

# **BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS**

## **BEWARE OF IMITATIONS**

**Editorial**

## **MINISTRY OF EPISCOPAL VICARS AND VICARS FORANE**

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**Bernard LeFrois, S.V.D.**

# BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

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## **EDITORIAL**

### **Beware of Imitations**

There was a time when people despised imitation goods, or at least clearly distinguished them from the genuine. But the ingenuity of modern man in making imitations look exactly like the real thing, hand in hand with expertise in advertising and marketing, have made us readily accept the spurious for the pure. Take, for example, Mass wine. There is a liquor on sale that looks exactly like the traditional and legitimate Mass wine. Yet it is made up of concentrated grape juice with flavor materials, sugar and alcohol. It easily passes off for authentic Mass wine and the priest who buys it for use at Mass is happy at the thought that he has saved a few pesos, since the real Mass wine is more costly. What is lost to him and his people, however, is considerably much more valuable — it's something money can't buy — the eucharistic sacrifice. The ceremonies are invalid when the matter for consecration is not the real thing.

The danger of passing off or accepting the false for the true, the fake for the real, the illegitimate for the legitimate, the natural for the supernatural, presently affects not only material things, but doctrinal and spiritual treasures of the Church.

In his Easter Message the Pope deplored that "an army of deniers and of critics has worked to deprive (the mystery of the Resurrection) of its univocal real sense." For some people it no longer means the coming alive of Christ to inaugurate his transcendent kingdom. Easter becomes, for some, the celebration of humanity's recovery from economic, cultural, social and political setbacks. The natural is subtly substituted for the supernatural — usually under the guise of making religion "relevant" to man — and people hardly seem to care.

Under the guise of adherence to Tradition, some Catholics, specially those led by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, refuse to follow the liturgical reforms in the spirit of Vatican II. As the Pope said,



"there are those who, under the pretext of a greater fidelity to the Church and the Magisterium, systematically refuse the teaching of the Council itself, its application and the reforms that stem from it, its gradual application by the Apostolic See and the Episcopal Conferences, under our authority, willed by Christ. Discredit is cast upon the authority of the Church in the name of a Tradition, to which respect is professed only materially and verbally. The faithful are drawn away from the bonds of obedience to the See of Peter and to their rightful Bishops; today's authority is rejected in the name of yesterday's." (Paul VI, May 24 Consistory).

At the other extreme are those who try to make people believe that their destructive criticism of the Church and her institutions are part of the reforms desired by the Second Vatican Council. They criticize the Church not only in words but in actions, as when they create their own liturgy contrary to official directives, "sometimes limiting the Sacrifice of the Mass or the sacraments to the celebration of their own lives or of their own struggle, or even to the symbol of their own fraternity." (Ibidem).

What is in fact doctrinal subversion is passed off as an updating of Church teaching. This is done by "those who interpret theological life as the organization of a society here below, reducing it indeed to a political action, and adopting for this purpose a spirit, methods, and practices contrary to the Gospel; and the point is reached of confusing the transcendent message of Christ, his announcement of the Kingdom of God, his law of love among people — founded on the ineffable paternity of God — with ideologies which essentially negate this message and substitute for it an absolutely antithetical doctrinal position, propounding a hybrid linking of two irreconcilable worlds, as is recognized by the very theorists of the other side." (Ibidem).

The experts can detect the imitations, but what about the common *tao*? Those who guide them must give due warning. Most of all they should give, in their lives, a strong and clear witness to the truth.

## In This Issue

The Church has committed itself to the development of peoples, but it has to make clear again and again that it understands development integrally — the perfection of the whole man and of all men, and it desires that this development be further perfected

by transcendent realities. This thread of thought can be discerned in Pope Paul VI's **Easter Message Urbi et Orbi**.

What happens in Manila very often affects the life of the whole nation. Hence it is inevitable that others take the cue from the premier metropolis for progress in political, cultural and even religious matters. Efforts to make the administration of the Archdiocese more responsive to the needs of the people are clearly seen in the **Canonico-Pastoral Scheme on the Ministry of the Episcopal Vicars and Vicars Forane in the Subordinated Administration of the Archdiocese of Manila**, issued by Jaime L. Card. Sin. The publication of this document, we hope, would be of service to other dioceses that wish to revamp their administrative structures.

Fr. Francisco del Rio, O.P., shares with our readers some of his thoughts on **"Where is Moral Theology Going?"**. He writes specially "to prevent young catholic students from being misled by many so-called 'modern' theologians".

Fr. Ted Gresh, M.M., on his part, writes on **"Ministry and Mission: From Roland Allen to the Present"**. In a letter to us he wrote that "This is the first of a two-part article in which I have tried to show that many of the insights and suggestions of major Catholic theologians and ecclesiologists today were foreshadowed and sometimes even better expressed in the works of Roland Allen," a Protestant missiologist. "It is also a response to Fr. Congar's Article "The Need for Pluralism in the Church", which appeared in your July issue, 1975 and with which I am in full agreement," continued our contributor.

We were saddened by the tragic death of Bishop Antonio Buenafe. We hope that the Pope's letter to him when he was appointed Bishop would remind us to pray for the repose of his soul, and for the good Lord to give us more ministers like him.

## POPE'S EASTER MESSAGE: "URBI ET ORBI"

The following is the text of the Holy Father's Message "Urbi et Orbi", which he delivered from the Central Loggia of St. Peter's Basilica, after the Mass on Easter Sunday, 18 April.

After the unexpected event of Pentecost, the first discourse which Peter addressed to the stunned and bewildered crowd concluded with that most forceful announcement of the Resurrection of the person who already was to be considered as the promised Christ: "Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs... as you yourselves know — this Jesus... you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. But God raised him up, having loosed the pangs of death. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we are all witnesses" (Act 2:22-32). And it will be this testimony that subsequently gives the first Scriptural proofs (cf. 1 Cor 15, etc.), and the Gospels will narrate for our joy and our piety the first visit of the holy women of the Gospel to the empty tomb from which Christ had risen at dawn of the third day after his tragic death. The Gospels will likewise record the extraordinary but real facts of the appearances of the Risen Christ to his disciples.

### Basis of faith

From that moment the Resurrection of Christ is the cornerstone of our faith and of our history. And although the experience of the senses was reserved to certain selected persons (cf. Acts 10:40, etc.), and although mystery surrounds this capital fact of the Catholic religion (cf. Acts 10:40 ff.; S. Th. III, 55, 2, ad 2), it will forever form the fundamental basis of that Catholic religion. The same Jesus had predicted: "The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes" (Mt. 21:42; cf. Ps. 117:22; Acts 4:11; Rom. 9:33, 1 Pt. 2:7).

It is to the affirmation, to the historical reality, to the mystery of life which this fact represents in itself, and to the destinies of the Church, and of humanity which flow therefrom, that this Easter feast is directed. It touches all Christianity and makes us still



today sing the Exsultet — that unheard-of, unthinkable but undeniable and unsuppressible victory of life over death. It concerns us all personally and collectively and it pervades us.

### Truly risen

Christ the Lord is truly risen. Already Mary, his innocent and privileged Mother has been raised and assumed by him into the immortal fullness of his glorious life at the right hand of the Father. And already the list of those who on the last day will be called the greatest wonder of resurrection in the corporeal renewal of an eschatological existence is being composed and registering the names in the "Book of Life", in the indelible memory of God (cf. Lk 10:20; Phil 4:3; Rev 21:27). We also, Brethren and sons and daughters, we also will rise!

The voice trembles in making such a wonderful prediction. But let our faith not tremble, if with a pure and sincere heart we have prepared for Easter, that is, if we have been nourished on the Body and Blood of Christ which he offers us in the Eucharist. For of the one that is fed with this vital food he has said: "I will raise him up at the last day". (Jn 6:54). Today the Resurrection of Christ is reflected in hope; tomorrow it will be reflected in a changed reality (cf. 1 Cor 15:38 ff.).

We cannot be silent that, in regard to such a great mystery, an army of deniers and of critics has worked and is working to deprive it of its univocal real sense. But our certainty today is so full and blessed that it desires only to be communicated with those who do not share it, in order to have them as partners in our faith and in our happiness.

### Craving for power

And we say this also to dispel the equivocation of a magic word, which charms and often deceives the one who makes use of it in a meaning restricted to the limits of a temporal phenomenology, that is, the word "resurrection" contained in the sense of scientific causality and of historical experience, when by resurrection there is understood the employment of methods and of forces which do not transcend the natural order. No one more than he who loves, for the superior reasons of the Gospel, humanity and the exhausting formation of society for the true progress of man's co-existence and his true welfare can rejoice that resurrection is spoken of to favour the effort and to obtain the result of a resurrection, that is, of an economic, cultural and social betterment for the comfort and remedy of every human suffering. But it would be an

illusion to hope to attain that effective and transcendent resurrection to which the life of man profoundly and essentially aspires, if this life were deprived of that "hope which does not deceive" (Rom 5:5) and if it were not taught that the inevitable danger resulting from the blind craving exclusively for temporal prosperity could bring man a greater unhappiness generated by the very expansion of his capacity to desire and of his possibility to enjoy more.

**All is new!**

Let us recall also in this luminous moment the directing words of Saint Paul: "The love of Christ compels us . . ." This means that if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation. The old order has passed away; now all is new! (2 Cor 5:14-17). Thus: **corda, voces et opera**. Let hearts be new; let words be new, let works be new.

With our Easter wishes and with our Apostolic Blessing.

## **PAULUS EPISCOPUS SERVUS SEVRORUM DEI**

Dilecto filio **ANTONIO BUENAFE**, Vicario General Peaelaturae Banguedensis, electo Episcopo titulo Metensi atque Auxiliari sacri Praesulis Novae Segobiae, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Quoniam, secundum munus nobis traditum, onorem sequimur Apostolicam Sedis, quae curare solet, ut Episcopi adiutores iis assignentur Pastoribus, qui nimis onerantur negotiis, audiendas Censemus preces Venerabilis Fratris Joannis C. Sison, Archiepiscopi Novae Segobiae, eam ob causam nobis adhibitae ut Auxiliarem Episcopum sibi impetraret. Quare, sententiam confirmantes Venerabilium Fratrum Nostrorum S.R.E. Cardinalium negotiis Sacrae Congregationis pro Episcopis praepositorum, vi et auctoritate Nostra Apostolica Episcopum titulo **METENSEM** te nominamus, dilecte fili, quem uno tempore Auxiliarem memorati Archiepiscopi constitutus eique assignamus, iuribus auctum ad hoc pertinentibus, quibus cautum est per Apostolicas Litteras — Ecclesiae Sanctae — motu proprio die VI mensis Augusti anno MCMLXV editas. Facultatem tibi facimus ut servatis normis canonico iure servandis, episcopalem consecrationem, ubicumque elegeris et extra urbem Romam, a quovis catholico Praesule accipias, post tamen quam, teste aliquo rectae fidei Episcopo, professione fidei feceris necnon fidelitatem erga nos et Successores Nostros iuraveris. Quibus rite peractis, tuum quoque esto curare ut formulae ad id adhibitae, sueta forma subscriptae, cito ad Sacram Congregationem pro Episcopis mittantur. Tibi demum, dilecte fili, cui dignitatem episcopalem suscepturo gratulamur, enixe suademus ut pro tuis viribus, quam maxime adiuves sacrum Praesulem et Pastorem Novae Segobiae in spiritali bono gregis ipsi crediti procurando. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die nono mensis Februarii, Anno Domini Millesimo nonagesimo septuagesimo sexto, Pontificatus Nostri tertio decimo.

**JOANNES CARD. VILLOT**  
Secretarius Status

**MARCELLUS ROSSETTI**  
Proton. Apost.



## **PAULUS EPISCOPUS SERVUS SERVORUM DEI**

Dilecto filio **ANSARIO CRUZ**, moderatori Seminarii Archidioecesis Manilensis, electo Auxiliari sacri Praesulis eiusdem Ecclesiae atque Episcopo titulo Marturanensi salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Qui divino consilio in beatissimi Petri locum successimus, ut patris ac pastoris amore universo christianorum gregi consuleremus, semper quidem et diligentiam et curam quam maximam in providendis Ecclesiis adhibere consuevimus, cum omnes aequae Christus sanguine suo resperserit Cfr. Act. 20, 28; cum vero de Sedibus illis agatur, quae antiquitate, fide, christianorum frequentia antecedant, tunc sollicitudo ac studium nostrum crescunt profecto et augentur. Qua re, cum Venerabilis Frater Jacobus L. Sin, Archiepiscopus Manilensis, laborum mole gravatus, iam alio viro auxiliari egeret, benefieri visum est, si te ei concederemus, cuius et pietatem novimus, et prudentiam, et usum rerum hominumque, muneri episcopali tuendo perutilem. Quae cum ita sint, consilio petito a Venerabili Fratre Nostro S.R.E. Cardinali Sacrae Congregationis pro Episcopis Praefecto, potestate Apostolica te simul Auxiliarem nominamus Venerabilis Fratris cuius mentionem fecimus, simul Episcopum creamus titulo **MARTURANENSEM**. Factis scilicet iuribus quae in Litteris Apostolicis — Ecclesiae sanctate — describuntur, die sexto mensis Augusti datis, anno millesimo nongentesimo sexagesimo sexto. Ad consecrationem autem tuam episcopalem quod attinet, sinimus, ut eam etiam extra urbem Romam excipere possis, a quovis catholico Episcopo rectae fidei, cui assistant duo viri episcopali dignitate praediti, una consecrantes. Ante vero consecrationem, oportet ut fidei professionem facias, atque iusiurandum fidelitatis des erga Nos successoresque Nostros, ad statutas formulas; quas sane, tuo nomine subscripto atque eius Episcopi quo teste iuraveris, ad Sacram Congregationem pro Episcopis cito mittes. Ceterum, dilecte fili, haec beati Augustini pulcherrima verba tibi meditanda proponimus, plena sapientiae: — Optimus minister tuus — Domino ait — est qui non magis intuetur hoc a te audire quod ipse voluerit, sed potius hoc velle quod a te audierit! Confess., X Brev. Rom. ed Vat. III, p. 215. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die quarto mensis Martii, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo septuagesimo sexto, Pontificatus Nostri tertio decimo.

**JOANNES CARD. VILLOT**  
Secretarius Status

**JOSEPHUS DEL TON**  
Proton. Apost.

# **NORMATIVE CONTENTS OF THE CANONICO-PASTORAL SCHEMA ON THE MINISTRY OF THE EPISCOPAL VI- CARS AND VICARS FORANE IN THE SUBORDINATED ADMINISTRATION OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MANILA**

## **A. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART PER ECCLESIASTICAL DISTRICT**

ARCHBISHOP  
AUXILIARY BISHOP-VICAR GENERAL  
and  
VICARS GENERAL  
EPISCOPAL VICAR  
VICARS FORANE  
PARISH PRIESTS  
ASST. PARISH PRIESTS/CHAPLAINS  
GUEST PRIESTS

**SOURCES:** BK III, De Personis, cc. 329-486 **CIC**; ACTA ET DECRETA  
PRIMI CONC. PLEN. INSUL. PHIL. nn. 140-143; CHRISTUS DOMINUS,  
n. 14; ECCLESIAE SANCTAE a. 19, par. 1-2

## **B. EPISCOPAL VICARS**

Faculties, Rights and Duties endorsed and approved in favor  
of the Episcopal Vicars:

1. To ascertain that the **Vicars Forane** within the Ecclesiastical  
District concerned judiciously exercise their faculties and rights,  
and satisfactorily perform their duties for the good of the Clergy  
and the Laity in their respective Vicariates.

2. To collaborate with the **Vicars Forane** within the Ecclesiastical  
District concerned in promoting the good of the Vicariates, correct-  
ing abuses therein if any, mediating in disagreements thereat, acting  
on the complaints against a Vicar Forane and denunciations made  
against priests by the Laity in a given vicariate.

3. To convoke regularly "motu proprio" or extraordinarily at  
the instance of the Auxiliary Bishop of the Ecclesiastical District  
or the Archbishop, the Vicars Forane of the same District for a  
regular or extraordinary agenda.

4. To be heard in the matter of appointments, removal from or termination of Office of the **Vicars Forane** within the Ecclesiastical District concerned.

5. To be heard in the matter of erection, division or suppression of **Vicariates** within the Ecclesiastical District concerned.

6. To see to it that Circulars, Decrees and other communications of the Archbishop, Auxiliary bishop concerned or any other legitimate Church authority are duly observed and/or complied with.

7. To take over the faculties, rights and duties of a **Vicar Forane** on account of either absence from the Vicariate foreseen to last for at least a month, a prolonged sickness, or established incapacity in the event that the Vicar Forane concerned is still retained in Office, or in the case of death until a new Vicar Forane is duly appointed.

8. To make regular visitations of the **Vicariates** within the Ecclesiastical District in view of having a first hand knowledge of their state of affairs.

9. To collaborate closely, consult and communicate regularly with the **Auxiliary Bishop** concerned for the ministerial good of the Clergy and the pastoral welfare of the Laity within the Ecclesiastical District.

10. To make an annual written report on the overall state of the Ecclesiastical District to the **Auxiliary Bishop** thereto assigned.

**SOURCES:** CHRISTUS DOMINUS, nn. 23, 26, 27: ECCLESIAE SANCTAE, aa. 14, par. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

### C. VICARS FORANE

**Ex officio** Faculties, Rights and Duties in favor of Vicars Forane as established by law:

1. To ascertain that the priests within the Vicariate live their life pursuant to their calling, and that they satisfy their obligations particularly relative to their availability and interest in attending to the pasoral need of the Laity such as the preaching of God's Word, the continuous liturgical services and the due administration of the Sacraments.

2. To assure that the Parish Books are well kept, the Parish temporalities prudently administered, and to see to it that the Parish Church movable properties received and/or purchased for the church and/or convent use are properly listed down and left behind in the event of transfer, change or death of the Parish Priest.



3. To correct any abuse by priests and/or laymen within the Vicariate, to mediate in disagreements between priests and/or between a priest and laymen, to investigate complaints and denunciations made against a priest by laymen, and thereafter make the necessary recommendation to the Episcopal Vicar.

4. To assist sick or dying priests within the Vicariate in their spiritual and temporal needs, visit distant and/or solitary priests, hear and counsel dissatisfied and/or erring priests, and thereafter make the necessary recommendation to the Episcopal Vicar.

5. To convoke regularly "motu proprio" or extraordinarily at the instance of the Episcopal Vicar, the Auxiliary Bishop concerned or the Archbishop, the priests of the Vicariate for an ordinary or extraordinary agenda.

6. To allow for a just and reasonable cause, the absence of a Parish Priest from his parish for a week, provided there be a substitute.

7. To make every year two visitations of the parishes within the Vicariate according to the standard visitation formulary, and submit this accordingly to the Chancery.

8. To permit the substitution of the publication of marriage banns from oral proclamations to written notices posted in the Parish Church bulletin Board for a period covering three consecutive days of obligation.

9. To grant absolution from sins reserved to the Bishops, with the faculty to subdelegate this power (*ad modum actus*) to the priest confessors within the Vicariate who ask for it.

10. To be heard in the matter of appointments, transfers or removals of priests qua parish priests into or from the Vicariate.

11. To make an annual written report on the overall state of the Vicariate to the Auxiliary Bishop concerned, candidly stating therein the good and unfortunate events that took place in the Vicariate during the year.

**SOURCES:** CANONS 447, 448, 449 CIC; ACTA ET DECRETA PRIMI CONC. PLEN. INSUL. PHIL. nn. 141, 142, 143; ECCLESIAE SANCTAE, n. 19.

Endorsed and approved Faculties, Rights, and Duties in favor of the Vicars Forane pursuant to the spirit of the law:

1. To allow during ordinary weekdays bination masses (*ad modum habitus*) and trination masses (*ad modum actus*) upon re-

quest of individual parish priests of the Vicariate for the good of the Laity.

2. To grant two dispensations from the three mandatory marriage banns for a just and reasonable cause, and to submit to the Chancery a monthly report of the dispensations so granted.

3. To be heard in the erection, division or suppression of Parishes within the Vicariate.

4. To check on the ministry of guest or visiting priests in the Vicariate, and to correct or denounce to the Episcopal Vicar concerned any irregular or abusive ministerial endeavors of such.

5. To collaborate closely, consult and communicate regularly with the Episcopal Vicar concerned for the ministerial good of the Clergy and the pastoral welfare of the Laity within the Vicariate.

#### D. CANONICO-PASTORAL GUIDELINES OF ACTION

Without prejudice to the procedural principle of direct approach to the highest hierarchical Office holder in the solicitation of oral or written rescripts of grace, the demands of pastoral order and hierarchical harmony towards a more united and effective ministry stipulate the observance of the following general guidelines of action:

1. While it is true that what a Vicar Forane may grant, may be granted also by the Episcopal Vicar, what an Episcopal Vicar may grant, may be granted also by an Auxiliary Bishop, and what an Auxiliary Bishop may grant, may be a fortiori granted also by the Archbishop, still, the rule should hold to the effect that petitions of grace should be addressed to the **immediate superior Office holder** pursuant to the Organizational Chart.

2. While it is true that a superior Office holder may grant what his subordinate Office holder may, still, the rule should hold to the effect that the **former** should not grant what the **latter** denied, unless there are valid reasons to the contrary.

3. While it is true that each and every Auxiliary Bishop is a Vicar General and consequently jurisdictionally competent for the whole Archdiocese, still, the rule should hold to the effect that **as far as possible**, an Auxiliary Bishop should confine his jurisdictional grants within the Ecclesiastical District committed to his direct care, unless otherwise determined by law or prescribed by the Archbishop or demanded by particular circumstances.

**ANENT: I: CANONICO-PASTORAL PROVISIONS FOR THE OFFICE OF THE VICARS FORANE AND EPISCOPAL VICARS.**

Pursuant to the expressed provisions of general particular laws, and the dictates of effective pastoral ministry, the following observations are in order for the right choice of **Vicars Forane** and **Episcopal Vicars**:

**A. NATURE OF THESE OFFICES.**

Although the Office of the Episcopal Vicar is supra-vicariate and the Office of the Vicar Forane is supra-parochial, it is however provided that these Offices should be accredited to Parish Priests.

The Episcopal Vicar precedes all Vicars Forane and all other priests within the Ecclesiastical District, while the Vicar Forane precedes all other priests within the Vicariate.

Episcopal Vicars and Vicars Forane should have their individual seal to certify their official functions within their Ecclesiastical Districts and Vicariates respectively.

**B. QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICE HOLDERS**

Those accredited with the Office of Episcopal Vicar and Vicar Forane should be worthy of the position particularly in terms of doctrinal orthodoxy and apostolic zeal, with the ability to lead their constituents towards a united pastoral endeavor, without prejudice to the fact that they could be relatively younger in age and in the ministry compared to other parish priests.

Such qualification is demanded by the very role they have in the subordinate administration of the Archdiocese, viz., eminently pastoral, vigilative, corrective, dispensive, auxiliary and consultative.

**C. TENURE OF OFFICE**

Without prejudice to the established right of the Ordinary of the Place to accredit the Office of Vicars Forane and Episcopal Vicars to pastors of his choice and to terminate their Office at his due discretion, still the law provides relative freedom in favor of the same Ordinary of the Place to determine the mode of choice of persons and their tenure of Office after due consultation with the Presbyterium.



## EPISCOPAL VICARS AND VICARS FORANE 303

**SOURCES:** Canons 217, 445, 446, 450, 447, 448, 449 **CIC**; ACTA ET DECRETA PRIMI CONC. PLEN. INSUL. PHIL. dd. 140, 141, 142, 143; CHRISTUS DOMINUS nn. 23, 26, 27; ECCLESIAE SANCTAE n. 14, 19.

### **ANENT II: PARTICULAR NORMS FOR THE PROVISION OF THE OFFICE OF EPISCOPAL VICARS AND VICARS FORANE.**

Unless otherwise subsequently provided for by the competent local Church Authority, the following particular norms have been duly established for the provision of the Office of the Episcopal Vicars and Vicars Forane:

#### **A. EPISCOPAL VICARS**

Subject to the approval-appointment by the Archbishop, the **nomination** and **term of Office** of an Episcopal Vicar for a given Ecclesiastical District shall depend on the Auxiliary Bishop concerned.

#### **B. VICARS FORANE**

Subject to the approval-appointment by the Archbishop, the **nomination** of two candidates for the Office of Vicar Forane shall depend on the Clergy of a given Vicariate. Subject to reappointment upon renomination, a Vicar Forane has a three-year **term of Office**.

EFFECTIVE 6 MAY 1976

(SGD.) JAIME L. CARD. SIN  
Cardinal—Archbishop of Manila

## WHERE IS MORAL THEOLOGY GOING? (\*)

By

Francisco del Rio, O.P.

A caricature which appeared in an American weekly, after Vatican II, translates the feeling of confusion taking place in the Church today. The caricature shows an **ecclesiastical getting into a taxi**. The driver turns around in his seat, and asks, not in the usual way, — "Whereto, Father? — but in Biblical terminology — "Whither goes thou? Where is the Church going? Where-to are "modern" moral theologians or moralists leading the Christian community, which is Christ's Church? . . . One thing is true, Vatican II — Decree on Priestly Formation — O.T. — n. 16 — directs that "other theological disciplines should also be renewed . . . Special attention needs to be given to the development of moral theology." Most certainly the **renewal** and development of moral Theology does not mean a "new" or "no" theology at all. Hence permissiveness, moral confusion, and steady degradation of Christian morals . . .

The Synod of Bishops of 1974, observed that "In the Western World, Europe, in particular, there is **general uncertainty about the Church's doctrine**." Unconsidered opinions are expounded and inculcated under the guise of **experience** or **research**, some fundamental points of faith are systematically glossed over, opening into a **humanism** which limits Christian perspective to present life alone, — ignoring grace and prayer; — to give an example, — the attitude of some Catholics as regards **abortion**.

"Lay people in charge of social and charitable works, often show tendency to ignore the magisterium of the Church, to which some priests no longer have recourse. Thus for example, statements are made: **the age of obedience is over**; it is necessary to pay attention to the results of sociological surveys, etc. The same is said about the confusion between salvation operated through grace and human liberation; thus there are those who, on the name of faith impose certain political opinions which are conducive to Marxism.<sup>1</sup>

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(\*) Cfr. Theology Digest, vol. 19, 1971; pp. 224-226. Under the above heading, Hans Rotter, s.j., of Innsbruck points out "where the action is" in present-day German moral Theology.

<sup>1</sup> Bishops' Synod of 1974, Cfr. L'Oss Romano, Engl. ed., Oct. 24, 1974, p. 12.

Patriarch Ignace Pierre XVI Batanian, remarked, "Evangelization, which is the announcing of the Word of God, certainly demands science, but those who are devoted to this science must proceed **in harmony with the magisterium of the Church**. Not a few of those who are adept in the Sacred Sciences act as if **certain definitions and certain condemnations were abolished**, and interpret Vatican Council II as it pleases them. It is perhaps the moment to speak clearly and authoritatively to those people.

"There can be risk in dialogue between Catholics and Non-Catholics or Christians or non-believers, of there being no benefit resulting when Catholics attach no little importance to the cultural and spiritual values of others, and **hardly ever speak about Christian values**, but **fall into a certain degree of syncretism**.

"In ecumenism it is necessary to bear in mind, that Christ's Church is **one**, under one **Head**, that it professes **one** and the **same faith and has the same Sacraments**. These are things which many Catholics and Zealots of an ecumenism "sui generis", do not bear in mind, operating in a way which is certainly no praise-worthy"<sup>2</sup>

Card. J. Doepfner, speaking for the German Episcopal Conference said: "The II Vatican Council recognizes the autonomy of earthly realities, but in dependence of God, the Creator. However radical evolution towards the **total autonomy** of the world has been produced. And so **faith and theology** have lost their living influence on the world which draws progressively away from God. Scientific inventions and technical achievements have created in man the impression that **he is totally and alone the forger of his destiny**. But man will obtain his liberation only if **he recovers** the strength of **self-denial**. Faith alone can help him this way. The Church is primarily in need of men who give transparent witness of the evangelical message with their whole lives, and who make our faith resplendent with the fervor of first evangelization".<sup>3</sup>

Bishop Holland of Salford in England, observed that "there is a fairly wide, complaint of doctrinal confusion; and of course, the bishops are condemned for it".<sup>4</sup>

Lastly, the statement of Card. Staffa which reads, in part, as follows: "To-day many of the faithful complain because certain professors of theology and law and other besides, make use of their positions to spread ideas which are not **in agreement** with the faith, even in points which are not left to free discussions (e.g.r. in the field of Christology, on the nature of the Church, of the priesthood, on ecumenism, etc.).

<sup>2</sup> Ob. Oct., 31, 1974, pp. 4 & 8.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. ib.

<sup>4</sup> Ib. ib.

"Faith needs certainty as the basis of total dedication to Christ; when this is lacking, we see the seminaries emptied, the number of priests decreasing, the rush activities less consonant with the exercise of the ministry, we also see preaching reduced to the mere transmission of a cultural message without a consistent witness of life.

"Without obviously neglecting the assistance human investigation can provide for greater deepening in the faith, ministers of the Gospel must take upon themselves worship, service and the witness of the Truth. **But if faith waivers, they become sowers of doubts and errors.**

"Fidelity to revealed truth is never an obstacle to new and fruitful searching and to their application to to-day's problems. To-day, in a particular way it is necessary to preach the evangelical message of the **love of God**, which in its **marvelous and salvific integrity** is that of the **Catholic Church** alone and pervades its life, its laws and its institutions.

"The force of expansion of a society is in proportion to its inner unity"<sup>5</sup>. Those words of the Synod of Bishops of 1974 are but a faint echo of the doctrinal **uncertainty** and **confusion** more keenly felt in the field of morals in the once, so-called "Christian world.

### THE POPE AND THE INTERNATIONAL THEOLOGICAL COMMISSION

On December 16, 1975, one and a half month after the closing of the Synod of Bishops, Pope Paul VI received the "distinguished Members of the International Theological Commission at the beginning of their meeting", cordially greeting both the theologians recently added to the Commission and also the already established members, who in accordance with the statutes of said Commission "excel in the science of theology and in fidelity to the Magisterium."

The subject proposed by the Pope to the members of the Commission for their Christian consideration, was — "**The Sources of Christian Moral Knowledge**".

The Pope emphasizes the fact that "the subject is important, a **serious** and **timely subject**, for the present need of the Church and of mankind, in as much as it concerns the very bases of fundamental moral theology and has immediate consequences for human conduct".

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<sup>5</sup> Ib. ib.



Everyone is aware of how the principles themselves of Christian moral discipline are being called into question. It is true that Revelation sets forth a definite and specific mode of conduct, which the magisterium authentically interprets and expands its new practical applications and developments; but **this is sometimes readily forgotten**. Today, furthermore, **these very principles of the objective moral order are contested** (Cfr. "Dignitatis Humanae", n. 7). Thence, derives contemporary man's perplexity. He no longer knows what is right and what is wrong, or what criteria for judgment he can rely. And some Christians also share in this uncertainty, no longer believing in either the **concept of natural law** or the **positive teaching of Revelation and the magisterium**. The Philosophy of **pragmatism** is deserted for the arguments of **relativism**.

"In our opinion, one of the reasons, perhaps the chief one, for this deterioration in contemporary man's faculty of judgment is to be found in the radical separation — rather than distinction — of **doctrine and moral practice from religion**, by denying that the latter has a reason for being, and depriving the former of their **ontological bases and ultimate ends**.

"In addition to the separation of morality from religion particularly from the magisterium, with regard to moral questions of the highest gravity (as for example, contraception, abortion, sterilization, euthanasia, etc.) there is another crucial point involving the moral teaching of the Church, that arises principally from the widespread opinion that the teaching of the Church, in such matters, is **old and obsolete**.

"The progress in ideas and customs observed in the course of history, the mode of thinking that prevails to-day, are believed to constitute valid grounds for rejecting the position of the Church in moral matters; for urging, even justifying change in these doctrines, and for defending, so to speak, a **relativism** that favours contemporary "moral" tendency and desire, proclaim the right to freedom, indiscriminately exercised, remove the sense of duty and moral obligation in matters that are manifestly serious and binding in both the life of the individual and of society (such as divorce, homosexuality, premarital sex etc.)

The Pope regards the study of the "**Sources of Christian Moral Knowledge**" as vital, since the "magisterium must not remain silent concerning the bases and necessary options of human acts, but assist Christians and all men of good will to act always responsibly and correctly".<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Translation of the Latin Text in L'Oss Romano, Engl. ed. Jan. 16, 1975, p. 2.

The topic had been specifically foreseen in 1969, he tells us, i.e. the year after the promulgation of the Enc. "Humanae Vitae" — on July 25, 1968. It is a matter of fact that this unprecedented uncertainty and confusion in the field of morals, and more specially in the area of sexual morals, **was accentuated and came to the front in the affluent countries of the Western World consequent to the opposition of some bishops, many so-called theologians, priests and medical men and lay Catholics to said doctrinal — pastoral document.** "It is doubtful, if any Encyclical has given rise to so much discussion in the press, radio and the public in general, as Pope Paul VI "Humanae Vitae".<sup>7</sup>

**Where** do Catholics stand and **why** on this matter of artificial family control, today, i.e., about eight years after the promulgation of the aforementioned encyclical? On the occasion of the 77th birth-day, 1974, of Pope Paul VI, the secular press offered a brief survey of the salient events in the eleven years of his pontificate, closing the survey with the following words: "In the single **most controversial and unpopular act** of his papacy, Paul VI on July 25, 1968, issued the "Humanae Vitae" encyclical, in which, contrary to many expectations, he came out **firmly** against any means of artificial birth control, including chemicals, such as the "pill".

"The Pope unyielding stand unleashed a frenzy of protest from Catholics and non-catholics alike, which seemed to take Paul VI by surprise, and has not abated yet".<sup>8</sup> I believe by the "frenzy of protests", the secular press news writer means or refers to the **precipitate protest** of 87 Washington so-called theologians, issued only **two days** after the promulgation of the Humanae Vitae Encyclical, the calculated adverse criticism of said doctrinal document by 20 European theologians, at the end of their two days meeting, from Sept. 18-20, 1968, in Amsterdam, the statement of the 13 faculty members of the Marquette University, Karl Rahner's claiming in the press that the doctrine of H.V. enc. was not only "reformabilis", but "reformanda", i.e., **erroneous**, Bernard Haring quoted as saying "That the Pope has chosen the **wrong advisers** and that the arguments which these men have recommended as highly suitable for modern thought, are simply "**unacceptable**", and some other ecclesiastical writers.

In November of 1968, the "American College" at Louvain sponsored a symposium on the subject of Pope Paul VI's encyclical "Humanae Vitae" and the Natural Law. Panel members were Philippe Delhaye, professor of fundamental moral theology, Victor Hel-

<sup>7</sup> Cfr. Catholic Medical Quarterly, Oct. 1968, Editorial.

<sup>8</sup> Bolletin To-day, Oct. 10, 1974, pp. 6 and 20.

Cfr. **Divus Thomas**, an. 72, 1969: L'Enciclical, "Humanae Vitae." *Analisi e Commento*. L. Ciccone, pp. 3-58.

len, professor of moral theology, and Louis Janssens, who presented excerpts from his article "Considerations on *Humanae Vitae*" with the following statement: "All in all, it is foreseeable that the publication of the '*Humanae Vitae*' just as before — there will remain two tendencies already in evidence at Vatican II, with respect to the means of regulating birth; — some couples will take as their standard, respect for biological functions and processes, others will form their conscience according to the personalistic criteria of responsible parenthood, and mutual self-giving in the context of true love."<sup>9</sup> Another participant, Philippe Delhay, in his paper "Conscience and the Catholic Authority" says: "The H.V. has placed Christianity in a most unusual and somewhat traumatic psychological condition since the encyclical was intended as a pastoral, rather than a doctrinal statement; its message is: avoid birth control as much as possible; practice it, only to salvage greater values, such as fidelity, the stability of the home, the education of children."<sup>10</sup>

Writing in 1973, Prof. E. Curran of the Catholic University of Washington says: "Today, it is safe to say that the majority of catholic theologians who are currently involved in research and writing disagree with the hierarchical teaching, i.e. on sterilization and contraception."<sup>11</sup>

In our country, there was no evidence of any emotional shock created by the "*Humanae Vitae*". Our Bishops hoped "priests would accept the H.V. encyclical with loyalty and obedience."<sup>12</sup> But the cultural, moral, spiritual climate, particularly in the area of sex morals has deteriorated considerably with the passing of years. I state only the obvious when I say that the number of Catholics bypassing the official stand of the Church on this matter of fertility control through artificial methods, gets larger and larger from year to year, and likewise the number of priests, professors who openly dissent from said stand of the Church is also increasing.<sup>13</sup>

Catholic sisters working in private Catholic hospitals submitted six proposals to the CBCP, among them, the following: (a) There is a felt need for moral and ethical directives . . . regarding contraception, sterilization and protection of human life . . . (b) To train hospital chaplains in pastoral work, and up-date them in theology so that they can perform their priestly ministry with a level of competence commensurate with professional medical care.

<sup>9</sup> Louvain Studies, Spring, 1969, p. 252

<sup>10</sup> *Ib.* — Fall, 1969, pp. 354-375

<sup>11</sup> Cfr. Linacre Quarterly, May 1973, p. 106 "Sterilization Roman Catholic Theory and Practice" by Ch. E. Curran.

<sup>12</sup> Pastoral letter of the CBCP on the Enc. "*Humanae Vitae*", Oct. 12, 1968, p. 6.

<sup>13</sup> Cfr. "The Communicator", June 13, 1973.

Several factors account for this serious moral deterioration and moral degeneration. The local theological press is practically non-existent, while the steady flow of foreign literature, particularly in English, may rightly be considered as a strong factor accounting for this moral confusion and consequent effects.

Today, we are witnessing throughout the world a new growth of sensitivity in some areas of response, and simultaneously a lessening of moral sensitivity in other areas, especially in the areas of sexuality; the high divorce rates, the spread of Playboyism, pornography, pre-marital and extra-marital sexual involvements, homosexuality . . . and there is no end in view.

1958-1968

In the words of John R. Noonan<sup>14</sup> "no Catholic theologian has ever taught — Contraception is a good act —"; "The teaching on contraception is clear and apparently fixed for ever," — "No Catholic writer **before 1963**, has asserted that the general prohibition of contraception was wrong."

What happened in 1963, when some Catholic writers began to think otherwise?

It is no accident that this specific doctrinal unrest in northern Europe coincides with the complete surrender of **conservative** Protestant churches to the latest demands of neo-Malthusianism and birth control, at the conference of Lambeth in 1958. — Protestant divines led by K. Barth, prepared the minds of their own bishops and ministers to surrender to a series of conclusions against traditional stands of these conservative confessions. Among other things, the conference of Lambeth of 1958 openly admits in marriage **two objectives, independent one from the other and exactly of the same absolute value: love and procreation.** — A false conception of marriage love dominates the world in which we live. Let me comment briefly.

The value of sex as an outward expression of an interior act of love, that is genuinely concerned for, and oriented towards the personal goodness and dignity of the other, is an ideal worthy of our humanity. Great stress is currently placed on sex, and sex education, but the cardinal point for our modern civilization to learn is — what really love is.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Cfr. John T. Noonan. Contraception: History of its treatment by Catholic Theologians and Canonists. — 1966, p. 6 and p. 512.

<sup>15</sup> Miseria Y Esperanza del Cuarto Mundo, por Joseph Card. Hoffner. Cfr. Nuestro Tiempo, Enero, 1974, pp. 11-30. I understand, E. I. Elbert. Sheed and Ward, N.Y., 1971, p. 196.



In order to love properly, writes A. Padovano, we must give of ourselves to another, to share with the other, our joy, our interest, understanding. In order to love truly, humanly and Christianly speaking, a number of things we must attend to. We must give of ourselves to another, to share with the other our joy and interest, understanding and knowledge, humor and sadness, weakness and strength. In the process of giving ourselves to the other, we must develop a sense of concern for the other's life and growth, a sense of care that makes me my brother's keeper — a sense of **respect so deep**, that I never exploit him, and so selfless that I never want him to be what I want him to be, but rather **what he must be**. And so, I encounter the other, and in our effort, together, we discover ourselves.

In love, I discover myself: we discover both of us, and if the love is genuine and deep, I discover all men, and God through this experience. If ever we really love one person, one loves all persons, the entire world, the experience of life, every man, and God Himself.

This love is built on our need for each other. Today, I, tomorrow, you. Though we need the other and meet the other, our love of friendship or fraternity serves not utilitarian purpose. This is a point that must be stressed insistently in our culture. We must not use the other, but rather discover him, respect him, give to him. — It is because in a commodity-minded society, we have made a commodity of each other, that love is difficult for us."<sup>16</sup>

But again, when did this unrest in the subject matter under consideration, start?

I think it was in 1957-58 that standard theological journals throughout the Western World began discussion of **oral contraceptives**, as we know them today. Every such article which at that time came to the general attention, concluded with a theological-rejection-of the **annovulant drugs**, except when their use was necessary for certain legitimate therapeutic purposes. It appeared to be altogether unanimously recognized by theologians that the contraceptive use of the "pill" could not be reconciled with the dictates of the natural law, because its purpose was achieved by means of a **direct temporary sterilization** accomplished by a calculated suppression of ovulation.

By mid-1963, moral theologians appeared confirmed in their opinion by Pius XII<sup>17</sup> that recourse to the annovulant drugs for the direct purpose of achieving their annovulatory effects could be

<sup>16</sup> Cfr. *The Stranged God*. A. Padovano. Sheed and Ward, N.Y., 1966, p. 166.

<sup>17</sup> Cfr. A.A.S., Vol. 50, 1958, pp. 735-736.

subject to the same moral strictures that would be advanced against any **direct** temporary sterilization.

About this time, there began to develop domestic rumors of some theological discontent with this consensus and soon it materialized into readable facts with the virtually simultaneous appearance of three articles of European origin in defense of the **oral contraceptive** by L. Janssens (Belgian), W. van de Mark (Dutch) and J. M. Reus (German).<sup>18</sup>

This problem became a matter of great Catholic concern and urgency while Vatican II was still in session. The subject matter of birth-control was brought forward frankly and forth-rightly in 1964, by Council Fathers of great influence and authority, among a large sector of the Council, such as Card. Alfrink of Utrecht, Cardinal Leger of Montreal, Card. Suenens of Malines, Belgium, and Patriarch Maximos of Antioch and Bishop Reuss of Mainz, Germany.

On October 30, 1964, by a standing vote, the Fathers approved the motion of the Moderators that discussion on Art. 21 be closed. The Holy Father had decided to reserve this matter to himself, asking advice from experts on the **medical, social, and moral** aspects of the problem. The problem is one of great delicacy and complexity and it calls for **expert opinion on several fields**, and consequently it is not one that can best be solved in open session by a "parliament" of more than 2,000 members (Council Fathers); the debate would be unending. Non-expert opinions might be twisted into the sensational by the world's popular press!

### THE PAPAL COMMISSION ON BIRTH CONTROL (PCBC)

The PCBC was originally appointed by Pope John XXIII, not by Paul VI as it was generally believed. It held its first meeting in Louvain, Belgium, on October 12 and 13, 1963 (four months after Pope John's death.). There was a second meeting in Rome, on March 25 through 28, 1965.

The original size of the group appointed by Pope John XXIII was approximately ten (10) members. It was expanded late in 1964 by Pope Paul VI to approximately fifty-five (55) members. The purpose of the Commission, as already stated above, was merely to study the problem. It is a fact-finding commission. It was only advisory to the Holy Father, not a decision-making body.

<sup>18</sup> Cfr. *Theology Digest*, 12, Summer, 1964, pp. 123-130; *Theological Studies*, 25, June 1964, pp. 238-246.

With the relaxation of Church censorship on matters of faith and morals, during the Council, "the newly found freedom" was not only used **but largely abused**. The problem of contraception, in particular, was discussed at all levels, with most of the writers and speakers expressing moral approval of said practice, the teaching of the Church up-to-then, to the contrary, notwithstanding. Hence, this warning and reminder of Pope Paul VI made it clear in an address delivered in 1964 (Cf. AAS, Vol. 56 (1964) pp. 588-589) that:

a) the relevant norms of Pius XII were not to be considered as having been superseded;

b) said norms of Pius XII remain obligatory and should be held **valid**, at least, until he (the Pope) considers in conscience obliged to modify them;

c) it seems therefore appropriate, "to recommend that no one, for the time being, presume to express himself in terms of variance with norms."

On October 29, 1966, the Holy Father exhorts us to remember what he had said in his speech of June 23, 1964, i.e. "That the mind and the norms of the Church on this subject matter **had not changed**; they are the ones in existence in the traditional teaching of the Church."<sup>19</sup>

Writing in 1966, John R. Cavanagh, American psychiatrist member of PCBC says: "A recent poll indicated that 61% of Catholics expect a change in the teaching of the Catholic Church **on contraception** at some time in the foreseeable future. The poll may be accurate, but there are no positive indications, at the present time that such a change will occur. **The wish for change is a father to the thought**. The possibility of change to a large extent, exists only in the wisful phantasies of many catholics.

"I would be the first to admit that the present teaching creates a hardship for many Catholic couples, though certainly not for all. The argument, therefore, that the present teaching increases the crosses born by many Catholics and contributes to the crisis of faith which is presently taking place, has validity. It is also true that it tends to perpetuate the separation of some of our brethren who believe that contraception is licit. There may even be value to the statement that the maintenance of the present teaching exposes Catholics to the ridicule of the non-Catholic world. **These are, however, emotional arguments**, compelling as they are, they should not impel the Church to a change, if the truth lies elsewhere.

<sup>19</sup> Cfr. AAS, Vol. 58, (1966) pp. 1169-1170.

"The first thing to be noted is the fact that in the continuing study of marriage, certain newly classified teachings are generally accepted today. **They contribute little, however, to the solution of total problem.** For example, we now accept the fact that all sexual acts are not intended to be procreative; that sex acts to promote the mutual love of the partners are indeed licit, under certain circumstances; that child spacing is licit; that nature frustrates the procreative aspects of most acts of conjugal union; that it is permissible to have no children for the duration of a marriage under certain circumstances; and that 40% of fertilized ova spontaneously abort. These and other matters are being studied. It is not clear, however, that they lead any closer to a contradiction of the solemn statement of Pius XI on this matter."

Because of the great expectancy of change, any papal statement to the contrary **would be a tremendous psychological shock and disappointment.** This would be most unfortunate. Hope for change, however, has been **equated** with the statement so frequently heard that a change not only **will** take place, but that it **must** take place. Objectively, there is nothing which leads to such a conclusion. Unfortunately, **many people in high places have failed to discourage the current expectation of change.** There were no real sound grounds for the optimism for change, **nor for the disregard for the pastoral criteria, warning and directions of Pope Paul VI, June 23, 1964 and October 29, 1966.**

"Every psychiatrist, in his daily practice knows how easy it is to rationalize reasons for changes which we would like to see take place. Most of the arguments for a change in the Church's traditional teaching on birth-control, would seem to fall into **this wish-fulfilling category.** Arguments based on single cases, may be very **appealing and emotional,** but they are not always logical. Contraception does not become licit merely because it is desirable either as a solution to a **personal problem,** or to the **population problems** of the world as a whole."<sup>20</sup>

## THE ENCYCLICAL "HUMANAE VITAE"

July 25, 1968

This encyclical contains the decision on fertility control which the Holy Father, Paul VI, had promised a few years before and had been awaited by a not always controlled public opinion. This

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<sup>20</sup> Cfr. Jubilee, Dec., 1965.



decision came out after a little more than two years since the presentation of the conclusions by the Commission (PCBC) to the Holy Father.

Msgr. Ferdinand Lambruschini, professor of moral theology at the Lateran University and member of the working group of theologians PCBC during the fifth session, April-May, 1966, presented the encyclical "Humanae Vitae" at the **Vatican Press** conference on July 29, 1968.

Among other things, Prof. Fr. Lambruschini said: "We may ask ourselves, at this point, what is the value of the pontifical pronouncement on birth regulation.

"Most of the theologians, while admitting that the magisterium can define infallibly some of the aspects of the natural law, explicit or implicitly contained in revelation, state that this has not yet come to pass in the field of morals. Attentive reading of the encyclical, "Humanae Vitae", does not suggest the theological note of infallibility.

"It is not infallible, but it **does not** leave the question concerning birth regulation in a vague problematic state. Assent of theological faith is due only to the definitions properly so-called, but there is owed also loyal and **full assent**, interior and not only exterior, to an authentic pronouncement of the magisterium, in proportion to the level of the authority from which it emanated — which in this case is the supreme authority of the Supreme Pontiff — and on **this object**, which is **most weighty**, since it is a matter of the **tormented question** of birth regulation.

"In particular, it can and must be said that the authentic pronouncements of "Humanae Vitae" **prevent the formation of a probable opinion**, that is, an opinion acting on the moral plane, in contrast with the pronouncement itself, and this, whatever the number and the hierarchical, scientific and theological authority of those who in the past few years could have formed it for themselves".<sup>21</sup>

"It is basic in Catholic Moral Theology, writes Fr. Lynch, S.J., **that practical probability** cannot be attributed to private theological opinion, which contradicts papal teaching on the same issue. **No number of theologians**, whatever their prestige, can, of their own authority establish probability for a proposition which papal doctrine **clearly repudiates**. Meanwhile, during whatever interval of time may elapse before the Supreme Pontiff again speaks author-

<sup>21</sup> Cfr. The Catholic Mind, Sept., 1968, pp. 49 ff; —Statement accompanying encyclical "Humanae Vitae".

itatively on this question, it would appear necessary to say that **extrinsic probability** cannot be conceded to the affirmative contrary opinion, nor can that opinion be followed in practice."<sup>22</sup>

Supposed to be **doctrinal interpretation** must give in to **authentic interpretation** for all practical purposes.

We read in n. 18 of the "Humanae Vitae" encyclical: "It can be foreseen that this teaching will perhaps not be easily received by all: too numerous are those voices — amplified by the modern means of propaganda — which are contrary to the voice of the Church. To tell the truth, the Church is not surprised to be made, like her divine Founder, a "sign of contradiction" (Luke 2:34); yet she does not because of this cease to proclaim with humble firmness the entire moral law, both natural and evangelical. Of such laws, the Church was not the author, nor consequently can be their arbiter; she is only their depository and their interpreter, without ever being able to declare to be licit that which is not so, by reason of its intimate and unchangeable opposition to the true good of man."

But what one finds amazingly strange is Prof. L. Janssens' statement — quoted above — that "All in all, it is foreseeable, that after the publication of the "Humanae Vitae" — there will remain **two tendencies**, — already in evidence at Vatican II —." In plain language, the encyclical "Humanae Vitae" is less than useless... **It is a practical denial of the magisterium** as exercised by the Supreme Pontiff. Every "dissenting" theologian is a **pope!!!**

The truth-value of the doctrine re-affirmed in the encyclical "Humanae Vitae" does not depend **exclusively** on the precise degree of authority with which the Holy Father wishes to teach or re-affirm this doctrine on birth regulation. Its status is enhanced, but not measured by the Encyclical. — Dissidents and opponents to the truth—value of the doctrine on birth regulation, are most anxious to focus just on this encyclical "Humanae Vitae", and to make capital out of its **isolated authority**.<sup>23</sup>

All throughout this Encyclical, Pope Paul VI shows that what is uppermost in his mind as Supreme Pontiff is **the firm and constant doctrine of the Church on this matter**, and it is **this doctrine**, he re-affirms in this solemn pronouncement.

#### **Firma et Constans Ecclesiae Doctrina**

We read in the H.V. encyclical, no. 6, that one reason why the Pope declared himself unable to regard the conclusions arrived at by the PCBC as definitive was "because the commission was divided

<sup>22</sup> Cfr. Theological Studies, June, 1965, p. 243; and in "Periodica", 64, 1965, page 309, ff, by M. Zalba, S.J.

<sup>23</sup> Cfr. C.M.Q., Oct., 1970, p. 112-113.

concerning the norms to be proposed," but **above all**, because certain criteria of solutions had emerged which departed from the moral teaching on marriage proposed with **constant firmness** by the teaching of the Church.

In n. 10 of the "*Humanae Vitae*" we read: "In the task of transmitting life, therefore, they are not free to proceed completely at will, as if they could determine, in a wholly autonomous way the honest path to follow; but they must conform their activity to the **creative intention of God**, expressed in the very nature of marriage and of its acts, and manifested by the **constant teaching of the Church**."

In n. 11: "The Church calling men back for the observance of the norms of the natural law, as interpreted by her **constant doctrine**, **TEACHES** that each and every marriage act (quilibet matrimonii usus) must remain open to the transmission of life."

In n. 18, 19, 20, 22, 25, 28, the one thought uppermost in the mind of Pope Paul VI is the natural moral law — a divine law indeed, governing marriage and every marriage act, which the Church has been **firmly and consistently teaching**, a law and doctrine this encyclical "*Humanae Vitae*" once more re-affirms.

For the **firm and constant** mind of the Church as stated by Pius XI and Pius XII may I refer readers and students of theology to *Gregorianum*, Vol. 45, 1964, pp. 795-815, and *Periodica*, Vol. 53, 1964, p. 186 ff.

For the mind of the bishops in the Western World from early in this 20th century, see the following Pastoral letters published in:

Belgium	2	VI	1909
Germany			1913
France	7	V	1919
U.S.A.	26	IX	1919
Scotland	Lent		1927

The mind of the Church throughout most of the 19th century may be gathered from the official answer given to queries on this subject-matter by the S. Officium.\*

21	V	1851
6	V	1853
30	III	1899

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(\*) Cfr. H. Batzill: "*Decisiones Sanctae Sedis de Usu et Abusu Matrimonii*," Taurini, 1937.

and by the decisions rendered by the S. Penitentiary. (\*\*)

16	XI	1816
1	II	1823
8	VI	1842
27	V	1847
10	111	1886
13	XI	1901

Theological literary production of pre-war days, and in particular, **leading textbooks** in Moral Theology in the Western world are in full agreement in disapproving "abusus matrimonii" known at the time, under the heading of onanistic practices. See, for instance, some of these well-known textbooks of Moral Theology:

**Aertnys-Damen**; Theol. Moralis, 13th ed. 2 Vols. Taurini: Marietti, 1938

**Capello, Felix**: Tractatus Canonico-Moralis de Sacraments, 4th ed., 3 vols., Marietti, 1939

**Davis Henry**: Moral and Pastoral Theology. 4 vols. New York, Sheed and Ward, 1935

**Genicot-Salmans**: Institutiones Th. Moralis, 2 vols., Brussels, 1936

**Merklebach, Benedictus**: Summa Th. Moralis, 3 vols., Paris, 1936

**Noldin-Schmitt**: De VI Precepto et de Usu Matrimonii, 23 ed. Oeniponte, Rauch, 1935.

**Prummer, Dominicus**: Manuale Theologiae Moralis, 3 vols., Frib. in Brisgovia, 1935

**Ter Haar, Franciscus**: Casus Conscientiae . . . Taurini, Marietti, 1939

**Vermeersch, Arthur**: De Castitate et Vitiis Contrariis, Rome, Universitas Gregoriana, 1919

Likewise, textbooks in **Medical Ethics**; for instance

**Bonnar, A.**: The Catholic Doctor, 2nd ed. N. Y., 1939

**Antoine D'Eschambault**: Eugenical Sterilization, Winnipeg, Canada, 1936

**Payen, P.G.**: "De-Onthologie Medicafe d'apres le droit naturel". Zi-ka-wei, pres Chang-Hai, 1935 I-XII: 1-832 pp.

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(\*\*) The moral cases submitted to the S. Penitentiary deal with Onanistic cooperation. Cfr. Compendio de Medicina Pastoral/Alb. Niedermeyer, M.D., Prof. of the University of Vienna, Edic. Española, Barcelona, 1955.



**Principles and Medical Practice** by the Ch. Coppens, S.J. and H. Spalding, S.J. Benziger Bros., N.Y., 1921. Lecture II on Sex-Hygiene and Eugenics, pp. 154-179 and Lecture XII on Birth Control, pp. 230-309.

**Austin O' Malley**, *The Ethics of Medical Homicide and Mutilation*, N.Y., 1919.

**Albert Niedermeyer**, M.D., Prof. at the Univ. of Viena, *Compendio de Medicina Pastoral*, Barcelona, 1954.

**F. I. Good-O. F. Kelly**, *Marriage, Moral and Medical Ethics*, Dublin, 1952

**Edward F. Burke**, *Acute Cases in Moral Medicine*, N.Y., 1929

Catholic Medical Associations such as the "**Roman Catholic Medical Association of the Netherlands**, **Medical Guild of England**, **Societe Medicale Belge de St. Luc**, shared the same views.

**Medical Publications**, such as **Saint Luc Medical**, **The Catholic Medical Guardian** came out frequently and intelligently against birth control practices being spread in the early 1930's.

## THE FIVE THEOLOGIANS

In 1935, a "Casus Moralis" was submitted to five theologians for solution. "The Ecclesiastical Review" published their statements in the June issue of 1936, pp. 387-393. "It is superfluous to add that the five theologians here quoted are among the **most prominent** in the world today. Moreover, they represent **five different nationalities** and they are acquainted with conditions **in their respective countries**. Fathers H. Vermeersch, S.J., F. Capello, S.J., BH Merklebach, O.P., M. Lopez, S.J. F. Hurth, S.J., who is professor at Ignatius Kolleg, Volkenburg, Limburg, Holland. He is considered, we are reliably informed, as among the foremost theologians of the Society of Jesus."

Out of the six questions presented to them, question n. 1, pertinent to our inquiry, reads as follows:

"**Num unquam onanismus conjugalit permitti possit?**" The answer of the five mentioned theologians reads:

**Fr. Vermeersch, S.J.:** "Onanismus conjugalit numquam permitti potest. Est res intrinsece mala. Est grave peccatum contra naturam"

**Fr. Capello, S.J.**, answer is: "Negative, i.e. numquam permitti potest."

**Fr. Merklebach, O.P.**, answers: "Negative" (i.e. numquam permitti potest).

**Fr. Lopez, S.J.** answer: "Onanismus conjugalis, utpote contra ipsam naturam, est intrinsicè malus, numquam ergo permitti potest."

**Fr. Hurth, S.J.** says — "ipse Onanismus conjugalis, et omnis ad eum cooperatio formalis est semper illicita".

If Popes, Roman Congregations, theologians, Christian medical men, educated laymen are virtually unanimous, having been supported doctrinally by a virtually unanimous world-wide episcopate in condemning contraception, is it not sufficiently clear that we are face to face with a moral doctrine of the Catholic Church, which calls for unconditional assent such we owe to an infallible pronouncement of the magisterium, call it ordinarium or by any other name you like?<sup>24</sup>

One of the reasons for maintaining that the doctrine of the Church opposing contraception is infallibly true is that the Catholic Church, by virtue of the assistance of the Holy Spirit — could not possibly have imposed for so long, and so insistently, and universally, a falsehood fraught with unimaginable implications. If the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the assistance of Christ mean anything at all, writes Fr. Wroe, they mean that the Church cannot doggedly and determinedly persist in the imposition of a falsehood which radically intrudes, with the force of a sort of devastating hurricane, into the mutual lives of countless human beings.

"Sentire cum Ecclesia" was and still is to-day a very sound criterion of Christian moral sanity. Let us abide by it.

It has been observed by some theologians that one practical-pastoral reason refraining Pope Paul VI from defining the immorality of contraception in the H.V. encyclical could have been the practical unwisdom of confronting Catholics with the challenge to abandon their faith on account of a doctrine, which is likely to be accepted in the near future by all mankind, in the probable event of advance in knowledge, which will render all illicit methods of birth control obsolete. There is wisdom in this reflection, no doubt.

Walter Lippman pointed out way back 1929, that the logic of contraception opened the door to every kind of sex outside marriage, to companionate marriage, to begin with, that the very value of life

<sup>24</sup> C.M.Q. October, 1970, p. 102 ff.

has been cheapened by the practice of contraception. It is especially troubling to see the **growth in numbers of Catholic who accept abortion consequent upon the growth** in number of those who accepted contraception.<sup>25</sup>

The process of dissent, — both in doctrine and action, begins with the area of less clarity and difficulty — contraception — and then moves steadily forward into the areas of pre-marital and extra-marital sex — areas certainly noted for a greater biblical clarity and **rejection**. We can not close our eyes to the sad fact that the society in which we live, has had an increasing rate of contraception, has shown likewise on increasing rate of **abortion, divorce, particularly in the affluent countries**.

"It is the living consciousness of such dangers as we have been mentioning, which is at the back of the high-principled resistance which the Roman (Catholic Church has offered from the very beginning to all these practices (one of them, artificial restrictions of the Family). In the future, this question will come more and more to the front, and we shall witness a remarkable spectacle. We shall see the Church (which has always been accused of undervaluing natural life and natural laws) defending, out of love for the human soul, the rights of nature and of the unconscious life against the preponderance of a morbid artificiality and calculation in the sphere of sex." Thus wrote in the early years of this 20th century . . . Protestant educator Dr. F.W. Foerster. — Marriage and the Sex Problem, N.Y. p. 108).

**Barriers are breaking down.** — At the present time, we are witnessing a violent and aggressive upsurge of **blatant eroticism** throughout the formerly so-called Western Christian World. It is **incredible ingenuity** to discover no connection between the free "recourse to contraceptives" and the intense upsurge of lust and promiscuity. **Sex mis-used:** sterile, brutalizing, frustrating, destructive of the person, and truly disastrous to society.

Our age is **extremely sensible** to some palpable wrongs — but, **truly blind to other evils**, which in the long run, may be far more damaging, because more insidious.

<sup>25</sup> Cfr. A Preface to Morals, N.Y., 1929, ch. 14); Linacre Quarterly, Feb. 1974: "The continuing debate on birth-control: "John F. Kippley, pp. 8-25) We read also in the well known American publication 'America' Oct. 28, 1972, p. 336).

Theologians who opened the doors to contraception by discarding the **natural law**, — by doing so, they discarded the **rationale for the traditional Catholic doctrine prohibiting all extra-marital sexual behavior**, and that includes masturbation, pre-marital extra-marital sex, homosexuality, non-genital intercourse, etc. — The questions raised by the dissenters from H. V. **logical** includes dissent from the entire christian sexual moral doctrine; then, one may rightly ask — is such a dissent in fact, **responsible**, as it is claimed, is it an example of theological and theologians loyalty to the Church.<sup>26</sup>

Time and again one reads that a matter of the natural moral law, should be clear, demonstrable to all men, not just believing, —. As shall be stated in the course of these reflections, the Church teaches that in the present state of **fallen** human nature it is **morally** impossible (exceedingly difficult) for everyone's unaided human reason to reach, with firm conviction and without erroneous alloy, moral religious truths which are in principle within the grasp of the human mind. Hence it is not surprising that the clouded mind of fallen man, experiences difficulty in discovering valid arguments in the moral sphere and in recognizing their validity, if and when such arguments are discovered. Most of the arguments from reason on moral topics fail to carry conviction with those who are not already satisfied that the conclusion is true.

There are some who seem to assume that the precise job of the moral Theologian in this critical age, — to — day — is this — to criticize every traditionally accepted moral norm and to conclude that those norms which cannot be supported in a rational way (philosophical) and which is not convincing at all to **modern man**, should be dropped as archaic secretions! This process which is well under way, in the area of moral sexual ethics, is **wholly unscientific; destroys but does not build; ignores** the fund of wisdom of ages gone by, and above all it seems to **ignore the presence and assistance of the Holy Spirit in the Church, the performance of its teaching mission.**

Truly, the christian world is now over nineteen hundred years old, and therefore old enough to have seem spent two of the forces against the church. Violence has ceased, at least, on scale; intel-

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<sup>26</sup> (Cfr. Theological studies, vol. 32, 1971, pp. 48 ff: "Continued Dissent is it responsible loyalty?" by John F. Kippley. Salinas, Kansas, USA)

lectual opposition has even ceased, as the world settles down to a brain fatigue in matters of Christian dogma. Hence, the time is ripe for the birth of a **third force**, — the force of passion, so characteristic of our era of carnality, manifested in a general softening of lives, weakening of wills, and the glorification of sex, is the new power which would kill the indefectible spirit of the body of Christ. Thus wrote in 1937 Fulton T. Sheen. What would be, the comment of the student of theology in 1976?<sup>27</sup>

We hear that this ever changing, growing, developing world, at this moment of time one cannot know what the **ultimate attitude** of the Church will be to contraception. A Catholic who understands what it means to be a Catholic rather than a Protestant, says Prof. W. Radford, the ultimate attitude of the Church to **contraception** is now and always will be what has been; **that contraception is immoral**.<sup>28</sup>

*It is said that because the H.V. encyclical is not a "complete treatment on marriage, one is not bound to obey its doctrinal content, for it simply may be developed and changed.* Bishops of the Philippines have this much to say on this point. — "If we adopt the criterion that we suspend our obedience to authority on the ground that what it prescribes is still under doctrinal development, and therefore subject to change, then society itself will collapse. No law or discipline could ever be forced for everyone would have the right to claim that the doctrinal basis of any given law can still stand further study and so he has no obligation in conscience to obey it until he decides that full growth has been achieved. And what doctrine, of whatever branch of learning, could be classified as "fully developed?" Even in the case of defined teachings, without supposing for a moment, that their dogmatic contents can change, our understanding of them is subject and will always be subject to change." And this applies to the natural law where the Church has made an authentic and final pronouncement.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Cfr. *The Mystical Body of Christ*. Sheed and Ward, London 1935, p. 137.

<sup>28</sup> Cfr. H. & P. Review, Aug.-Sept., 1972, p. 19.

<sup>29</sup> Cfr. Pastoral Letter of the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines on the Encyclical Letter, *Humanae Vitae*, Manila, Oct. 12, 1968, p. 10.



**SPECIAL EXHORTATION ADDRESSED TO PRIESTS AND  
PROFESSORS OF MORAL THEOLOGY: "HUMANAE  
VITAE" n. 28.**

It reads in part: "Your first task-especially in the case of those who teach moral theology — is to expound the Church's teaching on marriage without ambiguity. Be the first to give, in the exercise of your ministry, the example of loyal internal and external obedience to the teaching of the Church. That obedience, — as you know well, — obliges not only because of the reasons adduced, **but rather because** of the light of the Holy Spirit, which is given in a particular way to the Pastors of the Church, in order that they may illustrate the truth — see Vatican II, Const. L.G., n. 25." —

Students of theology know well, to quote E. O'Neill, O.P., that "The attitude of the Church to **birth-control** does not rest on the arguments put forward by her theologians. That these arguments are valid in their own sphere and that they develop the meaning of marriage is not being called into question; but because they are arguments of human reason concerning a natural institution, they are incapable of expressing **all that the Church knows** about marriage. These arguments derive from natural ethics, and as such have their own demands to make on human reason. They show how the teaching of the Church is a **defense of human nature and of the dignity of man**. But they fail utterly to convey or to give the **compelling reason** why the Church's teaching is what it is. Those who do not accept **her authority as guardian and interpreter** of revelation are incapable of appreciating the divine certainty of her doctrine on marriage. It is part of her mission to try to convince the unbeliever by rational arguments. For her own children she has a greater treasure, and she exacts from them, in virtue of her divine mission, a greater obedience of faith which holds fast to the word of God, **even when unaided reason would hesitate**. "Cfr. Meeting Christ in the Sacraments. — E. O'Neill, O.P. — Alba House, N.Y., 1964, p. 258.a)

The exhortation-mandate of Pope Paul VI in n. 28, just quoted, has been bypassed by many, for reasons I know not. Only in a few instances we read that "The concept of the natural moral law" Pope Paul VI tries to interpret, is an **obsolete concept**, consequently

the interpretation based on it contains no truth, nor binding power. Still a few others assert that the natural moral law does not fall within the object of revelation and interpretation by the magisterium.<sup>30</sup> Hence the much feared division and confusion in the Christian community, today is a very sad reality.

It is indeed regrettable that in the post Vatican II years many so-called Catholic Theologians either claim or are given an authority versus the Magisterium, which in the light of sound Catholic ecclesiology, they do not possess. The following basic traditional doctrine of the Church will help, I hope, to prevent young catholic students from being misled by so-called "modern" theologians.

1st. Theological authority cannot be claimed by every professor or writer on matters of faith or morals: only those who cultivate the sacred sciences according to the mind of Holy Mother the Church, in the sense of tradition, and men approved by the Church, **enjoy theological authority.** Therefore, a writer, in this field, must recognize the authority of the Magisterium, as his universal and proximate guide, in matters of faith and morals. The true Catholic theologian cultivates the science of theology, and places its findings, at the service of the magisterium, and it is in order that through this preparatory study the judgment of the Church may mature (Vat. II Const. D.V., n. 12). The theologian is also in the service of the community, they act as the mediator, in presenting the teaching of the Magisterium to the Christian people to form the faith and moral observance among them.

2nd. The 'normal' Catholic theologian knows not only his mission and functions in the Church, but his limitations as well, both **personal and of his mission and of his role in the Church.** The theologian no matter what his academic prestige, has no **magisterium, no teaching authority in the Christian community, which is the Church.** What he teaches, **his personal** opinion can be **questioned, rejected freely,** on a pure rational basis by an intelligent person. Important as it is the mission and function of the true theologian in the Church, this mission is only **extrinsically** entrusted to him by the authoritative magisterium and it is wholly dependent on the magisterium.

<sup>30</sup> Cfr. On Human Life. — An examination of "Humanae Vitae" by Peter Harris, Adrian Hastings, John Horgan, Lionel Keane and Robert Nowell — 3 priests and 2 laymen — London Burns and Oates, 1968.

3rd. The freedom of opinion, the expression that he can claim as a **private individual** is not an absolute one. We read in the Declaration of Religious Freedom of Vatican II n. 7: "In the use of all freedoms, the moral principle of **personal and social responsibility** is to be observed. In the exercise of their rights, individual man and social groups are bound by the moral law to have respect both for the rights of others and for their own duties toward others and for the common welfare of all." Such limitations are the more valid when it is a question of the diffusion of a questionable thesis within the Catholic ecclesiastical community. The indispensable responsibility of the hierarchy to watch over the truth of a message which we know in the light of faith, has come from above, cannot be questioned.

4th. We hear that theologians are charged with a special irreplaceable mission and that they cannot reduce their teaching to a mere echo of the traditional official doctrine of the Church. We all understand this, but we also understand **that research, to deserve to be scientific, must not be content with a few adventurous hypotheses upheld with perentory obstinacy that only a certainty could claim.** Unfortunately a great deal of the "research" that has been going on in the field of moral theology, and more specifically in the areas of sexual ethics, belongs to this category.

5th. In this issue of the *Humanae Vitae*, the presumption of truth lies with the magisterium, and the burden of proof with the individual believer dissenting from the official doctrine of the Church.

6th. **Objective valid appraisal of moral values, particularly in the area of sex morality, demands on those undertaking the work purity of heart, integrity and humility.**

7th. Neither rallies, such as those held immediately after the promulgation of the *Humanae Vitae*, nor manipulation of the mass communication media to stir up opposition to the H.V. encyclical, seem to be appropriate means and ways to bring something worthwhile to the attention of the Church's authorized teachers. Let's observe at least, accepted civilized manners!

In the course of the eight past years a **truly prodigious variety** of moral principles unheard of, or newly discovered, greets the reader of Catholic moral literature and are presented to **justify**

**contraception.** This seems to be the main objective of so much of the 'research' work and creative thinking in the field of sexual morals.

One may wonder, why if contraception is so evidently morally good, — contrary to traditional Catholic doctrine, it should be necessary to provide the world, and more in particular, the Christian community, with so many good, obvious reasons to evidence the moral innocence of those who practice it. — Furthermore, if this practice, — contraception — is mid-day light clearly moral, how do we account for Pope Paul VI issuance of the *Humanae Vitae* which condemns unconditionally said practice, re-affirming the **firm** and **constant** teaching of the Church?

Reading the April issue, 1975, of the *American Ecclesiastical Review* (pp. 234-235), I came to this blunt statement: "There is an in-built occasion of conflict between the role of the authority in the Encyclical — *Humanae Vitae* — and that of voluntariness in the contraceptive mentality, relying as it does on the urgency of family planning and the availability of effective means for achieving this end. In fact, this conflict has generated widespread discussion among educated Catholics about the morality of contraception, and a formidable set of convincing reasons has been put forth in opposition to the arguments of the Encyclical".

The currency of these arguments and views in our midst, notwithstanding the firm and constant stand of our bishops in re-affirming what has been and is **the firm and constant teaching** of the Church on this matter of artificial fertility control, invites to a brief critical evaluation of these arguments. I believe it could be beneficial in particular to students of theology. It is in this spirit, that the following theologico-moral reflections have been jotted down.

*(To be continued)*

# MINISTRY AND MISSION: FROM ROLAND ALLEN TO THE PRESENT

By  
Ted Gresh, M.M.

## Part I

It is over fifty years since Roland Allen wrote *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?*<sup>1</sup> and forty years since he wrote *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*.<sup>2</sup> It has taken major Catholic theologians almost a half century to come to many of the same conclusions.

Certainly, Allen is one of the most seminal missiological and ecclesiological minds of this century. While he was a prophet with little honor in his own Anglican community, this quiet Oxford graduate and sometime missionary to China planted ecclesiological time bombs whose explosions and repercussions are only being heard today.<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately, aside from a few missiologists, Allen has received little recognition from the Catholic theological community and his works remain relatively unknown. Nevertheless, in the 1970's we find Karl Rahner, Yves Congar, Adrian Hastings, Michael Richards and others substantiating many of his earlier insights.

Recently, Karl Rahner has published his *Shape of the Church to Come* in which he foresees a clericalized Church, a democratized Church and a Church built from the roots. Its communities will be basic communities, he says, in which the future office holders will have as much effective authority as is conceded freely by believers through their faith.

It will be quite possible for such a basic community to present to the bishop a suitable leader coming from among them for ordination and recognition in this particular community, not as a con-

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<sup>1</sup> Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. American Edition, 1972).

<sup>2</sup> Roland Allen, *Spontaneous Expansion of the Church* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. American Edition, 1962).

<sup>3</sup> William J. Danker, a quote on the cover of *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?*, *op. cit.*



cession granted by the great Church, but as a legal right. And "if the Church in a concrete situation cannot find a sufficient number of priestly congregational leaders who are bound to celibacy, it is obvious and requires no further theological discussion that the obligation of celibacy must not be imposed."<sup>4</sup>

Fr. Congar, reflecting on the crisis of community in France, notes that the loss of communitarian values is especially acute among the young. "For many young people, the Church as an institution has lost significance because it is proving incapable of truly expressing the values by which they live, and because the Church as a community of faith offers a **model of community life** which they find does not live up to the values to which they aspire."<sup>5</sup>

Fr. Avery Dulles has presented us with five basic "Models of the Church" (the title of his latest book) but it would appear that his intention was to provide us with deeper insights into the mystery of the Church rather than concrete pastoral models for the future. Nevertheless, his emphasis upon models rather than definition is in keeping with Fr. Congar's plea for pluralism in the Church.<sup>6</sup>

In this present situation Congar suggests "a concrete answer to the needs of the times," **quod tempus requirit**... a multiplicity of initiatives and small groups **operating at ground level**.<sup>7</sup> He makes a strong plea for unity at the universal level and plurality and recognition of charisms at the local level. "It is good, it is necessary to see the Church more clearly as a community where all have received the gifts of the Spirit in a way that shows this Church **is built from the ground up** and lives on the grace of the various charisms, initiatives and services".<sup>8</sup>

One of the basic and most important charisms is leadership, and noting the decrease of entries into seminaries and novitiates, he says, "We must have celebrants! We cannot have failed to understand the resolution of the last synod of Bishops on the eventual ordination of married men, because it is clear that this must come about."<sup>9</sup> In fact, prior to the 1971 synod on the priesthood, many Filipino priests were asked to submit their opinions on optional celibacy.<sup>10</sup> Such a solution would facilitate the intensification of

<sup>4</sup> Karl Rahner, *The Shape of the Church to Come*. Translated by Edward Quinn (London: SPCK, 1974) p. 110.

<sup>5</sup> Yves Congar, quoting *Pro Mundi Vita* (no. 33, 1970) in "The Need for Pluralism in the Church," *Boletín Ecclesiástico*, July 1975, p. 446.

<sup>6</sup> Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church* (New York: Garden City, 1974).

<sup>7</sup> Yves Congar, *op. cit.*, p. 448.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 450.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 448.

<sup>10</sup> Information supplied by CPCP office.

interpersonal relationships and community structures in "grass roots" and "highrise" communities. This is not the case in huge parishes, understaffed and over crowded where hardly anyone even knows the name of those in the pews beside him. If a depersonalized parish is to become a true community it will require a multiplication of ministers and celebrators of the Eucharist in proportion to the real sacramental, sociological and psychological limits beyond which "community" and "pastoral ministry" are more a legal fiction than a reality. It would seem that a community of more than two or three hundred would already be cumbersome.

In the Philippines, for example, Fr. Samuel R. Wiley, S.J. has pointed out, that the national average of the ratio of Catholics to priests is one priest per 8,434 Catholics and since many priests are involved in pastoral activity the actual ration of priest per Catholic in any given community is much higher.<sup>11</sup> Given the increase in population and decrease in "vocations" as presently understood by the institutional Church, it would seem logical and prudent to begin thinking of alternatives. Maybe the Holy Spirit is trying to tell us something here.

From a missionary perspective, this present intransigency of the Church is doubly burdensome, since it ties up a large proportion of men, presumably with missionary vocations, in purely pastoral activities. These men will not or cannot be freed for more missionary tasks among the non-evangelized until the Church faces squarely the problem of ordaining a sufficient number of men to care for those who are already Christians and have a right to preaching, ministry, and Eucharist.

Could it be that one reason for the present crisis in missionary seminaries is due to the fact that the Church, under its present discipline, has no intention of employing men as missionaries but would prefer to utilize them as functionaries and foreign pastors, in roles which can and should be handled by members of the local communities? Do we have the right to "convert" individuals in non-Christian countries when we have no concrete plan for guaranteeing them a meaningful community in which they can continue to receive the sacraments? Do Church authorities really think that the shape of the Church in communist countries is going to include a clerical caste, set apart with no other duties but to minister to the tiny communities which could foreseeably spring up there or that this would even be desirable? Should we not re-investigate those early forms of Church community as Roland Allen has done and Congar, Rahner and others are doing in order to see if perhaps

<sup>11</sup> Samuel R. Wiley, "Priest Power in the Philippine Catholic Church," *Philippine Priest's Forum*, March 1975. p. 35.

there are not other alternatives more in keeping with the spirit and signs of our times? As Rahner sums it up, "The Church of the future will be one built from below by basic communities as a result of free initiative and association. We should make every effort not to hold up but to promote this development and direct it on the right lines".<sup>12</sup>

Both Rahner and Congar (as well as Adrian Hastings, Michael Richards, and many others) recommend the ordination of married laymen to priesthood where this is necessary and fruitful. This is not exactly a progressive statement, since the criteria for ordination of a bishop in the Pastoral Epistles states that he may be married once and must have raised his family well. It comes as rather a surprise then, to find the Catholic hierarchy and theologians involved in studies and investigations on the possibilities of ordaining women! We have clear biblical foundations and traditions for the ordination of married men and it would appear that most of the Apostles and the "rock" upon which Christ built his was married.

We have no such solid biblical foundation or tradition for the ordination of women. Therefore, is the determining factor in all these deliberations celibacy or are these commissions also thinking of the possibilities of ordaining married women? In other words, what Scripture clearly allows is being ignored, while what is theologically ambiguous is being investigated. Meanwhile, millions of Christians are denied adequate ministers who do exist, but are not allowed to emerge because of an ecclesiastical discipline. While one may argue on the theological grounds that ordained women priests are possible, still there are many cultural reasons for delaying implementation of such a program.

On the other hand, a recent survey taken in Mindanao listed 41.47 of the laity in favor of ordained laymen celebrating Mass as against 39.43 opposed. An even higher number were in favor of laymen officiating at marriages, 51.11% in favor and 40.6% opposed. And two pages later under "It is therefore recommended that": the survey states that "Aside from administering the sacrament of matrimony and being ordained as community priests, the laity are in favor of all the possibilities of laymen sharing in the traditional duties of priests".<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Karl Rahner, *The Shape of the Church to Come*. op. cit., p. 108.

<sup>13</sup> Carlos Gaspar, "The Layman Looks at the Church," *Communications*, 14, December, 1974, pp. 3-5.

Platonism, Manichaeism, Jansenism could provide us with the philosophical pre-suppositions for refusing to ordain married men. They certainly do not come from the New Testament.

As Fr. Adrian Hastings sums it up:

Theology, then, can only recognize the distinction between the charisms of the ordained ministry and that of celibacy. It must recognize that both the linking in an individual life of the priesthood with celibacy and its linking with marriage have seen providential in the order of history, both have scriptural foundation, and both can be pastorally fruitful.<sup>14</sup>

This only corroborates Fr. Congar's observation that the time has come for a restructuration of the Church since "the laity have been brought to a point of taking on real ministries, even pastoral functions".<sup>15</sup>

The proliferation of "comunidades de base" in South America and the recent implementation of "kaabags" and "kapilya presidents" in Mindanao, the budding charismatic communities in the Philippines, Europe, North and South America are further indications that we are at the threshold of a radical restructuration of the Church. What is needed now as Rahner states, is an official recognition and support of these base communities by the great Church, and the ordination of their leaders to full priestly ministry.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Adrian Hastings, *Mission and Ministry*. (London: Sheed & Ward, 1971), p. 106.

<sup>15</sup> Congar, *op. cit.*, p. 447.

<sup>16</sup> Karl Rahner, *op. cit.*, p. 110. Rahner distinguishes "relative ordination," the assignment to a particular congregation or Church from "absolute ordination", the general practice today, which is without such assignment.

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Note: One wonders why theological and biblical studies on this subject proliferate, while the Catholic Church continues to ignore the clear pastoral and missionary options to ordain married men.

## LITURGY

# TO OVERCOME DOUBTS

By

Herman J. Graf, S.V.D.

## I. BREAD AND WINE FOR MASS

### Question

I'll be very grateful if you can comment on the use of TINTO DOLCE as Mass wine. The kind I have in mind is described as coming from Distilleria de Tanduay, Tinto Dolce, Elizalde, 28 proof.

I would also appreciate your comments on ordinary bread, ordered from the local bakery and baked without yeast as the matter for the eucharist.

### Answer

The Church teaches that for the validity of the celebration of the eucharistic, sacrificial sacrament, bread and wine are needed. In the Roman Missal, as published in 1970, we find the most recent statement on this subject: "Following the example of Christ, the Church has always used bread and wine with water to celebrate the Lord's supper. According to the tradition of the Church, the bread must be (**debet**) made from wheat; according to the tradition of the Latin Church, it must be unleavened" (General Instruction of the Roman Missal, art. 281 f).

### 1. Wine

It is obvious from the institution narratives of the eucharist (Mt. 26: 26-28; Mk. 14:22-25; Lk. 22:17-19; 1 Cor. 11:23-26) that Jesus Christ used bread and wine. In the Palestinian situation, and subsequently in the countries around the Mediterranean, "wine" meant always and exclusively grape wine (**vinum de vite**). No other drink was called "wine" except this naturally fermented juice taken from grapes.

TINTO DOLCE is an ordinary table wine which is not natural but has been manufactured by some chemical process, i.e., by mixing the constituents found in wine so that the final product resem-

bles wine. It uses concentrated grape juice with flavor materials, like essences, sugar and alcohol. Its use for holy Mass has been disapproved by the archiepiscopal curia of Manila. And rightly so.

Very stringent rules have been introduced at the beginning of February 1976 against the use of so-called table wines by the permanent council of the German bishops' conference. The bishops were similarly strict concerning imported wine. This wine has to be chemically analyzed. All importers of Mass wine have to be put on oath before they are authorized to act as dealers of imported Mass wine. According to the bishops' declaration this must be done "to secure a valid, licit and worthy matter for the holy sacrifice."

It would be good if the names of authorized importers of Mass wine be made known to the public. To those who have some knowledge what grape wine is and should be, the liquid presented as Mass wine in some of our parishes is highly doubtful. This led in some places to the practice that priests invited to help in these parishes brought their own genuine Mass wine along.

## 2. Bread

Some bakers of altar bread, notably sisters and cloistered nuns, were made to believe by certain priests that Rome had relaxed the prescriptions concerning wheat flour for hosts. These priests said that ordinary wheat flour, as sold on the open market, could be used for baking hosts. Others recommended ordinary bread, ordered from the local bakery for the celebration of the eucharist, or special forms of bread could be used, like crackers as they are sold in special packages (like tin cans). But, as a matter of fact, Rome did not change the prescriptions concerning the use of wheat flour.

Most, if not all the flour that is sold by the milling companies to the bakeries is not pure wheat flour. A considerable amount of other substances is mixed with the wheat flour, usually cassava flour and other sorts of starch. These additives amount usually to fifty percent, while the final product still goes under the name of wheat flour.

Quite recently, upon an enquiry, the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith re-iterated the traditional stand of the Church, by referring again to the articles of the general instruction of the Roman Missal quoted above. Bakers and dealers of hosts take upon themselves a serious responsibility, by selling hosts made from ordinary flour.

It is certainly not fair that bakers of hosts who follow the Church's prescriptions of using pure wheat flour — which is more expensive — be discriminated against. They have to sell their hosts at a somewhat higher price than those who buy their flour on the open market. Obviously, priests who do not know this buy the less expensive hosts, thereby also penalizing the conscientious bakers of hosts.

## II. WEDDING MASS DURING THE EASTER OCTAVE?

### Question:

Is the ritual Mass "pro sponso et sponsa" permitted during the Octave of Easter?

### Answer:

A ritual Mass is a Mass celebrated in connection with the celebration of one of the sacraments or one of the major sacramentals of the Church (e.g., dedication of a church, religious profession, etc.).

According to the Roman Missal of 1970 the ritual Mass "pro sponso et sponsa" was permitted during the Easter octave. According to the general instruction of the Missal "ritual Masses are prohibited on the Sundays of Advent, Lent and Easter season, on solemnities, on Ash Wednesday, and in Holy Week" (n. 330). The days of the Easter octave are not solemnities, though they are liturgical days of first class according to the Table of Liturgical Days (see Ordo 1976, pp. 7-9).

In 1975 Rome published a new "editio typica altera" of the Latin edition of the Roman Missal. In this edition n. 330 of the general instruction has been changed. According to this second typical edition ritual Masses are not allowed — in addition to the above mentioned days — "**during the Easter octave** and on All Souls' Day" (No. 2). While this second typical edition is usually more flexible than the first edition of 1970, granting considerably more freedom to the celebrating priests, it is more restrictive in the case of ritual Masses.

# **AD LIBITUM GREETINGS AND PRAYERS FOR THE PENITENTIAL RITE**

**Bernard J. LeFrois, S.V.D.**

(Note: Since the priest is given the liberty to greet the People of God in his own words at the beginning of the Eucharistic celebration, and also in forming the invocations of the penitential rite, the following are offered to give greater variety to those in the new Sacramentary. All are taken from the Scriptures or are in the spirit of the Scriptures).

## **I. Greeting at the outset of the Preparatory Prayers**

1. Greetings to you from God our Father who has bestowed on us in Christ every spiritual blessing in the heavens. May these blessings be always with you.
2. Grace and peace from God our Father who chose us in Christ before the world began, to be holy and blameless and full of love in his sight. May his love be always with you.
3. Blessings from the Father of all light, who has given us wisdom to understand the mystery that is Christ, the secret plan to be carried out in the fulness of time. May his wisdom be always with you.
4. May the hope cherished by the patriarchs and prophets for the coming Savior be always with you.
5. May the Heavenly Dew which the prophets prayed for in preparation for the Coming One be always with you.
6. In Christ you are chosen, in Christ you are sealed with the Holy Spirit who was promised of old. May his Spirit be always with you.
7. May the joy of Abraham when he saw the day of the Coming One be always with you.
8. May the seven-fold Spirit seen by the prophet to rest upon the Coming One be always with you.
9. May the longings expressed in the prayers of the prophets for the Coming One be always with you.
10. The inner peace which flooded the heart of Mary awaiting the birth of the Saviour be always with you.



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11. The peace of Yahweh, God of Israel, which was announced to the shepherds in Bethlehem be always with you.
12. The joy of the Virgin Mother as she laid her newborn child in the manger be always with you.
13. Grace and peace from the Christ-Child enthroned on the lap of his Mother be always with you.
14. The joy of the shepherds as they found the Child lying in the manger be always with you.
15. The exceeding great joy of the magi as they found at last the object of their quest be always with you.
16. May Christ who is the Light of the world shine upon you and remain always with you.
17. Praise to the Father for having made us worthy to share in the lot of the saints in light. May his loving-kindness be always with you.
18. May Christ the Lord in whom every treasure of wisdom and knowledge is hidden be always with you.
19. Because you are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with Christlike mercy and kindness. May his meekness be always with you.
20. Blessings from God our Father who is faithful, for it is he who called you to fellowship with his Son. May the sharing of his Spirit be always with you.
21. God's own peace which is beyond all understanding guard your minds and hearts in Christ Jesus and be always with you.
22. Praised be the Father who has willed to make known to us the glory which the mystery of Christ brings to the nations. May insight into this mystery be always with you.
23. Let your hearts be strengthened and be closely united in love, enriched with full assurance by your knowledge of Christ, the mystery of God. May this awareness be always with you.
24. God proved his love for us that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. May his love be always with you.
25. In Christ and through his Blood we have been redeemed and our sins forgiven. May his peace be always with you.
26. Grace and blessings from God our Father who has put all things under Christ's feet and made him thus exalted the Head of the Church. May the fullness of his blessings be always with you.

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27. Greetings from the God of love who is rich in mercy, and through love brought us to life in Christ, by whose favor we are healed. May his loving favor be always with you.
28. Blessings from the Father who raised us up with Christ Jesus and gave us with him a place in the heavens, that in the ages to come he might display the great wealth of his favor. May his loving kindness be always with you.
29. In humble submission, Christ emptied himself and took the form of a slave, being obedient even unto death, the death of the Cross. May this obedient attitude remain always with you.
30. Greetings from Mary's Son, the Savior of men, who so loved the Church that he gave himself up for her to make her holy and immaculate, without stain or wrinkle. May his love be always with you.
31. May Christ through whom we have redemption and forgiveness of our sins remain always with you.
32. The Son of God loved us and gave himself for us. May awareness of his mighty love remain always with you.
33. We have been crucified with Christ, and the life we now live is not our own: Christ is living in us. May his divine life be always with you.
34. May the love of Christ who gave himself as an offering to God, a gift of pleasing fragrance to the Father, be always with you.
35. May the Light of Christ who rose from the dead to be our Light and our Life and our Consolation be always with you.
36. Blessings from the Father whom it pleased to make absolute fulness reside in Christ, and by means of him to reconcile everything in his person, both on earth and in the heavens, making peace through the Blood of his Cross. May this peace be always with you.
37. Christ has achieved reconciliation for you in his mortal body by dying, so as to present you to God holy, free of reproach and blame. May his holiness be always with you.
38. In Christ you are chosen, in Christ you are sealed with the Holy Spirit who has been poured out upon you in Baptism. May his Spirit remain always with you.
39. May the Spirit, who is the pledge of our inheritance, the first payment against the full redemption of a people God has made his own, be always with you.
40. May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, grant you a Spirit of wisdom and insight to know him clearly. May his Spirit be always with you.

41. Blessings from Christ who dwells in your hearts through faith. May his love, the root and foundation of your life, be always with you.
42. Blessings from the Father who raised us up with Christ and gave us in him a place in the heavens, that in the ages to come he might display the great wealth of his favor. May his loving kindness be always with you.
43. Praised be the Father who made you the Temple of the Holy Spirit who is within. You are not your own. You have been purchased at a great price. May his Spirit remain always with you.
44. May the Spirit, deep with your hearts, enable you always to confess that Jesus is Lord, and remain always with you.
45. The love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. May this Spirit of Love be always with you.
46. May the Spirit, crying from the depth of our hearts: Abba, Father, be always with you.
47. All who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. May this Spirit of divine adoption be always with you.
48. May God, the source of all encouragement, enable you to live in perfect harmony with one another according to the Spirit of Christ Jesus. May his Spirit be always with you.
49. May God, the source of all hope, fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that through the power of the Holy Spirit you may have hope in abundance. May this Holy Spirit be always with you.
50. May the Spirit who came upon the Apostles so that they praised the Lord for all his wonderful works be always with you.
51. May the Spirit of Jesus who impelled Paul to carry the good news to the farthest corners of the earth be always with you.
52. May the Spirit of Jesus who taught the early Christian community to be of one mind and one heart be always with you.
53. May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you to the end, so that you will be blameless on the Day of Christ. For this purpose may his Advocate be always with you.
54. Praise be God who has given us life in Christ Jesus and made him our Wisdom, our justice, our sanctification and our redemption. May the fulness of his life be always with you.
55. Blessings from the God of peace who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep by the blood of the eternal

covenant. May he furnish you with all that is good and be always with you.

56. May God through Jesus Christ carry out all that is pleasing to him, and may his grace be always with you.
57. May the Virgin-Mother, the model of perfect redemption, guide your steps to the mansions of the Father and be always with you.
58. Praised be the Savior of men who gave us his own Mother to be our mother and advocate. May her motherly concern be always with you.
59. Blessings from Jesus, Son of Mary, who now awaits us in the glory of the Father. May his abiding presence be ever with you.
60. The divine favor of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of our heavenly Father and the fellowship, the sharing of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

## II. Penitential Rite Prayers

1. Lord, you humbled yourself, taking the form of a slave. Lord have mercy. As man you were obedient even to death on a cross. Christ have mercy. You nailed our sins to the Cross. Lord have mercy.
2. Christ Jesus, you took flesh of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Lord... You atoned for our sins on the Cross. Christ... You conquered death by your glorious resurrection. Lord...
3. Jesus, coming into this world, you said; Behold, I come to do your will, O Lord. Lord... By this willful obedience we are cleansed from our sins. Christ... You are the source of all holiness. Lord...
4. Lord, you became a child to teach us true simplicity. Lord... You gave us the example of humble submission. Christ... You are our Way and our Life. Lord...
5. Jesus, enriching all who invoke you, you give us the grace of sincere compunction. Lord... Jesus, salvation of all who trust in you, you give us pardon and peace. Christ... Jesus our life and our hope, you give us life that has no end. Lord...

6. Saviour of us all, you are the all-holy One and we, though sinners, approach you with confidence. Lord...  
You are the Beloved of the Father and we are eager to listen to you. Christ...  
You call us to holiness and we seek you with total commitment. Lord...
7. Lord, we share in the darkness of sin, but you are the Light of the world. Lord...  
Your Word is a lamp to our feet, a guide on the path that leads to you. Christ...  
You illumine our minds with the deep realities of the divine mind. Lord...
8. O Divine Word, you came into the world, but the world knew you not. Lord...  
You came into your own, but your own received you not. Christ...  
You share your divine sonship with all who receive you. Lord...
9. You are Emmanuel, God's presence among us. Lord...  
You are the Sun of justice and holiness, shining on us in the darkness of ignorance and sin. Christ...  
You are God's Son, asking our obedience of faith. Lord...
10. Wisdom of God most high, impart true wisdom and knowledge to us, blinded by our defects. Lord...  
Fruit of the Virgin's womb, you are the sign of God's redeeming love. Christ...  
Emmanuel-God-with-us, teach us to live in simplicity and harmony. Lord...
11. Jesus, you welcome all men to yourself. Lord...  
You do not reject the lowly and the sinner. Christ...  
You renew all hearts in your love. Lord...
12. Savior God, you call man to metanoia, a change of heart, Lord...  
You give us your example, your teaching and your love. Christ...  
You stay us up with yourself, the Bread of the Strong. Lord...
13. You are the Bread of Life, to sustain us on our earthly pilgrimage Lord...  
Through your Body and Blood, we receive remission of our sins, Christ...  
Son of God Most High, you are our personal Savior. Lord...



14. Jesus, you are the Beloved of the Father and we need to listen to you. Lord...  
 You are the Suffering Servant of Yahweh, and we seek forgiveness. Christ...  
 You are the Anointed of the Spirit and we ask for renewal in Spirit. Lord...
15. You are the living Word of God, sharper than any two-edged sword. Lord...  
 To those who turn to you for mercy, you are the gentlest of Saviors. Christ...  
 You are the judge of the living and the dead. Lord...
16. As we seek your forgiveness, Lord, you see into our hearts that are contrite, Lord...  
 As we recognize your presence, you come to save us and to heal us. Christ...  
 As we follow you our Light, we shall not walk in darkness. Lord...
17. Jesus, Son of Mary, you were born of a pure and spotless Virgin. Lord...  
 Our New Adam, you have overcome all temptations with Satan. Christ...  
 Son of God most High, you are our model in the battle against evil. Lord...
18. Lord, you were sent to heal the contrite of heart. Lord...  
 You came to call sinners to repentance. Christ...  
 You are our high priest, ever interceding for us with the Father. Lord...
19. Christ Jesus, through our Baptism, we were buried with you unto death. Lord...  
 We rose with you in baptism unto the newness of the Christ-life. Christ...  
 Through the gift of the living water, you satisfy our thirst for eternal life. Lord...
20. You who delivered man from the Evil One, deliver us from the influence of evil and sin. Lord...  
 You who opened the eyes of the blind, cure us from spiritual blindness. Christ...  
 You who instill new hope and ideals, renew us today in your love. Lord...
21. You did not hesitate to eat with outcasts and the despised. Lord...  
 You are the hope of everyone who turns to you. Christ...  
 You transform man anew into your Body and Blood. Lord...

22. Good Shepherd, you know your sheep and your sheep know you. Lord...  
You guide them and protect them from all harm. Christ...  
You cleanse them from their faults and feed them with Manna. Lord...
23. Lord, you were sent to heal the contrite and grant them peace. Lord...  
You came in word and sign to bring us to the way of life. Christ...  
You guide your sheep through all the vicissitudes of life. Lord...
24. Spotless Lamb of God, wash us clean from sin. Lord...  
Create a new spirit within us. Christ...  
A contrite and humbled heart you will not despise. Lord...
25. Lord Jesus, you are the Judge of the living and the dead. Lord...  
You who came in lowliness will come again in glory Christ...  
You will reveal the hidden deeds of man. Lord...
26. Lord, you forgave the repentant thief on the Cross. Lord...  
As Savior, you stretch out your arms to heal. Christ...  
Your Heart is a haven of peace for sinners. Lord...
27. Savior of men, the bruised reed you will not break. Lord...  
You bring the lagging spirit to full life again. Christ...  
You instill new vigor into contrite hearts. Lord...
28. You who overcame the Tempter in the desert, crush him anew in us. Lord...  
You who drove out demons, drive out his influence from our midst. Christ...  
You who conquered sin and death, reign anew in our hearts. Lord...
29. You who touched the lepers, reach into our hearts to heal them. Lord...  
You who healed the paralytic, raise us up to new life and energy. Christ...  
You who cured the blind, let us see the beauty of your sinless heart. Lord...
30. Jesus, hearken to our pleas for mercy. Lord...  
Jesus, forgive us for often having failed you. Christ...  
Jesus, instill in us new courage for the battle of life. Lord...
31. Lord Jesus, Lamb of God, you take away the sins of all who turn to you. Lord...  
As the giver of grace, you call us to live daily more in peace with one another. Christ...  
As the Splendor of the Father, you are the reward of our following you on the road of love. Lord...

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32. You took all our sins upon yourself, Lord Jesus. Lord...  
You rose triumphant from the grave to give us glory and destiny. Christ...  
You prepare a place for us in the mansions of your Father. Lord...
33. Christ our High priest, with loud cries you offered supplications to the Father, Lord...  
Son though you were, you learned obedience from what you suffered. Christ...  
You became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey you. Lord...
34. Master, you pardoned the good thief in the last hour of his life. Lord...  
Your heart is an ocean of mercy and compassion. Christ...  
You atoned for all our sins on the wood of the Cross that is now the Cross of glory. Lord...
35. Jesus, you turned no one away who came repentant to you. Lord...  
You fill with new joy and energy those who ask your forgiveness. Christ...  
You grant them deep peace of heart. Lord...
36. You promised rest to those who labor and are burdened by sin. Lord...  
You ask only that we take up the cross anew and carry it. Christ...  
Your yoke is sweet and your burden is light. Lord...
37. Lord Jesus, pardon us for not having carried our cross willingly. Lord...  
Forgive us the many times we were unwilling to show love to our neighbors. Christ...  
Instill in us new courage for the daily battle of Christian life. Lord...
38. Heart of Jesus, refuge of sinners and haven of peace. Lord...  
You offer yourself in sacrifice for our sins. Christ...  
You are the Bread of Life to make us strong. Lord...
39. Savior of the world, gather all nations in your citadel of peace. Lord...  
Universal King, take away the sin of this world's unbelief. Christ...  
Lord Jesus Christ, draw all mankind to yourself in bonds of love. Lord...
40. Master, guide us when the path is dangerous. Lord...  
In your goodness overlook our failings, Christ...  
Lead us to our heavenly home, when this life is ended. Lord...

## CASES AND QUERIES

### ON REFUSAL TO RENDER THE MARRIAGE DEBT

Dear Father,

I will like an answer to the following problem —

Juan and Maria are married and have decided, after responsible examination of all the facts to have five children, at properly spaced intervals. They agree to practice one of the natural methods, which they have learned.

Now they have already two (2) children and the next one is scheduled in a year or two.

Juan sometimes demands the marriage debt from Maria, even though both know that it is her fertile period and a possible pregnancy may result.

Is Maria entitled to refuse him, under these circumstances, especially in view of their previous agreement as to proper spacing, etc?

Or, what would be the proper action for Maria to follow in these circumstances?

Yours sincerely,

FR. PATRICK HURLEY  
Sipalay Mines  
Bacolod City

#### ANSWER:

1. Juan and Maria are married and have decided, after responsible examination of all the facts, to have five children at properly spaced intervals.

Juan and Maria evidently take their responsibilities as Christian spouses seriously, and their good intentions are beyond doubt. Nevertheless it may be advisable to remind them that it does not depend on the decision of the spouses alone whether a marriage be fruitful or continue to be fruitful. In transmitting human life the spouses are "cooperators with the love of God the Creator." (G.S. 50) God may or may not give Juan and Maria the three children they would still like to have, and He may or may not give them those children at the intervals they scheduled.

Juan and Maria have examined all the facts, but obviously they could examine only those facts which were known to them at the time when they made their decision. Furthermore, the facts to be examined in a matter like this are human facts, facts con-

cerning that particular relationship between a man and a woman which is the marital relationship. Human facts cannot always be foreseen or controlled. The decision of Juan and Maria should therefore not be interpreted as juridical which would henceforth bind them as parties to a contract. Juan and Maria are first and foremost husband and wife.

**2. Juan and Maria agreed to practice one of the natural methods which they had learned.**

It is not stated which natural method Juan and Maria practice. Nor do we know how much care Maria takes in determining her fertile periods. The better the method, or methods, and the greater Maria's accuracy, the less restriction need Juan and Maria impose on themselves.

**3. Juan sometimes demand the marriage debt from Maria, even though both know that it is her fertile period and a possible pregnancy may result.**

The union of husband and wife is a communion of life and love. The laws by which God orders life and love are not those of the sciences or of the courts of law, and our knowledge of them is less precise. Juan and Maria must be realistic in their relationship, and to be realistic they must count with, and respect, the rhythm of one another's spiritual and emotional life. It is one of the "facts" to be considered in a decision which affects the relationship between husband and wife as intimately as the regulation of their sexual life.

**4. Is Maria entitled to refuse Juan, under these circumstances, especially in view of their previous agreement as to proper spacing?**

Maria has prayed at her wedding that God may make Juan and her one heart and one soul. She has consented to become his wife and she has accepted him as her husband. Henceforth they are "one flesh". Her reaction to Juan's wishes should be dictated by love, and not by the terms of an agreement which is other than the fundamental, sacred agreement which constitutes the sacrament of marriage. A living union between husband and wife is the fundamental value which must be secured in a marriage, not only for the sake of the spouses but also for the sake of their children. No doubt that the decision of Juan and Maria to limit the size of their family was taken for the good of themselves and of their children. But, as St. Paul says, "do not refuse each other except by mutual consent, and then only for an agreed time, to leave yourselves free for prayer; then come together again in case Satan should take advantage of your weakness to tempt you." (I Cor. 7:5).

(SGD.) FREDERICK FERMIN, O.P.



# HOMILETICS

by

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## I. BIBLICAL NOTES

### EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

(August 1, 1976)

**First Reading: Exodus 16: 2-4, 12-15**

**Second Reading: Ephesians 4: 17.20-24**

**Gospel Reading: John 6: 24-35**

**First Reading:** On their journey to the Promised Land, the People of God for lack of faith break out into numerous complaints against the leaders given them by the Lord, because they are short of food which had been so plentiful in Egypt. Despite this show of base ingratitude for their deliverance from bondage, Yahweh hears their complaints and comes to their aid by promptly providing them with the double nourishment of quails and manna. By this twofold manifestation of his glory, they were to recognize that he was truly their God who cared for them (v.12), and in response they were to conform themselves to his injunctions given through Moses (v.2b).

"Bread from heaven" poetically describes the manna as the providential gift from the Lord in heaven, and does not mean that it dropped down from the skies. God can make use of natural means to provide food. Quails in their long journeys of migration land exhausted in great quantities on the Sinai peninsula and are easily captured. Manna is perhaps a substance made to fall from the tamarisk tree by insects boring into it; if gathered before the sun is too strong, it hardens and keeps indefinitely. Regardless of what it really consisted in, the manna as well as the quails were recognized as signs of Yahweh's special divine Providence.

**Gospel Reading:** After having fed the multitude by means of the multiplication of the loaves (v.11), Jesus endeavors to raise his audience to the higher level of faith. The food they had eaten was perishable. What he really intended to give them was Food that never perished, and conferred unending life on all who partook of it. In order to obtain it they

first had to acknowledge him as the "One sent by God", that is, their Messiah-King. That was the "work" God wanted of them: the humble acceptance of faith.

Their caustic remark that he had only multiplied ordinary bread while Moses gave their fathers "bread from heaven" led up to a further demand for a greater sign. This prompted Jesus to openly proclaim as his Father the very God who had fed their fathers, and was prepared now to give them the real Heavenly Bread, which was Jesus himself, who alone can still the hunger of every man and quench his thirst. With these last words the Evangelist is already hinting at the Eucharistic banquet Jesus will give in due time.

**Second Reading:** Paul contrasts the "old" unregenerated self, its many evil desires and all manner of sinful habits with the "new" man regenerated in Christ. Such a rebirth implies a deep interior transformation of the whole man. This initially took place in baptism and was aptly symbolized by laying off one's usual garments and donning new white ones. By plunging into the waters of immersion (as baptism was conferred at that time) the baptized signified his entering fully into the mind and heart of Christ. Christ is the image God intended for man at the outset, with all true holiness and genuine perfection. Thus to be a Christian not only makes one enjoy divine sonship but also makes one truly human, as God intended it. However, baptism is only the first step. The Christ-life must be lived daily and deepened. Therefore Paul talks of "learning Christ" (v.20), listening to what is preached about him, deepening one's knowledge of the Truth and one's love of the one great personality that is Christ. Only then can one truly call oneself Christian. Only then is the gradual transformation into Christ perceptible.

## NINETEENTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

(August 8, 1976)

**First Reading:** First Kings 19: 4-8

**Second Reading:** Ephesians 4: 30 to 5: 2

**Gospel Reading:** John 6: 41-51.

**First Reading:** Elijah had striven might and main to bring back Israel (the Northern Kingdom) to Yahweh, for it had sunk deeply into paganism under the wicked queen Jezebel. He had every reason to hope for success in face of the awakening of the people after heaven had proven that Yahweh was God in the miraculous consumption of the holocaust (ch.18). But Jezebel, furious over the death of her "prophets", turned his triumph to dismay by banishing him forthwith from her realm. Discouraged, he fled for his life to the southern limits of Judah. Despite his mighty deeds, he acknowledged that he was no more successful than anyone else and

begged the Lord to let him die. But divine providence furnished him food and drink in a wonderful manner. Strengthened by the repast, he undertook a pilgrimage to the very mountain (Sinai-Horeb) where Yahweh first established the covenant with Israel through his servant Moses, for he was determined to re-vitalize the covenant in its pristine purity. Though the distance was some 500 km., the food sustained him.

**Gospel Reading:** A hostile audience saw in Jesus only a man like themselves. For them the stumbling block was the Incarnation. They mention Joseph as his father, but Jesus counters at once by referring to God as his Father. Reason alone cannot convince them of this. Faith is needed, and faith is a gift of the Father, through the manipulations of his love (grace). Its mysterious work in the heart of every man is described in the graphic manner of the **Father attracting** him to come to his Son. Only the Son sees the Father, but since the Father has revealed himself fully in his Son, seeing Christ is seeing the Father in faith. Those who respond to this mysterious attraction of the Father will experience the divine power of the Son in the resurrection, so as to enjoy life unending.

Several points are then re-stated which Jesus already mentioned, according to the author's way of developing his theme in waves of thought. But they climax in the final statement that the Bread of Life is the Eucharistic Meal. No matter how the contemporaries of Jesus understood his words concerning the Bread of Life, St. John from the very outset (v.27) is gradually developing for his Christian readers the theme of the Eucharistic Food, the Bread which Jesus will give (v.51). For all who receive the Eucharist in sincere faith, Jesus himself is the source of life unending.

**Second Reading:** Paul uses the bold metaphor (as in 1:13) of the seal for the Holy Spirit. A seal was either a wax imprint on a document or a brand on the flesh. In either case it denoted ownership and belonging. The Christian by his possession of the Indwelling Holy Spirit is marked as Christ's own possession. Accordingly his actions must be Christlike. The manifestations of sinful man are to give way to a deeply lived Christ-life, with special emphasis on generous forgiveness of one another, the very action of God toward them in Christ. As children of their heavenly Father, they are to be like him. Their perfect model is the Son of God who became their brother. They must imitate his way of love, which went all out in total self-oblation to the Father for their sakes. No longer must the Christian abandon himself to pagan vices, but surrender himself to God in an oblation of sacrificial love for the sake of his fellow-men. Christ is pictured as priest and victim (v.5) and his sacrifice (in the language of Old Testament liturgy) is likened to a fragrant odor ascending to God (Lev. 3:5).

**SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE  
BL. VIRGIN MARY  
(August 15, 1976)**

**First Reading:** Revelation 11: 19a; 12: 1-6a; 10ab.

**Second Reading:** First Corinthians 15: 20-27

**Gospel Reading:** Luke 1: 37-56

**First Reading:** In the book of Revelation we are dealing with apocalyptic symbols which convey theological realities. Mention of the ark of the Covenant indicates God's special presence among his covenanted People (see 1 Sam. 4:3). God's presence became most actual for man when the Son of God became one of us. It is he who is born of the Woman in v.5, the Messiah-King destined to rule all the nations, who was taken up to be enthroned at the Father's right. It is he whom Satan is determined to destroy (v.4). But the male-child (v.5 Greek) is both an individual and a collective, for, after the Messiah-King was taken up to heaven in v.5, Satan persecutes the rest of the Woman's offspring (v.17), although no other parturition was mentioned than in v.5. The rest of her offspring are the true followers of Jesus (v.17).

The Woman is also considered by the author to be both individual and collective, or rather, an individual who represents a collective, as in other parts of the Apocalypse this phenomenon is found to be the case. Here, the author chose the one and only Woman from whom the Son of God took up his abode among his People. He projects Mary in her collective personality as the ideal embodiment of Mother Zion in all her sufferings and longings, awaiting the Coming One; and likewise as the ideal embodiment of the glorious Church of the new covenant. Stars, sun, birth-pangs, desert, etc. are to be taken in their apocalyptic symbolic meaning with theological implications. To take them literally is to misinterpret the symbolic language of this book. Clothed with the Godhead, which the sun symbolizes, the Woman is the unconquered Victor over Satan and the glorious Queen of the heavens. Mary is the sign of victory for the Church of which she is the embodiment, and a projection of the Church's glory. All victory comes from the Divine Son who dwells in her.

**Gospel Reading:** Filled with the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth is enlightened to proclaim Mary as the Mother of her Lord. For his Christian readers, St. Luke intends the fullest meaning of the word, for he uses the same word in the following verse with the meaning of Yahweh. Elizabeth utters a twofold beatitude regarding Mary, one for herself, and the other for her Child. "You are the most blessed among women" best translates the original Aramaic which lacks grammatical superlatives. It is the faith (not merely the trust of Mary that is extolled in v.45, the same word being used in 1:20 for Zachariah who lacked it.) Note that the twofold beatitude now forms part of the "Hail Mary".

Mary's response is her quiet answer to Elizabeth's congratulations. It is a hymn replete with allusions to the psalms and to Hannah's song of praise (in 1 Sam. 2). Mary was well acquainted with these in her intense Jewish faith and prayer-life. The magnificat is not Luke's invention, else he would have used much better Greek. It reflects an Aramaic original. Luke may well have put it into its final form, guaranteeing for his readers the thoughts and sentiments of Mary on this occasion. It falls neatly into three strophes: 1) Concerning Mary: her heart is penetrated with deep joy over the great God her Savior, but in her own eyes she remains the lowly servant of 1:38. Yet she prophetically announces that all nations till the end of time will take up the praise bestowed on her by Elizabeth, because the mighty hand of God was at work in her. 2) Concerning the anawim, the poor of Yahweh: Extolling Yahweh's might, holiness and power, Mary pronounces blessed all those who humbly depend on him as Savior. This is forcefully and graphically described in a triple antithetic parallelism. 3) Concerning Israel: Mary's hour is Israel's hour. The promise made to Abraham and his offspring reaches fulfillment in her bringing into the world the one Offspring in whom all nations will find themselves blessed (Gen.22:18). The Church daily makes Mary's magnificat her own in the Evening Prayers. Particularly fitting for today's feast is v.52 which would visualize Satan's dethronement and the exalted enthronement of the humble maiden of Nazareth.

**Second Reading:** Christ's resurrection is the guarantee of our own resurrection. First of all, our solidarity with Christ demands it. The first man gave us physical life, and from him we inherited death. In him we are one with all mankind. Divine life comes to us only if we are one with Christ. Then too, he is the first-fruits. Just as the offering of the first-fruits consecrated the whole harvest, so in Christ's glorious Coming, the whole Body as the completed harvest will put on immortality as Christ himself possesses it. The Risen Christ continues to reign from his resurrection to the final triumph and consummation of all things. Meanwhile the Father makes all (except himself) subject to Christ.

## TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

(August 22, 1976)

**First Reading:** Joshua 24: 1-2a. 15-17. 18b

**Second Reading:** Ephesians 5: 21-32

**Gospel Reading:** John 6: 60-69

**First Reading:** After having conquered the land of Canaan for God's people and apportioned the tribes their definite territory, Joshua held a final gathering at Shechem, at the foot of Mt. Gerizim, and put before them this challenge: Would they serve the false gods of their ancestors, or would they follow him and his family and serve Yahweh, the one true



God? With one voice the people proclaim their covenant-allegiance to Yahweh as their God who as Savior-Deliverer led them out of Egypt, and who had cared for them so providentially all along the way.

**Gospel Reading:** On the insistence of Jesus that his flesh is to be partaken as food, the disciples now in their turn show great repugnance. They are thinking of crass cannibalism. Jesus neither retracts nor explains his words, but insists that they take his word on faith. He refers to his return to the Father in proof of his claims. In v.63, "flesh" stands for man of himself without the enlightenment of the Spirit (cf. 3:6). The Spirit alone can reveal to man the spiritual and life-giving content of Jesus' words.

Again Jesus insists on the role of faith, for which the Father's attraction (grace) is needed. But the result of the confrontation is dismaying. The greater number of disciples defect. They want to understand first, before they accept his word. Jesus is ready even to lose the Twelve if they do not believe. Peter steps to the rescue and as spokesman states their loyal adherence: They do firmly believe that Jesus is God's envoy sent from above; unreservedly they accept his words as words engendering life eternal.

**Second Reading:** Paul's deeply theological insights concerning the married. He sees Christ's love for the Church as the model and ideal for married love. Christ's was sacrificial love, for he gave himself up to death to make the Church his holy and spotless bride, completely regenerating her by the waters of baptism and the word (of the gospel, or of the baptismal formula), so that she is a beautiful bride throughout. The implication is that husbands should also labor tirelessly with sacrificial love to make their wives attain the perfection that becomes them. Since in v.26 Paul had called the husband the head of the wife as Christ is head of his Body the Church, he now can state that husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. As Christ loved his Body the Church so the husband should care for his wife as his own self.

Quoting Gen. 2:24, Paul's inspired insight sees the deeper meaning of the verse, namely, the married are a reflection of the ideal union between Christ and the Church. But the ideal always surpasses the reflection. Thus the married do not become literally one Body, but that is just the mystery in Christ, that he and the Church are one Body, his Body. From this intimate union of Christ and the Church Christian marriage derives its sanctifying power.

## TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

(August 29, 1976)

**First Reading:** Deuteronomy 4: 1-2.6-8

**Second Reading:** James 1:17-18.21b-22.27

**Gospel Reading:** Mark 7: 1-8.14-15.21-23

**First Reading:** The author of Deuteronomy living many centuries after the death of Moses, places on the lips of Moses before his demise, eloquent and vigorous oratory by which he exhorts God's people to observe faithfully their covenant-union with Yahweh. Only if they carefully keep his commandments, will they enjoy continued life and obtain the possessions promised to them. Yahweh's commandments are full of wisdom, and if they keep them they will absorb this wisdom, manifesting it to all the nations who come to know them by their excellent behavior. Keeping his commandments also insures for Israel the special presence of Yahweh.

**Gospel Reading:** In the course of centuries, there had been accumulating an entire body of unwritten laws and regulations, which were like a hedge around the revealed Law to insure its observance. (These traditions of the elders were later written down as the Mishnah). The Pharisees scrupulously held them to be of equal binding force as the Law itself in the divine scriptures. When questioned about the disciples omitting these prescriptions, Jesus pointed out that real service of God is from the heart with good intention. They can multiply their laws and regulations indefinitely, but without the inner spirit it is mere externalism and lip service, but not the worship of God as he directed it to be. Jesus follows this up by emphatically calling their attention to something they found hard to accept: Foods in themselves are not impure. What a man eats and drinks does not of itself make a man morally defiled. It is digested and passes out. But what defiles a man's conscience is what he brings forth from an evil heart. Here Jesus lists many evil designs and actions that flow from the heart of an evil man. Already here Jesus is giving the death blow to the many Jewish distinctions of clean and unclean food.

**Second Reading:** James sets forth the beneficence of the heavenly Father. He is the source of all goodness, showering his gifts on his creatures. At the very foundation of the world he bestowed the heavenly luminaries for man's light. Their light changes according to their position, but God's goodness and munificence are unchangeable. Of his own free will he wishes now to impart to all who accept the Good News a new birth. They will be the first-fruits of his new creation which ultimately will embrace the entire world in its full harvest. But it is not enough to merely listen to the Good News at the beginning of the Christian life.

One must live it, carry it out in good deeds. Two examples are put forth: exterior works of charity toward the needy, and interior striving to keep the heart entirely free from a sinful world hostile to God.

## II. HOMILIES

### LEARNING CHRIST

(August 1, 1976)

**The Human Situation:** If anyone wants to be a professional in his line, there is need of constant progress, and the endeavor to increase one's knowledge and ability. Doctors who do not keep up with new methods and medicines will find themselves at a disadvantage. Teachers who do not continue to widen their know-how by employing new techniques along with increase of knowledge are less and less effectual with their students. Nature demand growth and success demands progress.

**The Good News:** In today's second reading. St. Paul speaks to us of "learning Christ." That supposes that the Christian is in the school of the Master, and always has more to learn from the great mystery of our salvation: Christ and his work of love for man. If responsible people are always trying to improve their know-how in their respective line of work, if musicians practice interminably to become masters in their field, if athletes keep up a rigid schedule to outdo others in sports, then the Christian must realize that growth in knowledge of Christ and advancement in the faith are not only possible but a real necessity, if the Christ-like is to blossom forth in full maturity.

Many are satisfied with the initial knowledge of the faith acquired in school days and never advance toward a deeper insight and appreciation of the wonderful plan of God's love for man in his Son Jesus Christ. Hence their growth in the Christ-life is stunted, remaining practically at the same level for years. The Christian religion means more than a routine fulfillment of duties and a mere external practice of various devotions and acts of piety. The Christian religion is dynamic, and it purports to lead man deeper and deeper into Christ's Paschal Mystery in order to transform him more fully each day into the one ideal that is Christ himself.

First of all, Christ expects each follower of his to earnestly strive to lay aside all evil desires and put an end to the sinful habits of yesterday. One who has put on Christ must put off the "old man" with all his cravings for inordinate pleasure, honors, power and possessions. Not only is he to relinquish selfish ambitions, but the true Christian is exhorted to put on the sentiments and generous aims of Christ, who so loved his fellowmen that he lived for them in a life of service, and gave his life for

them at the end. He has called us to share in all the riches of the God-head, and to be God's beloved children for all eternity, shining in splendor before the Father in heaven.

Do all Christians take their calling serious? How many think of the Church only in the three main events of life: Christian baptism, marriage and burial preparations? Even those who are faithful to Sunday duties often stop there, thinking they have done enough for religion for the week. Can we honestly say they are learning Christ and getting to appreciate better the stupendous mystery of his love, the way the Father in heaven expects of his children? Our Christian faith is intended by God to penetrate all the phases of life: work, recreation, family affairs, business interests. God is very interested in every one of our doings and Christ is very near in all of them. As Christians who have put on Christ we are to excel in all we do. Christ's ideas are to clothe our own, Christ's sentiments are meant to manifest themselves in our words and actions, not only now and then but each day, toward the members of our family, our employees and servants, our employers and business associates, and all with whom we deal. Only then are we the salt of the earth and the light of the world as Christ wants us to be. Salt gives savor and taste to food, so our Christ-lives are to give a Christian savor to our surroundings, and to light up the environment so that people see the way to God through our works of light. Christ became a man in order to show us how to be truly human and to lead lives worthy of the children of God.

We can learn Christ by listening attentively to the word of God proclaimed to us in the sacrifice of the Mass, and also on other occasions by reading the Gospels ourselves, in order to discover more and more the wonder of Christ's example. How can our inner life increase if we are not willing to ponder on the word of God and to reflect on the mystery of Christ which is imparted to us in the divine scriptures and by the light of the indwelling Spirit? How can we hope to grow and be perfected in the most important task of our life, which is our transformation into Christ?

**Our Response:** The reason we place shrines in our homes and statues of the Sacred Heart, Mary and the Saints, is not merely to honor the Lord and his Mother and the saints we love. It is chiefly to let them be a constant reminder how they lived in our place and how they expect us to live each day. Christ and the saints had the same ordinary life to lead as we do. But they vitalized each day with much love, and sacrificial love filled their hearts, driving out all sinfulness and selfishness. Love taught them how to live moment for moment their Christian commentment. Gradually the inner man is transformed, life itself is vitalized, and we make steady progress toward that fulfillment which alone can satisfy the human heart.

## APPROACHING THE EUCHARIST

**August 8, 1976: Nineteenth Sunday of the Year.**

**The Human Situation:** The best meal in the world will not benefit anyone if he is sick and cannot digest the food. No one approaches a banquet on an upset stomach for he knows better. Intake of food and drink will only benefit him when fitness is regained. Much also depends on how the food is prepared, with what ingredients and condiments, if the full benefit of the meal is to be derived from it.

**The Good News:** Jesus prepared the very best Food for all the children of God. It is himself in the Eucharist. He is the Bread of Life, the Food that nourishes the Christ-life in us and make it grow to maturity. But on our part, if we are to benefit from the divine Eucharistic Food, there are certain necessary preparations. If these are not present, the opposite effect can result. In the first place, no one should approach the holy table unless he is in the friendship of God (sanctifying grace). To receive the Lord in Communion while at the same time being fully aware that one has separated himself from God by a serious offense against his love (grievous sin) makes one unworthy to receive holy Communion, and no one should presume to do so before being reconciled to God in the sacrament of penance and reconciliation, which Christ instituted for that purpose. Remember the words of St. Paul: "Whoever eats this bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily, sins against the body and blood of the Lord (1 Cor. 11.27).

A further requisite is to have the proper intention. To receive the Eucharist out of mere habit, or because the rest of the group are doing so, or to let others see what a good Christian we are, or any such banal motivation does not make our reception of Communion beneficial at all. Good motivations are: to please the Lord, to gain strength for ourselves or others, to show Christ our allegiance and love, in reparation or thanksgiving, or any such noble motive. But the liturgy itself prepares us still more for the worthy reception of the Eucharist. It invites us to participate in the entire celebration of the Paschal Mystery which first of all offers Christ to the Father and then climaxes in the Eucharistic Banquet.

The entire first part of the liturgy consists of the Word of God, accompanied by prayer and song, which is intended to stir up in our hearts sentiments of faith, hope and love, of gratitude and praise, of humility and compunction, and thus to prepare them for the reception of the personal Incarnate Word in Communion. That is why coming late for the eucharistic celebration is such a loss. We miss the many motivations, prayers, thoughts, offered throughout the first part, which especially in the new liturgy is so full of inspiration. But it is also not sufficient just to be present in the Church. The People of God are expected to contri-



bute their own part in word and song, in answering the prayers and responses, with the whole-hearted attention. When only a few answer the "Amen", "Thanks be to God" "Glory to you Lord" and all the other responses, it is evident that the rest do not grasp the reality that just those responses are their contribution to the worship of God.

The highlight of the celebration is the consecration when we offer to our Father in heaven the Body and Blood of his Son, and ourselves together with him. No other gift is so pleasing to the Father than this. And the Father in turn gives his Son to us in Holy Communion in the climax of the Eucharistic Banquet. But before this, we pray together as the family of God the beautiful prayer taught us by his beloved Son while on earth, the Our Father. Then and there we ask explicitly for the Bread we need and desire so badly. But at the same time we assure the Lord at that solemn moment that we forgive from the heart all who have offended us. This is an excellent preparation to receive the Lord into our hearts, because when he sees them full of forgiving love as his is for us, he comes willingly and gladly.

How well the liturgy prepares us up to the very moment of receiving Communion! Together with the priest we humbly avow our unworthiness, but throw ourselves entirely on his mighty word of healing, that word which so often in the gospels healed all manner of physical and spiritual sickness. Finally, when the celebrant shows us the sacred host, saying: "The Body of Christ" our spontaneous "Amen" takes the place of a fervent act of faith that it is Christ the Lord, and an ardent act of love welcoming him into our hearts. With such proper dispositions and preparation, the reception of the Lord in the Eucharist cannot fail to produce the effects for which it was instituted.

**Our Response:** If we are among those who invariably come late for Sunday Mass, missing so much that is intended for our good, and also disturbing those who are trying to pay attention and to participate, then once and for all this bad habit ought to be eliminated. In most cases this can be done with a little bit of good will. Again, if we are among those who are only silent listeners, then we ought to resolve to take a more active part in the celebration of Christ's Paschal Mystery, realizing that this is also our Mass, our sacrifice, and that by such participation we prepare ourselves so much better for the reception of the Bread of Life, which will benefit us only in proportion to our preparation.

## HE HAS EXALTED THE LOWLY

**August 15, 1976: Solemnity of the Assumption**

In none of God's creatures has this word of the Magnificat been realized to such an extent as in Mary, Mother of Jesus and Mother of the whole Christ. She was but a young maiden, totally unknown to the world,

unknown even to her countrymen. To her towns-people she was an ordinary maiden like dozens of others in Nazareth. Though of the royal house of David, it was over five hundred years since the last king had sat on the throne of David, and the royal house had been reduced to a lowly state, counting in its membership many poor and hard-working people, ekeing out their existence as best they could.

Mary was one of the poor of Yahweh, known as the "anawim". They made no pretensions to power and greatness, could boast of no wealth or vast possessions. Yet they placed their entire trust and hope in Yahweh, God of Israel, Savior of his People and Helper of the down-trodden. Yet it was on this lowly maiden, unknown and unassuming, that the Lord's choice fell; he chose her to be the Mother of his Son, and what a Son! Not only is he Son of David and Messiah-King of Israel, but Son of the Most High, Son of God, Son of the heavenly Father. And from this divine election flow all Mary's privileges.

"The Almighty has done great things for me". Indeed, in the course of centuries, the voice of Christ which is that of his Church has unravelled more and more of the mystery that is Mary. She whom God chose to be the Mother of her Son is the Immaculate One, conceived without sin and filled with God's love from the first moment of her conception. She is chosen to give birth to the Child of her womb without any detriment to her virginity so that she is truly the Virgin Mother as the Early Church already proclaimed her. It is Mary who reared the Child from earliest childhood till he reached the mature age for his public life, caring for the Lamb of God until it became the Lamb of sacrifice for all mankind, the sacrificial Meal for all the children of God. Mary is the life-companion of Jesus, and she stood by him in all his trials even to his death on the cross. And when the course of her life of love had been completed, Mary too was taken up to be enthroned as Queen of the universe at the side of Christ the King, her Divine Son.

Assumed into heaven, Mary is Mother of the Church, for Christ is one, and hence she is the Mother of the whole Christ. In her person she embodies the entire Church in a perfect manner, for the Church looks up to her, seeking to become what she is. She is spotless from the outset, so her children are chosen by God to be without spot in the ages to come (Eph. 1:4). She is the first Christ-Bearer, so her children endeavor to bear Christ in themselves by fostering the Christ-life into which they were immersed in baptism. With Paul the Christian can say: "I live, now not I, but Christ lives in me". Like Paul they bring forth Christ by word and example, suffering spiritual birthpangs so that Christ be formed ever anew (Gal. 4:19). Mary is the Sign of salvation for the entire redeemed humanity, for the Lord has taken her up to himself, anticipating her resurrection unto glory, so that all the children of God may look up to the Mother. There they see the glory and the reward which will also be theirs if they continue with Mary to follow the Way

and the Truth which is her Son. As children of a generous and understanding Mother, they turn to her again and again so that she plead their cause before the throne of her Son as their Advocate and Mediatrix, to win for them whatever they need in order to live the Christ-life effectively here below, and to enjoy his glory in the mansions of the Father. Joined in prayer with Mary they await new Pentecostal gifts from on high in order to fill the world with love, and with the knowledge that God is all worthy of praise.

What hope is infused into the children when they see the Mother raised to the very throne of Christ her Son in such splendor and glory! More than ever it becomes clear that power and wealth and honors are not the way to reach true greatness in God's eyes. Mary's life of humble obedience to the will of God, and her total love of God and fellowmen, whom she served assiduously as she served her Son, is the surest way to that peace of heart that everyone longs for, the safest way to that salvation which is the eternal fulfilment of man. Mary was not asked to do great public deeds. But what she was asked to do, she did most faithfully with all the love of her heart to the very end. This is all that the Lord asks of all his children, great and small, that is why he said from the cross: There is your Mother (Jn. 19:25). What joy is ours today as we sing her praises. She has gone before but she awaits us there in the Kingdom that has no sorrow or pain, no death nor evil, the place that Jesus her Son has prepared for us. Let us walk in her footsteps so that we too arrive at the haven of peace, the mansions of the Father.

### CELEBRATING THE PASCHAL MYSTERY

**August 22, 1976: Twenty-First Sunday of the Year.**

**The Human Situation:** How often it happens that when one reads a good book for a second time, or goes to take in a good movie for another showing, how many details are noticed that were overlooked before! Things that were missed the first time now take on much more significance, and the entire matter is enjoyed and appreciated much more than before. This same experience can be had by reviewing the various aspects of what is already known to us: the Sacrifice of the Mass.

**The Good News:** Today it is preferable to refer to holy Mass as the Eucharistic Sacrifice, or the celebration of Christ's Paschal Mystery, for these expressions are far more personalistic and meaningful. Its many facets deserve attention. First of all, the Eucharist is and remains the one supreme sacrifice of the New Covenant, in which Jesus Christ is both victim and priest., offering himself to the Father through the ministry of his priests, who do not say at the moment of consecration: "This is Christ's Body", but "This is My Body which is given up for you." Though the usual purposes of all sacrifice, including adoration, reparation and

petition are present, yet special emphasis is placed on the idea of thanksgiving. "Eucharistia" in the original Greek means thanksgiving, and it is thanksgiving that is being stressed. A dutiful Son gives thanks to the Father for all the wonderful works of God especially the Paschal Mystery itself. Frequently this aspect of thanksgiving joined to praise comes to the fore in the prayers now in use at the altar. The People of God together with their priest pour out their thanks to God and sing his praise for his marvellous and mighty deeds.

But Christ instituted the Eucharist in the setting of a supper. In the midst of the Passover meal with his disciples he gave himself as Food and Drink to them. Therefore the Eucharist is emphasized more today as a meal. In the liturgy of the Old Testament, peace and thanksgiving offerings were returned in part to those who made the offering, that they consume them in a sacred meal. It was a sacrificial meal, and that is what the Lord intended with the Eucharist. In a family gathering around the table, the members celebrate some event of the past, and sing with rejoicing. This is the gathering of the Family of God and they are commemorating the Paschal Mystery of Jesus, his love-feast at which they sing and rejoice in celebration. Although Christ is totally present under the species of bread and under the species of wine, on special occasions both are offered to the faithful to make it more striking that this is truly a meal in which we partake of Christ's Body and drink his Blood.

Furthermore, the Eucharist is intended by Christ to be the special sign of unity and love. How well St. Paul says: "Is not the cup of blessing we bless a sharing in the Blood of Christ? Is not the bread we break a sharing in the Body of Christ? Because the loaf of bread is one, we, many though we are, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf." (1 Cor. 10: 16f). Though they are from many different races and cultures and languages, all receive the same Christ, and are molded by him into his one Body-Person. What a bond of unity and love this is! What greater motivation can one think of in order to bear up with one's neighbor, and come to his aid, seeing in him Christ the Lord! How can enmities exist between Christians who form members of the same Body-Person of Christ? Christ unites us all to the Father, and each one to the other.

Another aspect of the Eucharist which is greatly emphasized today is the presence of Christ. The Mass is not merely "something" we attend, but Someone whom we encounter in the Eucharistic sacrifice. And that Someone is Christ, who as our divine Brother invites us to worship the Father with him, and participate in his love-feast in which he gives us abundance of gifts. He loves us but he also expects a return of love. There are one hundred and sixty eight hours in a week, and he asks for only one of them as a warm response to his love in which together we praise God with the whole family of our heavenly Father. So often

today we hear students complaining that "they do not get anything out of the mass" and so they do not bother coming. It is not a question of always getting something out of it, but also of giving a response of love for all that the Lord has done for us. Gratitude is a mark of a noble soul, and Eucharist means thanksgiving.

Now the presence of Christ in the Eucharistic celebration is manifold: 1) he is present in the people of God singing and praying together, as he said to his disciples: "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst" (Mt. 18:20). 2) he is present in the dynamic word of God proclaimed in the readings. For the word of God is not dead, but a living two-edged sword (Hb. 4:12). In God's word, the Divine Word of God is dynamically present. 3) He is present in the ministers at the altar both the celebrant and also those who play other roles, such as server, lector etc. 4) he is present in a special way in the sacramental species: (decree on the Liturgy, no. 7). From earliest times, the believing community always preserved some consecrated particles for the sick and for further devotion of the faithful, and this real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is the great consolation for countless of her members.

Finally, the Eucharist is and remains a **mystery**, the memorial of the Paschal Mystery which is again brought before the eyes of faith and commemorated again and again. It was through the blood of the lamb that God delivered and saved his people from Egyptian bondage, but the Blood of the true Lamb of God brings salvation and deliverance to all mankind. His Paschal Mystery embraces his life of service, his passion and death, his resurrection and ascension climaxing in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. All this we commemorate every time we celebrate the Paschal Mystery of the Lamb, until he comes in glory (1 Cor. 11:26). After the consecration the priest announces: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith. It is this mystery in which we wish to steep ourselves more and more.

**Our Response:** To foster a lively awareness of our great treasure: the Christ-event in our midst; to give a willing participation to this divine drama and mystery of our faith, so that we and our entire community (parish) be renewed in Christ.

## CATHOLIC TRADITION

**August 29, 1976: Twenty-Second Sunday of the Year.**

**The Human Situation:** Tradition comes from the Latin "traditio": a handing on. All peoples, especially those closer to nature, have their saga and traditions. Often they contain precious secrets how to perform certain arts, or concoctions for medicines to heal ailments; or again methods



of embalming the dead, or knowledge how to navigate the deep seas in their canoes. They are treasured, and handed on from generation to generation with diligent care.

**The Good News:** Our separated brothers (Baptists, Methodists, and in general most Protestant groups) strictly adhere to the Bible as their sole source of Christian truth and morality, while they accuse their Catholic brothers of going contrary to the words of Jesus in today's gospel-reading when he says: "You disregard God's commandment and cling to what is human tradition" (Mk. 7:8). They state this because the Catholic Church upholds both the written Bible and Catholic tradition as the adequate norm of faith and morals.

Examining this passage carefully, it can easily be seen that Jesus is not referring to Catholic tradition at all. He had not even founded a Church as yet, and there was no Catholic tradition in existence when he spoke these words. He was referring to the Jewish traditions of his time. That was a body and man-made laws and regulations which helped to interpret the Law of God. The Pharisees placed them on the same level as the Law of God when it came to the authority they put in them. For centuries these Jewish traditions had been handed down orally, and at a later date were written down with the help of various memory devices and other literary techniques. This body of oral (and later on written) tradition was called the Mishna (which is part of the Jewish Talmud). Jesus did not condemn these traditions outright but disapproved of putting them on the same authoritative level as the divine word of God.

Catholic Tradition refers first of all to the Good News itself in so far as it was handed down and authentically interpreted by the Apostles of Christ to whom he had given the command to "teach all nations to carry out everything I have commanded you" (Mt. 28:20). After Christ's ascension, the Apostles and the evangelists who preached the word of God proclaimed the message far and wide for many years by word of mouth before our present gospels came to be written. In fact, the word "gospel" is simply an Anglo-Saxon word (godspel) for "Good News". Only in the second century did the word take on the specific meaning of written document.

In handing down the message, many techniques were used to clarify it, illustrate it and apply it when needed. Given situations demanded a certain expatiation to make the matter clear to new audiences. From an Aramaic culture it has to be adapted to a Greek-speaking world already

in the life-time of the Apostles. Images and phases had to be used which the Greek mind more easily grasped, and thought techniques used which appealed more to the various audiences at hand. Jesus never intended his message to be merely learned by heart and then by sheer repetition to be delivered to others. It was a dynamic seed and in the course of time, the Apostles, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, saw more and more the deeper meaning of the Lord's words and deeds, and added these explanations to the original message. This is exactly what Vatican II tells us in the decree on revelation no. 19. In the Apostolic Church there were surely circles which took care to preserve faithfully the message of Jesus and expand it according to the light of the Holy Spirit for the needs of the occasion. One can also trace many literary techniques used by them to make the message more easily remembered.

Once the Gospel was written in its present fourfold form (Mark, Matthew, Luke and John) it could not of itself be self-interpretative, for it is open to much interpretation of various individuals. Hence Jesus gave the gospel-message into the hands of the Church (the Apostles and their successors) to guard its meaning and interpret it authoritatively. This faithful handing down of Christ's message and authoritative interpretation of it is the Catholic Tradition. The Church not merely acts as a channel of a message, but endeavors to live that message in all her members, so that the whole world may see Christ's message blossoming in the lives of all his followers.

**Our Response:** There is a wise old adage: "sentire cum Ecclesia" (think with the Church), and it remains a guide-post for our day. When so many are confused as to what is what, the message of Jesus is best seen in the living members of the Church who have carried out the message faithfully. Christ is with his Church till the consummation of all things and he will never desert it. To think with the Church is the safest guide for our conscience, and the road that leads to peace and eternal happiness.

## **BOOK REVIEW**

**On the book**

### **CHRISTIAN ETHICS**

**by C. Henry Peschke, S.V.D.**

THERE IS NO ARGUING the fact that, generally speaking, moral theology had reached before Vatican II a sort of theory-and-practice log-jam mainly due to exorbitant adherence by most schools and institutions to medieval "penitentials", "summas", and "institutiones morales". This statement, however, is not intended to dismiss the efforts of moral theologians who, even before Vatican II was convened, had tried to break through the medievalistic bottle-neck in moral theology. But it was Vatican II that finally opened the floodgates of renewal within the Church: in moral theology, in particular.

During and immediately after Vatican II the scramble for change has caused some uproars and confusions even. But the Holy Spirit has not failed us and its work has had a telling effect on our faith: we are assured that things shall be put into order. A challenging call for order in moral theology has been in demand ever since the Fathers of Vatican II have returned to their respective flocks. Many moralists took the challenge. One of these daring souls is C. Henry Peschke, S.V.D. who recently published **CHRISTIAN ETHICS: A Presentation of General Moral Theology in the Light of Vatican II** (Manila: Catholic Trade, Inc., 1975).

CHRISTIAN ETHICS, I should say, is the much-longed for handbook in moral theology that somehow has not so much resolved the theory-and-practice log-jam in morals as it has established some reasonable order to the initial confusions caused by many a moralist in their sincere but excessive search for renewal in moral theology. The author did this by introducing elementary logic in the arrangement of the Book's materials.

The sub-title "A Presentation of General Moral Theology in the Light of Vatican II" shows us the rationale of the book. Taking the complaining cue from the Council that "the institutions, laws, and modes of thinking and feeling as handed down from previous generations do not always seem to be well adapted to the contemporary state of affairs" (*Gaudium et Spes*, art. 7) and that moral theology "should be more thoroughly nourished by scriptural teaching" (Decree on Priestly Formation), the author simply proceeds to arrange the Church's thoughts and feelings and has handed down to us a book on moral theology that provides a reassuring reinforcement to priests working in the Lord's vineyard, that extends a refreshing delight to theology professors constantly beleaguered in their search for materials for teaching, that infuses into catholic laymen and students alike a nourishing insight to moral guidance.

Two parts constitute the whole book. The first which is made up of three chapters gives us the Old and New Testament foundations of moral theology. This is the author's response to the Council's call for biblical orientation of moral theology. The third chapter is a panoramic overview of the historical development of moral theology: from the Fathers of the Church down to the scholastic period and up to the upper reaches of Vatican II. Why this particular chapter on the history of morals, the author explains "the important lesson to be learned from history": that dogma and morals are inextricably bound up with each other in development.

Part II, entitled "General Moral Theology", is traditional in presentation of materials but responsive in character in the sense that the author tries to adapt the moral thinking and feeling of the Church to contemporary thinking and feeling. In other words, this significant part of the book has not been intended to provide us the spit-and-polish style found in the medieval penitentials, *summas*, *institutiones morales*, and in the traditional manuals of St. Alphonse, Merkelbach, Prummer, Vermeersch, and others who, of course, to the author's gratifying attitude have not been dismissed summarily. Instead the author of *CHRISTIAN ETHICS* has taken their cudgel in his logical presentation of the subject matter but added some finesse to his work by absorbing not only Vatican II and scriptural orientation but also, significantly, contemporary Catholic moralists and even non-Catholic moral thinking and feeling. The bibliographical data provided for in the book tend to confirm this.

One phase of the book that I find most edifying is the chapter on the responsive character of moral theology. Moral theology is not a mere study of proper guidelines for human conduct in order for man to reach his end but most of all it provides for man the proper answers to God's call as well as the proper communication in the encounter and dialogue between God and man. It is but unfortunate that the author of **CHRISTIAN ETHICS** has not given a more expanded view on this particular theme.

As aforementioned in this review, Part II gives the traditional concepts of morality, moral law, conscience, human acts, sin, virtue and perfection. However traditional the presentation of these concepts, the author has readily acceded to the sub-title of his book by adapting these concepts to contemporary moral thinking and feeling. This is as far as General Moral Theology is concerned.

Is it not the moral obligation of the author to hand down to us a book of the same quality as this **CHRISTIAN ETHICS** but this time dealing on specific moral themes?

**FELIX O. LODERO, JR.**