stand in the storm. Even when you lose your leaves and branches you will endure and one day produce new leaves and grow new branches.

So, since having good, deep roots is a valuable thing, the Church today maintains the rule of celibacy for priests, as it has done in the past centuries.

OUR RESPONSE. The wisdom of preserving roots is applicable not only to the structure of the Church or to the rule of celibacy for priests. It applies also for every Christian. Let us maintain the legacy of our fathers in the faith. Yes, we can renew it and enrich it. But let us not sweep it away.

June 22, 1975 Twelfth Sunday of the Year

AMING LIGAYA

THEME: We should constantly renew our readiness to die for the sake of the gospel.

OUR HUMAN CONDITION. Our history tells us about the heroic deeds our ancestors gladly undertook for our freedom. We commit ourselves to follow their example when we say in our national anthem: "aming ligaya na pag may nangaapi ang mamatay nang dahil sa 'yo.'"

Yet, sometimes a cloud of doubt passes our mind. We say; "Is this — our situation today — what Bonifacio and the Katipuneros, Rizal and our other heroes died for? It does not seem worth it." Is there really any cause worth dying for?

THE GOOD NEWS. A nation's freedom is worth dying for. Of course, when that freedom is frustrated or not properly used, we begin to have doubts about its value. But this is really not an argument against the value of our ancestors' sacrifices. It is only a warning that what they won for us we should enrich with our own sacrifices.

Is there any cause worth dying for? Our christian religion gives us another reason to answer "yes" to this question. In fact, Christ commands us to be ready to die for the sake of the gospel.

(At this point the preacher may want to develop the three motives for being fearless in the face of persecution, mentioned in our biblical notes).

OUR RESPONSE. If the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is worth dying for, certainly it is also worth living for. In times like the present, when we are not being persecuted for our religion, let us meet the challenge of Christ's words by living our religion to the full, even at the price of sacrifices.

June 29, 1957: Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul

BROTHER AND LEADER

THEME: The Pope today, like Peter before, is a Big Brother as well as a Leader to whom Christ gave supreme authority.

OUR HUMAN CONDITION. People are never neutral with regard to the Pope. They either love him or hate him; respect him or despise him; listen to him or ignore him. He is either a threat or a help.

THE GOOD NEWS. When people have mixed feelings about the Pope they should remember that he is simply wearing the "shoes of the fisherman" — Simon Bar-Jona whom Christ renamed "Peter". We are informed by our Gospel Reading today that first Christ made Simon the foundation Rock of his Church and only in the second place gave him the insignia of authority and leadership, namely the "keys of the kingdom of heaven."

We should not confuse the two functions of Peter and the Pope: that of a brother to all, and that of leader vested with authority.

To understand why Christ called Simon Bar-Jona the foundation rock of his Church, we should remember what he said in Luke 22:31-32: "Simon, Simon! Satan, you must know, has got his wish to sift you all like wheat; but I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail, and once you have recovered, you in turn must strengthen your brothers."

(Here the preacher may want to use the explanation in our biblical notes regarding Peter as foundation stone of the Church).

To be the rock of the Church meant, in the first place, to be the Big Brother to all the other Apostles. Today, for us, it means to be "the holy Father." The Pope is our Big Brother. Our holy Father.

(The preacher may want to elaborate on the authority of the Pope).

OUR RESPONSE. Let us learn to love the Pope both as our Big Brother and our Leader. Let us follow the example of the early Church and pray unremittently for him.

SHORT NOTICES ON BOOKS

Bless, Willem & Emeis, Dieter: *Fe y Libertad*. Editorial Herder, Barcelona, 1974 — 148 págs. — Rústica 125 pesetas.

The first half of this book was written by Willem Bless, and is of a speculative slant, discussing faith in its nature, attributes and relations to the other virtues. Dieter Emeis authored the second half which applies the principles of the first part to the topics of how to lead an active and abundant life imbued with faith.

The whole volume is based on the Dutch Catechism, and thus whatever can be said about Catechism may as well be applied to this partial commentary of the same. Some portions of the original Dutch Catechism have been rewritten upon orders from the Vatican; but still it holds true that the underlying philosophy of the said Catechism is existentialism, which seems to be slowly blowing over. The Dutch Catechism has sold about 750,000 copies in the original and in translations. The book under review may appeal to the present holders of the Dutch Catechism, which seems to have seen its heyday.

Brosse, Olivier de la et al.: *Diccionario del Cristianismo*. Editorial Herder, Barcelona, 1974 — 1,104, págs. — Tela 1,5000 pesetas.

Though this Dictionary of Christianity has left out simple or self-explanatory religious words, even so it has more than 6,000 entries — terms used in exegesis, patristical theology, dogma, morals, asceticism (mysticism, canon law, Church history, liturgy, philosophy, psychology, psychoanalysis, economics, sociology, arts, etc., with complete definitions of all shades and nuances of meaning. When the vulgar and scientific or technical meanings differ, both are fully explained and discriminated. This is a very illuminating specialized Catholic dictionary which should be in every library, for it is a very useful and even necessary book of reference.

Colomer, Eusebio: *Hombre y Dios al Encuentro*. Editorial Herder, Barcelona, 1974 — 480 págs. — Price not mentioned.

This volume is a study of Teilhard de Chardin's ideas on anthropology, evolution and theology. The author of this book under review shows how the famous Jesuit scholar avoided the Scylla of immanentism and the Charibdys of transcendentalism (or pantheism). Chardin, of course, would not hear of the "death of God" theology, but he speaks of a sort of continuous evolution of the "image of God" and of the "transformation of the traditional religious attitude."

Chardin was either obscure or ambivalent in both the content and style of his works. Thus some take him for a sound scholar of the first caliber, while others see in him but a dreamer, if not a mere juggler of words. The book under consideration is authored by an admirer of Chardin. Other authors who flock around this priest-anthropologist-evolutionist-theologian either refute him or merely bask in his popularity to bandy about their own pet ideas as Chardin's. Colomer's work may be read with profit by critical readers who have their mathematics, science, philosophy and theology at their finger-tips.

Dodd, C. H.: *El Fundador del Cristianismo*. Editorial Herder, Barcelona, 1974 — 204 págs. — Rústica 190 pesetas.

240 BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS

The author Charles Harold Dodd, a minister of the Congregationalist Church of Warwick, is a noted independent-minded exegete. For him the gospels are part of Tradition, which he defines as anything that had been transmitted from mouth to mouth before being put eventually in writing.

A Catholic theologian or scholar of Holy Scripture will profit much from the perusal of this *Life of Christ* which is critico-historical; but if you are looking for a devotional work, you better search for it in another direction.

Faynel, Paul: *La Iglesia* — 2 tomos. Editorial Herder, Barcelona, 1974 — Vol. I: 380 pags. — Rústica 350 pesetas; Vol. II, 308 págs. — Rústica 280 pesetas.

This comprehensive work in two volumes is a most welcome post-Vatican contribution to Ecclesiology. The first volume is a historical and theoretical essay on primitive religions and specifically the Old Testament as the long slow process of gestation of the Catholic Church which was born with the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. The second volume is a masterly practical and pastoral study of the indefectibility, notes, oneness or unicity, ministries, chain of authority, achievement, etc., of the Catholic Church. The approach is optimistic though not triumphalistic, broadminded but orthodox.

Fiolet, H.A.M.: *Hacia una Nueva Teología Cristiana*. Editorial Herder, 1974 — 300 págs. — Rústica 280 pesetas.

Fiolet bores deep through the metaphysical shell that has gradually wrapped the Christian faith. This is an urgent task, if we want to hurdle over the static and dualistic pattern of thought so widespread nowadays but in opposition to the still more prevalent evolutionistic conception of the origin of the universe. If the Christian denominations should remain bogged down in their immobility or traditionalism, their members will feel constrained to adopt one stand while paying lip service to the other, if still they do not dare to break entirely from their faith. For Fiolet the biblical teachings, especially those contained in the first chapter of Genesis, are mere "retrojections" or interpretations of the experiences of the Jewish people in its relations with God throughout its history. Thus the Jewish people proclaims that its covenant with God was the rationale of creation and the key to understanding the main purpose of our earthly existence. And what in the Old Testament was called covenant, we call Christ in the New.

Under the powerful light of such broadminded and encompassing concepts, Fiolet dispels such unnecessary problems as the interrelation between creation and sin; the nature of original sin, the link between sin and death, the after-life, monogenism, polygenism, and other related ones. This book brings home what we continuously witness everyday the old is ever new, for what was is what is. The biblical conception of the origin of the universe surprisingly dovetails with the modern evolutionistic explanation proposed by Teilhard de Chardin, just to mention one in whom Fiolet discovers new insights and dimensions which could perhaps bring about a new theological synthesis in the near future.

In a word, Fiolet seems to be groping his way towards a new brand of theology other than that of the councils and St. Thomas. But did he not say that the old is ever new? His is a very hazardous and bootless endeavor indeed.