



BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

THE OFFICIAL INTERDIOCESAN BULLETIN

YEAR OF THE FAMILY

Editorial

**THE CBCP AT WORK: A SYSTEMATIC
COMPILATION OF THE MAJOR DECISIONS
TAKEN BY THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS'
CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES
JANUARY 1964 TO JULY 1979**

Florencio Testera, O.P.

ON THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD

Bishop Sincero Lucero, D.D.

HOMILETICS

Regino Cortes, O.P.

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EDITORIAL

YEAR OF THE FAMILY

Babies born this year will be twenty years old in the year 2000 A.D. Will they be members of a Church that will begin its third millenium with renewed vigour, or will they be scoffers of a Church exhausted after laboring for two thousand years? The answer will depend to a large extent on the strength of the Christian family in these last twenty years of the second Christian millenium. It is therefore most opportune for the Church to hold a Synod on the Family in the year 1980. In this sense this year, for the Church, is the Year of the Family.

It is logical for the Church to consolidate and build upon whatever was achieved by the United Nations in dedicating 1979 as the International Year of the Child. It also seems proper, after holding synods on the ministerial priesthood and justice in the world in 1971, on evangelization in 1974 and on catechesis in 1977, that the Church should focus its attention in 1980 on the strengthening of the family.

The study of the family today should be tackled in the totality of the problems facing it and at a universal level. In the words of Cardinal Wladyslaw Rubin, the Synod should lay the groundwork "in order to restore impetus and energy to the family, to give new meaning to Christian marriage, and to integrate once more all family problems to the whole of the life and mission of the Church with her apprehension and aspirations." He pointed out that "the Bishops, who asked for the subject of the family to be chosen, laid stress on the urgency of confirming its importance both as a cell of society and as the domestic church."

Our cities, already stifling, will continue to tighten their grip on men's personalities and activities and will continue threatening to disrupt the tranquility of homes and the strength of family ties. Some practical and effective ways must be found to keep husband and wife or father, mother and children affectionately

committed to one another and sharing in one another's joys and sorrows, hopes and successes amid the hustle and bustle of life spent mostly in factories, stores, offices, schools and streets of the giant metropolis. Away from the healing or uplifting touch of nature with its silences and pleasant sounds, its heights and valleys, its woods and fields, its profusion of beings that have the facility of communicating a sense of life, purpose and beauty, the family risks being denaturalized and dehumanized. Just as conservationists work for ecological balance to assure the continuation of plant and animal species, so also must the Church and human society give to the family the proper environment for its preservation and development.

Once the family is stable and flourishing in the home, its inner sanctum, it can be called upon to build up society to its image and likeness until all mankind lives as the great household of God.

In its effort to protect and revitalize the family the Church can be effective only if it lives as a "domestic" or "familial" community and not as an organization where bureaucracy is rampant. Learning from the values of family life, the Church today must evolve a life style that will bring back the familiarity that characterized the communities of believers in the early years of christianity — those years when the Church was not a powerful institution in the world but one big community of many smaller churches or groups of men and women and children affectionate and helpful to one another under the guidance of a pastor-father gently enabling everyone to contribute his or her share to the common life lived "in Christ". What a marvelous new era the third millenium would be if, at its beginning, the Church would be well on the way of becoming a world union of basic communities formed by Christian families.

When Pope John Paul II visited Poland last year, part of his address at the shrine of Jasna Gora touched on the family. "The family," he said, "is the first and basic human community. It is a sphere of life, it is sphere of love. The life of every society nation and State depends on the family, on whether the family is a true sphere of life and love in their midst. Much has to be done; indeed, everything possible has to be done, to give to the family those means that it needs housing, means to support itself care for life which has been conceived, social respect for fatherhood and motherhood, the joy given by children born into the world, the full right to education and at the same time the various types

of help needed for education. Here is a vast and rich programme on which depends the future of the individuals and of the nation." He went on to say, "How ardently I desire, I who owe my life, my faith, my language to a Polish family, that **the family should never cease to be strong with the strength of God.**"

The Church in the Philippine would do well to make its own the programme delineated by the Pope at Jasna Gora and seek to strengthen the Filipino family with the strength of God.

IN THIS ISSUE

"The CBCP from A to W" may be given as another title of Fr. Testera's article in this issue. The author has summarized and systematically compiled the major decisions taken by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines from January 1964 to July 1979. The first item comes under the title "Absolution" and the last one under the title "Women". Chronologically the earliest items date from July 1964: Vernacular Liturgical Languages, Sacraments in the Vernacular, and Sacramentals; the last entries date from July 1979: the Solemnity of St. Joseph restored to March 19, Special Mass and Office for the Santo Niño, the Age for Confirmation, Agreement on Baptism between the Roman Catholic Church and the Philippine Episcopal Church. Fr. Testera spent months working on his compilation but it was worth it because he has rendered a noteworthy service to the Church in the Philippines.

Bishop Sincero Lucero wrote a Pastoral Letter "On the Inspired Word of God" on the occasion of the publication of the New Testament in the Samarenyo popular version. By making this Pastoral Letter available to our readers we hope they would see more clearly the need for the Biblical Apostolate in our country.

JOANNES PAULUS EPISCOPUS SERVUS SERVORUM DEI

Dilecto filio **PACIANO ANICETO**, presbytero Ecclesiae Sancti **Ferdinandi**, electo **Auxiliari Archiepiscopi Tuguegaraoani** atque Episcopo titulo **Tloensis**, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Quoniam pro Nostra apostolica sollicitudine, qua universum Domicum gregem complectimur, Episcoporum necessitatibus prompte Nos subvenire oportet, visum est Nobis esse accedendum precibus Venerabilis fratris **Theodulfi S. Domingo**, Archiepiscopi **Tuguegaraoani**, Auxiliarem sibi petentis. De sententia igitur Venerabilium fratrum Nostrorum **S.R.E. Cardinalium praepositorum Sacrae Congregationi pro Episcopis**, deque summa Nostra potestate te, dilecte fili, cuius egregiae animi ingenique dotes notae sunt Nobis, Auxiliarem nominamus sacri quem diximus Praesulis simulque Episcopum vacantis Sedis titulo **TLOENSIS**, datis iuribus obligationibusque impositis sicut explicatur in Apostolicis Literis -Ecclesiae Sanctae- a Paulo VI, Decessore Nostro, die VI mensis Augusti datis, anno **MCMLXVI**. Quod ad episcopalem ordinationem tuam attinet, eam a Nobismet ipsis accipies Romae, in **Petriana Basilica** die vicesimo septimo mensis **Maii** qui proxime adveniet. Antea autem tuum erit catholicae fidei professionem facere atque iusiurandum dare fidelitatis erga Nos et Successores Nostros, teste quovis rectae fidei Episcopo, formulasque adhibitas ad Sacram Congregationem pro Episcopis mittere, de more signatas sigilloque impressas. Denique te, dilecte fili, paterne hortamur ut omni studio pastorem laborem suscipias atque tam Episcopum, cui subsidio mitteris, quam Christi fideles ei commissos, studeas diligentissime iuvare. Datum Romae, apud **S. Petrum**, die septimo mensis **Aprilis**, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo septuagesimo nono, Pontificatus Nostri primo.

✠ **AUGUSTINUS CASAROLI**
A Publicis Ecclesiae Negotiis

EUGENIUS SERI, Proton. Apost.

Prot. N. 188/79

SACRA CONGREGATIO PRO EPISCOPIS

CALBAYOGANAE

Administrationis Apostolicae

Decretum

Ad consulendum regimini vacantis dioecesis Calbayoganae, Summus Pontifex **IOANNES PAULUS**, Divina Providentia PP. II, praesenti Sacrae Congregationis pro Episcopis Decreto nominat et constituit Administratorem Apostolicum ad nutum Sanctae Sedis memoratae Ecclesiae, usque dum aliter provideatur, Exc.mum P.D. **Sincerum Lucero**, Episcopum Boronganensem, eique jura et facultates tribuens quae Episcopis residentialibus, ad normam sacrorum canonum, competunt.

Contrariis quibusvis minime obstantibus.

Datum Romae, ex Aedibus Sacrae Congregationis pro Episcopis, die 23 mensis iunii anno 1979.

✠ J. CARD. BAGGIO

Praef

JOSEPHUS TOMKO

Subsecr.

PASTORAL LETTER

ON THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD

**Sincero B. Lucero, D.D.
Bishop of Borongan
Eastern Samar**

*TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD: THE CLERGY, THE RELIGIOUS
AND THE FAITHFUL
GRACE, JUSTICE AND PEACE FROM OUR LORD,
JESUS CHRIST!*

With the dissemination of the **NEW TESTAMENT** in the **SAMARENYO POPULAR VERSION** we wish to offer the People of God in the Diocese of Borongan, Eastern Samar, some reflection on the **INSPIRED WORD OF GOD** from which, according to the infallible testimony of the Holy Spirit Himself, we can obtain innumerable benefits: "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instructions for right living, so that the man who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good work."¹

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The desire to be happy is deeply rooted in our human nature. Everybody looks for happiness. Some believe they can find happiness in riches and in fame; others look for it in power and influence; still others seek it in pleasures.

However, any Christian who knows God and what He has revealed knows that such things cannot make us supremely and permanently happy. It is only in the supernatural possession of God in glory that we can truly find eternal happiness. Says St. Augustine: "Our heart, O Lord, is restless until it rests in Thee!"² It is, therefore, only in God that we find our salvation.

NECESSITY OF FAITH

In our quest for happiness and ultimately, for our salvation, supernatural faith is absolutely necessary, as Christ Himself tells us:

¹ Timothy III:16-17.

² Confessions, I, 1.

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"Whoever believes . . . will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned."³ Moreover, Apostle Paul confirms: "No man can please God without faith. For whoever comes to God must have faith . . ."⁴

However, to have the faith is not merely enough. We must act the faith; we must live the faith in our daily lives. In other words, even though God has given us the gift of believing all He has revealed, we must exercise such gift.

For faith, like a tiny seed, is infused into the soul by God. If given the proper nourishment and care, this precious gift of faith grows to maturity and produces fruits "like a mustard seed, the smallest seed in the world . . . which when it is sown, it grows . . . and puts out great branches, so that the birds of the air can dwell beneath its shade."⁵

THE LIVING VOICE OF THE TEACHING CHURCH

Faith — "a supernatural virtue by which, with the inspiration and help of the grace of God, we believe to be true all that by Him has been revealed, not because of the intrinsic truth of these things as perceived by the natural light of reason, but by the authority of God Himself who reveals them, since He can neither deceive nor be deceived"⁶ — is indeed our guide to happiness and salvation. Vatican II points out that "the obedience of faith must be given to God who reveals, an obedience by which man entrusts his whole self freely to God, offering the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals, and freely assenting to the truth revealed by Him. If this faith is to be shown, the grace of God and the interior help of the Holy Spirit must precede and assist, moving the heart and turning it to God, opening the eyes of the mind, and giving joy and ease to everyone in assenting to the truth and believing it."⁷

However, since God does not tell each of us personally what to believe, the question arises: How can we know what God has revealed? How can we find out what we must believe in order to reach perfect happiness and salvation?

It is the **CHURCH** that makes known to us what God has revealed and tells us what we must believe. **THE LIVING VOICE OF THE TEACHING CHURCH** is our **RULE OF FAITH**. Christ, in commanding the heads of the Church to spread the faith, said: "All power

³ St. Mark XVI:16.

⁴ Hebrew XI:6.

⁵ St. Mark IV:31-32.

⁶ I Vatican Council, Dei Filius, Ch. 3.

⁷ Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, No. 5.

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in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world."⁸ Moreover, in another occasion, He told them: "He who hears you, hears Me; and he who rejects you, rejects Me."⁹ Furthermore, Vatican II confirms that "the task . . . has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church, whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. This teaching office is not above the Word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on, listening to it devoutly, guarding it scrupulously, and explaining it faithfully by divine commission and with the help of the Holy Spirit; it draws from this one deposit of faith everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed."¹⁰

The LIVING VOICE of the ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC, and APOSTOLIC CHURCH, then, is the source of knowledge of what we must know, believe and do to possess God. This VOICE reaches us through the duly authorized representatives of Christ and His Church here on earth, "so that by hearing the message of salvation the whole world may believe; by believing, it may hope; and by hoping, it may love."¹¹

DEPOSIT OF FAITH

The Living Voice of the True Church bases its teaching on the DEPOSIT OF FAITH which contains all the truths communicated by God to man through supernatural means, and this DEPOSIT OF FAITH is contained in the only SOURCE — who is GOD — of DIVINE REVELATION but with two modes of transmission, written and oral: SACRED SCRIPTURE and SACRED TRADITION. These form "one sacred deposit of the Word of God, which is committed to the Church,"¹² and both "are to be accepted and venerated with the same sense of devotion and reverence."¹³

DIVINE REVELATION

God did not disclose the TRUTHS of REVELATION to man all at once, but gradually with the passing of time. The Public Revela-

⁸ St. Matthew XXVIII:18-20.

⁹ St. Luke X:16.

¹⁰ Divine Revelation, No. 10.

¹¹ Ibid., No. 1.

¹² Ibid., No. 10.

¹³ Ibid., No. 9.

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tion of those truths which God communicated to the human race was first made to Adam and Eve, then to the patriarchs and after them to Moses and the prophets and finally, by Jesus Christ, either directly or through His Apostles and His Church. Vatican II has this to say: "God... gives men an enduring witness to Himself in created realities. Planning to make known the way of heavenly salvation, He went further and from the start manifested Himself to our first parents... Then, at the time He had appointed, He called Abraham in order to make of him a great nation. Through the patriarchs, and after them through Moses and the prophets, He taught this nation to acknowledge Himself as the one living and true God, provident Father and just Judge, and to wait for the Savior promised by Him. In this manner He prepared the way for the gospel down through the centuries... Then, after speaking in many places and varied ways through the prophets, God last of all in these days has spoken to us by his Son."¹⁴

The truths which God has revealed to the human race and which form the CONTENT of REVELATION can never be known unless revealed by God, for these are deepest truths about God and the salvation of man. Says Vatican II: "In His goodness and wisdom, God chose to reveal Himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of His will by which through Christ, the Word made flesh, man has access to the Father in the Holy Spirit and comes to share in the divine nature... By this revelation then, the deepest truth about God and the salvation of man is made clear to us in Christ, who is the Mediator and at the same time the fullness of all revelation."¹⁵ And even if discovered without revelation but only through human reason, these truths can only be grasped with greater ease and certainty once God reveals them. Vatican II again says: "Through His revelation... those divine realities which are by their nature accessible to human reason can be known by all men with ease, with solid certitude and with no trace of error, even in the present state of the human race."¹⁶

THE DIVINE INSPIRATION OF SACRED SCRIPTURE

The divinely revealed realities, having been consigned to writing under the INSPIRATION of the HOLY SPIRIT, are contained and presented in Sacred Scripture. The Living Voice of the Teaching

¹⁴ Ibid., Nos. 3-4.

¹⁵ Ibid., No. 2.

¹⁶ Ibid., No. 6.

Church holds that the books of Sacred Scripture are sacred to indicate its divine authorship, the nature of the truths it contain and the purpose for which it was written.¹⁷

Through DIVINE INSPIRATION, God moved and directed chosen men to write. He then aided them in the actual work in such a way that they wrote all that He wished to be written and only what He wished to be written. "For, by supernatural power, He so moved and impelled them to write — He was so present to them — that the things which He ordered, and those only, they first rightly understood, then willed faithfully to write down, and finally expressed in apt words and with infallible truth. Otherwise, it could not be said that He was the author of the entire Scripture."¹⁸ Thus, "everything asserted by the inspired authors or sacred writers must be held to be asserted by the Holy Spirit..."¹⁹ In other words, the human authors acted under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in such a manner that God is really the Author. Therefore, although different times have written the books of Sacred Scripture, and although these vary in many things according to the human authors' own individual character, style and personal traits, the collection is truly one book having a primary Author, God Himself, and one Common Theme, Jesus Christ.

INERRANCY OF SACRED SCRIPTURE

Since Sacred Scripture is divinely inspired and has God for its Author who is the Supreme Truth, then, obviously, it is totally free from error in all its statements. Leo XIII says: "All the books which the Church receives as sacred and canonical are written wholly and entirely, with all their parts, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; and so far is it from being possible that any error can coexist with inspiration, that inspiration not only is essentially incompatible with error, but excludes and rejects it as absolutely and necessarily as it is impossible that God Himself, the Supreme Truth, can utter that which is not true."²⁰ Hence, "the books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching firmly, faithfully, and without error that truth which God wanted to put into the Sacred Writings for the sake of our salvation."²¹

¹⁷ Cfr. *Ibid.*, No. 11.

¹⁸ Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter "On the Study of Holy Scripture."

¹⁹ Divine Revelation, No. 11.

²⁰ Leo XIII, *op. cit.*

²¹ Divine Revelation, No. 11.

UNITY OF SACRED SCRIPTURE

Since the books of Sacred Scripture, both the Old and the New Testaments, are inspired and have but one Author, there immediately follows the **UNITY** of both Testaments, there is in them a **UNITY** of **CONTENT**: "All the pages of both Testaments move toward Christ as to their center."²² In prophecy and prefigurement, the Old Testament contains the realities of the New; the Old Testament achieves fullness of meaning only in the light of the New: "God in His wisdom has so brought it about that the New should be hidden in the Old and that the Old should be made manifest in the New."²³ In simple words, the New Testament perfects the Old.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

The books of the **OLD TESTAMENT** tell the story of creation, the fall of man, the Hebrew people, and the preparation of the world for the coming of the Redeemer who, as had been promised, would restore the human race to friendship with God.

Says Vatican II: "The principal purpose to which the plan of the Old Covenant was directed was to prepare the coming both of Christ, the universal Redeemer, and of the messianic kingdom, to announce this coming by prophecy, and to indicate its meaning through various types. Now the books of the Old Testament, in accordance with the state of mankind before the time of salvation established by Christ, reveal to all men the knowledge of God and of man and the ways in which God, just and merciful, deals with men. These same books, then, give expression to a lively sense of God, contain a store of sublime teachings about God, sound wisdom about human life, and a wonderful treasury of prayers, and in them the mystery of our salvation is present in a hidden way. Christians should receive them with reverence."²⁴

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The books of the **NEW TESTAMENT** deal with the life, passion, death, resurrection and glorious ascension of Christ our Redeemer, as well as with His doctrines and His Church to which, for her preservation, growth and sanctification, the Holy Spirit perpetually provides life and strength.

²² Benedict XV, Encyclical Letter "Spiritus Paraclitus."

²³ Divine Revelation, No. 16.

²⁴ Ibid., No. 15.

Vatican II states that "it is common knowledge that among all the Scriptures, even those of the New Testament, the Gospels have a special pre-eminence, and rightly so, for they are the principal witness of the life and teaching of the incarnate Word, our Savior."²⁵

Besides the four Gospels, in the writing of the Epistles of Saint Paul and other Apostolic Writings, "by the wise plan of God, those matters which concern Christ, the Lord, are confirmed, His true teaching in more and more fully stated, the saving power of the divine work of Christ is preached, the story is told of the beginning of the Church and her marvelous growth, and her glorious fulfillment is foretold."²⁶

SACRED SCRIPTURE IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES²⁷

Christ Himself, even thought He "obtained authority by miracles, merited belief by authority and by belief drew to Himself the multitude,"²⁸ in the exercise of His divine mission, frequently appealed to Sacred Scripture. He used the Word of God to prove that He is sent by God and is God Himself. From its wisdom, He cited instructions for His disciples and confirmation of His doctrine. He quoted it against the calumnies of the Sadducees and Pharisees and against satan who tried to tempt Him. At the close of His earthly life as well as after His resurrection and ascension to the glory of His Father, Christ used to expound the Scripture to His disciples.

The Apostles, on the other hand, though granted by Christ Himself to perform "signs and wonders by their hands,"²⁹ did use effectively the Sacred Words to convince the people of the wisdom of Christianity and to suppress obstinacy and heresy. This is clearly manifested in the discourses of St. Peter who presented a series of citations from the Old Testament. The same thing can be found in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John, and in the Catholic Epistles, but most remarkably in Apostle Paul who "boasts that he learned the law at the feet of Gamaliel, in order that, being armed with spiritual weapons, he might afterwards say with confidence. "The arms of our warfare are not carnal but mighty unto God."³⁰

²⁵ Ibid., No. 18.

²⁶ Ibid., No. 20.

²⁷ Cfr. Leo XIII, Op. Cit.

²⁸ St. Augustine, De Util, Cred. 14,32.

²⁹ Acts XIV:3.

³⁰ St. Jerome, De Stud. Script. Ad Paulin, Ep. 53,3.

SACRED SCRIPTURE IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

The Church always venerates Sacred Scripture with a deep sense of devotion and reverence. For, from Sacred Scripture, we do certainly enjoy fuller knowledge of Jesus Christ who is the Author of our redemption and our sanctification and who teaches us lessons of holiness, humility, justice, truth, charity, and mercy. Moreover, from the Word of God which is imported without charge, we unceasingly receive the bread of life, especially in the sacred liturgy; the Holy Spirit's fire of love is enkindled in our hearts; and our Father in heaven meets us with great love and speaks with us.³¹ Furthermore, from the force and power in the Word of God, we obtain spiritual support and energy, strength of faith and food for our souls,³² sustaining us in times of strife and amidst adversity and misfortune, and helping us to remain steadfast in serenity of mind. Indeed, "the Word of God is living and effectual, more piercing than any two edged sword; and reaching unto the division of the soul and the spirit."³³

The Church, because of her untarnished faith in the divine authority and perfect truth of the Word of God, encourages us to move ahead toward a deeper understanding of Sacred Scripture. In 1898, Pope Leo XIII and the Popes after him encouraged the members of the Church to acquaint themselves with Sacred Scripture. For, "ignorance of Sacred Scripture is ignorance of Christ,"³⁴ but "a man who is well grounded in the testimonies of the Scripture is the bulwark of the Church."³⁵

Besides encouraging her members to have a fuller knowledge of Sacred Scripture, through Councils and common Teachings, the Church also strongly appeals to the tireless industry of her learned men in translating the Sacred Scripture from tongue to tongue, so that "easy access to Sacred Scripture should be provided for all the Christian faithful."³⁶ "But since the Word of God should be available at all times the Church with maternal concern sees to it that suitable and correct translations are made in different languages, especially from the original texts of the Sacred books. And if, given the opportunity and the approval of Church authority, these translations are produced in cooperation with the separated brethren as well, all Christians will be able to use them."³⁷

³¹ Cfr. Divine Revelation, No. 21.

³² Ibid.

³³ Hebrew XIV:12.

³⁴ St. Jerome, In Isaiam Prol.

³⁵ Ibid., In Isaiam 54, 12.

³⁶ Divine Revelation, No. 22.

³⁷ Ibid.

SACRED SCRIPTURE IN SAMARENYO POPULAR VERSION

The patience and the dedication of our expert translators as well as the cooperation of our separated brethren and the Church's approval brought into reality the message of Sacred Scripture in our own familiar dialect. Today, Sacred Scripture is communicated to us in a way that we all can understand. God speaks our language. Thus, with the availability of the **NEW TESTAMENT** in the **SAMARENYO POPULAR VERSION**, there is much hope that progress in Christian truths becomes simple and steady.

We believe that the possession of this priceless treasure in every home of our Diocese is expression enough of our gratitude to Almighty God and to all the wonderful people who were instrumental in making its translation popular.

CONCLUSION

We, therefore, end this Pastoral Letter, with the hope that, through the presentation of the **SAMARENYO POPULAR VERSION** of the **NEW TESTAMENT**, in our Diocese, may we be able to profitably grow familiar with Sacred Scripture. Thus, from our intensified veneration for the **INSPIRED WORD OF GOD** which shall always be "an inexhaustible treasury of heavenly doctrine"³⁸ and "an overflowing foundation of salvation,"³⁹ may we be able to obtain a new surge of spiritual vitality and growth.

As a pledge, then, of heavenly grace and as a sign of our episcopal concern, we lovingly impart to you all, our beloved People of God, our pastoral blessings.

Given at our Episcopal Residence in Borongan, Eastern Samar, on May 24, 1979, the Second Anniversary of our Episcopal Ordination.

³⁸ St. Chrysostom, In Gen. Hom., 21,2; Hom. 60,3; St. Augustine, De Disc. Christ., 2.

³⁹ St. Athanasius, Ep. Fest., 39.

THE CBCP AT WORK

A Systematic Compilation of the Major Decisions Taken by the
Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines
January 1964 to July 1979

Fr. F. Testera, O.P.

The teachings of Vatican Council II on colegiality gave a decisive impetus to the establishment and organization of national and territorial Bishops' Conferences. Though the Council did not initiate the establishment of said Conferences — already existing in many countries — it certainly gave it a legal status.

The chief aim of the Bishops' Conference is to assist all bishops of the territory in the spirit of fraternal cooperation without encroaching howsoever into the legislative power of any individual diocesan bishop.

Episcopal Conferences were not designed as legislative bodies. The Conference is "just like a council in which the bishops of a given nation or territory jointly exercise their pastoral office to promote the greater good which the Church offers mankind, especially through the forms and methods of the apostolate fittingly adapted to the circumstances of the age". (**Christus Dominus**, n. 38).

If and when the Conference wishes to make a law for its own territory, it must first secure the approval of the Holy See. The decisions of the Episcopal Conference are to have juridically binding force only in those cases prescribed by common law or determined by a special mandate of the Holy See, and further on condition that they should be approved by the secret votes of two thirds of the members with voting rights. (**Christus Dominus**, n. 38; **Notitiae**, Feb., 1973, p. 77, footnote).

Consistent with this theologico-juridical nature of the Episcopal Conference, the CBCP has been enacting through the years a number of important decisions as well as directives in the service of the local church. A great number of such resolutions, having to do with liturgical matters, have already been published in the **Liturgical Information Bulletin of the Philippines**. A few others have reached

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a relatively larger number of readers through the pages of the **Boletin Eclesiastico de Filipinas**. However, not a few priests and religious are still partially or totally unaware of the existence of certain directives and even lack adequate knowledge of some of the juridically binding decisions passed by the Filipino Hierarchy. Indeed, all and sundry would like to have such resolutions in compiled form for easy perusal and ready reference.

It is true that the **Liturgical Information Bulletin of the Philippines** published already a chronological list of the liturgical decisions passed by the CBCP. Today the **Boletin Eclesiastico** intends to enlarge said collection and to give it a new and systematic arrangement which hopefully may prove satisfactory to the readers and will surely offer a clear view of the work being done by the CBCP since the past years.

NOTE ON ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS COMPILATION

AAS — Acta Apostolicae Sedis.

BEF — Boletin Eclesiastico de Filipinas.

CBCP — Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Phil., formerly CWC.

CIC — Code of Canon Law.

CLD — Canon Law Digest.

Episc. Concl. — Episcopal Conclusions, 1970-1977. A compilation of the resolutions passed by the CBCP from 1970 to 1977.

GIRM — General Instructions on the Roman Missal.

ICEL — International Commission on English in the Liturgy.

LIB — Liturgical Information Bulletin of the Philippines.

SCDF — Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

SCDS — Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments.
Later SCS, Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments.

SCDW — Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship.

SCSDW — Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship. Since July, 1975, the SCB and the SCDW merged into a single unit called SCSDW.

ABSOLUTION

Norms for General Absolution Set. (February, 1973; LIB, 1973, pp. 50-52).

On June 16, 1972, the SCDF had issued **General Norms concerning the Administration of General Sacramental Absolution**.¹ The Episcopal Conference at its meeting of Feb. 1973, adapted these to the situation of the country. Since the **Rite of Penance**,² promulgated Dec. 3, 1973, merely incorporated the roman norms, we later integrated the policies adopted in 1973 into the new rite.

Guidelines for General Absolution. (February, 1973; LIB, 1975, p. 65).

1. General Absolution is best not integrated with the eucharistic celebration and should not take the place of the penitential act, but it can come **immediately** before the Mass. Hence, Rome should not be asked permission to integrate general absolution into the penitential rite.

2. There should be uniform policies regarding the following:

a. In danger of death n. 2 of the **Norms** is to be applied.

b. Are to be considered special circumstances of physical or moral impossibility when there is serious pastoral need for general absolution, **Norms**, nn. III and IX, namely: cases of barrios rarely visited, of barrio fiestas, occasions of great conflux of people, as on some days of Holy Week, Christmas and the novena of preparation for Christmas -Aguinaldo Masses-, graduations, etc.

c. General absolution is not applicable at the beginning of retreats of priests, sisters or small groups. At such occasion there is or should be sufficient opportunity for confession.

d. Ordinaries should inform their priests about the exact application of the norms for general absolution and the manner it should be celebrated, especially **Norms**, nn. IV, X, now found in the rite, nn. 31-35.

Recourse to the Ordinary for General Absolution. (July, 1975; LIB, 1975, p. 137).

The bishops clarified that the recourse to the Ordinary for General Absolution is necessary only for special cases not foreseen in the general norms given in 1973.

¹ BEF, 1972, pp. 427-432.

² LIB, 1975, pp. 66-80.

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Sign of Intention to Receive General Absolution. (July, 1975; LIB, 1975, p. 138).

The sign whereby penitents signify their intention to receive general absolution in penitential celebrations is left to the presiding minister; he invites participants, for example, to bow their heads, to kneel or to give some other signs.³

ALIENATION

Maximum Amount Permitted for Alienation of Church Property in the Philippines. (January, 1975; Congr. for the Clergy, Prof. 149253/III).

The CBCP agreed upon in its general meeting of January 30, 1975, to raise from P500,000.00 to P1,000,000.00 the maximum amount permitted for alienation of temporal goods of the Church and for contracting debts.

The request was granted with the understanding that "there remains in effect cc. 1529, 1530, 1531, 1533 of the CIC as well as, in the proportion there laid down, c. 1532 for that which concerns the vote of the Cathedral Chapter.

ALTAR

Materials for the Altar. (July 1969; LIB, 1969, p. 61).

Though natural stone is preferred, other worthy, solid and dignified materials may be used for the construction of fixed altars.⁴ (n. 263).

ANOINTING AND PASTORAL CARE

Rite of Anointing Approved.⁵ (July 1973; LIB, 1979, pp. 99, 151).

The Chairman of the National Liturgical Commission applied to Rome for approval in english of the provisional edition of the

³ MARIVOET, C., CICM, *Pastoral Norms for General Sacramental Absolution*. LIB, 1972, pp. 121-127; O'NEILL, T., SJ, *On General Sacramental Absolution*. Good Tidings. 1972, pp. 213-228; TESTERA, F., O.P., "Misuse" and "Overuse" of *General Sacramental Absolution*, BEF, 1978, pp. 149-150.

⁴ General Instruction on the Roman Missal. (GIRM). Published as part of the Roman Missal on 26 March, 1970.

⁵ *Apost. Const.*, "Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum". ASS, 1973, pp. 5-9; BEF, 1973, pp. 275-276; *Decree*, "On the New Rite of Anointing the Sick and their Pastoral Care", (SCDW, 7 Dec. 1972), AAS, 1973, pp. 275-276.

Rite of Anointing and the Pastoral Care of the Sick. On August 24, 1973, the SCDW gave the approval, except that the essential form, under discussion, was still to be kept in latin.⁶

Subsequently, Rome gave us full approval on January 10, 1974. The following vernaculars also received the Roman confirmation of this rite: Cebuano on March 4, 1974; Bikolano on May 7, 1974; Tagalog on June 16, 1976; and Ilocano on June 26, 1976.

Roman confirmation of the Rite of Anointing in the english ICEL version came on January 23, 1975. (LIB, 1977, pp. 154, 155)

ARANCEL

Gradual Elimination of the Arancel. (Episc. Concl., p. 82).

The Conference approved the gradual elimination of the Arancel System and the external classification in the administration of baptism, weddings and funerals. Each diocese was asked to experiment on the project by selecting three parishes, one poor, another medium class and a third one rich.

ATTIRE

Decree on Clergy Attire Confirmed. (January, 1970; BEF, 1968, p. 456-457).

The Holy See has recently confirmed the decree issued by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, governing the clergy attire for use in the country by priests, religious brothers, and major seminarians.

The decree was formulated during the annual meetings of the Philippine Catholic Hierarchy in 1967 and 1968, and embodies the following regulations.

Any priest or religious brother may use in the Philippines the new clerical attire besides the traditional cassock and clergyman's suit, subject to the norms as follows

1. For liturgical and sacred functions, only the cassock can be used.

2. For formal social functions, only the cassock or the clergyman's suit can be used; that is, when the occasion calls for laymen to use coat and tie or the "barong tagalog";

⁶ GRAF, H., SVD, *Is There Anyone of You Who Is Sick?*, BEF, 1972, pp. 392-410.

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3. The new clerical attire which may be used outside liturgical and formal social functions is described as follows:

- a) Both the trousers and the shirt must be in any dark one-tone color or white;
- b) The color of the trousers need not have the same shade as the color of the shirt;
- c) The shirt may have long or short sleeves. Its collar of even width is folded outwards to form an outer lapel with both ends buttoned to the neckline to support a short Roman Collar to be inserted into both ends of the lapel.

The shirt may also have a military collar of even width, with two buttons fastening both ends.

4. Religious priests, even of exempt Orders, are bound by these same norms when using the new clerical attire with previous consent of their Superiors;

5. Religious brothers are also bound by these same regulations, except when their Generalates have adopted their own attire.

6. The attire for major seminarians shall be left to the judgment of the metropolitan Archbishop, together with his suffragan bishops,

7. A proper sanction may be applied by the local Ordinary in case of non-compliance with the foregoing norms.

However, in case of violations by priests from other dioceses, this may be reported to their respective bishops.

BAPTISM

Extraordinary Ministers of Baptism. (February, 1971; LIB, 1971, p. 127).

The Episcopal Conference had requested the SCDC for the faculty to allow seminarians, religious, catechists and other laymen prepared for this task, a) to baptize when no priest or deacon is available, or b) to assist him when a large number of children is to be baptized.

The request met only with limited success:

1. Judging the non-availability of priests or deacons is left to the local Ordinary;
2. Each Ordinary has to apply individually to the SCDS, explain his situation justifying the appointment of an extraordinary minister, and propose norms for selecting laymen for this task;

3. For the time being, laymen can not be appointed to assist the priest or deacon when a large number of children is to be baptized.

Extraordinary Ministers of Baptism Allowed for the Country. (July, 1972, LIB, 1972, p. 116).

After the SCDS had issued an **Instruction** "On Conferring the Sacrament of Baptism in the Absence of the Ordinary Minister" on December 21, 1970, our Bishops reapplied for this faculty for the Philippines. It was given on October 16, 1972 for a period of three years, with the injunction of following the norms of the said **Instruction** and to use the rite for catechists. (LIB, 1973, pp. 47-50).

This same faculty was renewed on July 7, 1977. (LIB, 1977, p. 161).

Adaptations in the Rite of Baptism for Children.⁷ (July 1969; LIB, 1969, pp.61-62).

In the rite of baptism of children, the following parts may be omitted in the Philippines:

1. the official asking of the name at the beginning; 2. the ephetha; 3. the anointing with the oil of catechumens; but the chrism is to be used. (See Baptism of children, n. 24).

New Rite of Baptism of Children Obligatory. (January 1970; LIB, 1970, p. C.).

The new rite of baptism of children approved by our bishops, becomes obligatory in english on Easter Sunday 1970. Rome confirmed the rite in english (ICEL) and samareño on February 26, 1970. The rite of baptism for children was later confirmed by Rome in cebuano on March 17, 1971, in ilocano on October 5, 1971, and in bikolano on January 23, 1973.

Use of Catechist's Rite for Baptism. (July 1972; LIB, 1972, p. 116).

Our Bishops would like to have a locally prepared simpler rite of baptism for instance where many children have to be baptized. In the meantime they asked Rome for the permission to use in this case the rather simple rite for baptism for catechists (chapter IV of the Rite). On August 2, 1972, the SCDW deemed our application not opportune and recommended the use of Chapter III of the Rite, that for a large number of children. (LIB, 1973, pp. 46-37).

⁷ MARIVOET, C., CICM, *Notes on the Rites of Children's Baptism*, LIB, 1972, pp. 108-112.

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Rite of Reception of Baptized Christians into the Church. (February 1973; LIB, 1973 p. 74; 1976, pp. 118-127).

Validly baptized non-catholic christians are received into full communion with the Catholic Church with a special rite. Our Bishops accepted the provisional (Green Book) edition from ICEL and asked Rome for confirmation. Data for the roman approval are not available.

Catechumenate for Baptism and Marriage. (February 1971; LIB, 1971, pp. 28-54).

Our Bishops agreed that they should ask their priests to introduce gradually some catechesis at the occasion of baptism and marriage.

Mutual Recognition of Baptismal Validity. (BEF, 1972, pp. 267-278).

The Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines and the Lutheran Church in the Philippines express their mutual recognition of the validity of christian baptism as it is performed according to the rites of the respective Churches.

Agreement on Baptism between the Roman Catholic Church and the Philippine Episcopal Church. (July, 1979).

The Conference approved the proposed Agreement on Baptism between the Roman Catholic Church and the Philippine Episcopal Church, together with the notation appended to it.

The notation makes clear that the concord of full communion between the Philippine Episcopal Church and the Philippine Independent Church "neither implies nor effects the union of the PEC and the PIC, nor are the two Churches in any way merged" and that the Agreed Statement on Baptism affects only the PEC and not the PIC in any way.

In view of the varying pastoral conditions in the country, even after the signing of the Agreed Statement, the bishop may still decide not to implement it in his diocese.

BLESSINGS

Blessing of a Home. (February 1967; LIB, 1967, p. 87).

The Bishops also approved for immediate use in the Philippines the ritual for the blessing of a Home. Upon roman approval, it would be later incorporated into the Ritual for the Philippines. It

was approved for experimental use by the **Consilium** on October 20, 1967. See LIB, 1968, p. 2. This Ritual had been first published as a draft in LIB, December 1966, pp. 119-126.

Triple Blessing during the Ordination Rite. (February, 1971; LIB, 1971, pp. 28-54).

The Bishops requested the SCDW for retaining the triple solemn blessing during the Litanies of the Saints in the rite of Ordination. Rome turned down the request as not advisable.

The Rite of the Blessing of Oils and Consecration of the Chrism. (July 1972; LIB, 1972 p. 115).

The Rite was also approved in ICEL version and published in the Rite of Confirmation. Generally, the roman approvals for Confirmation cover also the rites for the oils and the chrism.

BREVIARY

Breviary.⁸ (January, 1965; LIB, 1966, p. 27).

For those priests who had the permission of their bishop or major religious superior to pray the office in the vernacular, approval was given to use either the english text as approved for the USA (in the three-volume **Divine Office** from the Liturgical Press) or the spanish text from Spain.

The Liturgy of the Hours. (January, 1975; LIB, 1975, p. 35).

Our Bishops had opted for the ICEL translation as the only official text of the Breviary for the Philippines.⁹

CALENDAR

The New Calendar may be Followed.¹⁰ (July, 1972; LIB, 1972, pp. 115-116).

Our Bishops sanction the use of the new calendar for the Mass and the Divine Office, as indicated in the **Ordo**, provided the Ordo gives, as long as necessary, all references for following both the new and the old calendar.

⁸ *Const.* "On the Sacred Liturgy", nn. 36, 101.

⁹ GRAF, H., SVD, *The Divine Office*, LIB, 1973, pp. 2-12.

¹⁰ *Decree*, "Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar", (SCR, 21 March, 1969); *Notitiae*, 1969, 165-186.

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Only a National Calendar. (July, 1975; LIB, 1975, p. 144).

The CBCP decided to have only a national calendar and no diocesan calendars. However, feasts of saints popular in some localities can be celebrated on the customary date, at the discretion of the local Ordinary.

CHALICES AND PATENTS

Materials for Chalices and Patents. (July 1969; LIB, 1969, p. 61).

Chalices and patents may be made of materials other than the customary ones, provided they are solid, dignified and non-absorbent.¹¹

COMMUNION

Extraordinary Ministers of Communion. (February, 1971; LIB, 1971, pp. 28-54).

Whereas the SCDS gives now the permission to individual bishops to assign extraordinary ministers of communion, the CBCP wants this permission to be given to the whole hierarchy, so that it can be used without further recourse by each Ordinary who sees the need for such ministers. Rome answered the matter was under study.¹²

Extraordinary Ministers of Communion Allowed. (July, 1972; LIB, 1972, p. 116)

Since the Bishops' Conference meeting of January 1971, we had twice applied for the whole country for extraordinary ministers of communion. Finally on October 7, 1972, the SCDS gave its approval, but for only one type of minister, the one appointed for single occasions, not the one on a more permanent basis.¹³ Fortunately, the *Instr.* "Immensae Caritatis" of January 29, 1973,¹⁴ from the same Congregation would extend the faculty for all countries also to more permanent ministers of communion, as would also the Rite of Holy Communion and Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass of June 21, 1973. Both the *Instruction* and the *Rite* also set the modalities of the occasions and the way these ministers exercise their functions. (LIB, 1973, pp. 59-63).

¹¹ GIRM, n. 290.

¹² LIB, 1973, pp. 59-63.

¹³ GRAF, H., SVD, *Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion "per modum actus"*. BEF, 1972, pp. 664-669.

¹⁴ BEF, 1973, pp. 226-234.

Restrictions for the Lay Ministry of Communion. (July, 1975; LIB, 1975, p. 142).

The CBCP approved extraordinary ministers of communion to carry the eucharist to remote places and to keep the eucharist, provided the Ordinary's safeguards are observed in accordance with the spirit of the norms of canon law.

On September 12, 1975, the SCDS informed our bishops that carrying and keeping the eucharist is not among the functions of the lay minister of communion and that he may not do so.

Once More the Lay Ministers of Communion. (June, 1976; LIB, 1976, p. 110).

On account of the restrictions placed by Rome on our lay ministers for communion, the CBCP advised its members to institute, according to the roman recommendation, acolytes. These will be given the faculty to carry and keep the eucharist, provided the necessary safeguards are observed and each Ordinary reports to Rome and asks for this privilege.

First Communion Mass for the Philippines Approved. (February, 1971; LIB, 1971, pp. 28-54).

A draft of a First Communion Mass, including a special eucharistic prayer, had been submitted to the CBCP as model, (LIB, 1971, pp. 10-26). Our bishops approved it with some minor amendments, and Rome confirmed it for experimental use on March 16, 1971. This permission was withdrawn for the eucharistic prayer when the new eucharistic prayers for children were released.

Children's First Confession and First Communion. (February, 1971; LIB, 1971, pp. 28-54).

The Bishops agreed that: a) the preparation for both sacraments should be separated, and b) there should be a certain lapse of time between the first celebration of the two. As to having first communion before first confession, no agreement was reached and no decision was taken.

Kneeling Posture for Receiving Communion. (July, 1967; LIB, 1967, p. 116).

The bishops upheld in July 1967 their unpublished decision of January 1967 that the faithful should receive communion while kneeling; however, they keep standing if communion is received under both species.¹⁵

¹⁵ GIRM, n. 21,

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Communio in the Hand Rejected. (February, 1971; LIB, 1971, pp. 28-54).

More than half of the bishops rejected communion in the hand for the people in general; for small, homogeneous groups the voting was close: one vote short of the required 2/3 majority.

Communion in the Hand Kept in Abeyance. (February, 1973; LIB, 1973, pp. 71-74).

The bishops accepted communion in the hand by an affirmative vote of practically 3/4 of those present and represented. The SCDW replied on March 12, 1973, that approval was kept in abeyance as the voting was to be clarified for the number of votes and procedure, since, according to the **Decree** "Christus Dominus" of Vatican II, not merely two-thirds of those present but of those having the right to vote is required, and this by secret vote.¹⁶

Communion in the Hand Turned Down. (July, 1973; LIB, 1973, p. 73).

The Bishops, intending to settle the matter now clearly, had a new voting on communion in the hand. Of the 56 percent present or represented, 18 voted against, 38 in favor, that is 67.86 % or just over 2/3 of those present, but not of those having voting rights, as several were absent and not represented. Yet, immediately afterwards it was unanimously approved to request Rome to allow communion in the hand on a experimental basis for two years. Rome answered in August 1973, that on these terms no permission could be given. (LIB, 1973, pp. 71-74).

Optional Communion in the Hand. (July, 1978; BEF, 1979, p. 6).

The resolution for optional communion in the hand, failed to get the necessary two-thirds majority of the Conference, and so, it can not be allowed in the Philippines.¹⁷

Extension of Communion under Both Kinds.¹⁸ (February, 1971; LIB, 1971, pp. 28-54).

The CBCP approved general norms for the Philippines, extending communion under both kinds at the discretion of each Ordinary, to Masses on days of special religious or civic importance to the

¹⁶ *Christus Dominus*, n. 38; *Notitiae*, Feb., 1973, p. 77, footnote.

¹⁷ *Instr.*, "On the Manner of Distributing Holy Communion", (SCDW, 29 May, 1969). AAS, 1969, pp. 541-547; BUGNINI, A., *On Communion in the Hand*, BEF, 1973, pp. 381-391; LIB, 1973, pp. 26-35.

¹⁸ GIRM, nn. 240-242; *Instr.*, "Sacramentali Communionem", BEF, 1970 p. 779.

filipino people in general, or to families and groups to whom it would be of special importance and benefit. These norms became applicable on monday after Easter, April 12, 1971.

Communion More than Once a Day. (February, 1973; LIB, 1973, pp. 57-58).

Our bishops voted in favor of allowing the people to receive communion more than once a day in certain occasions. Before we could pass our request to Rome, the SCDS issued the **Instruction** "Immensae Caritatis", in which several instances are foreseen in which communion can be received more than once a day.¹⁹

CONFESSION (See also General Absolution and Penance)

Children's First Confession and First Communion. (February, 1971; LIB, 1971, pp. 28-54).

The bishops agreed that, a) the preparation for both sacraments should be separated and b) there should be a certain lapse of time between the first celebration of the two. As to having first communion before first confession, no agreement was reached and no decision taken.²⁰

CONFIRMATION

The New Rite of Confirmation.²¹ (July, 1972; LIB, 1972, pp. 114-115).

There were four decisions regarding the new rite and the pastoral of confirmation:

a) The age for confirmation. Our bishops decided within the next five years, therefore, before the middle of 1977, to shift gradually from the confirmation of infants to at least the age of reason and even preferably to the end of the elementary school age, but allowing for exceptions in instances of special pastoral needs.²²

b) The ICEL text of the rite in english was approved by the bishops; the SCDW first turned down our application, as the ICEL essential form was not accepted (July 29, 1972). It was approved

¹⁹ BEF, 1973, pp. 229-231.

²⁰ MARIVOET, C., CICM, *First Confession and First Communion*, LIB, 1977, pp. 101-108; 110-115.

²¹ *Apost. Const.*, "Divinae Consortium Naturae", AAS, 1971, pp. 657-664; BEF, 1971, pp. 687-694; *Decree*, "On the New Rite of Confirmation", (SCDW, 22 Aug., 1971), AAS, 1972, p. 77.

²² MARIVOET, C., CICM, *The Age of Confirmation*, LIB, 1972, pp. 2-20.

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when a new essential form was agreed upon (February 5, 1973). Rome approved also our vernacular translations: Cebuano on May 2, 1972; Bikolano on May 15, 1973; Tagalog on October 10, 1973; Ilocano on January 21, 1976; The essential form in english was changed once more in 1975.

c) For children above the age of reason, a simple homily integrating the profession of faith instead of the rather theological model homily of the rite was approved by the bishops, (LIB, 1972, pp. 117-120).

d) The form of the rite of peace in confirmation was left by the bishops to the local usage.

Essential Form of Confirmation Changed in English. (July, 1975; LIB, 1975, p. 134).

The bishops were informed that after long controversies, the essential form of confirmation was changed once more, and definitively, from: "N... be sealed with the Holy Spirit, the Gift of the Father", into: "**N... be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.** Hence, the bishops requested that the text be changed accordingly in all liturgical books containing the rite.

Confirmation by the Parish Priest at Marriages. (February, 1973; LIB, 1973, pp. 63-66).

The National Liturgical Commission had proposed to the bishops to allow priests who prepared couples for marriage to confirm those partners who had not yet been confirmed if confirmation by the bishop would be onerous. The bishops approved this proposal but limited the permission to confirm to the parish priest. The SCDS gave this faculty for an experimental period of three years on June 11, 1973. It was renewed on July 7, 1977, (LIB, 1977, p. 161).

Age of Confirmation. (July, 1979; LIB, 1979, pp. 137-138).

The age of seven years or after First Communion was approved by the bishops as the uniform age for the reception of the sacrament throughout the country. (LIB, 1977, p. 149).

DEVOTIONS

Paralitururgical Devotions. (July, 1967; LIB, 1967, p. 87).

The Bishops' Conference mandated the National Liturgical Commission to prepare texts for novenas and other devotions to replace those that are not in conformity with the spirit of the liturgy.

Devotion to S. Joseph. (January, 1972; Episc. Concl., p. 87).

The Bishops unanimously agreed that devotion to St. Joseph be ever more promoted specifically every May 1st, through catechesis and proper homilies and more Masses on his feast.

DIACONATE

Permanent Diaconate for the Philippines. February, 1971; Episc. Concl., p. 77).

On the restoration of a permanent diaconate the Holy See has already approved the CBCP petition for the establishment of the Permanent Order of Married Deacons in the Philippines, and the training program for the candidates on experimental basis *ad triennium*.

Implementation of the Order of Diaconate in the Philippines. (July, 1971; Episc. Concl., p. 77).

The Conference approved the following practical recommendations on the implementation of the privilege to establish a permanent order of diaconate in the Philippines:

1. Leave it to the ecclesiastical province and its suffragans rather than establish three training formation centers in the Philippines.

2. The curriculum submitted to Rome should be followed and the syllabus of subjects including the management of the house of formation.

3. The experts of the Commission be urged to prepare manuals for the use of every Ordinary who may decide to train candidates for the permanent diaconate. This in turn may be translated into the vernacular should the respective Ordinaries find it convenient and prudent.

4. The minimum educational attainment should be high school graduates. Candidates should also be:

- a. Financially stable.
- b. Recognized leaders in their locality.
- c. Recommended by the parish priest.
- d. Apart from the family's consent to the ordination of the husband/father, should also enjoy good moral reputation.
- e. Deacon and family be ready to work in another barrio or parish.

5. After the second summer, the candidate, if found fit and worthy, should receive tonsure or any ecclesiastical degree now being

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contemplated in its stead. The succeeding orders be given after the third and fourth summer classes and the diaconate only after the whole course is finished.

6. The permanent deacons should receive some compensation from the parish or diocese. This is necessary in order to make his service to parish or diocese more meaningful and in order to preclude complete independence from the deacon's part.

7. The fact that many privileges are now being given to laymen should not be used as argument against the establishment of permanent diaconate in the Philippines. An ordained deacon is entirely different from a layman, who, by certain privileges, not by the power of ordination, performs certain ministries. Also a greater and more thorough intellectual and ecclesiastical formation minimizes the dangers of ministers going astray doctrinally or ministerially.

EASTER DUTY

'Easter Duty' throughout the Year. July, 1971; LIB, 1971, p. 148).

In response to a request from our bishops, the S.C. for the Clergy allows the annual obligatory communion during Easter Time to be taken, just like confession, any time during the year. This faculty is given for five years.

This faculty was renewed on July 13, 1977 by the S.C. for the Clergy with the recommendation to set aside a more limited time for the Easter Duty in the future, (LIB, 1977, p. 161).

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYERS

The Roman Canon in English. (July, 1967; LIB, 1967, 115).

The Conference approved **ad interim** for use in the Philippines the english translation of the Roman Canon as prepared by the International Committee on english in the Liturgy (ICEL). However, its use in each diocese was left to the discretion of the Local Ordinary. Roman confirmation of this decision came on August 10, 1967. The decree promulgating the decision to use the Roman Canon in english starting January 1, 1968, was issued on December 13, 1967. (LIB, 1968, p. 2).

New Prefaces and Eucharistic Prayers. (See Prefaces)

Two New Eucharistic Prayers Approved by CBCP. (January, 1975; LIB, 1975, p. 34).

Of the five New experimental eucharistic prayers released by the SCDW on November 1, 1974 — three for children, two for penitential occasions — our bishops approved the first for children and the second for reconciliation.

New Eucharistic Prayers for Children and Reconciliation. (July, 1975; LIB, 1975, p. 139).

Instead of merely two — one for children, one for penitential occasions — all five new experimental eucharistic prayers — three for children, two for reconciliation — are now approved by our bishops. Roman confirmation came on September 1, 1975. The text of these five eucharistic prayers is given in LIB, 1975, pp. 81-106.

ECUMENICAL TRANSLATIONS AND PRAYERS

Ecumenical Gloria, Creed, Sanctus and Our Father. (February, 1971; pp. 28-54).

When the ICEL text of the new Order of Mass was approved in January 1970, the new Gloria, Creed, Sanctus and Our Father were not included. These texts had been prepared by ICET, the International Consultation for Ecumenical Texts, which groups the Catholic Church — represented through ICEL — and representatives from several of the major Protestant bodies. Our bishops now accept these texts confirmed by the SCDW on March 16, 1971 and make their use of Mass obligatory on the First Sunday of Advent, November 27, 1971.

Ecumenical Translations. (July, 1972; LIB, 1972, p. 115).

Our bishops accepted the proposal from some Protestant groups to use, where feasible, ecumenical translations for texts we have in common and for the bible for the vernacular lectionary. In fact, we do this already for some texts of the Mass, where we take the ICEL version.

FAST AND ABSTINENCE

Fasting and Abstinence. (July, 1975; LIB, 1975, p. 143)

The bishops requested the Holy See to lift the moral obligation to abstain or to substitute an act of charity or piety on ordinary Fridays and to retain this obligation only for the Fridays of Lent, while Ash Wednesday and Good Friday would remain days of fasting and abstinence.

The Congregation for the Clergy replied on March 17, 1976:

a) The moral obligation to abstain or substitute acts of charity or piety on Fridays can not be lifted, as it is part of the normal duty of penance for a christian.

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b) Acts of charity or piety may from now on be substituted also on the Fridays of Lent.

c) Fasting and abstinence are maintained on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, (LIB, 1976, p. 108).

FEASTS

Feast of Santo Niño, (February, 1971; LIB, 1971, pp. 28-54

The bishops decided to place the feast of the Santo Niño in the national calendar, and to have it celebrated on the third Sunday of January with the Mass and the title of the Holy Name of Jesus. The SCDW approved this, but set the celebration on the **Third Sunday** in ordinary time, therefore, normally one week later than requested.

New Name and Date for the Feast of Santo Niño. (July, 1975; LIB, 1975, p. 144).

The feast of Santo Niño, introduced in the national calendar in 1971 under the title "Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus (Sto. Niño)" is now simply to be called "Feast of Sto. Niño".

Its celebration will be from now on the third Sunday of the month of January, rather than on the third Sunday in ordinary time, normally the fourth Sunday of the month. Rome confirmed this decision on August 20, 1975.

Special Mass and Office for the "Santo Niño". (July, 1978; BEF, 1979, p. 6).

The bishops officially approved the special draft for the Mass and Office for the Feast of the Santo Niño. This will take the place of the Mass for the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus in the Philippines. The draft will be sent to Rome for final approval.

Solemnity of St. Joseph Restored to March 19. (July, 1979; LIB, 1979, p. 137).

The Solemnity of St. Joseph has now been restored to March 19, while May 1 remains as the Memorial of St. Joseph the Worker. This reversal of a decision (LIB, 1969, p. 69) was made for several reasons. First, the Philippines seemed to be the only country that no longer was observing March 19 as the day of this Solemnity. Secondly, many places in the country have continue to hold their local celebration in honor of St. Joseph on this date. Thirdly, it has sometimes happened that the more important remembrance of St. Joseph, associated with the solemnity, has yielded to the May 1 Memorial. For these reasons and in view of the popular devotion of our people, the bishops voted to restore March 19 as the annual Solemnity of St. Joseph.

Memorial of Saint Pedro Bautista. (July, 1969; LIB, 1969, 59).

The General Calendar has on February 6, the obligatory memorial of the martyrs of Japan. St. Paul Miki and Companions. As St. Pedro Bautista, one of these companions, had worked for some years in the Philippines, our bishops preferred to have this memorial named "St. Pedro Bautista and Companions". However, in a communication of September 19, 1969, the Apostolic Nuncio informed the CBCP that Rome had amended the proposal and changed the appellation of the celebration into: **Saints Paul Miki, Pedro Bautista and Companions.**²³

FUNERAL RITES

Rite of Funerals Obligatory. (January, 1970; LIB, 1970, p. C).

The new rite of funerals in the english ICEL translation was approved and made obligatory on June 1, 1970.²⁴

The New Funeral Rites. (February, 1971; LIB, 1971, pp. 28-54).

a. The CBCP accepted the roman rite with its three stations - home, Church Cemetery - as a whole and obtain the roman confirmation on the ICEL text on January 3, 1971.

The cebuano version was approved by Rome on July 8, 1971; in ilocano on October 5, 1971; and in pampangueño on December 22, 1971.

b. Our bishops decided to allow laymen to conduct funeral services at the home and at the cemetery, as the new rite allowed them. For this they needed no further roman approval. They also applied to Rome for allowing lay persons to preside over non-eucharistic funeral services in church when necessary. Rome confirmed this decision on April 1, 1971.

c. A christian burial can be given to unbaptized children whose parents wished them to be baptized if the local Ordinary judges that pastoral reasons make such a christian burial advisable and if this practice will not result in a weakening of faith in the doctrine of the necessity of baptism.

d. As the Tumba — absolution — is abolished in the new rite and is replaced with the last commendation and farewell at an actual funeral, our bishops requested the SCDW to allow the Tumba

²³ BEF, 1969, p. 730.

²⁴ GRAF, H., SVD, *Post-Vatican II Funeral Liturgy*, LIB, 1972, pp. 152-163; *Liturgical Prayer for the Dead*, BEF, 1978, p. 141-150.

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still in the absence of the dead body. Rome gave the permission on April 1, 1971, but with the injunction that a good catechesis should gradually lead to the elimination of the Tumba.

e. Our bishops recommended several forms of prayers as substitute for the Tumba.

HOLY WEEK

Holy Week Rites. (February, 1977; LIB, 1971, pp. 28-54).

a. The use of the revised Holy Week Rites in english, already approved by the CBCP at their meeting of January 1970, was confirmed by Rome on January 13, 1971.

b. Three adaptations in the Holy Week were approved by the bishops and confirmed by Rome on March 16, 1971. These adaptations are:

(1) The use on Good Friday of as many crosses as are pastorally necessary for the smooth and orderly veneration by the people;

(2) Incorporation of the **Encuentro -Salubong-** as entrance rite at the beginning of the Mass on Easter morning.

(3) Renewal of the baptismal vows in the same way as in the Vigil Mass in each of the Masses of Easter Day.

Roman confirmation of the Holy Week Rites was also given for cebuano on March 17, 1971, and for hiligaynon on December 10, 1971.

MARRIAGE

New Philippine Marriage Rite Obligatory. (January, 1970; LIB, 1970, p. C

Our definitive version of the Philippine Marriage Rite, now adapted in some places to the new roman rite, has been approved by the bishops and confirmed by Rome on February 26, 1970. It becomes obligatory on the first sunday of May 1970.

The marriage rite was subsequently confirmed by Rome also in cebuano on October 16, 1971, and in bikolano on January 23, 1973.

New Edition of the Philippine Marriage Rite with Rite for Validation. (July, 1973; LIB, 1973, p. 75).

Our definitive edition of this rite was out of print by 1973. The bishops requested its reprint and approved an added chapter giving a rite for the validation of marriage.

Premarital Course. (July, 1969; LIB, 1969, pp. 59-62).

Our bishops request that the premarital examination of couples be done in the setting of a premarital course of three or more meetings with a priest.

No Class Distinction in Wedding Celebrations. (See Weddings)

Catechumenate for Baptism and Marriage. (February, 1971; LIB, 1971, pp. 28-54).

Our bishops agreed that they should ask their priests to introduce gradually some catechesis at the occasion of baptism and marriage. This decision is, at least for marriage, a watering down of the norm adopted in 1969 to require at least a three-session premarital course.

The Parish Priest as Extraordinary Minister of Confirmation. (See Confirmation).

On Mixed Marriages. (July, 1970; Episc. Concl., p. 20).

In taking the *Motu Proprio* "On Mixed Marriages"²⁵ wherein specific measures are left to the Episcopal Conferences, the bishops decided as follows:

— regarding norms nn. 4, 5 and 6, the forms for the promises and declarations therein specified shall be made in writing.

— after proper dispensation a marriage between a catholic and a baptized non-catholic may be performed within the Mass in accordance with norm no. 11.

MASONRY

Excommunication of Masons. (January, 1970; Episc. Concl., pp. 26-27).

The Conference fully approved the recommendation of the Commission on the Clergy to petition the Holy See for the non-application in the Philippines of c. 2335 of the CIC to the Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines. The petition states that the recommendation is meant only for the three (3) ancient craft degrees: **Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason**; and that it would cover only those catholics who, in the judgment of their local Ordinary are members in good faith of the Grand Lodge of the Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines.

²⁵ *Motu Proprio*, "Matrimonia Mixta" (Paul VI, 31 March, 1970), AAS, 1970, pp. 257-262; BEF, 1970, pp. 351-358.

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In its reply to the Conference petition the Holy See states: "In accordance with the circular letter dated July 18, 1974, which recalls a strict interpretation of c. 2335, the excommunication applies only to persons who are members of associations which militate against the Church. It is on the basis of this principle that the position of the different groups must be judged in each particular case".²⁶

MASS

Vernacular Mass. (January, 1965; LIB, 1965, pp. 2-4).

Almost all the parts of the Mass read, prayed and song aloud and the dialogues were permitted in the vernacular, including the presidential prayers, but excluding the eucharistic prayer and the prayers said in a low voice by the priest. Our bishops, however, had retained the **Kyrie** in greek, but later included it for vernacular use.

New Order of Mass Obligatory. (January, 1970; LIB, 1970, p. B).

The new Order of Mass is obligatory, in the english ICEL translation, from the First Sunday of Advent 1970, except for the new translations of the Gloria, Creed, Sanctus and Our Father, where the old texts should still be used.

The english text (ICEL) got roman approval on December 3, 1969; the ilocano version on August 18, 1972; and the ibanag on January 13, 1975,

The Simple Gradual Approved. (February, 1969; LIB, 1969, p. 5).

The Simple Gradual from the Sacred Congregation of Rites of September 3 1967, was approved by our bishops for use in the Philippines in the ICEL translation. It allows the singing or recitation of simpler antiphons for the responsorial psalm, and to use these, with their psalm, seasonally instead of having another text each day.

The Apostles' Creed at Mass. (February, 1969; LIB, 1969, p. 5)

The bishops approved and Rome confirmed the substitution of the Apostles' Creed for the Nicene Creed at Mass, on condition that the local Ordinary allows it and the Nicene Creed is used occasionally.

²⁶ TESTERA, F., OP, *Are Catholics Now Allowed to Join Masonry?*, BEF, 1979, pp. 352-356.

Rite of Peace at Mass. (July, 1969; LIB, 1969, p. 61).

The sign of peace is given by slightly bowing the head toward the person being greeted, with hands joined before the breast. The greeting is: "Peace be with you", and the answer, "And with you".

Two Readings on Sundays and Feasts. (July, 1969; LIB, 1969, p. 61).

Where pastoral reasons so demand, only two readings instead of three may be taken on Sundays, solemnities, and feasts which have three readings.²⁷

Other Readings on Ordinary Weekdays. (July, 1969; LIB, 1969, p. 61).

On ordinary weekdays, in Masses for special groups, other readings than those foreseen in the lectionary may be taken for meeting the needs of the group, provided they are taken from an approved lectionary.²⁸ For **Aguinaldo Masses**, those of LIB, 1966, p. 118).

Shared Homily. (January, 1970; LIB, 1970, p. B).

Shared homilies may be allowed by the Ordinary for small, educated groups only. Later, Rome excluded shared homilies, but this does not include shared reflections and the like.

Bodily Posture during Mass. (January, 1970; LIB, 1970, p. B).

The people should kneel during the eucharistic prayer, from immediately after the **Sanctus** until the beginning of the doxology **Through Him** . . . They may stand to receive the last blessing. Note that kneeling for communion is no longer mentioned. The Roman Order of the Mass recommends standing²⁹ and this was not amended again by the bishops.

Masses in Private Homes. (January, 1970; LIB, 1970, p. B)

Masses in private homes may be allowed only on extraordinary and special cases with due permission from the local Ordinary. Bishops are enjoined to set the example to avoid any possible discrimination.³⁰

Norms for Using the Directory of Masses with Children. (July, 1975; LIB, p. 140).

²⁷ GIRM, n. 318.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, n. 319.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, n. 21.

³⁰ *Instr.*, "On Masses for Special Groups", (SCDW, 15 May, 1969), AAS, 1969, pp. 806-811.

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a. **Number of Readings.** It is permitted that only one reading would be used in Masses with children, if it is difficult for them to have two or more, as for small children.

b. **Music by Children and Technically Produced Music.** The CBCP allows at Masses with children the use of instruments played by the children, as well as the playing of tapes and records to support the singing of the children.

Gestures and Actions during Mass. (July, 1975; LIB, p. 140).

The bishops suspended approval, until the matter is studied further, for introducing in the Mass dances, little dramas, tableaux, and the like.

Use of Audio-Visuals at Mass Approved. (July, 1975; LIB, 1975, p. 141.

The bishops approved the use of audio-visuals at Mass at special occasions, specially for children and young people or groups for whom it would be fruitful.

No Mass for the Dead on November 1. (July, 1975; LIB, p. 145).

The bishops requested Rome permission to celebrate in the afternoon or evening of November 1, a vigil Mass for the dead. This would be more in accordance with the mentality of the people, and particularly applicable for Masses in the cemetery.

The Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship turned out the request on August 20, 1975, for the reason that this would be against the spirit of the liturgy and that the Mass of November 1, **All Saints**, rings out the paschal significance of death. The Prefect of the Congregation stated orally that for these evening Masses the first reading could be taken from Masses for the dead.

White Accepted for Masses for the Dead. (July, 1975; LIB, p. 146).

The rule for using black or violet only for Masses for the Dead is not in force any more. Also white, for example, may be used. This according to an oral statement of the Prefect of the SCSDW to our national chairman of liturgy.

Mass for National Celebrations. (January, 1976; LIB, 1976, p. 109).

A eucharistic prayer for the Philippines, drafted earlier by Fr. J. Alipio, was revised and further developed by a special committee

of the NLC into a Mass for national celebrations. The bishops unanimously approved it and sent it to Rome for confirmation. The SCSDW assured us that it is still under study.

Misa ng Bayang Pilipino. (June, 1976; LIB, 1976, p. 109).

The Misa ng Bayang Pilipino, prepared by the Maryhill School of Theology, had been accepted by the bishops at their meeting in January 1976. The bishops made one further change, then accepted the text unanimously, and forwarded it to Rome for confirmation. It is still under study in Rome.³¹

Altar Bread and Mass Wine. (June, 1976; LIB, 1976, p. 111).

The CBCP recommended to member bishops to be vigilant in their dioceses regarding the use of the proper kind of flour for altar bread and natural grapevine as altar wine, rather than allow the use of low quality or questionable materials.³²

Saturday Evening Masses Counting for Sunday. (July, 1977; LIB, 1977, p. 163).

Renewed for five years in 1972, it lapsed on February 12, 1977.

Four Masses a Day. (July, 1977; LIB, 1977, p. 162).

At present bishops have to apply individually to Rome for the faculty to allow priests to celebrate up to four Masses a day where there is a serious pastoral need and priests are scarce. The Commission Chairman was requested to seek the extension of this faculty to all Ordinaries who express a need for it.

First Communion Mass. February, 1971; LIB, pp. 28-54).

A draft of a First Communion Mass, including a special eucharistic prayer, had been submitted to the CBCP as a model, (LIB, 1971, pp. 10-26. Our bishops approved it with some minor amendments and Rome confirmed it for experimental use on March 16, 1971. This permission was withdrawn for the eucharistic prayer when the new eucharistic prayers for children were released.

New Forms of Mass Vestments. (See Vestments).

Women in Liturgical Functions at Mass. (See Women).

³¹ CHUPUNGO, A., OSB, *Misa Ng Bayan Pilipino*, LIB, 1975, p. 147.

³² GIRM, nn. 282-284; LIB, 1969, pp. 89-91.

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Masses "Pro Populo". (July, 1970; Episc. Concl., p. 89).

In an answer to the letter of the Sacred Congregation of the Clergy of February 4, 1970, regarding the proposed reduction of Masses **pro populo**, the Conference voted in favor of their reduction to all sundays and local holydays a year.³³

MINISTERS

Decisions regarding Ministers.³⁴ (February, 1973; LIB, 1973, pp. 66-70).

The decisions of our bishops recall or specify further the roman norms.

a. The New Rite of Institution of Readers and Acolytes, Admission to Candidacy for the Diaconate and the Presbyterate and Commitment to Celibacy becomes immediately obligatory, even in latin if no translation is available. In english, the bishops accept the provisional translation of ICEL, which the SCDW approved for use in the Philippines on August 24, 1973.

b. The **lectorate** and the **acolytate** can be received also by the laymen (not women who do not aspire to become priests). For men who aspire to become priests, the **lectorate** should not be given earlier than in the First year of theology, and the **acolytate** in the second year, with an interval of at least three months between both.

c. Candidates for each ministry must present a personal, freely made petition to the Ordinary (religious to their major superior) for these ministries.

d. There must be an interval of at least six months between the conferring of the acolytate and that of the diaconate.

e. The rite for admission among the candidates for diaconate and the priesthood is obligatory for all except religious and is to be celebrated by the bishop himself. One can not be admitted to this candidacy unless he is at least twenty-one years old and has started the course of theology.

f. All candidates to the priesthood and unmarried candidates to the diaconate must publicly commit themselves to celibacy with the prescribed rite.

³³ TESTERA, F., OP, *The Obligation of Pastors of Saying the "Missa pro Populo"*, BEF, 1979, pp. 223-226.

³⁴ *Motu Propr.*, "Ministeria Quaedam", AAS, 1972, p. 529; CLD, VII, p. 690; *Motu Propr.*, "Ad Pascendum", AAS, 1972, p. 534; CLD, VII, p. 695. *Decree*, "Rites of Installation of Lectors and Acolytes, Admission to Major Orders and Assumption of Sacred Celibacy", (SCDW, 3 Dec., 1972), AAS, 1973, p. 274; CLD, VII, p. 705.

g. In the rite to the diaconate, ordinands must accept the obligation to pray the Liturgy of the Hours, **Breviary**. Permanent deacons are obliged to pray daily at least the morning and evening prayers of the Liturgy of the Hours.³⁵

MINISTRIES

Rites for Minor Ministries. (February, 1971; LIB, 1971, pp. 28-54).

a. At the request of our Bishops' Conference, the rites for the minor ministries of porter and exorcist are no longer to be conferred in the Philippines.³⁶

b. At the same time we are allowed to use experimentally the provisional new rites for admitting new candidates into the clerical state and those for conferring the ministries of lector and acolyte.

MISSAL

The Sacramentary Obligatory. (July, 1975; LIB, 1975, p. 135).

The bishops unanimously approved that the new Sacramentary — Altar Missal for the priests — in english be obligatory beginning the first sunday of advent, 1975.

Roman approval for the use of the ICEL sacramentary in the Philippines had already been received in January 1975.³⁷

MUSIC

Approval of Liturgical Music. (July, 1967; LIB, 1967, pp. 116).

The chairman of the subcommittee on sacred music is authorized to approve, in the name of the Conference, music for the part of the **celebrant**. Music for the parts of the faithful needs the approval of the Ordinary only.³⁸

³⁵ GRAF, H., SVD, *Minor Ministries, Admission of the Candidates to Sacred Orders, and Commitment to Celibacy*, BEF., 1973 pp. 322-326; MARIVOET, C., CICM, *Lay Ministers in the Philippines*, LIB, 1969, pp. 56-85.

³⁶ GRAF, H., SVD, *The Future of Tonsure and Minor Orders*, BEF, 1972, pp. 361-372.

³⁷ MARIVOET, C., *The New Missal is Now Complete*, LIB, 1970, pp. 62-66; 86-114.

³⁸ CHUPUNGO, A., OSB, *The Liturgical Year in the Context of Filipino Music*, LIB, 1971, pp. 130-135; MARIVOET, C., CICM, *Popular Music at Mass*, LIB, 1970, pp. 77-80.

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Old Texts of Songs of Ordinary still allowed. (February, 1969; LIB, 1969, p. 6).

Although the new texts of the Ordinary of the Mass should be used in the approved vernaculars, the bishops, in accordance with n. 55 of the Instruction on Sacred Music of March 5, 1967,³⁹ permit the continued singing of older texts for the songs of the Ordinary of the Mass — Sanctus, Agnus Dei, etc.).

Collections of Songs for Mass. (July, 1969; LIB, 1969, p. 60).

The Bishops' Conference indicated the main collections from which songs for the Mass could be taken.⁴⁰

ORDINATION

New Rite of Ordination Approved. (January, 1970; LIB, 1970, p. C).

The bishops approved the new rite of Ordination of Bishops, Priests and Deacons in the provisional ICEL version.⁴¹

Essential Form of Ordination Rite. (July, 1977; LIB, 1977, pp. 130-132).

The SCSDW released the text of the definitive essential form in english of the Rite of Ordination of Deacons, Priests and Bishops and approved it for use in the Philippines on August 12, 1977. The correct, final text is given in LIB, 1977, pp. 131-132).

Triple Blessing during Ordination Rite. (See **Blessing**).

PARISH

Means to provide Support for the Parish. (January, 1969).

On the means to provide support for the parish, the following principles are to be observed.

a. The duty of the faithful to support their parish; hence, the intensification of instruction for the faithful to realize and practice their duty.

³⁹ AAS, 1967, pp. 300-320; CLD, VI, pp. 735-754.

⁴⁰ *Letter*, "On the Minimum Repertoire of Plain Chant", (SCDW, April, 1974); *Notitiae*, 1974, pp. 123-126.

⁴¹ *Apost. Const.*, "Pontificalis Romani", AAS, 1968, pp. 369-373; BEF, 1968, pp. 652-656.

b. Semblance of commercialism, particularly in the administration of sacraments should be eschewed, hence:

1. In accordance with Vatican II, classifications in the administration of sacraments will be gradually eliminated.
2. The traditional "Arancel" system will eventually be eliminated in the light of Vatican II.

c. The meaning and value of voluntary donations towards the support of the parish, therefore:

1. Intensive and extensive education be imparted to the faithful to learn the meaning and value of said donations, particularly in the reception of certain sacraments.
2. In the preparation for the eventual elimination of the Arancel, the faithful must be educated in the fulfillment of their above mentioned duty through sunday collections.

d. The diocese should help provide for the needy parishes. Consequently, the diocese will put up investments from whatever available sources of income to generate trust funds that can supplement the lack of funds in poor parishes.

e. With the permission of the Holy See and with the exclusion of the Obras Pias, parish income from Church properties, excluding the income derived from the present Arancel, shall be centralized in the diocesan curia as a source of assistance to poor parishes. (BEF, 1977, pp. 484-493).

PENANCE (See also CONFESSION, ABSOLUTION)

The New Rite of Penance. (July, 1975; LIB, 1975, pp. 135-136).

a. **Obligation.** The new Rite of Penance⁴² in english, approved since January 1975, becomes obligatory on the first Sunday of advent, 1976.

b. **Vestments.** The bishops recommend to priests to use at least the stole for confession, unless in circumstances where it is difficult or not advisable to use it.

c. **Reconciliation Room as Alternative for Confessional.** The bishops recommend as an alternative to the confessional, the use of a reconciliation room, where those who want it can confess face to face to the priest. (LIB, 1975, pp. 136-137).

The Rite of Penance was confirmed in tagalog on May 20, 1976.⁴³

⁴² LIB, 1975, pp. 66-80.

⁴³ GRAF, H., SVD, *New Rites for the Sacrament of Penance*, BEF, 1975, pp. 201-218; MARIVOET, C., CICM, *The New Rite of Penance*, LIB, 1975, pp. 57-65.

PRAYER-DAYS OF

Special Days of Prayer. (July, 1969; LIB, 1969, p. 59).

As Rogation and Ember Days are abolished in the new Missal and yet there may be special times of prayer for various needs, the bishops leave the setting aside of such days to the discretion of each Ordinary. Texts are then to be taken from among the Masses for various needs.

Bishops' Ordination Day Commemorated. (July, 1969; LIB, 1969, p. 60).

The Ordo will retain the day of ordination of bishops. If the calendar allows it, a votive Mass for this intention will be said, otherwise priests will be asked to at least pray for the Ordinary. A special intention should be added in the General Intercessions in any case.

Tribal Filipino Sunday. (July, 1978; BEF, 1979, p. 7).

The bishops agreed to make the second sunday of October every year, a **Tribal Filipino Sunday**. The purpose is to focus the attention of our faithful on our brothers in the remote areas of the country. A model sermon for the occasion will be supplied by the Commission on Tribal Filipinos.

PREFACES

New Prefaces Approved in English. (July, 1967; LIB, 1967, p. 116).

An additional preface for advent and one for the feast of the Holy Eucharist have been approved in english and are official for the Philippines.

New Prefaces and Eucharistic Prayers. (February, 1969; LIB, 1969, p. 2).

Three new eucharistic prayers and eight prefaces had been released by Rome in latin on May 23, 1968. The National Liturgical Commission (NLC) had applied to Rome for permission to use them in the english ICEL translation. This permission was received and promulgated by a decree of the NLC on January 31, 1969, which set February 15, 1969 as the date they could be used. The same decree also made it mandatory, from May 1, 1969, to use eucharistic prayer 1 — the Roman Canon — in the revised, definitive ICEL translation.

PRIESTS

Retention of Priests' Titles. (January, 1970; *Episc. Concl.*, p. 20).

The Conference decided that the traditional titles and designations applied to priests be retained in the Philippines, since they are well accepted by the people and savor of no pomp or superiority.

Establishment of the Senate of Priests in each Diocese.⁴⁴ (January, 1970; *Episc. Concl.*, p. 21).

The Conference approved that a Senate of Priests be established in every diocese using as guidelines the general norms formulated jointly by the Administrative Council and the Commission on the Clergy, as well as the resolutions of the Congregation of the Clergy during its last meeting in Rome.

Priests' Remuneration and Social Security.⁴⁵ (January, 1970; *Episc. Concl.*, p. 21).

The Conference approved the following recommendations of the Commission on the Clergy, that in every diocese at least three parishes — one rich, middle class and poor — implement *ad experimentum* the conclusion of the CBCP January, 1969 meeting on clergy remuneration and social security.

As regards clergy remuneration, our priests should be given two kinds of remuneration, namely, 1) a personal basic remuneration which should be followed in the whole country, and 2) an allowance that should be decided on a diocesan level according to the conditions and financial capabilities of each diocese.

The allowance shall include the following:

1) Board and lodging, house service, light and water; 2) Clothing and laundry; 3) Personal needs (soap, barber, cigarettes . . .); 4) Transportation; 5) Recreation; 6) Reading matter; 7) Allowance for emergencies; 8) Insurance and retirement; 9) Retreat and vacations.

Concerning Clergy Social Security:⁴⁶

a) The diocesan curia shall set aside investment funds for sickness, retirement and death provisions for the clergy. Other means toward the same purpose may also be employed.

⁴⁴ *Ecclesiae Sanctae*, nn. 15-17; Priests' Council, (S.C. pro Cler., 11 apr. 1970), AAS, 1970, p. 459; CLD, VII, pp. 383-390.

⁴⁵ *Presbyter. Ordinis*, nn. 20, 21; *Ecclesiae Sanctae*, n. 8.

⁴⁶ The CBCP established a Pension Plan and a Supplementary Pension Plan as of Jan. 1, 1975, to provide, through a Pension Fund, for the payment of retirement, death, disability or separation benefits to bishops and diocesan priests.

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b) Encouragement towards the formation of an association of the clergy also for sickness, retirement and death benefits.

c) Eventual formation of Priests' Association as in the preceding number, on an interdiocesan or national level.

THANKSGIVING DAY

National Thanksgiving Day on December 8. (July, 1975; LIB, 1975, p. 146).

The CBCP gave the reminder that our National Thanksgiving Day, according to an earlier decision, apparently never promulgated, is December 8, the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, our national patroness.

TRIBUNALS

Matrimonial Tribunals.⁴⁷ (July, 1970; Episc. Concl., p. 72).

The Conference approved the following recommendations which needed the approval of the Holy See, to wit:

1. The faculty to instruct processes **super matrimonio rato** without seeking previous permission from the Congregation of the Sacraments.

2. That the regulation requiring a collegiate tribunal be relaxed and in its place allow the practice of one judge render the decision. However this petition will have to be based on the following circumstances:

a) the case is clear and its decision evident; b) the presence of a collegiate tribunal is difficult to achieve due to reasonable causes.⁴⁸

Marriage Regional Tribunals.⁴⁹ (July, 1970; Episc. Concl., p. 72).

The Conference endorsed the recommendations of the **Ad Hoc** Committee with regard to the letter of the Apostolic Nuncio (n. 6472/May 5, 1970) on the erection of Regional Tribunals of First and Second Instance for all ecclesiastical cases as follows:

⁴⁷ *Motu Propr.*, "Causas Matrimoniales", (Paul VI, 28 March, 1971), AAS, 1971, p. 441; CLD, VII, p. 669.

⁴⁸ TESTERA, F., OP, Myth and Reality: Church Marriage Tribunals in the Philippines, BEF, 1978, pp. 279-291.

⁴⁹ Norms for Interdiocesan, Regional or Interegional Tribunals, (Sign Apost., 28 Dec., 1970), AAS, 1971, p. 480; CLD, VII, p. 920.

a) Regional Tribunals of First Instance to be established in each Metropolitan See to handle cases coming from the respective Ecclesiastical Province — not only of matrimonial cases but of any other cases.

b) Regional Tribunals of Second Instance to be established in Manila for Luzon, in Cebu for the Visayas and in Davao for Mindanao.

c) To meet the difficulty of a certain diocese which is too far from the Metropolitan See, provision is made in the decree for each diocese to have a full team of tribunal personnel, which team can be delegated to act in a particular case in its own geographical area.

Ecclesiastical Courts of Second Instance. (FEF, 1973, pp. 235-236).

The President of the CBCP submitted to the Holy See the following requests:

1. That each Tribunal of First Instance in the Philippine Islands may serve as Tribunal of Second Instance to the other Tribunals established in the nation in individual cases as the need might require.

2. That the Episcopal Conference be given the power to appoint and approve, upon request of the bishop of each region, each and all members of the First Instance Tribunal of that region. That said Regional Tribunals of First Instance, thus constituted be endowed with the power to take the place of other regional tribunals, which may be impeded in whatever manner, in any diocese of the Philippines upon request of the local Ordinary without any further need of approval or permission from any higher authority.

The Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signature, after an in-depth study of the petition and having considered the peculiar conditions obtaining in the Philippines, decreed as follows:

1. The faculty requested for in n. 1 above, is hereby granted provided the selection of the Second Instance Tribunal be made by the President of the Episcopal Conference after listening to the Bishops Moderators of both the tribunal *a quo* and that *ad quem*, and without prejudice to the right of direct appeal to the Roman Rota in accordance with c. 1959, 1 of the CJC.

2. The faculty asked for in n. 2 above is likewise granted provided that such Tribunals before accepting cases, which are not under their jurisdiction, should obtain the permission, in individual

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cases, from the President of the Episcopal Conference, who should seek the **votum** of the respective Bishops Moderators of both the requested and the impeded Tribunals.

One Judge Tribunals for Courts of Second Instance. (January, 1976; Episc. Concl., p. 18).

Upon the suggestion of the Commission on Canon Law, the Conference made the following decisions:

1. that a petition be made to the Holy See to allow one-judge tribunals to act as Courts of Second Instance in the Philippines.

VERNACULAR LANGUAGE

Vernacular Liturgical Languages. (January, 1964, 1965; LIB, 1966, pp. 26-28).

Ten vernacular languages of the Philippines were recognized for liturgical celebrations in the liturgy: english, spanish, tagalog, cebuano, ilocano, bicolano, pampango, pangasinan, hiligaynon (ilongo), samareño.

For english the texts used in, and approved for the USA were to be used, and for spanish those applicable in Spain.

For the local vernaculars, texts already in existence could be used temporarily; for those parts that did not yet exist in the vernacular, regional bishops could approve new translations and the Bishops Conference authorize them after they have been submitted to and confirmed by Rome.

Chabacano approved as Liturgical Language. (July, 1967; LIB, 1967, p. 116).

Chabacano was approved in addition to the ten languages already official for liturgical use.

Ibanag as Additional Liturgical Language. (July, 1974; LIB, 1975, p. 35).

Our bishops accepted ibanag as the twelfth language officially recognized for the liturgy. They approved its translation of the Order of the Mass, including the eucharistic prayers. Rome confirmed this decision on January 13, 1975.

Use of Vernaculars in the Liturgy. (January, 1975; LIB, 1975, pp. 35-36).

At present twelve languages have been accepted as official for the liturgy in the Philippines. A communication from the Apostolic Nuncio to the Conference meeting of January 1975, later, followed by a letter to the Conference from the Vatican Secretariat of State and then by a letter from the SCSDW on June 5, 1976, intends to restrict local vernaculars that can be used in the liturgy to those that are recognized by the government as languages of instruction in schools. The bishops, as pastors, agreed that those languages spoken by large groups of people should be recognized for the liturgy, even if not taught in schools.

First New Vernacular Translations Approved by Rome. (January, 1965; LIB, 1965, p. 25).

On March 27, 1965, the **Consilium** approved, that is, confirmed, the first new texts in the vernacular proposed by our bishops. They were texts for the Mass and sacraments in cebuano, samareño and hiligaynon.

Rules for Vernacular Translations. (January, 1970; LIB, 1970, p. C).

Regional committees should, according to the rules, be representative of the language region and work out their texts in consultation.

Sacraments in the Vernacular. (January, 1964, 1965; LIB, 1966, p. 28).

Also the other sacraments, except Holy Orders, could be celebrated in the vernacular, including the essential form; this applied also to the distribution of communion outside Mass. However, the form of penance was to be said in latin, though no written declaration to this effect can be located. For Holy Orders, only the allocution at the beginning of each ordination (bishop, priest, deacon), the examination of the bishop elect, and the admonitions were permitted in the vernacular.

Sacramentals. (January, 1964, 1965; LIB, 1966, p. 28).

Included also for vernacular celebrations were the sacramentals and the funeral rites.⁵⁰

Breviary in the Vernacular. (See **Breviary**)

⁵⁰ GRAF, H., S.V.D.; *Sacramentals and Their Ministers*, BEF 1978, pp. 645-652.

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"Tantum Ergo" in the Vernacular. (July, 1967; LIB, 1967, p. 116).

The Tantum Ergo may be sung in translation, and other suitable eucharistic hymns may be substituted during Benediction.

Vernacular Mass. (See Mass).

VESTMENTS

Cassock and Alb. (July, 1970; LIB, 1973, pp. 52-56).

As the General Instruction of the Mass did not mention any longer the cassock among the liturgical vestments for Mass, our bishops, at their meeting of July, 1969, asked themselves what were the implications, and whether the white cassock could be used as alb. It was decided to consult Rome. The SCDW answered on August 5, 1969 that 1) the cassock is not a liturgical vestment and, hence, not required for Mass; the proper vestment is the alb. 2) However, since the white cassock is much similar to the alm, it may be used instead, provided it be clean and not worn as street dress during the day.⁵¹

This matter was taken up again at the meeting of July 1970 and hotly debated as to its interpretation. No decision was published but later each Ordinary applied his own interpretation in his diocese.

New Forms of Mass Vestments Approved. (February, 1973; LIB, 1973, pp. 55-56).

At the CBCP meetings of January and July 1972, a proposal had been presented for adopting for the Philippines the wider form of chasuble, but no action had been taken. At the February, 1973 meeting the bishops accepted the new form, which is an ample chasuble almost reaching the floor; it needs no alb underneath and the stole is worn on top of it. The SCDW confirmed this decision on April 3, 1973, but with the restriction that it should be used for special occasions, like concelebrations or Masses outside a sacred place.

WEDDINGS

No Class Distinction in Wedding Celebrations. (July, 1969; LIB, 1969, p. 59).

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy had forbidden to pay any special honor in the liturgy to "any private person or classes

⁵¹ GIRM, nn. 298-300; LIB, 1969, pp. 88-89.

of persons, whether in the ceremonies or by external display" (art. 32); the marriage rite had specifically reiterated this rule in connection with marriage. (**Introduction to the Rite**, n. 10). Taking cognizance of the fact that in many places there are still "classes" of marriages, the CBCP orders all classes to be abolished and instructs dioceses to implement this norm as soon as possible.

Rites for Wedding Anniversaries. (February, 1971; LIB, 1977, p. 147).

The CBCP approved for the Philippines a set of prayers, renewal of consent and General Intercessions for Wedding Anniversaries. (LIB, 1970, pp. 74-76; 114-116). These texts have been appended to the 1973 edition of the marriage rite.

WOMEN

Women in Liturgical Functions at Mass. (July, 1969; LIB, 1969, p. 61).

Our bishops allow women to act as readers, commentators, leaders of praying and singing, saying the intentions of the General Intercessions, from a place outside the sanctuary, i.e. not close to the altar,⁵² (Gen. Instruc. of Mass, n. 66).

The Place of Women as Ministers in Church. (February, 1971; LIB, 1971, pp. 28-54).

The bishops now allow women to act as lectors from the place where the readings are normally proclaimed. This decision does away with misinterpretation of "outside the sanctuary", from where they were earlier to proclaim the Word.

⁵² GIRM, n. 66.

CASES AND QUERIES

A PROBLEM OF ARANCEL

INTRODUCTION. I am the Pastor of a particular parish. Seven years ago my Bishop assigned an attached priest to this parish. He is diligent, attends faithfully to ministerial and pastoral works such as marriage arrangements, marriage catechetics, confessions, sick calls, and others. However, in accordance with the law of arancel of this Ecclesiastical Province, he is not entitled to any percentage of the parish income.

Recently an Assistant Pastor has been assigned to this same Parish. He is frequently absent and works only when he is previously assigned or instructed. As assistant he is entitled to ten percent out of the sixty percent of the income of the parish reserved to the Parish Priest.

QUESTION. Should I give the above mentioned ten percent to the Assistant Priest merely by reason of being Assistant even though he is absent or, if ever present, does not perform all the duties incumbent upon him? Should I give it to the Attached Priest if not *de condigno* at least *de congruo*?

ANSWER:

1. **The law.** The distribution of arancel or the percentage of the parish income that should go to the priests assigned to the parish, falls under the rules for benefice. Hence, only the Assistant Parish Priest is entitled to the ten percent of the sixty percent of the parish income reserved to the Parish Priest. The law does not recognize the condition of an attached priest. That is why, I do not believe that you, as Parish Priest, should take the amount which by law corresponds to the Assistant to give it to another priest. Strictly speaking, the application of this rule presupposes that the Assistant Parish Priest is actually rendering his duties as such.

2. **The obligation of the Assistant Priest.** The problem seems to be rooted in the fact that, in your estimation, the assistant you have does not comply with his obligations.

If the Assistant Parish Priest is permanently absent from the Parish and does not involve himself in the work after having been properly informed and advised, I suggest that you seek his removal. While he is not removed he is entitled to a share of the parish income and you will only create trouble by taking what is due to him in order to pay someone else who works in his place.

In the presentation of the case you mentioned that the Assistant Priest works when he is previously assigned. Hence, the first step in the solution of your problem is to arrange a fraternal dialogue with him and agree on a just distribution of work. You should also get him to agree that if ever it would be impossible for him to comply with the agreed assignments he will pay the attached priest whenever the latter acts as a substitute. By working out such agreements you need not take a unilateral decision and you will avoid conflict.

3. The compensation of the attached priest. Having in mind the case as you presented it, I believe the attached priest should be rewarded in a just manner for the pastoral work and services rendered to the parish. This is a matter of justice. But I advise you not to take the money for this purpose from the percentage of the parish income that is due to your Assistant Priest, for if you do so more problems and misunderstandings between you and your assistant will arise and further widen your communication gap. While you will argue that he is irresponsible, he will probably maintain that his absences are justifiable and your unilateral decision disproportionate to his shortcomings.

From what source should the Parish Priest take the payment for the attached priest? If the assistant will not voluntarily relinquish part of his percentage to pay for that part of his work that is done by the attached priest, the Parish Priest may consider the attached priest a Guest Priest and pay whatever is due to him according to the demands of justice, taking the money from the income generated by his work in the form of fees for baptisms, weddings and the like, or from church collections. Such income shall not be included in the income to be distributed to the Parish Priest and his assistant. For example, if five weddings have been officiated by the attached priest and the fee for the priest in these five weddings amounted to two hundred and fifty pesos (P250.00), this amount will be given to the attached priest and it will not be included in the total to be divided between the Parish Priest and his assistant. If furthermore the attached priest has heard confessions on a regular basis while the Parish Priest and his assistant priest have not, he shall be given compensation for this per hour, equivalent to what he would

get had he taught in a school for the same length of time. In this case the money will be taken from the Sunday collection and the amount will not be included in what has to be distributed to the Parish Priest and his assistant according to rules.

It is obvious that the main reason of a stipend or arancel is the spiritual welfare of the parish which has to be preserved and for this it is necessary that the provision for the material needs of those who serve it is adequate.

It is not advisable that you use the clause of the law of arancels of your Ecclesiastical Province stipulating that the ten percent due to the Assistant should not be given if he is absent unless it is obvious and clear that his absence has no justifiable reason. When all that is clear is the fact of the Assistant's absence, the Parish Priest risks making a wrong decision because his explanation of the absence might be unilateral and subjective. The assistant, when given no chance to explain his side, will consider the Parish Priest's decision unreasonable and unfair.

4. Summing up. It seems to me that your problem can be solved through a fraternal agreement. If attempts toward this fail and you do not want that part of the parish income be excluded from the amount to be distributed by percentage to you and your assistant, you may have to petition the Bishop for your assistant's removal. The attached priest, in any case, deserves compensation proportionate to his contribution to the good of the parish. If necessary, the parish should give this to him through extra-legal — though not illegal — means. As long as we seek the common good that the law desires to achieve, we may use means that the law does not envisage.

As a parting comment, you might find the solution of your problem in working for the attached priest to become an Assistant Priest in addition to the one you now have.

Fr. Bonifacio Solis, O.P.

COMMUNICATION

ON THE COMING VISIT OF JOHN PAUL II

The Editor,
Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas
U.S.T. Manila

Dear Father,

In connection with the coming visit of the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, to the Philippines, may I quote from a talk he gave in Dublin, Ireland recently:

He spoke of — “the centuries old practice of the sacrament of Penance... the practice of individual confession...”

Then he went on to say — “It was with great joy that I received the news that the Irish bishops had asked all the faithful to go to confession as a part of a great spiritual preparation for my visit to Ireland. You could not have given me a greater joy or a greater gift.”

I have heard from private sources that there was a tremendous response to this request of the bishops.

Perhaps we could do the same here in the Philippines.

(Sgd.) Fr. Patrick Murley
Dancalan
Negros Occidental

HOMILETICS

By

Regino O. Cortes, O.P.

1. BIBLICAL NOTES FOR FEBRUARY

FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

(February 3, 1980)

First Reading: Isaiah 6:1-2a. 3-8

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 (or 15:3-8.11)

Gospel Reading: Luke 5:1-11

First Reading: The following verses form part of the Prologue of the so-called Book of Immanuel (Isaiah 7:1-12:6). It is the inaugural vision of the Prophet Isaiah which happened in the year of King Uzziah's death, 740 B.C. The reign of King Uzziah was characterized by prosperity and agricultural development. His death was a loss to the kingdom and reaffirms man's mortality. On the other side of the picture Yahweh's transcendence was manifested to Isaiah in this vision. Israel's prosperity was not exactly due to the king who was a mere mortal but to God. The threefold repetition of the word "holy" indicates the superlative degree. Yahweh is holy in a super-eminent degree. The sign of the divine presence is shown by the smoke as the cloud which enveloped the Ark of the Covenant in the desert (Exodus 40:34). "What a wretched state I am in! I am lost,..." Isaiah was filled with awe: "could a man see God and live?" (Exodus 33:20). "With this (live coal) he touched my mouth" (verse 7) symbolizing the prophet's purification through God's initiative.

Second Reading: Paul's doctrine in this text is about the fact of the resurrection, occasioned probably by some Corinthians who deny the resurrection of the body. But there is resurrection of the body proven by Christ's resurrection. The death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord is proven by the Scriptures, citing in this respect Isaiah 53 on the Suffering Servant and Psalm 16:8-11; then by witnesses: first Christ appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve (stereotyped expression for the apostolic college); then to more than 500, to James, again to the Apostles and finally to Paul, who was an "ektroma", one untimely born. Paul omits the apparition to the women mentioned in the gospels perhaps because under Jewish law only men are considered responsible witnesses.

Gospel Reading: The story of the call of Peter is paralleled in Mark 1:16-20 but without the miraculous catch of fishes. It is quite improbable that Mark could have forgotten this miraculous catch previous to the call of Peter as his gospel was influenced by Peter himself. The last part, nevertheless, is parallel to the story of John 21:1-11 after the resurrection. It seems probable that Luke here combines different events to emphasize symbolically the fuller significance of Simon Peter's call. The center of the story is Peter. Andrew is not even mentioned.

Unlike the other Evangelists who speak of the Sea of Galilee Luke calls it properly as the Lake of Gennesaret, for it is really a lake. It is an oblong shape body of water about 21 kilometers long and 12 kilometers wide, fresh water and abounding with fish even today. Gennesaret is a place north-west of the Lake. St. Luke prefers the greek title "Epistata" (v. 5) meaning "Master" rather than the hebrew Rabbi probably because of his greek readers. In v. 8 there was a change from "Master" to "Lord" a term reserved to a divinity. In v. 10 Luke presents Jesus speaking only to Simon whereas in Mark 1:17 he addressed first Simon and Andrew and afterwards James and John. Then "they left everything," a phrase proper to Luke as the Evangelist of total renunciation showing the apostolic response a heroic one.

SIXTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (February 10, 1980)

First Reading: Jeremiah 17:5-8

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Gospel Reading: Luke 6:17.20-26

First Reading: These wisdom sayings in Jeremiah are observed to be closely parallel to Psalm 1. However this idea of the just man compared to a fertile tree is found in many sapiential texts, like Proverbs 3:18; 11:13; Psalm 52:10; Sirach or Ecclesiasticus 24:13. The style or literary form of these verses is of "blessings" and "curses" frequent in biblical literature. Some scholars think that Psalm 1 is dependent on this text from Jeremiah since in that Psalm the "trust in Yahweh" (v. 7) is substituted by "trust in the Law of Yahweh" (v. 2) which is characteristic of the post-exilic period. The message of the text is clear: the man who puts his trust in God has no worry in time of distress, will always remain strong and never ceases to bear fruit.

Second Reading: A continuation of last Sunday's second reading. After Paul has proven from many witnesses that Christ has truly risen he adds an argument *ex absurdo*. If Christ had not risen from the dead his preaching would have been a waste of time and our faith would have been utterly useless. In fact Christ's resurrection is the culminating event of the history of salvation. With Christ man conquered sin, Satan, and death. All Christians share in this risen life by their incorporation in Christ through baptism. Christ is the first fruit of all those who have fallen asleep". As the offering of the first fruit symbolizes the offering of the entire fruits or harvest to God, so also the resurrection of Christ as the first includes the resurrection of all who are united with him.

Gospel Reading: Counting the introduction "blessed" or "happy" in the parallel passage of Matthew 5:3-12 we can say that Matthew has 9 beatitudes. St. Luke on the other hand has 4 beatitudes and woes or curses. Each beatitude in Luke has its corresponding woes. It can also be observed that Luke uses more direct speech, preferring the second person to the third person of Matthew: "you who are poor," "you who are hungry now", "you who are rich", "you who have your fill now". The underlying hebrew word for "happy" is 'asre as in Psalm 1:1; 32:1; Isaiah 56:2, and not *baruk*, which is a liturgical expression of blessing. 'Asre is translated *makarioi* in greek that is why this literary style is also called a *makarism*.

The "poor", in greek *ptochoi* corresponds to the hebrew 'anawim, the humble, who, being aware of their own insufficiency looks for their sustenance from God alone. This is not, therefore, a social concept but a religious one.

The "curses" or "woes" (verses 24-26) are only found in Luke which serve as the antithesis of the "blessings".

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (February 17, 1980)

First Reading: 1 Samuel 26:2.7-9. 12-13. 22-23

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:45-49

Gospel Reading: Luke 6:27-38

First Reading: This passage is another narrative of how David spared the life of Saul in spite of the fact that Saul had been wanting to kill him. A similar story is given in chapter 24. Joab and Abishai were nephews of David, sons of his sister Zeruah according to 1 Chronicles 2:16. Here David proved his loyalty to Saul as God's anointed at the cost of being banished from his homeland.

Second Reading: After enumerating in the preceding verses some characteristics of a resurrected body: incorruptibility, clarity, agility, and spirituality, St. Paul explains more the last characteristic (vv. 45-49). He distinguishes the **animal-body** which is vivified by the "soul" (**psyche**) and the **spiritual body**, that which is vivified by the "spirit" (**pneuma**). It does not mean that Paul teaches two different principles of life in man. It is the same principle of life which he calls "soul" in so far as it informs the body according to its natural state, while it is called "spirit" when it acts under the influence and motion of the Holy Spirit. Adam was the source of this natural **psychic** life, while the Risen Christ, sending the Holy Spirit and making men sharers of his glorified life is the source of that **spiritual** life. Those who are baptized participate in the life of the Risen Christ. By the action of the Holy Spirit whom he has sent, the baptized are being transformed more and more into Christ's image (cf. 2 Corinthians 3.18), until at his second coming for Parousia, their bodies will become like his risen body: incorruptible, glorious, powerful, spiritual.

Gospel Reading: A parallel passage of this pericope of loving one's enemies is found in Matthew 5:38-48. Similar verses are also found in Romans 12:14; 1 Corinthians 4:12; and 1 John. Animosity is shown in three ways: in thoughts (hate); in words (curse); and in deeds (bad treatment). To show your love: do good to those who hate, bless those who curse, pray for those who maltreat you. In verse 31 we have the golden rule expressed by our Lord in a positive manner: "Treat others as you would like them to treat you". This is found expressed in a negative form in Tobias 4:15, Philo, Confucius, and in the Talmud (Shabbath, 31a). While in Matthew the evildoers were identified as "publicans and Gentiles", St. Luke used the general term of sinners. Finally in v. 36, where St. Matthew uses "be perfect" he has "be compassionate" or "be merciful". In Old Testament usage, compassion or mercy is usually attributed to God. Luke makes this attributes also a goal to be achieved by Christ's disciples.

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT (February 24, 1980)

First Reading: Deuteronomy 26:4-10

Second Reading: Romans 10:8-13

Gospel Reading: Luke 4:1-13

First Reading: The following verses from Deuteronomy has been termed by some biblical scholars as the "historical credo" pronounced by the pious Israelite at the offering of the first fruits probably

during the spring festival of Unleavened Bread or "Azymes". The "father" mentioned here as a wandering Aramaean is no other than Jacob whose family is from Aram.

Second Reading: St. Paul makes a contrast of the righteousness or justification which comes from the Mosaic Law and that which comes from faith. He implies that righteousness through the Law requires much effort aside from the fact that it does not perfectly justify, compared with justification through faith which is easy to achieve. "The word, that is the faith we proclaim, is very near to you, it is in your lips and in your heart". The expressions: "confess with the lips", "believe in your heart" indicate the two aspects which Christian faith should have, interior as well as exterior. As the essential object of that confession of faith St. Paul enjoins the believer to profess that "Jesus is Lord", to acknowledge Christ as the giver of salvation. For Paul everyone is called to this new justification, Jews as well as Greeks. The phrase: "those who call on the name of the Lord" (Joel 3:5) is referred to pious Jews, now it is transferred to Christians as in first Corinthians 1:2 and Acts 9:14. Whereas salvation was expected by the Israelites from the Old Testament "Kyrios" or Yahweh, now they are to expect it from the Kyrios whom Yahweh himself instituted as such (Acts 2:36), Christ the Lord.

Gospel Reading: Immediately after baptism the synoptics narrate Jesus' temptations in the desert. St. Mark mentions this episode in a very general way. In contrast Matthew and Luke have a detailed account of this temptation but still with remarkable differences dictated more by their respective theology rather than by the exact order of the temptations. The last temptation in Matthew was on a high mountain which is the second in Luke. For this Evangelist the climax of his temptation narrative is Jerusalem. According to Luke's theology Jesus' entire ministry leads towards Jerusalem.

"Filled with the Holy Spirit": these words confirm 3:22 where it is said that the Holy Spirit descended on him. While Matthew places the temptations after our Lord's stay of 40 days in the desert, St. Luke uses the imperfect. "He was being tempted there by the devil for forty days". (v. 2).

The final observation of Luke that after "having exhausted all these ways of tempting him, the devil left him," but only "to return at the appointed time" could refer to the decisive attack of the devil at the moment of his passion.

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT (March 2, 1980)

First Reading: Genesis 15:5-12. 17-18

Second Reading: Philippians 3:17-4:1

Gospel Reading: Luke 9:28b-36

First Reading: Biblical critics believe this chapter which speaks of Yahweh's covenant with Abraham to be a compilation from different sources since there seems to be some contradictions in the time element in the narrative. In verse 5 the scene is set at night while in verse 12 the sun was just setting. Only in v. 17 does it become dark. Be as it may for the sources, we have in the text two promises of God: 1) the promise of descendants to Abraham; 2) the giving of the land. For the first promise Abraham put his faith unconditionally in God and he was, therefore, accounted as "just" or "righteous". The hebrew word *sedaqah* translated as "justice" or "righteousness" means right relationship with God which later Christian theology would relate it to sanctifying grace. The second promise was sealed by a covenant. The rite of the covenant was characterized by the slaughtering of the animals and dividing them into two. The contracting parties passed between the two halves to show their willingness to suffer the fate of the animals if they broke the covenant. God passed in between in the form of "a smoking furnace and a firebrand", (v. 18).

Second Reading: "Be united in following my rule of life" (v. 17). Paul offers himself as a model for imitation as he himself is an imitator of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1). The "enemies of the cross of Christ" were those who still cling to dietary laws, "making food into their god," and to circumcision which for Paul is a thing they ought to be shameful of. For Christians, their homeland is in heaven, having renounced the things of the earth. The Lord Jesus will then transform their bodies like his own glorious body.

Gospel Reading: The Transfiguration. After the first prediction of his passion (Luke 9:22) Jesus brought his chosen apostles, Peter, John and James to the mountain (a definite mountain for Luke without naming it, although tradition localizes it at Mt. Tabor). There he was transfigured in front of them. This was a foretaste of glory which he also predicted that would come after his passion. "Suddenly there were two men there talking to him; they were Moses and Elijah": Moses representing the Law and Elijah the Prophets. The subject of their conversation was his "departure"

which will be in Jerusalem. This clearly refers to his passion. It is significant that Luke uses the greek word **exodus** referring to the passion of Christ thus confirming the typology of the Old Testament exodus. V. 35 is an echo of Christ's baptism. Instead of "the Chosen One" (**ho eklelegmenos**) some manuscripts have **ho agapetos** ("My Beloved") which is probably due to the harmonization between Matthew and Mark. The disciples kept this "messianic secret" until after the resurrection.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT (March 9, 1980)

First Reading: Exodus 3.1-8a. 13-15

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:1-6. 10-12

Gospel Reading: Luke 13:1-9

First Reading: The mountain of God in the Elohist source is commonly called Horeb, while in the Yahvist (J) source it is called Sinai. The "Angel of Yahweh" (v. 2) is a circumlocution meaning Yahweh himself as for instance in Genesis 16:7, 13). There is here a theophany or manifestation of God by means of a spectacular event, a ball of fire on a bush, about to choose or call his human instrument for the deliverance of his chosen people. At the hesitation of Moses God made this assurance: "I shall be with you." For the first time this formula appears in the Bible in this episode which will be echoed afterwards in many calls in the Bible, like that of Gideon, Jeremiah, until the call of the Apostles (Matthew 28:20). With these words the one called is assured of divine portection in the fulfillment of his mission. Still Moses had other difficulties. "What if they ask me your name?" To this question God gave the proper name by which he should henceforth be known: "I Am who I Am". From this first person singular, the name seemed to have been taken in the third person singular masculine of the **Qal** form, imperfect: "he is". This is written YHWH, the famous tetragrammaton which is pronounced **Yahweh**.

Second Reading: From the history of Israel's wanderings in the desert St. Paul's draws lessons to warn Christians of their own conduct. Many events in the history of Israel prefigured the life of the "new Israel", the Church. In the Exodus-event Paul has drawn forth the typology of the sacraments of baptism: "they were all baptized into Moses in this cloud and in this sea"; and the Eucharist: "all at the same spiritual food and all drank the same spiritual drink". Even in our times, then, the Messianic period, "for

us who are living at the end of the age", the episodes of the Old Testament are still addressed to us as a "type" or lesson. The Scriptures, written by God for the Church, is addressed to us members of the Church.

Gospel Reading: This passage invites repentance or what would happen when a person fails to repent. Only Luke has this passage. The episode mentioned in verse 1 about the "Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices" is not mentioned in profane history but is in accord with Pilate's character known from Josephus. Of course the actuation of Pilate is condemnable but the mention of this episode has different aim than to condemn Pilate but rather to warn his hearers of repentance. To the common concept that suffering is the result of sin, Jesus contends that this is not so. There are other Galileans who were greater sinners, but suffered less. Still all sinners will be castigated, if not here in this life, certainly in the next.

Since Luke omitted the cursing of the fig tree found in Mark 11:12-14 and Matthew 21:18-22, he compensated it with the parable of the fig tree which is only found in his gospel. The fig tree is Israel (an image found in Hosea 9:10; Jeremiah 8:13). If Israel fails to produce fruits, at a period of grace given by God, then it will be cut off.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT (March 16, 1980)

First Reading: Joshua 5:9a. 10-12

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Gospel Reading: Luke 15:1-3. 11-32

First Reading: The passages narrate the circumcision of all the male Israelites born in the wilderness after their exodus from Egypt upon entering the Promised Land; then the first celebration of the Passover at Gilgal, under the leadership of Joshua.

Among the Israelites circumcision was a sign of the covenant made with Yahweh (Genesis 17:9-14; Exodus 12:43-48; Leviticus 12:3). The Passover was celebrated on the 14th day of that month, the month of Nisan which usually falls on March/April. When the Israelites left Egypt they celebrated the Passover. Now to show that their liberation-event was completed they celebrate the Passover now inside the Promised Land. From that time on, the "manna" which sustained them during their wanderings in the desert ceased to fall.

Second Reading: As a result of one's incorporation in Christ, "there is a new creation". There is a radical transformation because of Christ's redemptive activity. A new being is effected, essentially differing from what was before. Christ has become indeed the turning point in history. But this is all the work of God (v. 18). God is the source of man's reconciliation **through** Christ who in turn has entrusted this ministry of "handing on this reconciliation" to the Apostles. Because of the salvific work of Christ God reconciled the world to himself, "not holding men's faults against them" (v. 19). God now looks at the human race as if sin had not been committed (cf. Romans 5:18-21). This is called "objective redemption" by theologians. The apostles (and their successors) were entrusted with the task to spread the news that men are reconciled to God. They are God's ambassadors. Still the full effect of this reconciliation cannot be achieved unless men allow themselves to be reconciled, that is why the ministers or ambassadors of God continues their appeal: "be reconciled to God".

Gospel Reading: The Prodigal Son. We may distinguish two parts in this parable: 1) the central story of the younger son who left his father's house, lived a wanton life, became miserable after spending all his money, repented, and returned to his father; 2) the episode with the older brother which aims to enhance more the merciful and loving character of the father. In the central story we may distinguish three stages: 1) the sin of the son (vv. 11-13); 2) his conversion (14-20a); 3) the forgiveness of the father (20b-24).

Critics do not agree in the interpretation of the older brother. Do they represent the Pharisees or the just in general? The immediate context refers to the Scribes and Pharisees (v. 2). Perhaps, in the mind of St. Luke the image of the older brother has a more universal meaning, those people who consider themselves just, who sees the mote in others' eyes without seeing the beam in their own eyes. The father is God, the younger brother any sinner who repents, the older brother, the rest of men.

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT (March 23, 1980)

First Reading: Isaiah 43:16-21

Second Reading: Philippians 3:8-14

Gospel Reading: John 8:1-11

First Reading: The following verses are considered to be the work of Deutero-Isaiah, a prophet who could have descended from the Isaian school or tradition living in Babylon during the time of the

exile. In this passage, the author describes the return of the exiles or the "new exodus". As the exodus from Egypt was a great manifestation of the power of Yahweh, so also in this "new exodus". Although the author recalls the salvific acts of Yahweh in the past still he reflects on these events not only for the sake of glorying in the past but applying them to the present. What is important are the present deeds of Yahweh showing His continuous protection of His people.

Second Reading "Supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" (verse 8): The knowledge that Paul had of Christ after his conversion far surpassed any knowledge or experience that he had during his life as a Pharisee. As he wrote these passages about 20 years after his conversion he could only regard his former life before he knew Christ as rubbish or dung. Yet mere intellectual knowledge of Christ is not enough. St. Paul considers the communion with Christ as a goal. It grows and develops until its perfection at the **parousia** or Christ's second coming. He has still to run the race up to the finish "for the prize which God calls us upward to receive in Christ Jesus" (verse 14).

Gospel Reading: This episode of the adulterous woman is considered by biblical scholars not to be original in the Gospel of St. John. Many major manuscripts of St. John omit it. The Greek Fathers and commentators before the 12th century seemed not to know it, but it is well known among the Latin Fathers and found in the Vulgate. But there is no doubt as to its canonicity and inspiration as declared by the Council of Trent. The style of the story is very close to that of St. Luke and probably it was originally part of St. Luke's gospel and was transferred here to illustrate what our Lord said in John 8:15: "you judge by human standards; I judge no one, . . .

The narrative is in accordance with the pattern in the synoptics. Jesus' adversaries were trying to ensnare him with legalistic problems which for them seemed insoluble that whatever action our Lord would take would be for his own condemnation. Still Christ solves the dilemma with great wisdom and charity for the one accused.

PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION (March 30, 1980)

First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7

Second Reading: Philippians 2:6-11

Gospel Reading: Luke 22:14-23:56 (or 23:1-49)

First Reading: The following passages from Isaiah comprise the first verses of the "Third song of the servant of Yahweh". The

first song starts from chapter 42 while the second one from chapter 49. In comparison with the two first songs, this third one is more somber and the persecution of the servant of God more violent. The **Servant** affirms that the word of Yahweh is source of salvation and he has been appointed as spokesman "given a disciple's tongue". He speaks of what he has heard and listened to like a disciple although he suffered insults and humiliations. It is not however clear whether the Prophet himself was the one persecuted or Israel, as a collectivity.

Second Reading: As part of his exhortation to the Philippians, Paul inserted this sublime hymn to Christ representing a very early kerygmatic confession of Christ's divine pre-existence and his condescension through his Incarnation and his humiliation to death on the Cross. He suffered death in obedience to his Father and because of this he received that heavenly exaltation and therefore all creation in the universe should adore him. Jesus by his death and resurrection was constituted the Lord (**Kyrios**), an allusion to Isaiah 45:23 transferring to the new **Kyrios**, Christ, the adoration given to Yahweh, or better Christ is thus esteemed equal to Yahweh and given equal adoration.

Gospel Reading: The Gospel reading in today's Mass is taken from the narrative of the Passion according to St. Luke. This is the longest section in the Gospel. One of the factors in the development of the passion narrative could have been the liturgy in which according to St. Paul the Christians "proclaimed the death of the Lord till he comes" (1 Corinthians 11:26). This is quite pronounced in St. Matthew whose account of the Passion is solemn adding details and biographical anecdotes like that of Judas, of Pilate and his wife. St. Luke on the other hand invites us to look at the Passion as part witness, part experience. He wants us to take a place next to Jesus, even carrying his cross like Simon of Cyrene. He wants us to see ourselves in the weakness of Peter as well as in the plea for forgiveness of the good thief.

HOMILIES FOR FEBRUARY

PETER THE PRIVILEGED APOSTLE AS VICAR OF CHRIST

Fifth Sunday of the year: February 3, 1980

1. Situation: In one midwestern town in the United States with a population of about 15,000 one can surprisingly find thirty-two non-Catholic churches. In each of these churches one can read the year

when that particular church or chapel was built. The year itself when each particular non-catholic denomination was founded and their founder may be traced back further.

We enter one of the Lutheran churches as there are three different Lutheran churches in this town. This church was founded by Martin Luther in 1517. Then we pass on to the Episcopalian church. This was founded by King Henry VIII of England in 1534. Just a little further we will reach the Presbyterian church founded in 1560 by John Knox. One block away is the Congregational church founded in 1583 by Robert Browne; next is the Baptist church with John Smith as founder in 1660; then the Methodist church started by John Wesley in 1729. The other denominations are less than 300 years old.

All of these sects separated from the Mother Church founded by our Lord Jesus Christ, visibly governed by the Apostolic College with the Holy Father, the successor of St. Peter as head. The present Apostolic College is composed by the bishops all over the world, successor of the Apostles.

2. Biblical Message. Sufficient evidence are found in the New Testament to show that Peter was the head of the apostolic group even during the earthly life of Jesus, and even after Christ's ascension into heaven.

In the list of the Apostles the name of Peter is always mentioned first (Matthew 10:1-4; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16); he was always a constant companion of Jesus wherever He went and witnessed all His miracles. He was privileged to witness both the glory and humiliation of Jesus together with John and James: the resurrection of Jairus' daughter; the transfiguration, and the agony in the garden. He was given more coverage and limelight in the gospels than any of Matthias to take the place of Judas. He acted as spokesman of the Apostles at Pentecost and preached the sermon converting 3,000 people. The first one who baptized a pagan to Christianity was Peter in the person of the Centurion Cornelius and his household. He was the one who gave the decision at the Council of Jerusalem. Our list is not exhaustive and some more could be added, but this is enough to prove Peter's privileged position in the Church.

3. Our Response: The successor of Peter, the Holy Father in Rome, is presently the head of the Apostolic College, composed of the bishops who are successors of the Apostles. As Peter occupied a privileged position in the early Church, so today his successor, the Pope, continues that function. He was ordained to confirm the faith of the other Apostles and disciples which underwent a crisis during the passion. He himself sealed that faith with his blood.

HAPPY THE PERSECUTED

Sixth Sunday of the Year: February 10, 1980

1. Situation: About the year 100, St. Ignatius of Antioch, a direct disciple of St. John the Evangelist, was sentenced to die to be thrown into the amphitheater in the midst of wild beasts to be mangled by them. His friends in Rome wanted to ask for his release because of his age but he pleaded with them in a letter not to do such a thing. He in fact welcomed his martyrdom. He wrote to the Christians in Rome this moving letter:

"I am writing to all the Churches and state emphatically to all that I die willingly for God, providing you do not interfere. I beg you, do not show me unreasonable kindness. Suffer me to be the food of wild beasts, which are the means of my making my way to God. God's wheat I am, and by the teeth of wild beasts I am to be ground that I may be proven to be Christ's pure bread. Better still, coax the wild beasts to become my tomb and to leave no part of my person behind: once I have fallen asleep. I do not wish to be a burden to anyone. Then only shall I be a genuine disciple of Jesus Christ when the world will not even see my body. Petition Christ in my behalf that through these instruments I may prove God's sacrifice... Oh, may the beasts prepared for me be my joy! And I pray that they may be found to be ready for me. I will even coax them to make short work of me, not as has happened to some whom they were too timid to touch. And should they be unwilling to attack me who am willing, I will myself compel them... fire, cross, struggles with wild beasts, wrenching of bones, mangling of limbs, crunching of the whole body, cruel tortures inflicted by the devil — let them come upon me, provided only I make my way to Jesus Christ".

2. The Good News: Christian teaching considers a man happy in the midst of persecutions, hatred, abuses, false accusations, if such a man suffers all these things for the sake of Christ. Happiness, then, does not depend on any external contraptions like riches, affluence bodily comforts. Nevertheless, Christian teaching does not propagate that pain, suffering, persecution and the like are good in themselves and are to be endured for their own sake. This will be a kind of masochism. They become meritorious only if suffered "on account of the Son of Man", that is for the sake of Christ or of God.

3. Our Response: One time or another we will have to endure persecution, whether intentional or otherwise, whether falsely done or due to misinterpretations of facts or simply because our actions

do not conform with what the world, against the spirit of Christ, expects us to do. If this happens we are given the best of opportunities to suffer for Christ's sake. If we endure these persecutions with this kind of attitude, then, we will be happy. Otherwise, if we suffer persecution for other motives, we will only become more miserable.

PARDON OF ENEMIES

Seventh Sunday of the Year: February 17, 1980

1. **Situation:** This incident happened on the night of April 25, 1958 in Philadelphia. A gang of eleven young hoodlums mauled to death a young Korean student named In Ho Oh. They accosted him first asking for money so they could pay their way to a dance. As the Korean could not give them any they ganged up on him and beat him without mercy until he died.

This cruel murder angered the citizens of Philadelphia, more so because the victim was an innocent foreigner. They were expecting that the parents of the boy and the Korean authorities would demand the full prosecution of the killers and ask for an official apology or reparation for the crime committed. But instead the parents of In Ho Oh wrote to the Red Cross in Philadelphia the following letter:

"We deply appreciate the expressions of sympathy you have extended to us at this time... We are sad, not only because of In Ho's unachieved future but also because of the unsaved souls and the paralyzed human nature of the murderers... Our family has met together and we have decided to petition that the most generous treatment possible within the laws of your Government be given to those who committed this criminal action without knowing what it would mean to him who has been sacrificed, to his family, to his friends, and to his country... Our whole family has decided to save money to start a fund for the religious, educational, vocational, and social guidance of the boys when they are released."

2. **The Good News:** Contrary to worldly expectations and the seemingly natural attitude of men, Christ tells us to love our enemies, to do good to those who hate us. He himself gave a supreme example of this love when he forgave his enemies from the cross. This attitude demands heroism in the eyes of th world but presented in the Gospel as the normal attitude of a Christian. Loving one's enemies does not mean condoning the evil which dominates in the

personality of the enemy but looking at the person of the enemy made to the image and likeness of God and redeemed by the blood of Christ.

3. Our Response: If you love your enemy you destroy the enemy in him as the evil enveloping him which was the cause why you considered him an enemy in the first place gradually dissolves in the presence of the heat rays of love. Love let the good blossom in your enemy until finally his inimical character will just shed off or melt away and you will see again the redeemed image of God emerge.

DECEIT: TEMPTATIONS STRATEGY

First Sunday in Lent: February 24, 1980

1. Situation: In his work the "Pilgrim's Progress" John Bunyan tells the story in an allegory how the city called Mansoul was captured by the enemy. The city was built by a wise and good king, well protected and its citizens enjoying all the peace and prosperity inside its walls. No army of the enemy could break down the powerful walls nor penetrate its five gates. These gates have names called Eargate, Eyegate, Nosegate, Mouthgate, and Feelgate.

There was a wicked giant called Devil who wanted very much to capture the city. He gathered his councilors to plan how to conquer the city but all plans seemed to be worthless. The city is simply well protected for any attacking army. Then the Devil had an idea that might possibly work. He would try to conquer Mansoul by deceit. He would make the citizens of the city and the authorities believe that they are friends. They conceived of a strategy to flatter the people, tell them lies, make false promises to them. In this manner they will be able to penetrate inside the city.

And so the Devil started the execution of his plan. He went to Eargate and very politely requested for an audience with Captain Resistance and Judge Conscience who were commanding the defense. In flattery words and lies he convince them that he was a friend. He started to subvert the reputation of the king saying that they are being exploited for his own selfish interest.

The people were convinced of these lies. Little by little they opened Eargate and Eyegate to the enemy. They entered the city and once they were in other attacks followed until Mansoul was conquered by the enemies.

2. The Good News: Jesus was tempted by Satan and our Lord came out victorious. He did not exempt himself from the assault of his adversary to teach us to be on guard always against temptations, to unmask the deceitful strategy of the devil and to show us how to do battle against the evil one on his own terms. The devil used Scripture cunningly and deceptively to tempt Jesus and our Lord used the same Scripture to topple the devil down.

3. Our Response: As our Lord was tempted, we his disciples will not expect to be treated otherwise. But we have already a blueprint of the forms by which these temptations will come and the strategy used by the father of lies. To rely, however, solely on our own powers to combat these temptations would be a fatal mistake. It is true that we will never be tempted beyond our endurance but still to conquer these temptations special strength is required which could only come from our incorporation with Christ. As he conquered all temptations, we his followers, can undoubtedly do so, but only if we remain united with him.

REPENTANCE NOT TO BE DELAYED

Third Sunday of Lent: March 9, 1980

1. Situation: In one of the movies a scene was depicted where the actor, pursued by his enemies, suddenly came near a river which was fast rising up. He tried many times to cross but whenever the water reaches up to his neck he recedes back afraid of being swept away. But then the water continue to rise and his pursuers were fast catching up with him. There was no time to lose, the longer he waited the more dangerous it would become and more difficult for him to cross. Realizing his serious situation he made the plunge before it was too late. He swam safely although with much difficulty to the other bank.

This is exactly the condition of sinners who delay their repentance. They think of the present difficulties. But the longer they delay the more difficult it will become for them to make the plunge and repent of their sins. Their hearts become more hardened. Do not delay because sooner or later it may be too late.

2. The Good News: God is so merciful to give us the opportunity to repent, but his justice requires that this should be done in a certain period of time. Life is already too short even for the second

best, so we have always to strive for the "first best". Yet for some people life is even too short for their call to repentance. They dilly-dally until it is too late. What if accidents happen like what happened to those men who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell? What if they die in a war, an ambush, a hi-jacking?

3. Our Response: Since we cannot control the passage of time we should never let any time pass being separated from God. If ever we have the misfortune to be separated from him, let us do all the means in our power, and the means for this are not wanting, to reconcile ourselves with God. We may not have the opportunity to grab heaven at the last hour as the good thief had done, we may not reach the ripe old age that we expect so as to wantonly spend our youth as we please. We may not wake up tomorrow as we close our eyes tonight. So the best strategy to defeat these uncertainties of life is always to be with God.

SINS COUNTLESS AS SANDS OF THE SEA STILL FORGIVEN

Fourth Sunday in Lent: March 16, 1980

1. Situation: A story was told by a missionary working in one of the islands in the Pacific. One day a woman entered the sacristy while he was about to say Mass carrying a handful of sand.

"Father, do you see what I have?" she asked.

"Why, sure, that is a handful of sand," answered the good-natured priest. "What are you going to do with it?"

"I look at these sands as my sins," the woman explained. They are numerous and countless. How can God ever forgive me for committing them?"

"Look," said the missionary, "go back to the seashore where you got that sand and place them near the waves. Then you observe as the wave comes. What will happen? It will wash away completely that pile of sand. That is the way God forgives our sins. His mercy is wider than the ocean since he is infinitely merciful. If you are truly sorry for all your sins and go to confession to reconcile yourself with God, your sins, however great will be forgiven with God.

2. The Good News: However much we have sinned against our loving Father He is always ready waiting for us to return. The Gospel passage highlights the different stages of the Prodigal son's

conversion: the realization of his miserable state, the peace and prosperity he was enjoying in his father's household, the loving treatment of his own father; after that realization, he resolved to return preparing what he was going to confess to his father, disposed to receive whatever punishment will be imposed on him even to the point of not being recognized as the son and member of the family but only one of the servants; the actualization of his resolution by starting for home and seeing his father meet him with great happiness.

3. Our Response: Sinners who do not realize their miserable state being in sin are difficult to be converted. We can only hope and pray that an external cause, perhaps a calamity, like that famine in the prodigal son's story, would happen and let them come to their senses. Some people have gone back to God after a traumatic experience or a crisis in their lives: an accident, a serious illness, personal problems and the like. But will that opportunity ever come?

PARDON WITHOUT VIOLATING JUSTICE

Fifth Sunday in Lent: March 23, 1980

1. Situation: During the civil war in the United States, a soldier was court-martialled for a serious offense and was sentenced to be shot. His old father came all the way to Washington to beg President Lincoln to save his son's life since he was his only son. Lincoln took pity on the plight of the old man but felt helpless. One of his generals, General Butler had already criticized him for interfering with the affairs of the army and without their loyalty and support the war would be a lost cause. In fact he just received a message from Butler that day which he handed over to be read by the father. "Mr. President," it goes, "I beg you not to interfere with the court-martials of the army. You will destroy all discipline."

The man could not hold back his tears at the prospect of seeing his son put to death. This greatly touched the heart of the President. He got a piece of paper and wrote this order: "John Smith is not to be shot until further orders from me. Signed: Abraham Lincoln." He gave it to the man who was still disappointed at the message thinking that the President was writing the bill of pardon for his son. What if he orders him to be shot any day? But Lincoln assured him that since the order would come from him that order would never come.

2. The Good News: In the gospel story a sinful yet pitiful woman was being judged by human standards demanding that divine standards conform to its dictates. But divine standard has its own norms to follow totally different from the human. In the divine standard justice is tempered with mercy, hypocritical accusations are foiled by truth, and the guilty is given all the chances to repent. Granted that the woman was guilty of the crime, still to be judged those who perhaps may have been guilty of a greater crime than that committed by her cannot be tolerated by the divine standard. The only one allowed to cast the stone of death on her was the one who had not committed any sin. But no one among those accusing could conform to this divine standard and not stone was ever cast.

3. Our Response: Those of us who are prone to judge or criticize others or our neighbours should first see whether we are worthy to cast that stone of judgment or whether we are more guilty than they. Even in cases when we are sure of the guilt of our neighbor we are never allowed to take the law into our own hands and still should presume the person to be innocent until proven guilty by competent authorities or competent courts of law. At any rate we can always conform to the divine standard of justice which is clothed by mercy and love, wishing the guilty to repent and be again reconciled with God.

ADDENDUM TO PREVIOUS NUMBER

(We apologize to our readers for failing to print this homily guide in our November-December 1979 issue).

UNRECOGNIZED BY HIS OWN

(January 27, 1980 — Third Sunday of the Year)

Situation: In tennis the prestigious award is called the Davis Cup in honor of Dwight Davis who established the award in 1900. In 1932 Mr. Davis attends one of the tennis matches of the Davis Cup in Paris. He wanted to be with the American Team in the official seats reserved for them but he was turned away by the guard. In vain did he tell the official that he was Mr. Dwight Davis. The guard never heard of such a name. Mr. Davis returned to his hotel disappointed. Later, a certain Pierre Gilloux, head of the French Tennis Federation heard of this incident and called on Mr. Davis offering his apologies. During the next day of the tournament the benefactor of the Davis Cup was publicly introduced and was given a formal apology.

The Gospel: Christ, the creator of the world, was rejected by his own during his life-time. "He came into his own his own received him not," Not only was he rejected, he was even persecuted, taunted, threatened by his own people. In spite of this he continued loving them, fulfilling the mission to which his Father had sent him.

Our Response: We, the modern disciples of Christ, should work for his acknowledgment by the whole world. Apologies are not enough. We must proclaim him and his works, tell the whole of creation that he was the one who gave them their being, and most of all to all men whom he redeemed by his blood.

SHORT NOTICES ON BOOKS

Rene Laurentin: VIDA DE BERNARDETTE. — Versión castellana de Claudio Gancho. Editorial Herder, Barcelona, 1979 — 260 págs. — Rústica 350 pesetas.

Rene Laurentin has written a score of scholarly books on everything about Lourdes, and this one under review is a strictly historical biography of Sister Marie Bernard Soubirous, known the world over as Bernardette, who died exactly a century ago — on April 16, 1897.

Jack Dominian: LA AUTORIDAD. — Versión castellana de Antonio Martínez Riu. Editorial Herder, Barcelona, 1979 — 172 págs. — Rústica 380 pesetas.

This book deals on the Christian interpretation of the psychological evolution of the concept of authority or leadership in the home, school, profession, the Church and society in general, and says that the exercise of authority should never lose sight of the basic equality of men and should be tempered with oodles of love. This is a manual for successful leadership in any human undertaking.

Claude Tresmontant: CIENCIAS DEL UNIVERSO Y PROBLEMAS METAFÍSICOS. — Versión castellana de Ramón Olives Puig. Editorial Herder, Barcelona, 1978 — 268 págs. — Rústica 580 Pesetas.

To the host of know-it-all who spurn Metaphysics as a mental exercise in futility, Tresmontant answers that it is most necessary nowadays to interpret and synthesize the plethora of information-explosion of our age, and that this can be achieved only with Metaphysics or Ontology as the guiding light. This work is a rational analysis and synthesis of ageless or perennial truths as distilled from the latest findings of modern science in its entire spectrum.

Karl Rahner: TOLERANCIA, LIBERTAD. MANIPULACIÓN. — Versión castellana de Claudio Gancho. Editorial Herder, Barcelona, 1978 — 168 págs. — Rústica 350 pesetas.

Religious tolerance, the theme of this profound work, has evolved throughout the centuries from the time of the Inquisition to modern times and then to our days after Vatican II. Before

Vatican II tolerance was resigned, that is, a necessary "evil", but after wards it became a positive one — a defense of the rights of other to their own convictions, and a strict adherence to one's own. This positive stance of tolerance is best shown in the search for dialogue with other faiths both Christian and non-Christian. Rahner gives us advices on how best to conduct this dialogue.

His book is further enhanced with two illuminating essays, the first of which deals on the problem of liberty and the manipulation of the wills of others, and the second makes a bird's eye-view of the positive and negative values in inter-faith dialogues after Vatican II.

Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger: **CURSO DE TEOLOGÍA DOGMÁTICA**. Tomo III. El Mundo, Creación de Dios. — Versión castellana de Claudio Gancho. Editorial Herder, Barcelona, 1979 — 664 págs. — Rústica 1,400 pesetas.

This is the 3rd of eight volumes on Dogmatic Theology by two famous authors. God is treated as creator of the universe and mainly of the human race. The description of man by Vatican II is grafted into the treatise, and this makes the work original and new but well grounded on Tradition and on Holy Scripture.

Karl Hermann Schelkle: **TEOLOGÍA DEL NUEVO TESTAMENTO**. Tomo IV. Consumación de la Obra Creadora y Redentora. Comunidad de discípulos e Iglesia. — Versión castellana de Marciano Villanueva. Editorial Herder, Barcelona, 1978 — 516 págs. — Rústica 1,300 pesetas; tela 1,500 pesetas.

The author, Karl Hermann Schelkle, is a doctor of Theology and Philosophy, and though already in his seventies, still teaches New Testament at the Catholic University of Tübingen. He has written many authoritative volumes on the New Testament, particularly St. Paul's Letters, which have translations in at least ten different languages.

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