

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

LUMEN ECCLESIAE

Pope Paul VI

CENSORSHIP OF BOOKS

**S. Congregation for
the Doctrine of the Faith**

THE HARTFORD STATEMENT

BONTOC MARRIAGE RITE

Maryhill School of Theology

POPULAR BIBLICAL OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

Bernard LeFrois, S.V.D.

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Censorship Liberalized

The first reaction to the news that the Vatican has issued new rules for the censorship of books could understandably be the thought that the Pope wants more discipline in this matter. Since the new decree came at the heels of the recent warning issued against two books of Hans Küng, one could get the impression that the Vatican is really cracking down on authors like him.

But even a cursory reading of the decree would immediately dispel such impressions. In fact it is limited to pre-publication approval of books and other writings and does not deal at all with actions a bishop may take regarding a book which is already published and which he judges to be contrary to faith and morals.

According to a Vatican commentator the new rules are a "liberalization" of existing Church law and a "simplification to the utmost extent of present legislation."

The decree is liberal in the sense that it respects the rightful freedom of research and culture of Catholic writers by imposing on them only those regulations and prohibitions that are strictly necessary for the Church to safeguard faith and morals.

The following points can be placed under the title of liberalization. (1) The types of books for which the Imprimatur is **obligatory** have been reduced to three: texts of Sacred Scripture, Liturgical books and prayer books, Catechisms and school textbooks on religious and moral matters. **This means that authors are no longer obliged to obtain approval for all other books, notably exegetical and interpretative works on Scripture, and publications of research work on theological and moral questions.** (2) Laymen and priests are not obliged to obtain an Imprimatur for articles on non-religious as well as religious and moral matters sent to newspapers and periodicals. This is somewhat restricted in the case of religious,

who are instructed to abide by their institute's constitutions, and in the case of materials sent to publications that **manifestly** and **habitually** attack the Catholic religion or right morals. In this latter case laymen are asked to have a "just and reasonable cause" and priests are required to obtain the approval of the local Bishop. (3) The local Bishop who refuses to grant his approval of a work submitted to him **must communicate to the writer the reasons for his refusal.**

Under the title of simplification it could be noted (1) that the "local Bishop" who has the jurisdiction on approval is either the Bishop of the place where the author lives, or the Bishop of the place where the publisher has his headquarters, and (2) that the Bishops could draw up a list of censors or set up a commission of censors to whom questions could be referred; however, only the Bishop himself can make the decision to grant the *Imprimatur*.

To safeguard the faith and morals of all readers the decree instructs censors to "leave all partially aside and keep in mind only the doctrine of the Church regarding faith and morals, as it is proposed by the magisterium of the Church." On this point a Vatican commentator says: "This evidently debars the censor from basing his judgment on theological opinions, even if they are worthy of respect, or on his own personal views."

Perhaps the rule which will have the greatest repercussion is the new responsibility placed on those in charge of churches and chapels: "No books or other writings dealing with religious or moral questions can be displayed, sold or distributed in churches and oratories if they are not published with the approval of the competent ecclesiastical Authority." This rule gives teeth to the "strong" recommendation that all books on religious and moral matters—even those for which approval is not obligatory—be submitted to the Bishop for approval.

All in all the new decree strikes a very reasonable balance between the duty of the magisterium to see to it that the people be guided in their reading so that their faith and morals may be built up rather than disturbed, and on the other hand, the freedom that scholars and highly prepared students need to widen the frontiers of religious studies. We should welcome the decree and do our part in its implementation.

In This Issue

As a new school-year begins it seems opportune to remember that St. Thomas Aquinas is still the "Patron of all Catholic schools of every category and rank", a title which Pope Paul VI confirmed in **Lumen Ecclesiae**, his letter to the Dominican Master General on the seventh centenary of St. Thomas' death. The letter, though dated November 20, 1974, was received too late for publication in our Boletín in time for the saint's feast on January 28. The Pope agrees "with those who maintain that even seven hundred years after his death the holy Doctor is to be commemorated not merely as a great mind and teacher of the past but also as one whose principles, doctrines and methods have an altogether contemporary validity." To those who do not share this view the Pope's advice is: "Go to Thomas" and study him sincerely, not superficially.

We publish both in Latin and in English translation the Vatican's decree **De Ecclesiae Pastorum Vigilantia Circa Libros**, because of the importance of this document which supersedes prescriptions of Canon Law which are contrary to it. Moreover, L'Osservatore Romano's commentary on the document should suggest to our readers that this is a document that calls for careful study.

In these times when there are so many confusing theological opinions the **Hartford Statement** or "An Appeal for Theological Affirmation" is most welcome because it points out common errors that reputable theologians of different Christian confessions reject as "false and debilitating to the Church's life and work".

Indigenization of the Liturgy is brought up in the article on the Bontoc Marriage Rite. We do hope to hear our readers' views on liturgical indigenization.

Pastors and teachers, we are sure, will welcome Fr. LeFrois' **Answers to Popular Biblical Objections**.

This issue answers many questions, but we hope it also raises some. If they reach us in written form we could share our views on them in the pages of this publication.

LUMEN ECCLESIAE

*Letter of Paul VI to Dominican Master General
on VII Centenary of Death of St. Thomas Aquinas*

To Our Beloved Son
Vincent de Couesnongle
Master General
of the Order
of Friars Preachers

PAUL VI
Greeting
and Apostolic Blessing

1. St. Thomas Aquinas, justly acclaimed Light of the Church and of the World, is remembered in a special and solemn manner in this present year, the seventh centenary of his death which occurred in the monastery of Fossanova when at the command of Our Predecessor, the Blessed Gregory X, he was on his way to the second General Council of Lyons. This commemoration has led to a new intensity in research, in publications, in holding conventions in many universities and centres of higher studies, especially in this city of Rome where through the efforts of the brethren of

the Order of Preachers, of which St. Thomas was himself a member, an international congress of Thomistic studies was held. We have still before our mind the impressive sight of the throng of illustrious scholars from all parts of the world who filled to overflowing the great auditorium of the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas. We addressed to them words of encouragement and congratulation and extolled in their presence this great Doctor of the Church. Some time later We drew attention to "the return" of St. Thomas which, while certainly not expected, occurred in a striking manner, thus manifesting the wisdom of the supreme Magisterium in declaring that in philosophical and theological studies he is a guide whom none can replace.¹ We Ourselves have seen many indications that his teaching touches and moves the minds of men even in our own times.

Commended by the Church

2. We now propose to explain more fully what We have said by drawing attention to certain doctrines of St. Thomas which

are of grave importance for the defence and thorough study of the truths of divine revelation. In this way, he is commended—

¹ Address to the Organizing Committee of the "Index Thomisticus": cfr. *L'Osservatore Romano*, 20-21, May 1974.

as the Church has commended him in the past and continues to do so in the present — to our contemporaries as the master of the art of reasoning, as we Ourselves have styled him,² and as a guide in establishing the relations between philosophical and theological problems and, it may be added, by setting in due and fitting order all that belongs to higher and recondite knowledge.

We wish, therefore, to express Our full agreement with those who maintain that even seven hundred years after his death the holy Doctor is to be commemorated not merely as a great mind and teacher of the past but also as one whose principles, doctrines and methods have an altogether contemporary validity. We desire also to bring out the reasons for the scientific authority which the Magisterium and ecclesiastical institutes attribute to him, especially many of Our predecessors who did not hesitate to name him the "Common Doctor", a title by which he was already known in the year 1317.³

We confess that in affirming and reviving this long-standing and venerable tradition of the

Church's Magisterium We have been moved not only by respect for the authority of Our predecessors but also by an objective appraisal of the excellence of the doctrine of Aquinas, by Our personal experience of the benefits to be derived from the consultation and study of his works and, finally, by the power of conviction and of intellectual formation which he exerts on those who study him, especially on the younger among them. This last We Ourselves observed during Our apostolate among university students who, inspired by Our predecessor, Pius XI of venerated memory, had dedicated themselves to the study of the Angelic Doctor.⁴

3. We are well aware that these views are not shared by all at the present time. It has not escaped Our notice that distrust of St. Thomas or opposition to him is frequently found where his teaching has been superficially or merely occasionally consulted. Indeed, it sometimes happens that in such cases his works have not even been read, much less seriously studied. We, therefore, say with Pius XI to all who desire to act maturely in this matter: Go to

² Address at International Congress to mark 7th centenary of death of St. Thomas: cfr *L'Osservatore Romano*, 22-23, April 1974.

³ Pius XI, Encyclical Letter, *Studiorum Ducem*: A.A.S. 15 (1923), p. 314. Cfr. J.J. Berthier, *Sanctus Thomas Aquinas "Doctor Communis" Ecclesiae*, Rome, 1914, p. 177 ff.; J. Kock, *Philosophische und theologische Irrtumlisten von 1270-1329: Mélanges Mandonnet*, Paris 1930, t. II, p. 328, n. 2; J. Ramirez, *De auctoritate doctrinali S. Thomae Aquinatis*, Salamanca, 1952, pp. 35-107.

⁴ Cfr. M. Cordovani, *San Tommaso nella parola di S.S. Pio XI: "Angelicum" VI (1929)*, p. 10.

Thomas.⁵ We repeat, seek out and read the works of St. Thomas, not only that you may discover in these rich treasures salutary nourishment for the

mind but especially that you may see the incomparable depth, abundance and importance of the doctrine there contained.

I

ST. THOMAS IN THE CONTEXT OF HIS TIME

4. In order to understand fully the lasting influence in the Church and in the learned world of the teaching of St. Thomas it is necessary not only to have a direct and adequate knowledge of his writings but also to take into consideration the historical and doctrinal circumstances of the time in which he lived and carried on his work as teacher and writer.

A simple outline of the essential features of his age provides

a framework in which stand out more clearly the main lines of the holy Doctor's thought concerning religious, theological, philosophical and social questions. This age has been described as an anticipation of the Renaissance. It is true, certainly, that the forces that were to give birth to the Renaissance were already active between the years 1225 and 1274 which was the life-span of St. Thomas.

Gradual Transformation

5. The student of social and political history is well aware of the events which completely changed the face of Europe as it had hitherto been. These were: the victory of the Italian Communes over the already dying medieval empire, the Magna Charta in England, the Hanseatic League uniting sea-trading and commercial cities in northern Europe, the gradual transformation of the monarchy in France, the economic development in the commercial cities, such as, especially, Flo-

rence, and the cultural development in various branches of learning in the great universities, for example theology at Paris, civil and canon law in Bologna, medicine in Salerno, the widespread knowledge of scientific discoveries and of the philosophical works of Arabian scholars in Spain, the establishing, as a result of the Crusades, of new contacts with the East.

It was this age also that witnessed, in the rise of the City States and Kingdoms, the be-

⁵ Encyclical Letter, *Studiorum Ducem*: A.A.S. 15 (1923), p. 323.

ginning of the cultural and political trends that led in the 12th and 14th centuries to the establishment of the modern State. The *respublica christiana*, once based on the religious unity of Europe, gradually gave way to a new and urgent sense of nationality which, pervading every aspect of European society, changed it completely from the medieval concept which was a society dominated by the relations between two supreme powers, namely, the pontifical and the imperial, which were united by mutual cooperation. This was the concept which, after the death of Aquinas, Dante Alighieri vainly proposed as the ideal for human society.

The thirteenth century itself was marked by a strong tendency to assert the "autonomy" or freedom of the temporal order from that of the sacred and spiritual and, consequently, of the State from the Church. In almost every sphere of life there was an ardent eagerness for earthly goods and a renewed acceptance of worldly values to the detriment of religious faith. On the other hand, with the spread of the Mendicant Orders there came about an ever expanding movement of spiritual renewal which, inspired and guided by a love of poverty and zeal for the Gospel message, led christian people to a recognition of the need for a return to the

true and genuine spirit of the Gospel.

St. Thomas, at the centre of philosophical and theological discussion and keenly observant of political developments was fully alive to the changing conditions of his time and perceived in them the "signs" of the universal principles of reason and faith by which human affairs are to be governed and events are to be judged. He acknowledges a certain "autonomy" in secular values and institutions while asserting unhesitatingly the transcendent power and excellence of the final end to which everything in the world is ordained and subject. This last end is the Kingdom of God which is at the same time the place of man's salvation and the foundation of his dignity and freedom.⁶

6. This manner of thinking derives in general from the doctrine concerning the relations between intellectual culture and religion, between human reason and faith, a doctrine which St. Thomas elaborated in response to new problems and new demands in philosophy and theology arising out of the social and cultural developments of the time.

It was an age in which purely rational investigation was more and more insisted upon. In the previous century Abelard in the University of Paris introduced

⁶Cfr. *Summa Theologiae*, I-IIae, q. 21, a. 4, ad 3: Ed. Leonina, VI, p. 167.

the method in a purely **dialectical** form. Whereas formerly an argument from authority was accepted without question, now it was replaced by a comparison between its assertions and the findings of reason, by logical demonstration of theses, by discussions of various opinions, by an eager proposing of questions for debate, by subtle scientific investigation of the nature of language conducted with a precision of method and aims which seems to anticipate modern semantics.

It is in this cultural climate that are found the beginnings of the natural sciences which, while in no way denying the presence and power of God in nature, sought to explain by natural causes the normal course of the visible world. This trend can be seen in not a few christian writers of the time, among whom stands out St. Thomas's teacher, St. Albert the Great, whom Our predecessor Pius XII proclaimed patron of students of the natural sciences.⁷

7. The use of the experimental method had scarcely begun and there were not available instruments — such as, later, Roger Bacon was to forecast — by which the findings of science could be applied to converting material things to the use of mankind. Nevertheless, the power and importance of human reason for the investigation and interpretation of created nature were clearly seen.

For this reason a ready welcome was given to the works of Aristotle, first made known in the West by Arab scholars and later by christian interpreters among whom was William of Moerbeka, a Pontifical Penitentiary, a fellow Dominican and collaborator of St. Thomas.⁸ In Aristotle's works there is found an awareness of concrete reality and a balanced judgement concerning it, in a word, a **realism**, which for many provide a precious instrument of work and a new approach to philosophical and scientific investigations.

Reason and Faith

8. At this point there arises the problem of reaching a new understanding of the relations between reason and faith, and — to take a wider view of the matter — of the relationship We have already mentioned, be-

tween the entire order of earthly realities and that of religious truths, especially that of the christian message.

In this domain there is evident danger of lapsing into one

⁷ Cfr. Litt. Apost. *Ad Deum per rerum naturae*: A.A.S. 34 (1942), pp. 89-91.

⁸ Cfr. M.D. Chenu, *Introduction à l'étude de Saint Thomas d'Aquin*, Paris 1950, pp. 183 ff.

or other of two mutually opposed errors, namely, **naturalism** which completely excludes God from the world and especially from all that concerns man, and a false **supernaturalism** or **fideism**. This latter, in order to guard against errors in doctrine and spirituality, would deny the legitimate claims of reason and hold back the forces making for progress in the natural order. This it would do in the name of a principle of authority which it wrongly uses, taking it outside its proper sphere which is that of the truths of christian revelation, truths which are the seeds of a future life and altogether surpass the capacity of the human mind. This twofold error has frequently cropped up in the course of centuries, both before and after St. Thomas. In our own time these contrasting dangers have not been avoided by some in discussing problems bearing on reason and faith who justify themselves by appealing to the example of St. Thomas's daring originality while lacking his penetration and balance of mind.

St. Thomas was, indeed, endowed with a rare courage in the search for truth, with great intellectual freedom in treating of new questions and with a scientific probity characteristic of all those who, while never

permitting christian truth to be contaminated by secular philosophy, nevertheless do not reject this philosophy **a priori**. He is for this reason, numbered in the history of christian thought, among the pioneers in the development of a new philosophy and of science in general. The source and the hinge, as it were, of the doctrine by which with his sublime and almost prophetic genius he found a new solution for the relation between faith and reason consists in his harmonizing the **secularity** of the world with the austere demands of the Gospel. In this way he avoided the tendency, foreign to human nature, to condemn the world and its values while in no way receding from the supreme, necessary principles of the supernatural order. The entire doctrinal edifice raised by Aquinas is founded on that golden principle which he enunciates from the first pages of the *Summa Theologiae*, namely, that grace does not dispense with nature but perfects it, nature is subject to grace, reason to faith, human love to charity.⁹ Infused grace, the principle of eternal life, supposes the entire vast field of virtues and faculties — namely, "being", intellect, love — in the exercise of which human life consists¹⁰ and at the same time endows it with new powers.¹¹ Thus, the full perfec-

⁹ Cfr. *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2: *Ed. Leonina*, IV, p. 22.

¹⁰ Cfr. *Summa Theologiae*, I-IIae, q. 94, a. 2: *Ed. Leonina*, VII, pp. 169-170.

¹¹ Cfr. *Summa Theologiae*, II-IIae, q. 24, a. 3, ad 2: *Ed. Leonina*, VIII, p. 176.

tion of the **natural man** is achieved in the supernatural order by a process of redemptive purification, of sanctifying elevation. This supernatural life reaches its culmination and perfection in the beatitude of

heaven; nevertheless in this terrestrial life it leads to a beautiful and harmonious combination of values which, like the christian life itself, is difficult to achieve while fascinating to contemplate.

Firm Foundation

9. St. Thomas avoided any form of exaggerated supernaturalism such as was sometimes found in medieval School, and at the same time withstood the **secularism** which was being propagated in Europe in the name of Aristotle who was falsely interpreted on purely naturalistic principles. By his teaching and by the example of his **scientific** labours the Angelic Doctor showed in his teaching and in his life that it was possible to harmonize fidelity to the Word of God with a mind completely open to the world and its genuine values, to combine zeal for renewal and progress with the aim of building a system of doctrine on the firm foundation of tradition.

He kept abreast of the new knowledge of his time in dealing with new problems to which it gave rise and in studying arguments from human reason both for and against the faith. Above all, he studied the Sacred Scriptures on which he had commented from his early years as a professor in the

university of Paris. He was familiar with the works of the Fathers and of the early christian writers, and with the theological and juridical tradition of the Church. He carefully studied ancient and more recent philosophies, not only Aristotle's but also that of Plato and the New-Platonists, as well as Roman, Christian, Arabian and Jewish philosophy. Indeed, he never ventured to sever his connection with the past. This would have been to cut himself off from his roots. Rather, it may be said, that he made his own the saying of St. Paul: **It is not you that support the root but the root that supports you** (Rom 11, 18).

For the same reason he was ever most faithful to the Magisterium of the Church whose office it is by divine mandate and with the ever present assistance which Christ promised would never be wanting to the Pastors of His flock,¹² to guard and define the **rule of faith**¹³ for the faithful and especially

¹² Cfr. *Summa Theologiae*, *ib.*, a. 10; l. mem.; Lk, 22, 32, *ibi* memorandum.

¹³ Cfr. *Summa Theologiae*, II-IIae, q. 1, a. 10, ad 3: *Ed. Leonina*, VIII, p. 24.

for theologians. In a particular way, however, he acknowledged the supreme and definitive authority of the Roman Pontiff in deciding matters pertaining to the faith.¹⁴ To the

judgment of this authority he submitted all his writings, conscious, perhaps, of the immense import and boldness of his innovations.¹⁵

Apostle of Truth

10. Such devotion to the pursuit of truth and such dedication in its service—which St. Thomas deemed to be his life's vocation and which he fulfilled marvellously by his teaching and writing—entitles him to be called "an apostle of truth" and to be proposed as a model for all who are engaged in the office of teaching. To us he is the ideal figure of the christian scholar who aware of the intellectual ferment of his time, responded to the demands of an evolving culture without neglecting the teachings of faith, of tradition and of the Magisterium those sources which brought him the riches of the past and placed on his work the seal of divine truth. In his fidelity to this truth he did not reject the discoveries of human

reason in the past or in his own time. As he himself said, these truths by whomsoever uttered, have as their source the Holy Spirit. Every truth, by whomsoever stated, is from the Holy Spirit infusing the natural light of reason and inspiring and moving us to the understanding and expression of the truth.¹⁶

Open to every advance

11. Because he was so firmly rooted in the faith St. Thomas could not be slavishly dependent on human teachers, ancient or more recent, Aristotle not excepted. His mind was open to every advance of truth from whatever doctrinal source it came. This is the first aspect of his universalism. There is yet another aspect of it which

¹⁴ Cfr. *Summa Theologiae*, II-IIae, q. 1, a. 10: *Ed. Leonina*, VIII, pp. 23-24. Cfr. also what St. Thomas wrote in his *In Symbolum Apostolorum Expositio* concerning the Roman Church: "The Lord said . . . : 'They shall not prevail.' And hence it is that the Church of Peter alone (which included the whole of Italy when the disciples were sent to preach) has always been firm in the faith: and when in other places there is either no faith at all, or it is mixed with error, in the Church of Peter the faith flourishes and is free from errors. This is not surprising because the Lord said to Peter (Lk. 22, 32): 'I have prayed for you, Peter, that your faith may not fail.'" (a. 9: *Ed. Parmensis*, t. XVI, 1865, p. 148).

¹⁵ Cfr. *Vita S. Thomae Aquinatis* by William of Tocco, ch. XIV: *Fontes vitae S. Thomae Aquinatis*, ed. D. Prümmer, O.P., fasc. II, Saint-Maximin (Var), 1924, p. 81.

¹⁶ *Summa Theologiae*, I-IIae, q. 109, a. 1, ad 1: *Ed. Leonina*, VII, p. 290.

is, perhaps, more expressive of his genius and personality, namely, the supreme freedom with which he uses sources without being bound by any merely human doctrinal authority. It is in this freedom and autonomy of mind that his greatness as a searcher for truth is manifest.

In philosophy he paid homage above all to truth and, consequently, judged everything not . . . by the authority of those who spoke, but by the reason for what was asserted.¹⁷ He could freely discuss the views of Aristotle, Plato and others without becoming either an Aristotelian or a Platonist in the strict sense of these terms. This independence of mind, by which he had an affinity with those who submit to the austere mental discipline of the positive sciences, enabled Aquinas to expose and refute the errors

hidden in the writings of Averroes and to take cognizance of the limitations and lacunae to be found in the works of Plato and Aristotle. He was thus able to construct a gnoseology and an ontology which are masterpieces of objectivity and balance.¹⁸

His attitude towards the masters of thought was threefold: first, admiration for the immense patrimony of doctrine which they had collectively gathered and transmitted;¹⁹ secondly, he recognized the value and influence of their work and, at the same time, their limitations;²⁰ finally, he was moved by a certain pity for those who, like the philosophers of old, lacked the light of faith and who when faced with the great problems concerning the meaning of human life and, especially, its last end,²¹

¹⁷ *Expositio super librum Boethii de Trinitate*, q. 2, a. 3, ad 8: rec. B. Decker, Leiden 1955, p. 97. Cfr. *Summa Theologiae*, I q. 1, a. 8, ad 2: An argument from the authority of faith is strongest of all but that based on human authority is the weakest. (Ed. Leonina, IV, p. 22). Another text illustrates St. Thomas's method in philosophy, namely, a method which was neither a slavish dependence on the sense of an author nor was it limited to merely historical considerations nor eclectic but was soundly critical: "The study of philosophy is not ordained to knowing what men have thought but to discovering the truth about reality." In *librum Aristotelis de coelo et mundo commentarium*, I, lect. XXII: Ed. *Parmensis*, t. XIX, 1865, p. 58. Cfr. *Tractatus de spiritualibus creaturis*, a. 10, ad 8: ed. L.W. Keeler, Rome, 1938, pp. 131-133.

¹⁸ Cfr. E. Gilson, *L'esprit de la philosophie médiévale*, Gifford Lectures, Paris, 1932, I, p. 42; *Le Thomisme—Introduction à la philosophie de saint Thomas d'Aquin*, Paris 1965, 6th ed. *passim*. Cfr. also E. Van Steenberghen, *Le mouvement doctrinal du XI au XIV siècle*: Fliche-Martin, *Histoire de L'Eglise*, vol. XIII, p. 270.

¹⁹ Cfr. In XII libros *Metaphys.* *Aristotelis Expositio*, II, lect. 1, Ed. Taur., 1950, n. 287, p. 82.

²⁰ Cfr. *ib.*

²¹ Cfr. *Summa contra Gentiles*, L. III, c. 48: Ed. Leonina, XIV, pp. 131-132.

were filled with an anguish which could not be overcome by human powers an anguish completely absent in a humble old woman with the knowledge of christian truth, who enjoyed a greater fullness of divine light than these great minds.²²

Study of truth

12. While St. Thomas in his profound study of truth attained to the highest pinnacle of human reason, he had, nevertheless, when confronted with the sublime and ineffable mysteries of faith, the simplicity of a child. It was his custom to remain kneeling before the crucifix or the altar, praying for the light of intellect and purity of heart which would permit him to see clearly the hidden things of God.²³ He willingly confessed that his knowledge had been obtained more by prayer than by study.²⁴ He had such a sense of divine transcendence that he laid down as the first condition of any theological investigation this principle: **the more perfectly we know God in this life, the better do we understand that he surpasses whatever the mind**

can know of him.²⁵ This statement, besides being a primary principle and almost the foundation of the method of investigation from which originates what is called "apophatic" theology, is also an indication of his humility of mind and of his spirit of adoration.

Combining in himself a most profound christian sense with the penetration of a scientific mind, open to every advance of ancient or contemporary thought, it is not surprising that St. Thomas, at the very centre of the crisis in the 13th century, could open up new ways for defining the relations between reason and faith, nor that, when necessary, he prevented theology from leaving the path of truth under pressure from philosophical trends. He rejected any false harmonizing of the truths of reason and revelation. Neither can it be wondered at that he emphatically refuted the doctrine of "the two truths", namely, of reason and of faith which even if mutually contradictory, could, according to this doctrine, be accepted by christians on different grounds. Its defenders

²² Cfr. *In Symbolum Apostolorum Expositio*, a. 1: *Ed. Parmensis*, t. XVI, 1896, p. 35: "None of the philosophers before the coming of Christ could know as much about God and about what is required for eternal life as a simple old woman knows by faith after Christ's coming."

²³ Cfr. *Summa Theologiae*, II-IIae, q. 8, a. 7: *Ed. Leonina*, VIII, p. 72: *Vita S. Thomae Aquinatis* by William of Tocco, chs. XXVIII, XXX, XXXIV: *Fontes vitae S. Thomae Aquinatis*, ed. mem. pp. 102-103, 104-105, 108.

²⁴ *Vita S. Thomae Aquinatis* by William of Tocco, ch. XXI: ed. mem., pp. 105-106; cfr. J. Pieper, *Einführung zu Thomas von Aquin*, München, 1958, p. 172 ff.

²⁵ *Summa Theologiae*, II-IIae, q. 8, a. 7: *Ed. Leonina*, VII, p. 72.

destroyed the interior unity of the christian mind and fomented controversies which, when the balanced synthesis of St. Thomas had been forsaken, were to disrupt the intellectual culture of Europe.²⁶

13. In carrying out the work which was to lead medieval christian culture to its apex, St Thomas was not alone. Both before and after his time many outstanding scholars laboured towards the same end. Among these were: St. Bonaventure, the seventh centenary of whose death coincides with that of St. Thomas, St. Albert the Great, Alexander of Hales, Duns Sco-

tus. Without doubt, however, the body of "scholastic"—as it is called—philosophy and theology attained its summit with St. Thomas, and his work became the centre around which, then and afterwards, christian teaching revolved while being capable of true progress.

In this year, therefore, which marks the seventh centenary of the death of St. Thomas we offer him our heartfelt praise in gratitude for the benefits conferred by him on the entire christian people and in public acknowledgment of his impe- rishable grandeur.

II

THE PERMANENT VALUES OF HIS DOCTRINE

14. The greatness of St. Thomas is not a matter merely of the historical and cultural circumstances of his age but is on a doctrinal plane which reaches beyond the period between the 13th century and our own. During these centuries the Church has acknowledged the power and importance of thomist doctrine, especially on outstanding occasions such as the ecumenical Councils of Florence, Trent and Vatican I,²⁷ the promulgation of the Code of Canon Law,²⁸ and

the second Vatican Council, of which We shall speak later.

This authority of St. Thomas has frequently been confirmed by Our predecessors and by Ourselves. Let it be clear to all that there is no question in this of a doctrinal conservatism closed to historical development and fearful of progress. Rather is it a choice based on the objective and intrinsic realism of the philosophy and theology of Aquinas which reveals in him a man providentially raised up who, by the originality of his creative work,

²⁶ Cfr. J. Pieper, o. mem., p. 69 ff.

²⁷ Cfr. Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter, *Aeterni Patris: Leonis XIII Pont. Max. Acta* I, Rome 1881, pp. 255-284.

²⁸ CIC., can. 1366, 2: cfr. can. 589, 1.

determined christian teaching to enter on a new road, especially with regard to the relation between intellect and faith.

15. To sum up briefly the reasons We have indicated, it suffices to recall the **gnoseological and ontological realism** which is the first and fundamental characteristic of the philosophy of St. Thomas. We could also describe it as a **critical realism** which in so far as it is based on sense knowledge and hence on **objective reality** gives to "being" ("esse") its true and positive meaning. This realism, while perceiving the universal element in sense data, does not lose contact with them in such a way as to be caught up in the dialectical vortex of merely **subjective** knowledge which almost necessarily leads to more or less absolute agnosticism. **Primum in intellectu cadit ens.** (The first concept in the mind is the concept of being), as Aquinas says in a well-known text.²⁹ On this primary principle is based the gnoseology of St. Thomas, the surpassing originality of which consists in a balanced judgement of the contribution of both sense knowledge and the testimony of consciousness to the process of knowledge.

From this, when subjected to critical analysis, is derived a sound ontology and consequently the entire structure of theology. For this reason the philosophy of St. Thomas can be defined as the **philosophy of being** which it studies in both its universal aspect and its existential conditions. It is likewise clear that from this philosophy Aquinas ascends to the **theology of the divine Being** as subsisting in itself, as revealing itself by its Word, in salvation history and especially in the mystery of the Incarnation.

Our predecessor Pius XI in an address to university students extolled this gnoseological and ontological realism in these significant words: **In Thomism there is, so to speak, a kind of natural Gospel and solid foundation on which all doctrinal systems are based and in which they are contained, for the reason that it is proper to Thomism to be objective. It does not offer merely abstract and lofty intellectual explanations but gives an account of things to which reality invites the mind... The excellence and value of thomistic doctrine will never fail as, otherwise, the excellence and value of reality itself would fail.**³⁰

Human Intellect

16. To understand how a philosophy and theology of this

kind can be possible it must be recognized without doubt

²⁹ Cfr. *Quaestiones Disputatae. De Veritate*, q. 1, a. 1: Ed. Leonina, XXII, vol. I, fasc. 2, p. 5.

³⁰ Cfr. *Discorsi di Pio XI, Torino* 1960, vol. I, pp. 668-669.

that the human intellect, which is fundamentally sound and is gifted with a certain sense of being, has the power of knowing truth. The mind tends, by its very nature, in every contact great or small with concrete realities, to assimilate their content to itself. In this way it progresses to a reflection on their ultimate reasons or causes in which their definite explanation is to be found. Indeed, as is fitting for a christian philosopher and theologian, St. Thomas recognizes in every being a certain participation of the Absolute Being which creates, sustains and from on high moves by its power the created universe, all life, every thought and act of faith.

Beginning from these principles, Aquinas, while exalting as much as possible the dignity of human reason, provides theology with a most precious instrument which enabled him to clarify and understand profoundly many problems which his brilliant mind examined. Such are problems pertaining to the transcendental properties and the analogy of being; the constitution of finite being from essence and existence; the relations between creatures and divine Being; the dignity of created causality which, in its dynamism, depends on divine causality; the ontological reality of the actions of finite beings, a matter that pertains

to all parts of philosophy and theology, to morals and to ascetical studies; the structure and finality of the universe. If however, the mind ascends higher to the sphere of divine truths, the same may be said of the understanding of God as subsisting Being whose hidden life *ad intra* revelation permits us to know; of the distinction of the divine attributes; the defence of divine transcendence against any form of **pantheism**; of the doctrine of creation and of divine providence. In dealing with all these questions, St. Thomas not only clarifies metaphorical and obscure anthropomorphic terminology but, with characteristic soundness of judgement and a spirit of faith performs a work which today, perhaps, could be called "demythologization" but which can more truly be described as a rational investigation directed, sustained and inspired by faith, of the essential truths of christian revelation.

In this way and for these reasons St. Thomas both exalts the power of reason and renders a most effective service to faith as Our predecessor Leo XIII declared in a memorable pronouncement concerning the Angelic Doctor: **Distinguishing**, as is fitting, reason from faith, while yet establishing harmony between them, he both preserved the rights of each and

respected their dignity in such a manner that reason raised on the wings of Thomas to the limits of human possibility

could not rise higher, nor could faith obtain more or stronger helps from reason than were provided by Thomas.³¹

Highest Notions

17. There is a further reason why the doctrine of St. Thomas possesses a power and an influence which remain undiminished with the passage of time. While establishing the universality and the transcendence of the highest notions as the keynote of his philosophy (namely, **being**) and of his theology (**divine Being**), he did not wish to construct a final and closed system of doctrine but one which would continue to remain open to progressive enrichment and expansion. What he achieved by drawing on the fruits of ancient and medieval philosophy and much less frequently on the contributions of the natural sciences as known to the ancients, can always be repeated for any real value provided by philosophy or the most advanced sciences. This is further shown by the experience of numerous writers who have found in the doctrine of St. Thomas excellent means of fitting the specialized results of philosophical and scientific investigations into a world-view of universal scope.

18. Let it be stated here once more that the Church, while not unaware of certain limita-

tions in the doctrine of St. Thomas, especially where it is more closely linked with medieval cosmology and biology, nevertheless warns that not all philosophical and scientific theories can be considered as equally sharing in the christian vision of the world, much less as being completely christian. Indeed, not all the ancient philosophers, including Aristotle who was so generally favoured by Thomas, were considered as such or were accepted in their entirety or uncritically. In their case Aquinas used the same principles which are employed today in deciding whether contemporary philosophy or science can be accepted by christians.

For while Aristotle and other philosophers—allowing for due correction and adaptation of particular points—were, and are, acceptable on account of the universality of their principles, of their respect for **objective reality**, of their acknowledgment of one God distinct from the universe, the same cannot be said of any philosophy or **scientific theory** whose primary principles cannot be reconciled with religious faith either on

³¹ Encyclical Letter, *Aeterni Patris*: *Leonis XIII Pontificis Maximi Acta I*, Rome 181, p. 274.

account of the monism on which they are based or because of their denial of transcendental values or because of subjectivism or agnosticism.

It is indeed regrettable that many doctrines and systems of our age are of this nature so that they cannot at all be reconciled with christian faith

and theology. Nevertheless, in this matter also, St. Thomas shows how from such systems certain elements may be taken which can be used either for the perfecting or constant development of traditional teaching or, at any rate, are incentives to study areas of knowledge formerly unknown or insufficiently cultivated.

Present-day Scholars

19. The method followed by St. Thomas in this work of assimilating the views of others can serve as an example to be imitated by present-day scholars. It is clear that he entered into a kind of mental dialogue with all the learned teachers, christian and non-christian, of antiquity and of his own time. He examined carefully their views, opinions, doubts and difficulties and sought to discover both their causes and their ideological environment and also, not infrequently, the social and cultural circumstances which influenced them. He expounded their doctrine especially in the "Quaestiones" and in the "Summae". It was not a mere listing of difficulties to be solved or of objections to be answered but rather, a dialectical method by which he reached the thesis he defended concerning the questions which had been proposed for debate and elucidation. Sometimes he engaged in controversy in a serene and dignified manner as when, for exam-

ple, it was necessary to defend some truth which had been assailed. This he did in works with such titles as *Contra errores*, *Contra gentes*, *Contra impugnantes* and so on. Always, however, he entered into dialogue with a mind completely and readily open to the acceptance of truth from whatever source it came; indeed, he was sometimes moved to give a kind and favourable interpretation to what in the course of discussion had been shown to be false. In this way St. Thomas arrived at a magnificent and balanced synthesis of universal value by which he proves himself to be a master even for the present day.

20. Finally, we wish to commend a feature of the work of St. Thomas which greatly contributes to the lasting value and excellence of his doctrine. This is the style which he forged for his purpose, developing it in the course of his activities as teacher, controversialist and writer. It is marked by clarity, conciseness and restraint. The

description of it given in the ancient Dominican liturgy for his feastday may be quoted: *Stilus brevis, grata facundia: celsa, firma, clara sententia*,³² pithy in expression, pleasing in its fluency, lofty, solid and lucid in content. This is not the least of the reasons for turning to St. Thomas in our own day when language is

so often complicated and involved, so lacking in smoothness and polish and even so ambiguous as no longer to serve its purpose of allowing the light of thought to appear or of being a common bond between those whose vocation it is to be sharers in the truth and to pass it on to others.

III

EXAMPLE OF ST. THOMAS FOR OUR AGE

21. On the occasion of the seventh centenary of the death of St. Thomas it is well to recall what, in the mind of the Church, is his role in the ordered structure of philosophical and theological studies. This is why the Church prescribes that Catholic Schools should recognize and follow him as the "Common Doctor" in this sphere.

During the lifetime of St. Thomas the Roman Pontiffs gave him the support of their authority. They protected the Master himself and defended his teaching from those who attacked it. After his death certain doctrines of St. Thomas were condemned by local authorities but the Church did not cease to honour this faithful servant of truth and confirmed the veneration paid to him by his canonization on 18 July

1323, and by declaring him a Doctor of the Church on 11 April 1567.

22. In this way, therefore, the Church wished to give testimony that by the teaching of St. Thomas there is propounded a lofty, complete and faithful expression both of its own Magisterium and of the "sense of faith" of the entire People of God as they had been manifested in a man endowed with the necessary gifts at a specially opportune moment of history.

In a word, the Church confirms by its authority the teaching of the Angelic Doctor which it employs as a most apt instrument, extending to Aquinas, as to other renowned doctors, but in a greater degree, the rays of its own Magisterium. This was stated by Our predecessor, Pius XI, in the Encyclical letter

³² Office for the feast of St. Thomas Aquinas, II Noct., IV Resp.; cfr. J. Pieper, o. mem., p. 116.

Studiorum Ducem in which he wrote: **It behoves everyone who bears the name of Christian to celebrate worthily this centenary because in honouring Thomas there is something more involved than judgement on Thomas, i.e. the authority of the teaching Church.**³³

23. Now, since it would take too long to recall all the tributes of such great veneration paid by the Church and by Popes to St. Thomas, it suffices to remember that at the end of the last century — just at the time when the consequences of the breach between reason and faith were being everywhere experienced—they again proposed his example and his teaching as contributing to the restoration of unity between religious faith, culture and civil life in various ways in accordance with the demands of changing times.

The Apostolic See initiated and encouraged a new flowering of Thomistic studies. Our

predecessors, from the time of Leo XIII, and as a result of the strong impulse given by his Encyclical Letter *Aeterni Patris*, recommended devotion to the study and the teaching of the doctrine of St. Thomas in order to bring out the harmony which existed between it and divine "revelation,"³⁴ to make clear that reason and faith are united in a friendly union which acknowledges the rights of each,³⁵ that zeal in the search for truth is in no way lessened by importance given to his doctrine but is rather stimulated and safely guided.³⁶ Furthermore, the Church gives a special place to the teaching of St. Thomas in acknowledging it as her own — but this does not mean that there is any restriction of liberty to follow other schools which have the right of citizenship in the Church — and in favouring it as the result of centuries-long experience. In our age, also, the Angelic Doctor and the study of his teaching pertain

³³ Encyclical Letter, *Studiorum Ducem*: A.A.S. 15 (1923), p. 324. Note St. Thomas's words concerning the position of Doctors of the Church (and theologians) in relation to the Magisterium: "The teaching of Catholic Doctors has its authority from the Church; the authority of the Church is, therefore, to be preferred to that of Augustine or Jerome or any Doctor." *Summa Theologiae*, II-IIae, q. 10, a. 12: *Ed. Leonina*, VIII, p. 94.

³⁴ Pius XII, Encyclical Letter, *Humani Generis*: A.A.S. 42 (1950), p. 573.

³⁵ Cfr. Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter, *Aeterni Patris*, l. mem., *ibid.*

³⁶ Cfr. Pius XII, *Sermo habitus ad alumnos seminariorum, collegiorum et institutorum utriusque cleri*, 24 June 1939; A.A.S. 31 (1939), p. 247.

³⁷ Cfr. Benedict XV, Encyclical Letter, *Fausto appetente die*: A.A.S. 13 (1921), p. 332.

³⁸ Cfr. Pius XII, *Allocutio habita quarto expleto saeculo a Pont. Universitate Gregoriana condita*, 17 Oct. 1955; A.A.S. 45 (1953), pp. 685-686.

³⁹ Pius XII, Encyclical Letter, *Humani Generis*: A.A.S. 42 (1950), p. 573.

by law to the basic theological training of those whose office it is rightly to confirm and strengthen their brethren in the faith.⁴⁰

24. The second Vatican Council recommended St. Thomas to Catholic schools on two occasions. Treating of the education of priests it used these words: In order to make clear as far as possible the mysteries of salvation, students must learn to penetrate them more profoundly by speculative reason and to see their interconnection, under the tutelage of St. Thomas.⁴¹ The same Ecumenical Council in its Declaration on Christian Education, having urged that in schools of higher learning those in charge of them should take most careful account of contemporary advances in knowledge in order to understand more deeply how reason and faith give harmonious witness to the unity of all truth, immediately adds that for this it is necessary to follow in the footsteps of the

Doctors of the Church, especially of St. Thomas Aquinas.⁴² This was the first time it happened that an Ecumenical Council commended a particular theologian, such was the esteem in which St. Thomas was held. As far as We are concerned it suffices to repeat the words which We spoke on a former occasion: Those to whom the office of teaching is committed should listen with reverence to the Doctors of the Church among whom Aquinas holds the chief place. So great is the genius of the Angelic Doctor, so sincere his love of truth, so exalted his wisdom in thoroughly examining the most profound truths, in clarifying them and in manifesting in a most apt manner the unity in which they are bound together, that his teaching is a most efficacious instrument not only in defending the foundations of the faith but also in gathering in a useful and secure manner the fruits of all true scientific advancement.⁴³

Our Own Time

25. It may now be asked whether St. Thomas Aquinas who, as we have shown, had left his imprint on past ages has anything to offer for our own time. There are many

now-a-days who deny or doubt more openly than ever before that the Gospel message is relevant for them. It is not only non-Christians who ask this question. The problem

⁴⁰ C.I.C., can. 1366, 2.

⁴¹ Decree on Priestly Formation *Optatum Totius*, n. 16: A.A.S. 58 (1966), p. 723.

⁴² Cfr. Declaration on Christian Education *Gravissimum Educationis*, n. 10: A.A.S. 58 (1966) p. 737.

⁴³ *Allocutio habita ad Pont. Universitatis Gregorianae moderatores, doctores discipulosque*, 12 March 1964: A.A.S. 56 (1964), p. 365.

arises in the minds of certain Catholics who compare the teachings of their faith with contemporary secular culture and with the content of their secular knowledge. Often objections are raised in the name of modern linguistic studies and it is freely asserted that the language or the vocabulary of faith has lost its clarity and meaningfulness.

It must be added that these objections include the criticisms made repeatedly of great works which provide a complete exposition of Scholastic doctrine. Further, a sufficient distinction is not always made between the faith itself and theological explanations of it. The language of Scholastic theology, in so far as it is linked to an ancient philosophy and puts forward its own obsolete views of the word and of a human condition altogether different from our own, is unacceptable and incomprehensible. Nor can it be otherwise, it is said since the sciences, technology, social relations, culture politics, etc. have brought about profound changes. Changes have taken place which affect the rational process of thought, the philosophical approach to problems and the way of deal-with the things of faith in a purely human manner. To the modern mentality the language used in the theological system of those times by the authors and their contemporaries is no longer a meaningful expression of the matters discussed.

It follows that, since not long before his time the mentality of the Middle Ages still prevailed, the theological style of St. Thomas, as of any author belonging to the scholastic age, has become more difficult, requiring time and labour from any who would wish to become familiar with it and becoming more than formerly a matter for specialists. Aware of this evolution, the recent ecumenical Council deliberately looked in a new way on the Church reflecting upon herself and present in a world of whose changing character it was acutely aware. Can it, on this account, be said that St. Thomas is the kind of man who not merely is not helpful for the spread of the faith and christian truth but is an obstacle to it?

Anyone who would avoid this question and ignore its importance is lacking in the spirit of St. Thomas who always sought to discover every source of knowledge. We have no doubt that today he would eagerly seek to discover the causes of the changes affecting mankind, his circumstances, his mentality, his behaviour. He would rejoice in all the means now available for speaking in a more worthy and convincing manner of God than he was able to use in his own time but without losing anything of that serene and lofty composure which only faith can give to the human mind.

Members of the Church, who are engaged in higher studies, not excepting professors and students of the sacred sciences, more acutely aware now than formerly of the vast and profound changes which have taken place, and understanding the need of comparing the present age with what in past centuries was, so to speak, the life of the christian religion, are less inclined to listen to St. Thomas. Wherefore it seems advisable to add to the tributes always due to this man of genius, an exhortation to the right and necessary use of his works which in our time is required for the fruitful acceptance of his spirit and thought.

26. It should by no means be thought, as it sometimes is, that scholastic doctrine is easily understood as it was in the course of centuries. It is not sufficient to take up in a "material" way the formulas, the problems and the manner of expounding with which it was once customary to treat these same problems. To take it up again in this way not only does not guarantee a faithful presentation of this author's doctrine but endangers the knowledge of it which is so specially necessary in our time. It can even have the effect of neutralizing the power of germinal notions which the mind should develop.

All those, therefore, whose office in the church is the

ministry of studying and teaching theology should be prompt to undertake the labour necessary in order to make the teaching of the Angelic Doctor intelligible in all its vitality beyond the limited boundaries of the school. In this way they will be in a position to guide those who are not free to undertake such labour themselves but who need to know the general lines of this doctrine, to acquire its balanced doctrinal outlook and especially the spirit which pervades and gives special character to all his works.

Obviously, the work of the appropriate renewal of the Scholastic-Thomistic doctrinal heritage must be carried out in accord with the wider view of things clearly set out by the second Vatican Council in the passage from the Decree *Optatam totius*, no. 16, already quoted, namely: dogmatic theology should be nourished to a greater extent and intimately by the riches of Sacred Scripture, there should be wider access to the wealth of doctrine in the Fathers of the Eastern and Western Church, closer attention should be given to the history of dogma, it should have closer contact with the life of the Church and its liturgy and finally it should more faithfully respond to the needs of contemporary man in the changing conditions of human affairs.

True Followers of St. Thomas

27. Those who desire to be followers of St. Thomas in our time have yet another obligation, i.e. to consider carefully what is today of greatest interest to people who are striving for a better understanding of the faith which will otherwise neither move nor interest them. Unless, in fact, one carefully examines present-day trends of thought it will not be possible to identify, much less to expound — by careful comparison bringing out differences and similarities — various particular themes to be treated, on which theology sheds a clear light.

If the true science of God and man suffers grave injury when new doctrines are ignored and the mind is confined to the teaching of past ages, the same thing happens when the teaching of the school of famous Teachers is rejected *a priori* and there is dependence solely on the sometimes specious doctrines of more recent times. The true followers of St. Thomas have never failed to make this comparison. How many of them, specialists in S. Scripture, philosophy, history, anthropology, the natural sciences and socio-economic problems, have

clearly shown by their works how much in their own fields they owed to St. Thomas!

28. To these recommendations We add a third: the necessity of establishing in the manner of a continuing dialogue, vital communication with St. Thomas himself. He presents himself to our age in a special way as a master of rational discourse who seeks the source of what is essential, accepting with a ready and humble spirit the truth from wherever it comes. In this way he gives an outstanding example of the manner in which the treasures and the ultimate requirements of the human mind correspond to the profound truths contained in the word of God. He teaches us to be intelligent in our believing and to be so fully and eagerly. In this way reason is enriched since, when the mind places itself at the service of all, great or small, to whom the theologian is a brother by faith, it exercises the function of a guide in matters spiritual, and by reason of this and of the consequent glory rendered to God, it receives honour for honour, light for light.

True Fidelity

29. As We have already explained, in order to be a faithful follower of St. Thomas it does not suffice to make it one's aim to do with the means

now available what he achieved in his own time. Whoever wishes to imitate him by going in a way parallel to his, receiving nothing from him, will with

difficulty succeed, at any rate he will not give the Church and the world the help of the light it needs. There will be no true fidelity to St. Thomas unless one accepts from his hand, as it were the principles which are so many lights by which the grave philosophical problems of our time are illuminated and the faith is rendered more comprehensible in our age, and unless the principal themes and, so to speak, dynamic concepts of his doctrine are accepted in the same way. In this way it can come about that the teaching of the Angelic Doctor constantly in contact with the increasing development of secular sciences by a kind of osmosis may flourish with an abundant new life. As an eminent theologian, a member of the Sacred College of Cardinals, recently stated: the best reason for honouring St. Thomas is always that we may penetrate the truth which he served and that we should show to the best of our ability how that truth is capable of absorbing the discoveries which the human mind in the progress of time has made.⁴⁴

30. This, then, is the wonderful achievement of St. Thomas which We consider advisable to recall on the occasion of this centenary, convinced that in

doing so We are benefiting the Church. We cannot, however, conclude this Letter without recalling that this holy Doctor of the Church not only, as his first biographer states, excelled others in arousing in scholars by the sublimity of his doctrine a love of knowledge,⁴⁵ but also provided for his contemporaries and those who came after him a shining model of sanctity. It suffices to recall the memorable words which he uttered as he was on the point of ending his earthly pilgrimage and which are a most fitting seal on his life: I receive Thee, the price of the redemption of my soul, Viaticum of my pilgrimage, for love of whom I have studied, kept vigil and laboured. Thee have I preached and taught. Never have I spoken against Thee, but if I have done so, it was through ignorance and I do not hold to my opinion. If I have said anything ill of this Sacrament or of the others I submit all to the correction of the Holy Roman Church in whose obedience I pass from this life.⁴⁶

It was certainly because he was a saint — the most saintly of the learned, the most learned of the saints, as has been said of him⁴⁷ — that Our predecessor Leo XIII declared him to

⁴⁴ Charles Card. Journet, *Actualité de saint Thomas*, Praef. Paris-Bruxelles 1973.

⁴⁵ *Vita S. Thomae Aquinatis* by William of Tocco, ch. XIV; ed. mem., p. 81.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, cap. LVIII; ed. mem., p. 132.

⁴⁷ Cfr. *Discorsi di Pio XI*, Torino 1960, vol. I, p. 783.

be not alone the master and leader but also the heavenly Patron of all Catholic schools of every category and rank⁴⁸, a title which We are happy to confirm.

Desiring, therefore, that this solemn celebration in honour of so great a man may bring forth salutary fruit not only for the Order of Friars Preachers but also for the benefit and progress of the entire Church

We gladly confer on you, beloved son, on the members of your Order and on the teachers and students of ecclesiastical centres of learning who will be faithful to Our desires, the Apostolic Blessings.

Given at St. Peter's, Rome, on the 20th day of November, 1974, the 12th of Our Pontificate.

PAUL PP. VI

⁴⁸ Litt. Apost. *Cum hoc sit*, De Sancto Thoma Aquinate Patrono caelesti studiorum optimorum cooptando: *Leonis XIII Pont. Max. Acta II*, Rome 1882, pp. 108-113.



ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES

The Association of Catholic Universities of the Philippines (ACUP), on completing its second year of existence, has made it possible for its member institutions to provide scholarships to college Theology professors desirous of attending a summer seminar on Religious Education. A grant totalling P165,000.00 was distributed among the eleven member-institutions.

Another project of the ACUP realized in May this year was the holding of a seminar on the Dynamics of Cooperatives Management, for cooperative managers and directors.

A third project of the ACUP, to be implemented in the school-year 1975-76 is the granting of study loans to deserving students. A total of P275,000.00 for this purpose is available to the eleven members.

In the summer of 1974 the ACUP also obtained funds for seminars on the Socio-Cultural and Economic Development of the Philippines through better College and Graduate School Education.

The ACUP was founded on April 25, 1973, in response to a call of Vatican II, expressed in the "Declaration on Christian Education", to unite and coordinate Catholic Universities for the well-being of the human family. Its formation was sparked by the Papal Nuncio to the Philippines. President of the ACUP is Fr. Leonardo Legaspi, O.P., Rector of the University of Sto. Tomas; Secretary General is Fr. Paul P. Zwaenepoel, C.I.C.M., President of St. Louis University. Its secretariat is located in Baguio City (P.O. Box 71).

Member universities of the ACUP are: Adamson (Manila), Aquinas (Legazpi City), Ateneo de Manila (Quezon City), Divine Word (Tacloban City), Notre Dame (Cotabato City), St. Louis (Baguio), San Agustin (Iloilo City), Santo Tomas (Manila), and Xavier (Cagayan de Oro).

SACRA CONGREGATIO PRO DOCTRINA FIDEI

DECRETUM DE ECCLESIAE PASTORUM VIGILANTIA CIRCA LIBROS

Ecclesiae pastorum, quibus cura commissa est Evangelium ubique terrarum annuntiandi,¹ est veritates fidei servare, exponere, diffundere ac tueri necnon morum integritatem fovere et tutari. Profecto "quae Deus ad salutem cunctarum gentium revelaverat, eadem benignissime disposuit ut in aevum integra permanerent omnibusque generationibus transmitterentur. Ideo mandatum dedit Apostolis ut Evangelium, quod promissum ante per Prophetas Ipse adimplevit et proprio ore promulgavit, tanquam fontem omnis et salutaris veritatis et morum disciplinae omnibus praedicerent eis dona divina communicantes".² Munus itaque authentice interpretandi verbum Dei scriptum vel traditum soli vivo Ecclesiae Magisterio concreditum est.³ Illud exercent Episcopi, Apostolorum successores, singulari vero ratione exercet successor Petri, utpote unitatis tum Episcoporum tum fidelium multitudinis perpetuum ac visibile fundamentum.⁴ Ipsi etiam christifideles, pro suo quisque munere, peculiari quidem ratione scientiarum sacrarum cultores, officio tenentur cum Ecclesiae pastoribus cooperandi ad fidei veritates integre servandas et tradendas moresque sartos tectos habendos.

Ut vero veritatem fidei morumque integritatem servant ac tueantur, officium et ius est Ecclesiae pastoribus invigilandi ne christifidelium fides aut mores per scripta detrimentum patiantur; ideoque etiam exigendi ut quae fidem moresque respiciant scripta edenda, suae praeviae approbationi subiciantur; necnon reprobandi libros vel scripta quae rectam fidem aut bonos mores impetunt. Hoc munus competit Episcopis, tum singulis tum in Conciliis particularibus Episcoporumve Conferentis adunatis quoad christifideles suae curae commissos, atque supremas Ecclesiae auctoritati quoad universum Dei populum.

¹ Cf. Conc. Vat. II, Const., dogm. *Lumen gentium*, n. 23.

² Conc. Vat. II, Const. dogm. *Dei Verbum*, n. 7.

³ Const. dogm. *Dei Verbum*, n. 10.

⁴ Cf. Const. dogm. *Lumen gentium*, loc. cit.

CENSORSHIP OF BOOKS

Decree of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

The Pastors of the Church, who are entrusted with the care of proclaiming the Gospel all over the earth¹, have the task of preserving, expounding, spreading and safeguarding the truths of the faith and promoting and defending the integrity of morals. Certainly, "God in his gracious goodness has seen to it that what he had revealed for the salvation of all nations would abide perpetually in its full integrity and be handed on to all generations. Therefore Christ the Lord, in whom the full revelation of the supreme God is brought to completion, commissioned the Apostles to preach to all men that gospel which is the source of all saving truth and moral teaching, and thus to impart to them divine goods"². Therefore the office of interpreting authentically the word of God, written or handed down by tradition, is entrusted solely to the living Magisterium of the Church³. The Bishops, successors of the Apostles, exercise this office, and in a special way the successor of Peter exercises it, as the perpetual and visible

foundation of unity both of the Bishops and of the multitude of the faithful⁴. Even the faithful themselves, each according to his own function, and especially students of sacred sciences, have the duty to cooperate with the Pastors of the Church to preserve and hand on in their integrity the truth of faith and to protect morals.

To preserve and defend the integrity of the truths of faith and morals, the Pastors of the Church have the duty and the right to be vigilant lest the faith and morals of the faithful be harmed by writings; and consequently even to demand that the publication of writings concerning the faith and morals should be submitted to her prior approval; and also to condemn books and writings that attack the faith or morals. This office belongs to the Bishops both individually and gathered in particular Councils or in Episcopal Conferences, as regards the faithful entrusted to their care, and to the supreme authority of the Church as regards the whole people of God.

¹ Cf. Vat. Council II, Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, n. 23.

² Cf. Vat. Council II, Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum*, n. 7.

³ Cf. Vat. Council II, Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum*, n. 10.

⁴ Cf. Vat. Council II, Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, loc. cit.

Ad libros aliaque scripta edenda quod attinet, haec Sacra Congregatio, postquam plures Ordinarios locorum ubi activitas editorialis maioris est momenti consultaverit, in Plenario Coetu sequentes normas statuit.

ART. 1

1. Nisi aliud statuatur, loci Ordinarius, cuius approbatio ad libros edendos iuxta normas quae sequuntur est petenda, est loci Ordinarius proprius auctoris aut Ordinarius loci in quo libri publici iuris fiant, ita tamen ut, si eorundem quis approbationem denegaverit, non liceat auctori eandem ab alio petere, nisi eundem de denegata ab alio approbatione certiore faciat.

2. Quae his normis statuuntur de libris praescripta, quibuslibet scriptis divulgationi publicae destinatis applicanda sunt, nisi aliud constet.

ART. 2

1. Libri Sacrarum Scripturarum edi non possunt nisi qui aut ab Apostolica Sede aut a loci Ordinario approbati sunt; itemque eorumdem versiones in linguam vernaculam ut edi possint, requiritur ab eadem auctoritate sint approbatae atque insimul necessariis et sufficientibus explicationibus sint instructae.

2. Versiones Sacrarum Scripturarum convenientibus explicationibus instructae, communi etiam cum fratribus seiunctis opera, parare atque edere possunt christifideles catholici, de consensu loci Ordinarii.⁵

ART. 3

1. Libri liturgici itemque eorum versiones in linguam vernaculam eorumve partes ne edantur nisi de mandato Episcoporum Conferentiae atque sub eiusdem vigilantia, praevia confirmatione Apostolicae Sedis.

2. Ut iterum edantur libri liturgici qui a Sede Apostolica probati sunt necnon eorum versiones in linguam vernaculam ad normam par. 1 factae et approbatae, eorumve partes, constare debet de concordantia cum editione approbata ex attestazione Ordinarii loci in quo publici iuris fiunt.

3. Libri quoque preces ad orationem privatam proponentes ne edantur nisi de licentia loci Ordinarii.

⁵ Cf. Conc. Vat. II, Const. dogm. Dei Verbum, nn. 22, 25.

As regards the publication of books and other writings, this Sacred Congregation, after consulting various Ordinaries of places where publishing activity is more intense, established the following norms in Plenary Congregation.

ARTICLE I

1. If not otherwise established, the local Ordinary, whose approval is to be sought for the publication of books, according to the following norms, is the local Ordinary of the author or the Ordinary of the place in which the books are published. If either of them has refused approval, however, the author may not ask for the other's approval without informing him of the previous refusal.

2. What is established by these norms with regard to books must be applied to all kinds of writings intended for public circulation, unless otherwise established.

ARTICLE 2

1. The books of the Holy Scripture cannot be published unless they are approved either by the Apostolic See or by the local Ordinary; similarly for the publication of their translations into the

vernacular, there is required the approval of the same authority and also that they be furnished with the necessary and sufficient explanations.

2. With the consent of the local Ordinary, translations supplied with suitable explanations, can also be prepared and published by the Catholic faithful in collaboration with the separated brethren⁵.

ARTICLE 3

1. Liturgical Books and also their translations into the vernacular, or their parts, may not be published except by order of the Episcopal Conference and under the surveillance of the latter, after the previous confirmation of the Apostolic See.

2. To publish a new edition of liturgical books approved by the Apostolic See and also their translations into the vernacular, made and approved in accordance with the terms of par. 1, and their parts, it is necessary to obtain from the Ordinary of the place in which they are published an attestation that they conform to the approved edition.

3. Also books that propose prayers for private use may not be published unless with the permission of the local Ordinary.

⁵ Cf. Vat. Council II, Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum*, nn. 22, 25.

ART. 4

1. Catechismi necnon alia scripta ad institutionem catecheti-
cam pertinentia eorumve versiones, ut edantur, approbatione egent
loci Ordinarii, aut Conferentiae Episcopalis sive nationis sive re-
gionalis.

2. Nisi cum approbatione competentis Auctoritatis ecclesiasticae
editi sint, in scholis, sive elementariis sive mediis sive superioribus,
uti textus quibus institutio nititur adhiberi non possunt libri qui
ad quaestiones spectant ad Sacram Scripturam, ad Sacram Theo-
logiam, Ius canonicum, Historiam ecclesiasticam. et ad religiosas
aut morales disciplinas pertinentes.

3. Commendatur ut libri materias de quibus in par. 2 tractan-
tes, licet non adhibeantur ut textus in institutione tradenda, item-
que scripta in quibus aliquid habetur quod religionis aut morum
honestatis peculiariter intersit, approbationi subilciantur loci Ord-
narii.

4. In ecclesiis oratoriisve exponi, vendi aut dari non possunt
libri vel alia scripta de quaestionibus religionis aut morum tractan-
tes, nisi cum approbatione competentis Auctoritatis ecclesiasticae
editi sint.

ART. 5

1. Attentis eorum munere peculiarique responsabilitate, enixe
commendatur clericis saecularibus ne libros edant quaestiones re-
ligionis aut morum spectantes sine licentia proprii Ordinarii; so-
dalibus Institutorum perfectionis nonnisi de licentia Superioris
maioris, salvis eorum Constitutionibus, quae obligationem imponant.

2. In diariis, foliis aut libellis periodicis qui religionem catho-
licam aut bonos mores manifesto impetere solent, ne quidpiam
scribant christifideles, nisi iusta et rationabili de causa; clerici
autem et Institutorum perfectionis sodales, tantummodo approbante
loci Ordinario.

ART. 6

1. Integro remanente iure uniuscuiusque Ordinarii committendi,
pro sua prudentia, iudicium de libris personis quibus fidem facit,
in singulis regionibus ecclesiasticis ab Episcoporum Conferentia con-
fici potest elenchus censorum, scientia, recta doctrina et pruden-
tia praestantium, qui Curiis episcopalibus praesto sint, aut consti-
tui commissio censorum, quam loci Ordinarii consulere possint.

ARTICLE 4

1. The approval of the local Ordinary, or of the national or regional Episcopal Conference is required for the publication of catechisms and other writings dealing with catechetical instruction, or their translations.

2. Unless they are published with the approval of the competent ecclesiastical Authority, books concerning questions of Holy Scripture, Sacred Theology, Canon Law, Church History and religious or moral disciplines, cannot be used as teaching texts in elementary, intermediate and higher schools.

3. It is recommended that books dealing with the subjects in par. 2 should be submitted to the approval of the local Ordinary, even though they are not used as text books. The same applies to writings that contain anything of special interest to religion or morality.

4. No books or other writings dealing with religious or moral questions can be displayed, sold or distributed in churches and oratories if they are not published with the approval of the competent ecclesiastical Authority.

ARTICLE 5

1. In view of their office and their special responsibility, secular clerics are earnestly recom-

mended not to publish without the permission of their own Ordinary books concerning religious or moral questions; likewise members of Institutes of perfection without the permission of their Major Superior, except where their Constitutions make it obligatory.

2. In dailies, papers or periodicals which are manifestly accustomed to attack the Catholic religion or morality, the faithful may not write, unless for a just and reasonable cause; clerics and members of Institutes of perfection (may write) only with the approval of the local Ordinary.

ARTICLE 6

1. Without prejudice to the right of every Ordinary to entrust, according to his own prudence, the judgment on books to persons he trusts, in the individual ecclesiastical regions the Episcopal Conference can draw up a list of censors, outstanding for their knowledge, sound doctrine and prudence, who will be at the disposal of the episcopal Curias, or set up a Commission of censors that the local Ordinaries can consult.

2. The censor, in carrying out his duties, leaving all partiality aside, should keep in mind only

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2. Censor, in suo obeundo officio, omni personarum acceptione seposita, prae oculis tantummodo habeat Ecclesiae de fide et moribus doctrinam, uti a Magisterio ecclesiastico proponitur.

3. Censor sententiam suam scripto dare debet; quae si faverit, Ordinarius pro suo prudenti iudicio licentiam concedat ut editio fiat cum sua approbatione, expresso suo nomine necnon tempore ac loco concessae approbationis; quod si approbationem non concedat, rationes denegationis cum operis scriptore Ordinarius communicet.

Has normas, in Plenario Coetu Sacrae Congregationis pro Doctrina Fidei propositas, Summus Pontifex PAULUS VI, in Audientia die 7 Martii 1975 infrascripto Praefecto impertita, approbavit et publici iuris fieri iussit, derogans simul Codicis Iuris Canonici praescriptis quae eiusdem normis sint contraria.

Romae, die 19 Martii 1975.

Franc. Card. Seper
Praef.

Hier. Hamer, O.P.
A Secr.

the doctrine of the Church regarding faith and morals, as it is proposed by the magisterium of the Church.

3. The censor must express his opinion in writing; if it is favourable, the Ordinary according to his prudent judgment, may grant permission for publication with his approval, expressing his name as well as the date and place of approval: if, on the contrary, he does not grant it, the Ordinary

must communicate to the writer the reasons for his refusal.

In the course of the Audience granted to the undersigned Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on 7 March 1975, His Holiness Paul VI approved these norms proposed in the Plenary Congregation of the above-mentioned Congregation and ordered them to be published.

Given in Rome, on 19 March 1975.

PROTECTION OF THE FAITH AND FREEDOM OF RESEARCH

Commentary on Censorship Decree

L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO (ENGLISH), APRIL 24, 1975, pp. 4—5

With regard to the above Decree we have questioned an authoritative expert, whose views we are summarizing here for the benefit of our readers.

The promotion and safeguarding of the faith are two aspects of the mission entrusted to the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

This must be kept in mind when reading the present decree, which contains the Norms that from now on will discipline the surveillance of Pastors as regards books and writings in general before their publication.

In the Code of Canon Law this subject is regulated by canons 1385-1394.

They, like the whole of Title XXIII of the Code (*De praevia censura librorum eorumque prohibitionem*. Canons 1384-1405) reflect the letter and the spirit of previous legislation on this matter.

The ten Rules of the Index, promulgated by Pius IV with the Bull *Dominici Gregis* of 24 March 1564 (known as the Council of Trent Rules, because they were prepared by a Commission of that Council) were better framed and updated by Pope Benedict XIV

(Lambertini) with the Bull *Sollicita ac Provida* of 9 July 1753.

Leo XIII was responsible for the last updating. The provisions of the Bull *Officiorum ac Munerum* (25 January 1897) were adopted by the Code of Canon Law almost literally.

With a *Notificatio* dated 14 June 1966 the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith communicated that the **Index of forbidden Books** was no longer in force as an ecclesiastical law, the prohibitions remaining valid on the moral plane.

Subsequently a Decree of the same Sacred Congregation, dated 15 November 1966, declared lapsed as an ecclesiastical law canon 1399 (a long list of classes of books *ipso iure prohibiti*), and repealed canon 2318 (censure against readers and publishers of certain classes of books).

These interventions of the Congregation certainly did not aim at creating a legislative vacuum but at establishing the conditions for a revision of the subject with a view to the promulgation of the new Code of Canon Law.

The new Norms should be set in this context. Since the matter is a delicate one, directly concerning the responsibility of Pastors, care was taken to study it in communion with the Episcopate questioning the bishops in places where publishing activity

is more intense. The collaboration of the Bishops was considerable and it was expressed also at the Plenary Congregation, of which, as is known, not a few residential Bishops are members.

Article 1 establishes who is the Ordinary "loci" competent to grant approval, when it is prescribed or requested: it is the Bishop of the place of the author or of the place in which the publishing House is located.

Canon 1385, par. 2, listed one more: the Ordinary of the place where the printing press is situated. Apart from that, the new Norm agrees substantially with the aforesaid Canon.

Articles 2, 3 and 4 list the classes of books for which the approval of the competent ecclesiastical Authority is obligatory:

* * *

1. **Books of Holy Scripture** (that is, in the original language or in ancient translations, such as the Latin Vulgate) and their translations in modern languages, for which explanatory notes are necessary. Approval is granted either by the Apostolic See or by the Ordinary "loci".

2. **Liturgical books** and their translations in modern languages. As regards the translations, the Episcopal Conferences are competent; in fact it is laid down that they are not to be published unless by order of the Conferences

themselves or under their surveillance and after confirmation from the Apostolic See.

As is known, the typical editions are published by the Holy See.

The competency of the Episcopal Conferences is a new point as compared with the old canonical legislation. The competency of the Ordinaries "loci" remains for the approval of subsequent editions, to guarantee that they correspond to the typical editions.

3. Texts of catechism and other writings of catechetical instruction.

Both the Ordinaries "loci" and the national and regional Episcopal Conferences are competent.

4. School texts, on religious and moral subjects, in particular Holy Scripture, Theology, Canon Law and Church History, for use at all academic levels, from the primary school to the university. In this field, competency lies, according to cases, with the Holy See, the Episcopal Conferences or the Ordinary.

* * *

Before continuing with the list that follows, some observations may be useful.

The approval for the books of Holy Scripture does not mean

that the Bible or the Word of God must be subject to an *imprimatur*.

This regulation means, principally, that the Magisterium of the Church presents and guarantees to the faithful the text of Holy Scripture in its integrity.

We read in the Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum* (Vat. Council II): "It is clear that sacred tradition, sacred Scripture, and teaching authority of the Church, in accord with God's most wise design, are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others" (*Dei Verbum*, n. 10).

It is unnecessary to emphasize the importance of n. 2 of art. 2, which concerns translation of the Bible carried out jointly by Catholics and brethren of the separated churches.

In the perspective of the now distant times in which the Code of Canon Law was promulgated, this constitutes a very great novelty. Today, however, it is no longer so, after several years of activity of the Secretariat for the Union of Christians¹.

* * *

The ancient saying "*Lex orandi, lex credendi*" tells us how important is the requirement of the Church's approval for the liturgical books, which are official texts and as such should be presented

¹ Cfr. "Guiding principles for interconfessional cooperation in translating the Bible", published by the Secretariat for the Union of Christians, 1 June 1968.

and guaranteed by her. The prescribed approval of the ecclesiastical authority for catechisms or for textbooks on religious and moral subjects, is a guarantee and precaution both for students and for their families.

What is laid down in n. 3 of art. 3 aims at preventing the spread among the faithful of prayers and devotions that are lacking in orthodoxy or of little spiritual value.

The measure laid down in art. 4 n. 4, which forbids the display, sale or distribution in churches and oratories of books or other writings (dealing with the above-mentioned subjects) if they do not have ecclesiastical approval, is completely new.

The reasons are evident: diffusion in these places should constitute a guarantee for the faithful and is a commitment for the ecclesiastical authority.

Cases in which ecclesiastical approval is optional are listed in art. 4 n. 3 and then in art. 5. This, too, is something new as compared with the old legislation.

If these measures are compared with those in can. 1385, in parti-

cular par. 1 n. 2, and Canon 1386 par. 1,² considerable differences can be seen.

In the above-mentioned canons there was a minute enumeration of the cases in which previous approval was required; without the permission of their Ordinaries ecclesiastics could not write even on secular subjects. For religious, the restriction was even more severe. It is true that the practical sense of Ordinaries tempered ~~this~~ strictness a great deal in practice.

Now the new measures recommend prior authorization for laymen, only when it is a question of religious and moral matters.

For ecclesiastics, both secular and regular, on the other hand, the recommendation is made "enixe" (earnestly) and it can easily be understood why.

Note the restrictive clause, if the Constitutions of their own Institute make it compulsory.

* * *

We wish to call the reader's attention to the implications of these new provisions.

The Catholic reader, who is not very well prepared, will have to

² Can. 1385, par. 1, n. 2: "Libri qui divinas Scripturas, sacram theologiam, historiam ecclesiasticam, ius canonicum, theologiam naturalem, ethicen aliasve huiusmodi religiosas ac morales disciplinas spectant, libri ac libelli precum, devotionis vel doctrinae institutionisque religiosae, moralis, asceticae, mysticae alique huiusmodi, quamvis ad fovendam pietatem conducere videantur; ac generaliter scripta in quibus aliquid sit quod religionis ac morum honestatis peculiariter intersit".

Can. 1386, par. 1: "Vetantur clerici saeculares sine consensu suorum Ordinariorum; religiosi vero sine licentia sui Superioris maioris et Ordinarii loci, libros quoque, qui de rebus profanis tractent, edere, et in diariis, foliis vel libellis periodicis scribere vel eadem moderari".

have the prudence to consult competent and reliable persons, in order not to run the risk of finding in his hands a writing that does not agree with Catholic doctrine or which offends morality. Unless the author is well known for his sound doctrine, as well as for his specific competence.

The Catholic writer, especially if he is an ecclesiastic, if he wishes to reassure his readers, will make a point of submitting his written work to the approval of the Church, even when it is not of obligation to do so. Without this approval, the work necessarily lacks the authoritative guarantee of the Hierarchy.

Mention should be made, finally, of the points of agreement and of difference between n. 2 of art. 5 and canon 1386 par. 2.³

In the new Norm "manifesto" is added to "impetere solent"; for laymen the approval of the Ordinary is no longer compulsory, but only the condition "nisi iusta et rationabili de cause". On the

contrary—and this, too, is natural—the approval of the Ordinary "loci" is necessary for ecclesiastics; however, it is no longer necessary in order to write in periodicals that "non solent religionem catholicam aut bonos mores manifesto impetere", while before, in accordance with the aforesaid canon, they could not write even in periodicals or newspapers without the consent of the Ordinary, in the case of the secular clergy, and the permission of the major Superior in the case of the regular clergy.

* * *

The formalities for the examination and approval of a work are laid down in art. 6.

It should be noted that in n. 2 of this article, repeating more concisely what was recommended in preceding Documents of the Holy See (particularly in the Bull *Sollicita ac provida* of Benedict XIV) and expressed by canon 1393 par. 2,⁴ it is laid down that censors, when giving their judgment, should abide exclusive-

³ Can. 1386, par. 2: "In diariis vero, foliis vel libellis periodicis qui religionem catholicam aut bonos mores impetere solent, nec laici catholici quidpiam conscribant, nisi iusta ac rationabili causa suadente, ab Ordinario loci probata".

⁴ Can. 1393, par. 2: "Examinatores in suo obeundo officio, omni personarum acceptione deposita, tantummodo prae oculis habeant Ecclesiae dogmata et communem catholicorum doctrinam quae Conciliorum generalium decretis aut Sedis Apostolicae constitutionibus seu praescriptionibus atque probatorum doctorum consensu continentur".

ly by the doctrine of the Church as it is set forth by the ecclesiastical Magisterium. This evidently debars the censor from basing his judgment on theological opinions, even if they are worthy of respect, or on his own personal views.

N. 3 repeats, with a few variations, what was already laid down in par. 4 of canon 1393:⁵ the approval of the Ordinary must be printed in the book in the usual formulas.

N. 1 contains another new feature: the Episcopal Conferences can draw up a list of censors distinguished for their culture, sound doctrine and prudence, or set up a Commission of censors: both to be put at the service of the Ordinaries.

This is a very useful practical provision for dioceses since there

are not a few that lack subjects suitable for the purpose.

In the final conclusion, after the approval of the Sovereign Pontiff and, of course, by his Authority, it is declared that any prescriptions of the Code of Canon Law which are contrary to these norms are no longer in force.

Anyone can see from a comparison of the old provisions with the new ones that the legislation on the prior censorship of books has been simplified as much as possible.

It can be said that in this matter the Church has been guided by a dual concern: to safeguard the faith and morals of the faithful and at the same time to respect the rightful freedom of research and culture of Catholic writers by imposing on them only those regulations and prohibitions that are strictly necessary.

⁵ Ibid, par. 4: "Censor sententiam scripto dare debet. Quae si fuerit, Ordinarius potestatem edendi faciat, cui tamen praeponeatur censoris iudicium inscripto eius nomine. Extraordinariis tantum in adiunctis ac perquam raro, prudenti Ordinarii arbitrio, censoris mentio omitti poterit".

THE HARTFORD STATEMENT

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIAN FORMULATE AND REPUDIATE DANGEROUS CONTEMPORARY THEORIES

The following is the text of the Hartford Statement, "An Appeal for Theological Affirmation," drawn up and signed by 18 well-known Christian thinkers at a meeting at the Hartford Seminary Foundation, Hartford, Conn., January 24-26, 1975.

The statement presents 13 themes that the thinkers consider false but widespread among Christians today. Each theme is followed by an affirmation that explains why the signers think the theme must be repudiated by Christians.

"AN APPEAL FOR THEOLOGICAL AFFIRMATION"

The renewal of Christian witness and mission requires constant examination of the assumptions shaping the Church's life. Today an apparent loss of a sense of the transcendent is undermining the Church's ability to address with clarity and courage the urgent tasks to which God calls it in the world. This loss is manifest in a number of pervasive themes. Many are superficially attractive, but upon closer examination we find these themes false and debilitating to the Church's life and work. Among such themes are:

Theme 1: Modern thought is superior to all past forms of understanding reality, and is therefore normative for Christian faith and life.

In repudiating this theme we are protesting against the captivity to the prevailing thought structures not only of the 20th century but of any historical period. We favour using any helpful means of understanding, ancient or modern, and insist that the Christian proclamation must be related to the idiom of the culture. At the same time, we affirm the need for Christian thought to confront and be confronted by all worldviews, which are necessarily provisional.

Theme 2: Religious statements are totally independent of reasonable discourse.

The capitulation to the alleged primacy of modern thought takes two forms: one is the subordination of religious statements to the

canons of scientific rationality; the other, equating reason with scientific rationality, would remove religious statements from the realm of reasonable discourse altogether. A religion of pure subjectivity and non-rationality results in treating faith statements as being at best, statements about the believer. We repudiate both forms of capitulation.

Theme 3: Religious language refers to human experience and nothing else, God being humanity's noblest creation.

Religion is also a set of symbols and even of human projections. We repudiate the assumption that it is nothing but that. What is here at stake is nothing less than the reality of God: We did not invent God; God invented us.

Theme 4: Jesus can only be understood in terms of contemporary models of humanity.

This theme suggests a reversal of "the imitation of Christ"; that is, the image of Jesus is made to reflect cultural and counter-cultural notions of human excellence. We do not deny that all aspects of humanity are illumined by Jesus. Indeed, it is necessary to the universality of the Christ that he be perceived in relation to the particularities of the believers' world. We do repudiate the captivity to such metaphors, which are necessarily inadequate, relative, transitory and frequently idolatrous. Jesus, together with the Scriptures and the whole of the Christian tradition, cannot be arbitrarily interpreted without reference to the history of which they are part. The danger is in the attempt to exploit the tradition without taking tradition seriously.

Theme 5: All religions are equally valid; the choice among them is not a matter of conviction about truth but one of personal preference or life-style.

We affirm our common humanity. We affirm the importance of exploring and confronting all manifestations of the religious quest and of learning from the riches of other religions. But we repudiate this theme because it flattens diversities and ignores contradictions. In doing so, it not only obscures the meaning of Christian faith, but **also** fails to respect the integrity of other faiths. Truth matters; therefore differences among religions are deeply significant.

Theme 6: To realize one's potential and to be true to oneself is the whole meaning of salvation.

Salvation contains a promise of human fulfillment, but to identify salvation with human fulfillment can trivialize the promise. We affirm that salvation cannot be found apart from God.

Theme 7: Since what is human is good, evil can adequately be understood as failure to realize human potential.

This theme invites false understanding of the ambivalence of human existence and underestimates the pervasiveness of sin. Paradoxically, by minimizing the enormity of evil, it undermines serious and sustained attacks on particular social or individual evils.

Theme 8: The sole purpose of worship is to promote individual self-realization and human community.

Worship promotes individual and communal values, but it is above all a response to the reality of God and arises out of the fundamental need and desire to know, love, and adore God.

Theme 9: Institutions and historical traditions are oppressive and inimical to our being truly human; liberation from them is required for authentic existence and authentic religion.

Institutions and traditions are often oppressive. For this reason they must be subjected to relentless criticism. But human community inescapably requires institutions and traditions. Without them life would degenerate into chaos and new forms of bondage. The modern pursuit of liberation from all social and historical restraints is finally dehumanizing.

Theme 10: The world must set the agenda for the Church. Social, political, and economic programmes to improve the quality of life are ultimately normative for the Church's mission in the world.

This theme cuts across the political and ideological spectrum. Its form remains the same, no matter whether the content is defined as upholding the values of the American way of life, promoting socialism, or raising human consciousness. The Church must denounce oppressors, help liberate the oppressed and seek to heal human misery. Sometimes the Church's mission coincides with the world's programmes. But the norms for the Church's activity derive from its own perception of God's will for the world.

Theme 11: An emphasis on God's transcendence is at least a hindrance to, and perhaps incompatible with, Christian social concern and action.

This supposition leads some to denigrate God's transcendence. Others, holding to a false transcendence, withdraw into religious privatism or individualism and neglect the personal and communal responsibility of Christians for the earthly city. From a biblical perspective, it is precisely because of confidence in God's reign over all aspects of life that Christians must participate fully in the

struggle against oppressive and dehumanizing structures and their manifestations in racism, war, and economic exploitation.

Theme 12: The struggle for a better humanity will bring about the Kingdom of God.

The struggle for a better humanity is essential to Christian faith and can be informed and inspired by the biblical promise of the Kingdom of God. But imperfect human beings cannot create a perfect society. The Kingdom of God surpasses any conceivable utopia. God has his own designs, which confront ours, surprising us with judgment: and redemption.

Theme 13: The question of hope beyond death is irrelevant or at best marginal to the Christian understanding of human fulfillment.

This is the final capitulation to modern thought. If death is the last word, then Christianity has nothing to say to the final questions of life. We believe that God raised Jesus from the dead and are "... convinced that there is nothing in death or life, in the realm of spirits or superhuman powers, in the world as it is or in the world as it shall be, in the forces of the universe, in heights or depths — nothing in all creation that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38f).

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MEDICAL MISSIONS

The Medical Missions Incorporated originated by University of Santo Tomas, has fielded a total of 109 medico-surgical missions in different parts of the Philippines where the services of doctors are most badly needed. Since its foundation fourteen years ago, it has handled 246,540 medical cases and performed 10,047 minor and major operations without any remuneration. Aside from this, the MMI also conducts regular weekend missions to the impoverished areas of Metro Manila and assists at the socio-medical center in Sapang Palay, Bulacan.

This summer, the MMI had five medico-surgical missions slated for Ozamis (Misamis Occidental), Lemery (Butangas), Iligan (Lanao del Norte), Siargao Island (Surigao), and Glncoog (Misamis Oriental).

The work of the MMI was praised in newspapers early in 1974 when an eight-man team served in Jolo a week after the city was burned in the conflict, between government forces and rebels. The MMI was called by Bishop John Smith of Jolo, and they worked in coordination with the National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA). A second mission was sent to Jolo simultaneously with another to Zamboanga City, January 20-27 this year.

The Medical Missions started in 1961, upon the initiative of UST medical students desirous of providing medical assistance to the Ifugao residents of Kiangnan. When medical faculty members and the Dominican Fathers of the university got interested in the project, the first organized medical team was sent to Kiangnan in October 1961.

In 1962 the Medical Missions ventured into five distinct localities within the Mountain Province, particularly Kalinga-Apayao, Bontoc, and Ifugao. The success of these missions focused national attention on the group, and they decided to be formally incorporated as the Medical Missions Incorporated, a non-profit, non-political and non-sectarian corporation in accordance with Philippine laws.

The incumbent president of the MMI is Dr. Jose Antonio Santos, and the moderator is Fr. Braulio Peña, O.P. The MMI can be contacted through its president or moderator, care of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, University of Santo Tomas, Manila.

BONTOC MARRIAGE RITE — A STUDY ON LITURGICAL INDIGENIZATION

By

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I — INTRODUCTION

With Vatican II sounding off a much-needed *aggiornamento*, the Church is now undergoing the painful yet liberating process of reform. The Church must truly become incarnate in the world of men to whom she proclaims and offers the message of salvation. Moreover, as a human community, she is constantly called to renewal and adaptation.

The centrality of the liturgy in the life of the Church has given it priority in this renewal. Wherever the Church is present, therefore, her liturgical life needs to be adapted to the people in whom she wants to be made incarnate. Together with the emphasis placed on the official worship of the Church, Vatican II in calling for liturgical reforms asks for respect and promotion of the genius and traditions of the various races and peoples; if possible and as long as they harmonize with the true and authentic spirit of the liturgy, such things should be preserved intact and even admitted to the liturgy itself (SC art. 37).

In this country it would be a gross mistake to say that nothing has yet been done in the line of liturgical reforms. But there is still much to be desired. This is most especially true with regard to the selection of Filipino folk rituals and traditions which can be incorporated into and raised to the status of the official worship of the Church. The present official Church worship in the Philippines is still practically Roman, "foreign and unintelligible to many Filipinos." Too often the Filipino Christians find themselves involved in both their folk liturgies and the Church's official liturgy (cf. Anscar Chupungco, O.S.B. "Folklore and Christian Worship").

What is said of liturgical reform in the Philippines in general is also applicable to the Filipino cultural minorities in particular, for

instance the people living in the mountain provinces of Luzon. This people, through the zeal and dedication of missionaries belonging to different denominations, has received the gospel. The Church's official worship has also been introduced and celebrated to this day side by side with centuries-old native practices of worshipping the native deities. Several cultural and anthropological studies have been and are still being made about this people. But very little effort is done to make the talents and traditions of this people vehicles of the Christian message for the task of proclaiming the gospel and celebrating the liturgy.

This paper is the initial result of trying to do just that. In particular, it is an attempt to look for possibilities of adaptation in the liturgical celebration of marriage. It is based on a study of the traditional marriage practices of the people of Bontoc, with the hope of opening up the possibilities of adapting the Church's official Philippine Marriage Rite to the Bontoc marriage customs. This study compares the Bontoc marriage ceremony with the Church's official rite, selecting several elements considered valuable in making the Christian liturgical celebration more meaningful for the people of Bontoc.

This study is limited by lack of material. For one thing, Carmencita Cawed's book, *The Culture of the Bontoc Igorot* (Manila: MCS Enterprises, Incorporated, 1972), is the only available work on the Bontoc culture. There is no written Bontoc Marriage ritual. It is still handed down through oral tradition. Eight people, either Bontoc themselves or people who know the Bontocs by living with them or by making a study on their customs, were interviewed; unfortunately they could not provide all the practices done and the prayers used in the ceremony.

II — BONTOC MARRIAGE

The people of Bontoc practice monogamy; infidelity to a wife or to a husband is unknown and unheard of. Between a couple who have children divorce is not permitted. But a couple, who remain childless after living together for several years, can break their marital contract with the hope that each one will be lucky enough to have children with another partner. Courtship, the practice of having a go-between, and parental engagement are three ways by which one can enter into a marriage contract, the last two ways being rarely practiced.

Marriage is for the people of Bontoc a contract ratified and agreed upon in and by the community. It is a community affair. The marriage feast with all its many rites is a ratification of the

contract made by the marrying couple. It is sanctified by religious observances, in order that the couple may live a good and prosperous married life, as expressed in the prayers of the marriage ceremony.

Ordinarily, the marriage feast lasts for seven days. But those who belong to the richer families extend the marriage celebration for a few more days.

What follows is a description of the Bontoc marriage ceremony:

PART ONE: CONSENT GIVEN BY THE PARTY OF THE BRIDE

When two lovers intend to get married, they follow the marriage rituals prescribed by and practiced in the community. So on the first day the man, accompanied by another man, goes to the house of the woman he wants to marry. They carry with them a **tupil** of meat (**tupil** is a bamboo or rattan woven container with a cover, used for taking the provision of food to the field). A dog that barks at them on their way is considered a **lawa** (bad omen) and a sign that they should not go on; if everything goes alright on the way, they can proceed to their destination.

Upon arrival at the house of the woman the **tupil** of meat is given to the woman's parents. The two men rest for sometime and then go to a nearby **ato** (it can mean three things: first, the place where the Council of elders hold various ceremonies and meetings which are religious, social or political in nature; second, a public structure used as a dormitory by the bachelors, widowers, young boys and visitors of the village; and third, a gathering place where the men of the village spend a rest day weaving an unfinished basket or hat, or smoking their pipes and talking shop.) There they wait to be called for lunch. When the food is ready the father of the woman calls the two men and they eat together. When evening comes, the betrothed man stays behind while the companion returns to the man's house to report on what has happened. The acceptance of the **tupil** of meat signifies the acceptance of the marriage proposal and the consent of the parents to let the man and the woman be joined in marriage.

The following day is declared a **tengao** (rest day of the Igorot which may be binding on one person or a family or the whole town depending on the reason given).

PART TWO: PIKPIK (the word refers to an offering wherein a chicken is sacrificed as a victim; the chicken is held by its feet upside down and is beaten to death with a small stick.)

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During the third day the first formal celebration is held. The grandfathers and grandmothers of the bridegroom and the bride are sent for. The other relatives are also invited.

A chicken is sacrificed and cooked with salted meat for lunch. After lunch, an old man who presides during the marriage ceremony says the **kap-ya** (prayer) for the intentions of the new couple.

Then the parents of the bride prepare a **tupil** of rice and meat which is brought to the house of the bridegroom. There the **pikpik** is performed, following the same ritual done in the bride's house. The parents of the bridegroom also prepare a **tupil** of rice and meat which is brought to the house of the bride.

From now on the two houses are joined together; one house is no longer a stranger to the other; the two parties are united, for the bridegroom and the bride are now one.

The following day is again declared a **tengao** for the newlywed and those who participated in the **pikpik**. On this same day the couple go separately to the river to take a bath.

PART THREE. CHALISCHIS (a feast celebrated in both houses of the newlywed during which a pig is butchered; this is done when there is a large group present at the celebration.)

On the fifth day, so long as nothing went wrong during the rest day, the second feast is performed. This day's feast starts also in the house of the bride. The couple's grandparents, uncles and aunts, other relatives and especially the couple's friends are invited. A pig is butchered and prepared for lunch.

After lunch the presiding elder says the **kap-ya** which is addressed to Lumawig (chief of the spirits for the people of Bontoc). The prayer is said in front of the new couple:

You, who looks down this man and this woman, they are your children. They are here today, for they desire to be one. We made our offerings in the past, today we celebrate another. Give this couple a prosperous life. If they will have pigs, let them grow big and be many; make their chicken grow and increase; when they cultivate the earth and plant their seeds, let them bear good fruits. Let their beans spread and cover the earth. Let them live in peace and harmony, and make the man, in his capacity as the father quicken the seed in this woman. (translation by Cawed, *The Culture of the Bontoc Igorot*, p. 20).

After this celebration in the bride's house, the marriage party moves to the house of the bridegroom to repeat the same ritual. Here again, the exchange of **tupil** is done.

The following day is once again declared a **tengao** for all who participated in the **chalischis**.

PART FOUR: MANGMANG (a religious ceremonial requiring a chicken or a pig for the offering; this is done for a small group).

On the seventh day the final celebration is held. It is also called **paschep**, for it is a celebration done inside the house, unlike the **pikpik** and **chalischis** which are held outside the house. Only the close relatives are invited to this feast.

A chicken or a pig is killed, offered and cooked for lunch. During the celebration a **sisig** (bamboo or rattan woven square plate used for food offering during special occasions) with a stone on it is placed on the **chocso** (an elevated area in the corner of the house). The **sisig** with the stone stays there and should not be overturned or moved until the prescribed time, at least one day, is over.

After the meal the presiding elder takes a tray of food, smells it and then says a prayer of **makedse** (steadfastness);

Now this young couple are joined together; do not allow any sickness to come on their way and make their love grow firm and strong. For Cachigkay said, "I acted as a support for the burned pig, and when I looked down at the fence, I saw a stone which I put as support for the fence so that it became firm and strong."

The following day is a **tengao**. After this **tengao** the new husband goes to the mountain and brings home his first bundle of wood, signifying that from now on he will act as the breadwinner.

III—COMPARISON AND ADAPTATION

ELEMENTS FROM BONTOC MARRIAGE

PROPOSAL FOR MARRIAGE AND EXCHANGE OF CONSENT

On the first day the man, accompanied by another man, brings a **tupil** of meat to the parents of the woman he wants to marry. The acceptance of this **tupil** of meat signifies the acceptance of the marriage proposal and the consent of the parents to let the man and the woman be joined in marriage.

The exchange of the **tupil** of meat and rice during the **pikpik** and the **chalischis** signifies the agreement of both parties to the marriage and the union of the two houses.

THE PHILIPPINE MARRIAGE RITE (DURING MASS)

1. SOLEMN ENTRANCE OF THE BRIDAL COUPLE
2. LITURGY OF THE WORD;
HOMILY
3. ALLOCUTION
4. SCRUTINY
5. EXCHANGE OF CONSENT

Priest (to couple): N. and N., since you wish to contract holy matrimony, please join your right hands and express your intention before God and His Church.

They join their right hands.

First, the priest asks the bride:
N., do you take N. here present, for your lawful husband according to the rite of our holy Mother, the Church?

Bride: Yes, I do

Priest: Do you give yourself to him as his wife?

Bride: Yes. I do.

A D A P T A T I O N

1. SOLEMN ENTRANCE OF THE BRIDAL COUPLE
2. LITURGY OF THE WORD;
HOMILY
3. ALLOCUTION
4. SCRUTINY
5. EXCHANGE OF CONSENT

Priest (to couple): N. and N., since you wish to contract holy matrimony, please exchange your **tupil** of meat and rice and express your intention before God and His Church.

The bridegroom offers to the bride a **tupil** of meat and rice, saying:
N., do you take me here present, for your lawful husband according to the rite of our holy Mother, the Church?

Bride: Yes, I do.

Groom: Do you give yourself to me as your wife?

Bride: Yes, I do.

Priest: Do you accept him as your lawful husband?

Groom: Do you accept me as your lawful husband?

Bride: Yes, I do.

Bride: Yes, I do.

Then the priest asks the bridegroom: N., do you take N. here present, for your lawful wife according to the rite of our holy Mother, the Church?

The bride accepts the **tupil** of meat and rice. She takes her **tupil** of meat and rice and offers it to the bridegroom, saying:

N., do you take me here present, for your lawful wife according to the rite of our holy Mother, the Church?

Groom: Yes, I do.

Groom: Yes, I do.

Priest: Do you give yourself to her as her husband?

Bride: Do you give yourself to me as my husband?

Groom: Yes, I do.

Groom: Yes, I do.

Priest: Do you accept her as your lawful wife?

Bride: Do you accept me as your lawful wife?

Groom: Yes, I do.

Groom: Yes, I do.

The bridegroom accepts the **tupil** of meat and rice.

Priest: Now, please say together with me:

Then the couple together with their parents say:

Grant us, O Lord, to be one heart and one soul from this day forward for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health until death do us part.

Grant us, O Lord, to be one heart and one soul from this day forward for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health until death do us part.

BUNDLE OF WOOD

Wood means many things for the people of Bontoc: shelter, fuel, heating. The first bundle of wood brought home by the new husband after the **tengao** on the eight day symbolizes his concern and dedication for the support and welfare of the woman and their own family.

SISIG WITH A STONE

The **sisig** with a stone on it is placed on an elevated part at the corner of the house on the seventh day during the final celebration. This signifies steadfastness in the life of the new couple if overturned or moved during the time prescribed, it might mean separation of the new couple in the future.

6. CONFIRMATION OF THE MARRIAGE BOND

7. BLESSING OF THE ARRHAЕ AND RINGS

A server brings the plate with the arrhae and the rings.

Priest: N. and N., we shall now bless your arrhae and rings. Our help is in the name of the Lord.

All: He made heaven and earth.

Priest: Let us pray. Bless, O Lord, your servants, N. and N., with sufficiency of material possessions which these arrhae symbolize so that they may use them to attain eternal life. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Priest: Let us pray. Bless, O Lord, these rings so that your servants, N. and N., who wear them may ever live in mutual love and in unbroken loyalty. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

6. CONFIRMATION OF THE MARRIAGE BOND

7. BLESSING OF THE BUNDLE OF WOOD AND **SISIG** WITH A STONE

Priest: N. and N., we shall now bless your bundle of wood and **sisig** with a stone. Our help is in the name of the Lord.

All: He made heaven and earth.

Priest: Let us pray. Bless, O Lord, your servants, N. and N., with sufficiency of shelter, fuel and heating which this bundle of wood symbolizes so that they may use them to attain eternal life. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

Priest: Let us pray. Bless, O Lord, this **sisig** with a stone so that your servants, N. and N., who accept them may ever live in mutual love and in steadfast loyalty. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Then the priest sprinkles the arrhae and the rings with holy water.

8. GIVING OF THE WEDDING RINGS AND THE ARRHAE.

The priest picks up the wedding rings from the tray and says:
Now give these rings to one another and say after me:

The groom takes the bride's ring from the priest and puts it on the bride's ring finger. It is a very old custom in the Philippines to have the wedding rings of the groom and the bride on the ring finger of the right hand. The groom says after the priest:

N., wear this ring as a sign of my love and loyalty. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Then the bride takes the groom's ring from the priest and puts it on the groom's ring finger, saying after the priest:

N., wear this ring as a sign of my love and loyalty. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Then the priest sprinkles the bundle of wood and the **sisig** with a stone with holy water.

8. GIVING OF THE **sisig** WITH A STONE AND THE BUNDLE OF WOOD.

Priest: Now present the **sisig** with a stone to one another.

The bridegroom, presenting the **sisig** with a stone to the bride says:

N., accept this **sisig** with a stone as a sign of my steadfast love and loyalty. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Bride: I accept it.

The bride, presenting the **sisig** with a stone to the bridegroom, says:

N., accept this **sisig** with a stone as a sign of my steadfast love and loyalty. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Groom: I accept it.

The groom takes now the arrhae in both hands; the bride places her cupped hands under those of the groom. The groom lets them fall into her hands, saying after the priest:

I give you these arrhae as a pledge of my dedication to your welfare. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

The bride, accepting the arrhae says after the priest:

And I accept them.

The bridegroom, taking the bundle of wood and offering it to the bride, say:

I give you this bundle of wood as a pledge of my dedication to your welfare. In the name of Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

The bride, accepting the bundle of wood, says:

And I accept it.

PRAYER OF MAKEDSE

During the final celebration the prayer of **makedse** is said:

Now this young couple are joined together do not allow any sickness to come on their way and make their love grow firm and strong. For Cachigkay said, "I acted as a support for the burned pig, and when I looked down at the fence I saw a stone which I put as support for the fence so that it became firm and strong."

The native text:

In among nan nay ay
ongang-a ya maikasiwcha ya
makedsecha. Kanan
Cachigkay, "Sak-en nan

Then the priest says:

Now this young couple are joined together.

May God not allow any sickness to come on their way, and make their love grow firm and strong.

May God act as their support, and when He looks down at the fence and sees a stone, may He put it as support for the fence so that it may become firm and strong.

maisalakan nan sinaposab.
Ikoyag na pay isnan paniki
saet en ose. Oschonga na
pay nan fato ya iptang na
sana oschongan nan muling
ay fato yo itamakna saet
matat-ke."

PRAYER TO LUMAWIG

There is a prayer addressed to Lumawig during the celebration on the fifth day. It is prayed by an old man asking for blessings for the new couple:

You, who looks down upon this man and this woman, they are your children. They are here today, for they desire to be one. We made our offerings in the past, today we celebrate another. Give this couple a prosperous life. If they will have pigs, let them grow big and be many; make their chicken grow and increase; when they cultivate the earth and plant their seeds, let them bear good fruits. Let their beans spread and

9. PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

10. LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

11. NUPTIAL BLESSING

12. CONCLUDING RITE:

FINAL ADMONITION SEVENFOLD BLESSING

Then, with his hands elevated and extended over the spouses, to bless them, the priest says:

Priest: May the Lord bless you by the word of his mouth.

All: Amen.

Priest: May he unite your hearts in an enduring bond of pure love.

All: Amen.

9. PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

10. LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

11. NUPTIAL BLESSING

12. CONCLUDING RITE:

FINAL ADMONITION SEVENFOLD BLESSING

Then, with his hands elevated and extend over the spouses, to bless them, the priest says:

Priest: You, who look down upon this man and this woman, they are your children. They are here today, for they desire to be one. We made our offerings in the past, today we celebrate another. Give this couple a prosperous life.

All: Amen.

Priest: If they will have pigs, let them grow big and be many.

All: Amen.

cover the earth. Let them live in peace and harmony, and make the man, in his capacity as the father, quicken the seed in this woman.

(The text in Bontoc is not available).

Priest: May you be blessed in your children, and may the love that you lavish on them be returned a hundredfold.

All: Amen.

Priest: May the peace of Christ dwell always in your hearts and in your home; may you have true friends to stand by you, both in joy and in sorrow.

All: Amen.

Priest: May you be ready with help and consolation for all those who come to you in need; and may the blessing promised to the compassionate descend in abundance on your house.

All: Amen.

Priest: May you be blessed in your work and enjoy its fruits. May care never cause you distress, nor the desire for earthly possessions lead you astray: but may your hearts' concern be always for the treasures laid up for you in the life of heaven.

All: Amen.

Priest: Make their chicken grow and increase.

All: Amen.

Priest: When they cultivate the earth and plant their seeds, let them bear good fruits.

All: Amen.

Priest: Let their beans spread and cover the earth.

All: Amen.

Priest: Let them live in peace and harmony.

All: Amen.

Priest: May the Lord grant you fullness of years, so that you may reap the harvest of a good life and after you have served Him with loyalty in His kingdom on earth, may He take you up into His eternal dominions in heaven.

All: Amen.

Priest: And may almighty God bless you all,
The Father, and the Son
and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Priest: Make the man, in his capacity as the father, quicken the seed in this woman.

All: Amen.

Priest: And may almighty God bless you all,
The Father, and the Son,
and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

BIBLE STUDY

POPULAR BIBLICAL OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

by

Bernard J. LeFrois, S.V.D.

Catechists are often confronted with various scriptural objections. Some of them are given here, with answers that each catechist can adapt to his own circumstances and put in his own language. Down to earth comparisons are sometimes more helpful than strictly exegetical answers. Yet, all answers ought to proceed from the true meaning of the text.

1. Did not God command man at the outset to increase and multiply (Gen. 1, 28), and if so, are not priests and nuns disobeying this command?

ANSWER. a) If this were a command to marry and have children, then Jesus himself would have been disobedient, as well as John and Paul, and many professional people who devote themselves wholeheartedly to the good of mankind but do not marry (doctors, nurses, teachers, scientists). — b) A careful examination of the context shows that it is not a command but a blessing of fruitfulness on mankind: "And God blessed them saying to them: be fruitful and multiply". God blesses man so that he be fruitful. In 1,22 irrational creatures were addressed in the same words, and irrational creatures do not receive commands to increase and multiply. — c) In the first chapters of Genesis, man in general is in the mind of the sacred writer, the race of man as such. Would individuals who have no children through no fault of their own also be disobedient to God's "command" to multiply? — d) Jesus himself praises those who remain celibate for the sake of the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 19, 12). St. Paul likewise commends virginity (1 Cor. 7,32f).

2. Why does the Church prohibit divorce without any exception? Does not Christ himself make an exception in Mt. 5,32 and 19,9 when he states: "Everyone who divorces his wife except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress". It would seem then that if the wife had been unfaithful, the husband does not commit adultery by marrying another.

ANSWER: a) Christ made no exception. That is clear from the earliest written Gospel (Mk. 10,11) as well as from Lk. 16,18 and 1 Corinthians 7,10-11. Moses allowed divorce, Jesus said, as a concession and a lesser evil (Mk. 10,2-9.). Jesus restored marriage to its pristine purity. — b) Matthew's gospel written for Jewish converts has a special case in mind. "On the ground of unchastity" means that the bond was not a valid one to begin with, either because it was concubinage or because it was between Jew and pagan, which the Jews considered invalid, and the Church followed suit. The translation of the New American Bible brings this out better: "everyone who divorces his wife (lewd conduct is a separate case) forces her to commit adultery". — c) If Jesus were really making an exception, he would be supporting the very concession he is criticizing, namely divorce, and it would lead to absurd possibilities of deliberate infidelities in order to force the issue.

3. Why confess my sins to a man when God alone can remit sin?

ANSWER: a) Because Jesus himself gave this power to the ministers in his Church when he said: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive men's sins, they are forgiven them; if you hold them bound, they are held bound." (Jn. 20,22). Since Christ is with his Church until the consummation of the world (Mt. 28,20), he must have intended this power not only for the Apostles but for their legitimate successors. Truly, it is God who remits sin, but through his instruments as Jesus decreed. Mention of presbyters and confessing of sins to men is also clear from the letter of James 5, 14-16. — b) Experience has shown that confession of sins to an authorized minister shows the depth-psychology of Jesus. In some countries the Lutherans have also introduced it. The sacraments are visible signs of the presence of Jesus, and the sacrament of penance is a visible and tangible sign of his healing power. It is not only intended to remit sin, but to heal the wounds and roots of sin.

4. Jesus advises us that when we pray it ought not be in public, but rather in a room in private and in secret. Why then insist that we go to Church and to Mass? (M. 6.5-6).

ANSWER: a) In that section of the sermon on the mount (Chapter 6), Jesus is correcting abuses connected with the three works of religion that were commonly practiced in his day: alms-giving, prayer and fasting. In all three cases he is correcting the false practice of ostensibly doing these works in order to be seen and admired by men. Our motive ought to be to please the Father only. His examples are chosen to bring out his point forcibly. — b) Jesus was never against public prayer. He knew well that man was a social being, and he himself often prayed in public: He at-

tended the synagogue services (Lk. 4,16) and ate the customary pass-over meal (Lk. 22,14). He was often in the Temple, the hallowed place of prayer. He prayed in the sight of his apostles (Jn. 17,1; Lk. 11, 1). — c) The Early Church frequently gathered in the Temple to pray (Lk. 24,53) and in common in upper rooms and houses (Acts 2,42; 4,24; 3,1; 12,12). — d) The Mass is the memorial of the death and resurrection of our Savior. Out of a sheer response of love we ought gladly give worship to God in the manner and on the day the Church deems best. From Apostolic times this was the first day of the week, the day on which Christ rose from the dead (See Acts 20,7).

5. Is not the honor given by Catholics to Mary unwarranted in view of the way that Christ spoke to Mary and about her? He called her "Woman" in Jn. 2,4; and in Lk. 11,27 he says of her "Rather blest are those who hear the word of God and keep it".

ANSWER: a) The Greek word for "woman" has nothing of disrespect in it. It is a title like our "lady". Jesus addressed the same title to the Canaanitic woman while praising her highly (Mt. 15,28) and to Mary Magdalen whom he loved deeply (Jn. 20,13). — b) In Luke 11,27 Christ rightly placed spiritual values above all physical relationship. His mother was blest far more for hearing the word of God and keeping it, than for becoming his mother physically. She was the first to welcome the Word of God in person and give him her own flesh. If anyone, then Mary is deserving of this praise. — c) The entire question of honoring Mary involves an attitude. If the dying Savior himself told us in the corporate personality of John the beloved disciple: "Behold, there is your mother" (Jn. 19,26), then the Catholic Church correctly has her children honor and love the Virgin-Mother as their own mother.

6. Why do Catholics state that Mary was always a virgin when the Bible says that Jesus had brothers and sisters as in Mk. 6,3; 15,40 and several other passages.

ANSWER: Brother and sister in the Bible can often have a wider meaning. It can mean cousin or some other relative. In Gen. 13,8 Abraham calls Lot his brother, but back in Gen. 11,27-31 it is evident that Lot is his nephew. The Hebrew had no special word for cousin, so it used the phrase "son of the brother of his mother" or simply brother. See Lev. 10,4. In Mt. 27,56 it is expressly stated that the mother of James and Joset (the "brothers of the Lord") is not Mary, the mother of Jesus. Nowhere in the Gospels is any other child of Mary mentioned. On the cross just before he died Jesus gave his mother to the care of John, the son of Zebedee (Jn. 19,26). This would be contrary to all custom if Mary had other children.

7. But is Jesus not called the firstborn of Mary in Luke 2,7 and if so, would not that mean that other children had followed?

ANSWER: Not at all. "Firstborn" is a legal title which the first child immediately acquired, regardless whether any further children came after. In Egypt a papyrus from the early centuries mentions that a woman died in giving birth to her firstborn. Evidently this is a reference to the above-mentioned title, for no other children followed. There is also a deeper spiritual meaning to "firstborn" when applied to Christ, as is evident from Rom. 8,29. Christ and all who are baptized into him are brothers.

8. Does not Mt. 1,25 show that Mary had other children after the birth of Jesus: "But Joseph knew her not until she had borne a son, and he called his name Jesus"? Not until, but surely afterward.

ANSWER: This text of Matthew is only concerned to make clear that Jesus is not the son of Joseph. The use of the preposition "until" in Hebrew does not imply that Mary and Joseph had marital relations after the birth of Jesus. This can be shown from 2 Sam. 6,23 where it is said that Michol the daughter of Saul had no child till the day of her death. Also from 1 Tim. 4,13: "Until I arrive, devote yourself to the reading of Scripture". Nothing is stated about the time after the event.

9. Is it right to have statues and images in the churches and homes? Did not God forbid all such images to be made by Israel (Ex. 20,3-4)?

ANSWER: a) Since God wanted to draw his people away from all the idolatry practiced in the surrounding nations, he forbade all images of himself to be made, or any image of created things to be adored. Exodus 20,4 must be understood together with Ex. 20,5: images are not to be made to be adored. The Hebrew prefers coordinate sentences (connected by and) whereas we would prefer subordinate clauses: you shall not make images to adore them. — b) Not all images were forbidden to the Israelites: In Ex. 25,18 Moses was told by God to make two images of Cherubim for the Holy Place. Again, God told him to make a brazen serpent (Num. 21,8). — c) We give honor to the statue of Rizal or any other great man by decorating it. If we dishonor it by some act of violence, we are liable to punishment. Why? Because it is the person of Rizal whom we dishonor by desecrating his statue. So also in our churches and homes we honor the person whom these statues represent.

10. The Bible says: "Do not call anyone on earth your father. Only one is your father, the One in heaven. "Why do Catholics call their priests "father"?"

ANSWER: a) If Christ prohibits something, there must be a reason for it. But we must carefully examine what he is prohibiting. Reading over the rest of that passage we see that it is the **abuse** of the title "father" that Christ is prohibiting. His audience was the Pharisees who craved for titles and the first places of honor. This wrong attitude Christ denounces. — b) The title of "father" is given to priests because they share spiritually in the fatherhood of God by begetting Christ in the hearts of men by preaching the word of God and baptizing. Since their "fatherhood" is derived from the gift of God it is not an abuse. — c) St. Paul expressly calls himself the father of those at Corinth (1 Cr. 4, 14-15) and he calls the Galatians his dear children (Gal. 4, 19). Timothy and Titus he calls his dear sons (1 Tim. 1,2 and Tit. 1,4). See also 2 Cor. 6,13. Would St. Paul go against a command of Christ?

11. Why bank on tradition when it is condemned by Jesus who said: "You disregard God's commandment and cling to what is human tradition" (Mk. 7,8)? See also Mt. 15,3.

ANSWER: If one reads the whole passage it is clear that Jesus is referring to the **Jewish traditions** which enabled a man to cheat his own parents out of a livelihood. Oral Christian tradition is nothing else than the proclamation of the Good News by the Apostles of Christ, much of which was later written down in the four gospels, and the Church continues to proclaim this Good News, interpreting it for our times. Thus St. Paul wrote: "Hold fast to the traditions you received from us, either by our word or by letter" (2 Thess. 2,15). "The things which you have heard from me through many witnesses you must hand on to trustworthy men who will be able to teach others" 2 Tim. 2,2). "I praise you because you always remember me and are holding fast to the traditions just as I handed them on to you" (1 Cor. 11,2).

12. Did not God command us to keep holy the Sabbath? Why does the Church celebrate Sunday instead? (Ex. 20,8).

ANSWER: The meaning of "Sabbath" in Hebrew is "day of rest". For Israel that was the seventh day of week. But Christ is master also of the Sabbath (Mk. 2,27). He rose on the first day of the week (Mt. 28,1), and the Early Church soon made the first day of the week the prescribed day of rest. See 1 Cor. 16,2; Acts 20,7 and Revelation 1,10. This she did with the authority given to the Apostles of Christ, for the Old Law had passed (see Col. 2,16 and Hebr. 8,13).

13. If God is all merciful, why is the sin against the Holy Spirit not forgiven? (Lk. 12,10). See also Mt. 12,31.

ANSWER: The exact words of Jesus are: blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. That is an act of a man who blinds himself to the manifest works of the Spirit, such as Christ's manifest miracles. Such a man denies what both senses and reason tell him, thus refusing the very grace that is offered him for conversion. As long as he continues to do that, he withdraws himself from reconciliation with God. The Holy Spirit will not force man by his grace.

14. Does not the Bible say that Judas is in hell? Jn. 17, 12 calls him a son of perdition and Mt. 26,24 states that it were better had he never been born.

ANSWER: Both are Semitic expressions used by Hebrew speaking people. A "son of perdition" is one who deserves it by his act, but nothing is said of the actuality. Moreover, Jesus in Jn. 17 is speaking of losing an apostle from the chosen band. In Mt. 26,24 Jesus is not using philosophical language but a popular expression which expressed the horror and outrage of the deed. It would defeat God's purpose to reveal the final fate of Judas, for it would either occasion despair or presumption. All should abhor his deed, but trust God's mercy if they fall into similar sins.

15. Is God's name Jehovah as the Jehovah Witnesses insist?

ANSWER: Undoubtedly by the name "Jehovah" the Witnesses mean the God of Israel. But Israel never called him by that name. Jehovah consists of the four Hebrew consonants YHWH. Before Christ's time there were never vowels in Jewish writings, so they pronounced each word by writing the consonants only, and learning the vowels by heart. Yet, ever since God punished Israel so fearfully in the Babylonian exile (587 BC) she wanted to be sure not to transgress the second commandment, so avoided pronouncing the name YHWH. Instead they called the God of Israel "Adonai" which means Lord or Master. Then, after the beginning of the Christian era, Jewish scribes began inventing vowel signs and placed them in the consonantal words. But instead of adding the vowels that belong to YHWH they added the vowels of Adonai, to be sure that those letters would be pronounced Adonai, again to reverence the name of God by not pronouncing it at all. When later centuries began reading the Bible in Hebrew (as in Europe in the 17th century), scholars did not realize at first that YHWH had the

vowel signs of Adonai, and combining both, they pronounced it Yehowah or Jehovah (since the German language had neither Y nor W). Jehovah then is a misnomer, being a combination of the vowel signs of one word with the consonants of another. Scholars to-day opt for the pronunciation Yahweh as the name of the God of Israel.

16. Is it true that only 144,00 are the elect as some people claim according to Rev. 14,1?

ANSWER: In the book of Revelation and other apocalyptic passages of the Bible, numbers are not to be taken in their numerical value, but are symbolic and stand for an idea. Both 12 and 10 are sacred numbers denoting fullness, and when both are raised to the square of 12 and cube of 10 multiplied into each other, it conveys the greatest fullness thinkable. In Rev. 7,9 it is stated that a huge number, impossible to count, stood in front of the throne of the Lamb. Jesus commanded his apostles to go out into the whole world and preach to every creature (Mt. 28,18 and Mk. 16,16) and "God wants all men to be saved and to come to the truth" (1 Tim. 2,4).

Some of the "Questions from Farmers" can be answered if one understands the proper nature of the first eleven chapters of Genesis (see Boletín Ecl. March 1974, 169-174 and April 1974, 246-274).

COMMUNICATION

Originally, the word "communicate" meant "to make (something) 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.

INDIGENIZATION IN THE LITURGY

The Editor

Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas

Dear Father:

During the schoolyear 1973-1974, in Maryhill School of Theology, a liturgical consultation was held around the theme of "Indigenization in the Liturgy". This consultation was the outcome of a series of research work done in connection with paraliturgy and liturgy in the Philippines, under the direction of Fr. Anscar J. Chupungco, O.S.B.

Some of the papers presented at the consultation were published in the **Liturgical Information Bulletin of the Philippines**: they deal with the Panunuluyan, the Pabasa, baptism and the Kalinga marriage rite.

Enclosed you will find two other studies, attempts at indigenization of the sacrament of matrimony among the peoples of Benguet and Bontoc. Maybe they could be of interest to you for publication in the **Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas**.*

In case you print these two studies, may we request that the format of the "COMPARISON AND ADAPTATION" be maintained, if possible. We consider it important for a study of this nature.

Grateful for your consideration and with high esteem for the service rendered by your periodical,

on behalf of Maryhill School of Theology

(Sdg.) GUIDO EVERAERT, CICM

* The study on the Bontoc marriage rite is published in this issue p. 382. The one on the Benguet rite will be published later.

HERE AND THERE

VOCHONG CONFERENCE ON CHICO RIVER PROJECT

Vochong — the Kalinga word for peace pact — was the name given to a conference which attempted to draw the attention of public and private social, cultural and religious groups to the worsening situation of the Kalingas and Bontocs who will be dislodged from their ancestral lands if the government's Chico River Dam Project is pushed through (see *Boletin Eclesiastico* March 1975, p. 222).

Over a hundred Kalinga and Bontoc leaders who came from the mountains to St. Bridget's School, Quezon City, May 10 to 12, to explain their demands and aspirations vis-a-vis the Chico River Basin Development Project, made it clear that their people are reaching the point of desperation and have seriously started considering armed rebellion to defend their rights. Several attempts to gain an audience with the President have failed.

The specific objective of the conference was to draw up a program of action and the mechanisms to implement what the participants deemed to be the just solution of the problem. Mechanisms for the mutual support of the Kalingas and Bontocs on one hand and the church and civic groups on the other hand, were also studied.

Organizers of the conference have invited attention to documents of the United Nations and to articles of the new Philippine Constitution. The documents of the United Nations call for "planning with the masses" and "increased participation by all peo-

ple at all levels of society" in any plan for national development. The new Constitution says: "Filipino culture shall be preserved and developed for national identity" (Art. XV, Sec. 9, 2); "The state shall consider the customs, traditions, beliefs and interests of national cultural communities in the formulation and implementation of state policies" (Art. XV, Sec. 11).

A Bishop who is a Bontoc by birth, Francisco Claver (of Malaybalay Diocese, Bukidnon), has joined his people in making a strong appeal to the President to find a just solution to the socio-cultural problems connected with the Chico River project.

The participating institutions in the Vochong Conference were: Share and Care Apostolate for Poor Settlers (SCAPS), National Social Action Council (NASAC), Association of Major Religious Superiors (AMRSP), Commission on Development and Social Concerns (of the NCCP), Justice and Peace Commission (of the NASSA). The following were listed as invited institutions or groups: UP Anthropological Society, Association of Cultural Minorities, Institute of Social Order, Asian Social Institute, Samahan ng Mag-aaral ng Asya, Benguet - Apayao-Bontoc - Ifugao Association (BABKI), Lubuagan Catholic Mission (ICM Sisters, CICM Fathers). Podon, Inc., was a collaborating group.

Among the speakers at the conference were Bishop Mariano Gaviola, Bishop Francisco Claver, Sr. Mary Christine Tan, R.G.S.

ELEVEN NEW PRIESTS

Eleven seminarians who finished their studies at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Santo Tomas were ordained recently. They belong to five different dioceses.

Diocese of Dipolog: Edito Gamallo. Diocese of Lucena: Manuel Lim. Diocese of Malolos: Alfredo Fajardo, Roberto Ignacio, Leocadio de Jesus, Salvador Viola, Eliseo Zuñiga. Archdiocese of Nueva

Segovia (Vigan): Orlando Fuller, Roque Reyes. Archdiocese of Tuguegarao: Benjamin Lasam and Bonifacio de Ocampo.

Other seminarians were ordained earlier and still some more will be ordained in Rome in June. All in all the new priests this year who have stayed in the Central Seminary will be twenty seven, coming from sixteen dioceses.

VOCATION DIRECTORS HOLD NATIONAL CONVENTION

The Directors of Vocations in the Philippines (D.V.P.) met in a national convention at Guadalupe Minor Seminary, Makati, Rizal, on May 6 to 8, to discuss the implementation of the document "Pastoral Approach to the Vocation Apostolate" in the context of the socio-cultural-economic situation of the Philippines.

Bishop Felix Perez and Fr. Carlos Abesamis, S.J., were the keynote speakers. The former is the chairman of the Episcopal Commission on Education and Religious Instruction. The Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Bruno Torpigliani, gave the closing address underlining the importance of

vocation work today as a priority for the church.

Vocation Directors, Directresses and Lay Promoters from different dioceses and religious congregations attended the convention. They elected the following as officers of the association: Fr. Gregorio Mirto, Jr., National Coordinator; Bro. Antonio Narciso, F.S.C., Regional Coordinator for Luzon; Fr. Noel Gartlan, C.Ss.R., Regional Coordinator for Visayas; Fr. Georges-Louis Fortin, P.M.E., Regional Coordinator for Mindanao; Sister Lydia Lascano, I.C.M., National Executive Secretary; Bro. Calixto Silverio, S.J., National Finance Officer.

VIETNAMESE AND CAMBODIAN BISHOPS STAY AT THEIR POSTS

Catholic Bishops have remained in their dioceses in South Vietnam and Cambodia in spite of the communist take-over of these countries.

The South Vietnamese Bishops and the Apostolic Delegate in Saigon announced that they do not wish members of religious orders to leave. Shortly before Saigon was captured by the communist Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces Archbishop Paul

Nguyen Van Binh appealed to Catholic priests not to abandon their parishes in the face of invasion. Catholic, the Archbishop said, should, by virtue of their faith, remain in control of themselves and examine the situation carefully. "Along with other compatriots, Catholics should participate in establishing peace and concord among Vietnamese. The situation needs it and Catholicism demands it." He ended

his message with the words: "The Church hopes that, thanks to a just and correct application of the Paris accords on the part of all interested parties, the war will end and the rights of each to his own life be finally respected."

In a letter written on April 1, Bishop Nguyen Van Thuam of Nga Trang, South Vietnam, reported that Bishop Seitz, Archbishop Dien and Bishop Chi, of Kongum, Hue and Da Kang, respectively, in the northern provinces first occupied by the communists in March, have chosen

to stay. Bishop Lam of Dalat and Bishop Cac of Qui Nhon were in places under siege reported that Bishop Mai of Ban-Me-Thout and Bishop-elect Hou of Phan Thiet were missing and believed to have been killed by the communists.

Meanwhile, according to a message received in London by CAFOD, 'in Combodia, the Hierarchy and members of the local churches, who have set a magnificent example, appear already to be preparing to do everything possible to help in reconstruction programmes."

JESUIT CONGREGATION OBEYS POPE

Pope Paul VI expressed satisfaction to the Jesuit General Congregation in the final hours of its three-month long meeting at its acceptance of his refusal to permit changes that would allow more Jesuit priests and brothers to be eligible for high office in the society.

Pope Paul's Latin message was handed to the Jesuit superior general, Father Pedro Arrupe, in an audience with him on March 7. A Jesuit spokesman emphasized that the meeting was very friendly.

In the message the Pope also told the Jesuits to move ahead in reform and renewal, but to do so in line with the norms of the Gospel and of the Society of Jesus itself. The Society of Jesus "must be modernized... but not wholly changed or disturbed."

The cordial papal message brought a certain relief to the approximately 200 Jesuits from around the world who have been participating since early December in the Jesuits' 32nd general congregation. Tension built up between the general congregation and the Pope over the congregation's wish to extend the fourth vows to more Jesuit priests and to Jesuit brothers. The fourth vow of obedience to the Pope constitutes solemn profession in the Society of Jesus. Only solemnly professed Jesuits are eligible for high office in the society.

The Pope said that it was "no small source of satisfaction for us" that the general congregation "understood sympathetically the force and meaning" of his decision. He said the members of the general congregation "showed that they accepted our intervention in a spirit of cooperation."

HOMILETICS

by

Regino Cortes, O.P.

I. BIBLICAL NOTES FOR HOMILIES

18TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

(August 3, 1975)

First Reading: Isaiah 55: 1-3

Second Reading: Romans 8:35. 37-39.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 14: 13-21.

A. First Reading. Chapter 55 of Isaiah is considered to be the prologue of the Book of Consolation which begins from chapter 40 addressed to the Judean exiles. The sacred author ends this comforting literature with an exhortation to accept salvation. Messianic overtones are very obvious in this text. Although the historical setting has been pointed out to be the return of the Jewish people from the Babylonian exile, its prophetic feature is nevertheless distinctly delineated. We are reminded here of the introduction of the Covenant-making in Exodus 19: 3-8, with the same biddings: "If you hear my voice and hold fast to my covenant..." Salvation is here proffered under the sign of gratifying the prime necessities of man: food and drink. This could be taken as a figure of the Holy Eucharist.

The "eternal Covenant" mentioned in v. 3 is accepted to be the New Covenant accomplished in David, more exactly through one of his descendants, in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord.

B. Second Reading: Verses 31-39 of Romans, VIII are the concluding verses of Paul's doctrine on the Christian's spiritual life which he expounded in this particular chapter. A progress in literary thought may be discernible from the four rhetorical questions proposed: 1) With God on our side who can be against us? (31); 2) Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? (33);

3) When God acquits, could anyone condemn? (34); Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? (35).

The phrase "love of Christ" could either be taken as an objective genitive: "our love for Christ," or a subjective genitive: "Christ's love for us, I think both interpretations could be accepted. The richness of Paul's language is all the more manifested. It is truly a great consolation for us whom Christ loves and who love him in return to have that love be characterized as unbreakable.

Third Reading: The Gospel narrates the multiplication of the bread which according to the accounts of Matthew and Mark happened twice (Matthew 14: 13-21 and 15: 32-38; Mk. 6: 31-44 and 8: 1-13). In St. Luke and St. John there is only one narrative of the multiplication of the bread: Lk. 9: 10-17 and Jn. 6: 1-15. In the gospel of St. Matthew this is the first multiplication miracle.

The event happened according to St. Matthew after the death of John the Baptist beheaded by Herod. As his hour has not yet come he was careful not to antagonize the authorities and used his human prudence to retire to a place with his disciples, according to tradition to the neighborhood of Bethsaida Julias in Gaulanitis outside Herod's territory as this belongs to Philip the Tetrarch.

The mention of grass, which according to Mk. 6:39 were green indicates the time of the miracle which was spring probably before the Pasch giving us a historical parallel with the Last Supper when the Eucharist was instituted which also happened before the Pasch.

NINETEENTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

(August 10, 1975)

First Reading: 1 Kg 19:9a.11-13a.

Second Reading: Romans 9: 1-5.

Gospel Reading: Mt. 14: 22-33.

A. First Reading: The historical context of this biblical narrative was a sequel to Jezebel's (the impious wife of Achab) persecution of Elijah. The prophet fled to Horeb, the other name for Sinai, the mountain of God. There Yahweh appeared to him, an unusual theophany which contrast with Yahweh's theophany to Moses at Mt. Sinai narrated in Exodus 19:18: "The mountain of Sinai was entirely wrapped in smoke, because Yahweh had descended on it in the form of fire. Like smoke from a furnace the

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smoke went up, and the whole mountain shook violently." During this theophany to Elijah the strong wind, the earthquake, and the fire were just heralds of Yahweh's apparition who appeared in the form of a gentle breeze indicating that Yahweh is not a terrible God after all but gentle, peaceful and calm.

B. Second Reading: St. Paul's love and concern for his own people, the Israelite, is here strongly manifested. He knew for a fact that they rejected the Messiah and were therefore excluded from the new community of salvation as a people. We could discern how deep was his anguish to be able to utter such strong words: "I would willingly be anathema and be cut off from Christ if it could help my brothers of Israel." This does not mean eternal union with Christ to which he himself is aspiring: "who shall separate us from the love of Christ," but he is willing to be cut off from the Church on earth to help his own people. This does not mean exclusion of any Israelite from salvation which is an individual happening but from the community of salvation on earth.

C. Gospel Reading: The continuation of the multiplication of the bread narrative was another extraordinary happening: the walking of Christ on the water. Not to be contaminated by the excitement of the people who witness the multiplication miracle, our Lord sent them back to the boat while he dispersed the people wanting to make him king. He did not join the apostles but retired into the hills to pray. When nightfall came the apostles left without him but due to contrary winds made little progress which seemed to be the providential way to let them witness another miraculous manifestation. It was about the fourth watch, about 3-6 in the morning when they saw him walking on the water. The request made by Peter was quite in accordance with his character. Our Lord permitted him to come to him on the water but then because of the strong wind got afraid and began to sink.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (August 17, 1975)

First Reading: Isaiah 56: 1. 6-7.

Second Reading: Romans 11: 13-15. 29-32.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 15: 21-28.

A. First Reading. This text from Isaiah forms part in the beginning of another section of a literature bearing the prophet's name. This section is commonly referred to as the Trito-Isaiah. The audience definitely is not a people who were in danger of

being conquered by a foreign power as in the first section of his work, nor a people in exile which was the situation in the second part but a people who had again settled in Jerusalem after the exile. The universal character of salvation is one of the paramount themes in these late texts: Jerusalem is the "holy mount to which the aliens shall be brought in Sion where Yahweh is worshipped."

B. Second Reading: In spite of St. Paul's preferential treatment of the Gentiles as the object of his vocation as an Apostle he could not forget his own people the Israelites. For the third time he insists that his apostolic ministry among the Gentiles was in a way also for the sake of his own people. Being pro-gentile does not mean anti-Israel. He argues from the lesser to the greater: "If their rejection meant the reconciliation of the world, what would their admission mean? Nothing less than a resurrection from the dead."

A time, however, will come, when, we do not know that "after the whole pagan world has entered, the rest of Israel will be saved as well." This he says is a mystery. He does not claim any special revelation but gives his arguments: 1) from Scriptures (v. 26) — prophecy of Israel's restoration, cf. Is. 59-20; I Cor. 2:7; Is. 27: 9. 2) from Israel's history: "they are still loved by God, loved for the sake of their ancestors." (v. 28). 3) salvation is gift of God's mercy. Man's failure is Mercy's opportunity to unfold itself.

C. Gospel Reading: Jesus has here in the gospel story extended his field of ministry to a non-Israelite area always with a providential significance, and this was the occasion of the curing of the daughter of the Canaanite woman. In Mark 7:24 he calls her Syro-phoenician which is more exact. But Canaanite was not exactly inaccurate as the district colonized by Canaanites was still basically Canaanite.

The woman addressed Him, son of David which was a messianic title. The intervention of the disciples with a note of annoyance at the inopportunities of the woman is mentioned by St. Matthew but absent in St. Mark. No special significance may be attached to this difference.

Our Lord's first concern was for Israel but this does not limit his concern for the pagans as well as he would die for all men. Our Lord has used a strong word to describe the Pagans. They are "dogs" in the eyes of the Jews, although the meaning could

be attenuated by the fact that he used the word *kynaria* meaning small dogs or pet-dogs. Still the woman was undaunted and her faith tested quite rigorously received its reward.

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (August 24, 1975)

First Reading: Isaiah 22: 19-23.

Second Reading: Romans 11: 33-36.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 16: 13-20.

A. First Reading: The text from Isaiah refers to an oracle against Shebna or Sobna, master of the Royal Palace during the time of Ezekiah in Jerusalem. Isaiah rebuked him for "hewing a tomb for himself high up, carving out a room for himself in the rock" (v. 16) which seemed to be an indication of high ambitions and predicted that Eliakim would succeed him in his office. Eliakim was ambassador sent by Ezekiah to Sennacherib's general for the terms of Jerusalem's surrender to the Assyrians, cf. 2 Kgs. 18: 18 ff. The "key of the House of David" is a symbol of authority and since it is made of wood and much bigger than our modern keys it is said to be placed on one's shoulder.

B. Second Reading: This text is the conclusion of Paul's reflection on the destiny of Israel, his co-people who was chosen by God for a special mission but which at this stage of history became the object of rejection. There may be many problems left unsolved concerning Israel's election and subsequent rejection, still these are parts of God's plan designed according to his impenetrable wisdom for the salvation of all and for his glory. "Who could ever know the mind of the Lord? Who could ever be his counsellor?" In spite of all these Paul strongly manifests his faith that God is the efficient, sustaining, and final cause of all.

C. Gospel Reading: The famous confession of Peter and his subsequent elevation to primacy in this text happened at Caesarea Philippi, now a village in northern Israel called Banyas, near Mt. Hermon where the source of the Jordan comes from. Reflectively a meaning could be projected in the choice of place since the faith of Peter would be the source in a certain way of our faith.

Many opinions have circulated concerning the person of Jesus. There were superstitious rumors in Antipas' court who beheaded John the Baptist that he resurrected in the person of Jesus. That

he was Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets. Christians nevertheless believed that Jesus was the "prophet" foretold by Moses in Dt. 18:15. Cf. Acts 3:22-26; Jn. 6:14; 7:40. Having asked his Apostles their belief about him, Peter answered categorically, "You are the Christ," which means the anointed one or the Messiah. St. Matthew has added a second phrase absent in St. Mark, 8: 27:30 and St. Luke 9: 18-21, that Jesus is also "the Son of the living God."

That it was the Father, and not the Son, who revealed Jesus' identity to Peter indicates the divine character of Peter's faith and perhaps confirms his divine choice as head of the Apostolic College. Finally Christ explains Peter's name which he already gave in Jn. 1: 42. The Aramaic word "Kephaz" was masculinized in the Greek translation as "Petros" where the Latin got the term "Petrus".

TWENTY SECOND SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (August 31, 1975)

First Reading: Jeremiah 20: 7-9.

Second Reading: Romans 12: 1-2.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 16: 21-27.

A. First Reading: The text, although as far as the biblical context is concerned, follows the altercation of Jeremiah with Passhur, in charge of the police, who had the prophet "beaten and then put in the stocks at the Gate of Benjamin," the lamentations he addressed to Yahweh could be placed in another setting.

We could discern in these so-called "Confessions of Jeremiah" a state of conflict and anguish in the prophet's soul. For the doctrine of prophetic inspiration this text may be revelatory. "I used to say," the prophet confessed, "I will not think about him, I will not speak in his name any more. Then there seemed to be a fire burning in my heart." The word to "seduce" used in the Jerusalem Bible may not be so expressive. "To entice" seems to be nearer: "You have enticed me, Yahweh, and I have let myself be enticed." (v. 7).

B. Second Reading: A sincere exhortation to authentic Christian behaviour is here made by St. Paul to the Christians of Rome. A liturgical dimension may be discerned in the first part of this exhortation: to offer worship to God not only with the spiritual part in us but also offering our living bodies. "To worship God worthy of thinking beings" is seen by biblical scholars as a contrast of

the worship usually made by pagans to God, using rituals which in a way "would not be worthy of thinking beings."

C. Gospel Reading: After the episode of Peter's confession about the Messiahship of Jesus, the synoptics immediately the first prophecy of his passion (Mt. 16: 21-23; Mk. 8: 31-33; and Lk. 9:22) and then the demand required by Christ in order to be His follower.

Peter's remonstrance was not natural. Not knowing the plan of God for the salvation of the world and expecting a more triumphant reign of the Messiah he must have been startled to hear that the Messiah would suffer, and be put to death. Because of this obstruction he was called satan by Christ which does not mean the evil one, but someone who contradicts.

II. HOMILIES

August 3: 18th Sunday of the Year

PROVIDENCE NEVER SLEEPS

Our Situation: The world does what it wants and begin to worry afterwards. It condones sexual permissiveness, premarital sex, marriage for pleasure, trial marriages, divorce, and all other sexual aberrations and then worries about population explosion, the high rise of abortion, and even infanticide. It continuously producing weapons which could even threaten its own existence, fanning hatred in the guise of nationalism and then worries about war, rebellions, the refugee problem etc. It prefers to dump food supplies into the sea to control prices and afterwards sympathetically appeals (sincerely or otherwise) for the hapless hungry millions.

Providence never sleeps. If we just remain docile to it, then we could avoid all these unnecessary worries, or man-made worries which accelerate many a white hair to grow prematurely, and wrinkles to deepen before its time. But faith in Providence should never mean a "bahala na" attitude, or rather the negative aspect of the bahala attitude, since this attitude could have a positive aspect which could be discerned from its etymology: "bathala na" an expression of faith in Divine Providence.

The Good News: The crowds who followed Christ, as narrated to us in today's Gospel reading, left their places, their homes to listen to him, to nourish their spirit. They became oblivious of bodily nourishments, about the inconveniences of the place. Their sacrifice and confidence in our Lord was rewarded even if it took a miracle to do it.

These people left their homes not because they did not like to work any more, nor did they expect that our Lord would perform a miracle to feed them but only because they wanted to listen to him and be with him.

Our Response: Our man-made worries could be prevented by learning from past experiences, and developing more that trust in Divine Providence. One time in your life you got stomach-ache because of too much eating, then this experience should make you watch out in the future not to pamper your appetite and suffer the same result. We could also learn from the experience of others. We try our best not to contract cancer because as others have experienced it, the moment we get the disease we would be done for. But most of all trust in the Lord, trust in his providence, and no earthly difficulties, not even death could make us fearful any longer.

August 10: 19th Sunday of the Year

SINKING ZEAL

Situation: How many times we hear the story of a newly ordained priest, fresh from his seminary formation, full of idealism, fiery in his zeal to bring souls to Christ but gradually shrinks to mediocrity and much worse to inactivity after experiencing strong winds of opposition from his environment. The fatherly advice of caution from his superior or bishop could be mis-interpreted as obstructionism. On the other hand the difficulties of the apostolate coming from different sectors could prove too much to a zealous but under-faith heart.

Good News: Today's gospel could give a fruitful reflection in the face of such difficulties. Peter, the over-zealous Peter, wanted to approach Christ walking on the water. In so far as his gaze was fixed on Christ, his steps were firm. But the moment he became aware of the strong winds, his faith faltered and he began to sink.

Fortunately, he regained himself and shouted to our Lord to help him. As the gospel tells us: "Jesus put out his hand at once and held him," chiding him for his lack of faith.

Our Response: We need always to be aware that opposition would come our way whatever we do, wherever we are, in whatever situation of life we find ourselves. The gauge of our maturity in faith is precisely our firmness in the face of these oppositions and obstacles. But let us be convinced that this firmness in faith does not come and could never come from our frail human efforts alone. It is a grace from God, we need the help of Christ to sustain us on solid footing, to save us when we are sinking. Only one important thing is asked from us: that our faith should never fail.

August 17: 20th Sunday of the Year

FAITH THRILLERS

Situation: "The Philippines is the only Christian country in Asia." We have heard this stereotyped expression so often that we do not care anymore about its meaning. Shall we be elated about it, or shall we be fearful about the tremendous responsibility it entails? Shall we continue just basking in the glory of this privileged situation, or shall we start sharing what we are able or even ought to give to others by reason of this singular position. We are surrounded by non-Christian countries like Israel of old. Our being chosen as a Christian nation was not meant only for ourselves. It was meant for others as well. The Christian gift of salvation may not be pleasing at once. It is up to us to make it attractive, to make it the real "gospel" that it is; a gospel means the good news of salvation. If we are reluctant to share it with others it may be because we ourselves are not convinced of its value. Then we should really beware "lest by preaching to others we ourselves would be condemned."

Good News: The salvation brought by Christ is for all men. His blood was shed for all. In the beginning, it was confined to Israel as the first chosen community of salvation. Now it is extended to all without distinction. The Canaanite woman was fortunate. She received a share of that salvation before the appointed time. Her only investment was that extraordinary act of faith which our Lord could not but commend and praise.

Our Response: Seeing non-Christian nations around us slowly give way to the pressure of communism could we not discern in this event a kind of providential sign that the stage of purification is at hand? For all we know this could be the instrument of modern times to prepare the way of the Lord and make his straight his paths for his eventual coming to the other nations of the Far East.

August 24: 21st Sunday of the Year

THE ROCK THAT NEVER ROCKS

Situation: Insecurity has been branded as one of the major problems not only on an individual but also of a nation. Security is thus sought with frenzied interest at times in areas where security but yields an illusion of peace. Security from war means producing more and more weapons to deter any external force from attacking; security from want means bigger and improved industries; security from politics means quelling all kinds of opposition; security from diseases means more and more hospitals. Strange to say the more we seek human means to solve our insecurities the more insecure we become.

The more we produce weapons to secure peace the more we fear that it would boomerang on us; the more we proliferate industries to solve our economic needs the more we worry about environmental pollution; the more new drugs are discovered for current diseases, new diseases seem to appear. We have not hit really the root of our insecurity.

Good News: One institution which is at the same time a communion of persons was given that divine promise of total security. Not the security that the world could give but that which has come down from heaven. That security was promised in the image of a rock, solid, immovable, firm. It is the security which all other securities should take its root: economics, political technological, educational, etc.

Our Response: The signs of our times indicate that the world's pluralistic institutions need the total security which only the Church as a divine institution could give. We, as members of the Church should not deny this benefit to be shared with the world. This is the way we can really show that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

August 31: 22nd Sunday of the Year

RENUNCIATION TO GLORY

Situation: May time is not only the time in the Philippines of Fiestas, Santacruzans, Flores de Mayo but also the annual bikathon of the popular "Tour of Luzon," and beauty pageants. These two last events, the former for men only, while the latter for women only, are for the contestants the chance of a life-time to acquire glory, fame and fortune. How rigid the preparations which these contestants underwent for the competitions they themselves could only testify. The bikathon enthusiasts suffered the gruelling test of rough terrain, mountain climbing, exhaustion and heat etc. hoping to attain the victor's crown. How many meals have our beauties missed to maintain their trim figure, what rigorous exercise they willingly suffered to remove those excess fat? In the end only one gets the crown while the others, the majority, would be contented of having joined the contest.

Good News: Strange as it may seem, but when it comes to spiritual endeavors and spiritual beauty we become reluctant to undergo even the slightest mortification. Fasting and abstinence is viewed as outmoded. The cross is a real pain in the neck. Still, as our Lord insists and we do also insist to be faithful to our Lord, that suffering in union with him is the real gateway to happiness. Without the passion there would be no resurrection; without death of a lower life there would be no acquisition of a higher life. Without following Christ and carrying our cross daily we cannot enter with him into his kingdom.

Our Response: Whatever we do, wherever we go the cross will always be with us. The more we flee from it the heavier it will become. The best way is to carry it with our Lord, who promised that his yoke is sweet and his burden light. If we could be motivated to undergo hardships for the sake of an ephemeral victory, why could not we be motivated to renounce ourselves for the sake of eternal glory?