



BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

THE OFFICIAL INTERDIOCESAN BULLETIN

JESUS, THE "YES" OF GOD

Editorial

THE POPE SPEAKS IN THE PHILIPPINES

February 17 to 19

**THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON
BALANCE-SHEET OF A PAPAL VISIT**

Joseph M. de Torre

ACCULTURATION

Jaime Cardinal Sin, D.D.

VOL. LV, NOS. 616, 617, 618

MARCH, APRIL, MAY, 1981

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

THE OFFICIAL INTERDIOCESAN ORGAN

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

Subscription Rates (Effective January, 1979). Yearly subscription in the Philippines:

	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years
Newsprint	P35	P65	P98
Bookpaper	P40	P75	P110

Price per copy: Newsprint — P6.00. Bookpaper — P8.00. Back issue, P6.00. Abroad, \$20.00 per year. Back issue, \$5.00. Subscriptions are paid in advance.

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

Address all communication to:

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS

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University of Santo Tomas
Manila, Philippines**

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EDITORIAL

Jesus, The "Yes" Of God

"Yes" and "No" have been the most talked-about words in the Philippine scene for the past few weeks because of the plebiscite on constitutional amendments. They have overshadowed "Totus tuus" and "Amo te" which dominated the streets during the papal visit. Maybe there is no connection between the two slogan campaigns. But if we read II Corinthians 1:18-19 and reflect of some feedback on the papal visit and the plebiscite we might gain an insight on how to assess our life in the Philippines after the papal sojourn and after the referendum.

St. Paul was taken to task by some Corinthian Christians because he promised to visit them, and then called off the trip, or at least postponed it too long. He explained his side saying, 'As God keeps his word, I declare that my word to you is not 'yes' one minute and 'no' the next. Jesus Christ, whom Silvanus, Timothy and I preached to you as Son of God, was not alternatively 'yes' and 'no'; he was never anything but 'yes.'"

The beauty of this passage lies in the fact that St. Paul writes it to deal with a a passing problem, yet in the process he imparts to us an eternal truth: Jesus Christ is Gods' "Yes"; he is the "Yes" to all of God's promises. It is through him that we become capable of saying and we actually say "Yes" to God.

Well, how is all this connected with the assessment of the papal visit and the plebiscite?

In contrast to the overwhelmingly positive reaction of our people to the Pope's presence among us, there are a few sour notes, some of them coming from priests. A disappointed or unappeased priest wrote, "In spite of the many things said about this particular Pope, from his holiness to his sex appeal, I still believe that he is a far-away Father, trying to represent a God God who introduces himself as a nearby God." The cause of the priest's disappointment is the wrong role he assigns to the Pope that is, to represent God as God. No man can do that. At best, the man Jesus could have done it, but even he, while on earth, had his limitations. Pope John Paul II can say "Totus tuus" and "Amo te" but he cannot do better than Jesus Christ who said "Yes" to God as our Saviour.

So we should thank God for bringing us a little closer to Him through Pope John Paul II, but we should not ask anyone, not even the Pope, to take the place of God or of Jesus Christ.

As for the plebiscite on the constitution, there was never any reason to doubt that the "yes" vote will carry the day. But there is also no doubt that the victory of "yes" will not solve the ills of our country.

It is really only when we repeat, in our own small, limited way, the "yes" of Jesus Christ that we could do something for our eternal and also political salvation.

IN THIS ISSUE

From the first "Salamat sa Poong Maykapal" clearly and correctly pronounced shortly after he kissed Philippine soil, to the last "Mabuhay" coming from the heart and his lips as he was about to leave Pope John Paul II made an unforgettable impact on the Filipino people. We treasure what he did and said while he was in our midst. One indication of this was the oft repeated inquiry. "When can we have a copy of the Pope's speeches?" This came from people who ordinarily do not care to know what papal Encyclicals are all about.

In this issue we give our readers the words of Pope John Paul II from the time he arrived in the Philippines on February 17, up to the time he addressed Families at Lahug Airport, Cebu City, on February 19. Roughly half of the speeches are here. The remaining half will have to wait until our next issues.

Even just a partial collection of the papal words cover wide-ranging concerns: those of the Filipino nation, women and men religious, bishops, priests and seminarians, professionals, catechists and students, poor people, the Chinese community, the diplomatic corps, and families. The homilies of the Pope at the Beatification Rites for Lorenzo Ruiz and his companion martyrs and at the Mass for Peace are also included here.

In our section for Features we give our readers the attempt of Joseph M. de Torre at drawing up a balance sheet of the papal visit, *The Dignity of the Human Person*. We also give the concluding portion of Cardinal Sin's article on *Acculturation*. It is interesting to follow the thought of the Archbishop of Manila as he explains that cultures have a right to be different. In fact, differences in culture lead to opportunities for enrichment, for growth in maturity, for growth in responsible freedom, and for growth in unity. The diversity of culture is not a danger when people of different cultures love one another as Christ loved us all.

The *Biblical Notes and Homilies* written by Fr. Herman Mueller, SVD, extend to the last week of May.

THE POPE SPEAKS IN THE PHILIPPINES

ARRIVAL IN THE PHILIPPINES

Manila International Airport

17 February, 1981

Mr. President,

Your Eminences and venerable brother Bishops
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,
Dear people of the Philippines,

Salamat sa Poong Maykapal! (Thanks be to God)

With profound *gratitude to God* for being able to come to the Philippines, I offer my heartfelt greetings of love and peace to you all. It is a great joy to set foot on the soil of this beloved country, and I look forward to spending the coming days in your midst.

2. I come to you in the name of Jesus Christ, whose servant I am. And I come on a *visit of a religious and pastoral nature to proclaim his Gospel*, to proclaim salvation in His name. As successor of the Apostle Peter, it is my desire to strengthen my brothers and sisters of the Catholic Church in their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ who is our justice and peace, our greatest treasure and the one source of our hope.

3. In the very first week of my pontificate, Cardinal Sin spoke to me about the possibility of my coming to the Philippines on the occasion of the fourth centenary of the Church of Manila. At that time he requested the *Beatification here in this capital city of Lorenzo Ruiz*. Although it was not possible to fulfill this request in the jubilee year 1979, I desire at this time, through the first Beatification of a native son, to bring completion, as it were, this centennial celebration. This is my *first and principal reason* for coming. The Beatification, which also renders solemn honor to fifteen other Christian martyrs, is indeed an historic event for this country and a great blessing for the Church throughout the world. The heroic life of this Filipino layman and the faithful witness of his companions remind us that we are all called to holiness of life, and that, as Saint Paul wrote, God's power, "working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine" (Eph. 3:20).

4. And so I come to share with the Filipino people this occasion of great joy and Christian pride. From the history of the Church in my own nation, I know how important the first canonization of a native son, Saint Stanislaus, was for all the people of Poland at that time. It took place in Assist in 1253. You know that in modern times any ceremony of this nature usually takes place in Rome at the See of Peter the center of universal Church. By way of exception a Beatification rite will take place for the first time now outside Rome. It will be held in a different way, but in the midst of the Church, in the local Church where Blessed Lorenzo Ruiz grew up in the faith.

This extraordinary event will illustrate in a clear manner how the two dimensions of the one Church — the universal and local dimensions — are complimentary and include each other. It is fitting that the setting for such an event should be the Philippines, a nation known for its dynamic Christian faith and at the same time for its strong tradition of unquestioned fidelity to the Bishop of Rome.

5. In relation to this ceremony I am also happy to make a pastoral visit throughout the Philippines. Its extensive program will give me the possibility of meeting people of different regions. How much would I have liked to go everywhere to meet all the flourishing Catholic parishes, to be with the people of the barrios all over the land, but the time is limited. All the people of the Philippines will be in my heart and prayers when I visit the different communities that are in the program.

In this regard I am very grateful to you Mr. President, and to the national and local authorities for making all this possible, and for extending to me the hospitality of the Philippines.

6. I likewise wish, by means of this apostolic journey, to *show my respect and esteem for the whole of Asia*, for all the countries which are your neighbors in this part of the world. To the members of other Christian Churches, whom I also have the happiness of calling brothers and sisters in Christ, I offer cordial and fraternal greetings. And to all those who belong to the non-Christian religions I extend a sincere greeting as a friend and a brother into the one family of mankind.

7. As God gives me the privelege of visiting your country, which made up of thousands of islands, I am moved to repeat, in praise or our Creator, the words of the Psalmist: "The Lord is King; let the earth rejoice; let the many isles be glad" (Ps. 97:1). Indeed *may the many islands of the Philippines be glad and rejoice* in the loving mercy of our God!

May God bless you!

May God bless the Philippines!

Mabuhay ang Pilipinas (Long live the Philippines!)

MEETING WITH WOMEN RELIGIOUS

Baclaran Shrine

Manila, 17 February, 1981

Dearly beloved Sisters,

I bless the providence of God that has brought me back to Manila, back to this Sanctuary of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, where I once celebrated Mass. I bless the providence of God that has brought me to you, and you, and you to me. It always brings me happiness to be with Sisters during my apostolic journeys, but today there is the special joy of knowing that your country is one of those where vocations to the consecrated life are flourishing, and that this generous response to grace is itself a gift of God to you.

1. And as I thank the Lord for the many people whom he has called to the religious life, I wish to express to you my esteem and affection in Christ Jesus, and I wish to offer you my encouragement. In the first place, I would like to help you preserve and increase in your hearts the reverence and love for your sublime vocation. I pray that every day you will respond to that vocation more generously, so that you will grow steadily in the likeness of Christ your Ideal and your Teacher: *for your religious consecration is essentially an act of love for Jesus Christ.*

2. The more intensely you live this love and unite yourselves more closely to Jesus, the greater witness you will bear to the Gospel. It has often been noted that there is a close connection between the fervor of the religious life of a country and the condition of the Church in that country: fervent religious life means a living and apostolic Church; where that fervor grows cold, the vitality of the local Church is reduced. If, by a mischance, tepidity and mediocrity were to set in, they would soon be reflected among the Christian people. On the other hand, throughout the history of the Church, when she has been assailed by crises, it has always been the religious life that has given the signal for a reawakening and a renewed fidelity to the Gospel.

And your own responsibility in this regard is increased by the fact of the special situation prevailing in the Philippines. Yours is a land profoundly marked by Catholicism, in an

immense part of the world that needs the witness of a fervent and vital Church, so that the Gospel may be more widely known and embraced.

3. You have perfectly understood this, and all your activity shows that *your generous consecration to the love of God makes you particularly capable of loving all your brothers and sisters*, ready to spend yourselves for them with no thought of self and without reserve. I know how hard you work for children, for children, for the sick and the aged, for families, for the poor and for the many refugees who have come to this region. I know that your devotion also reaches out to the Mission lands; I know that you share in catechetical work, and I assure you that this work is deeply appreciated by the Bishops. You are truly witnesses to Christ's love, and your Pastors are thankful for your own loving presence and activity among those whom the Savior loves with a special love. In the name of Jesus and in the name of his Church I thank you all. At the same time I would assure you that the transformation of the world and the building up of Christ's Kingdom of justice and peace can be effected only by grace and the power of God's love in us. Only love can transform hearts, and without love there can be no adequate reform of structures in society. The only violence that leads to the building up of the Kingdom of Christ is the sacrifice and service that are born of love.

4. I also express my gratitude to those of you who live *the cloistered and contemplative life*, so open to the presence of the living God, in the midst of a world that is so often confused and is groping to find the light. You are so deeply needed. And through your daily life of prayer and sacrifice, united with the oblation of Christ, you powerfully aid your Sisters in the active apostolate. You are, moreover, of great assistance to the whole Church and its visible Head in the mission of proclaiming Christ, and I tell you that I count very much upon your collaboration and your supplications to the Lord.

5. The mission of Religious is thus a very important one. And in order to help you to respond to it ever more perfectly, I would like to mention three points of fundamental importance.

First, there is your task of *being witnesses*. By reason of your *baptism*, you must be a sign and instrument of union with God and of the salvation of the world. It is life in the Spirit that must come first, through listening to the word, through interior prayer, through the faithful accomplishment

of the task given to you, through the gift of yourselves in service, and through the humility of repentance (cf. *Mutuae Relationes*, 4b). Through your *religious consecration*, you are a visible testimony to the world of the deep mystery of Christ, for you represent him "in contemplation on the mountain, or proclaiming the kingdom of God to the multitudes, or healing the sick and maimed and converting sinners to a good life, or blessing children and doing good to all people, always in obedience to the will of the Father who sent him" (*Lumen Gentium*, 46). Through your particular vocation, lived out in an Order or Congregation approved by the Church, you are a special sign of sanctification and apostolic work that gives you a specific role in the Church, a role with its own distinctive character. Always remain faithful to that vocation, in spite of temptations. Find your joy in preserving your interior identity and in being outwardly recognized for what you are.

The second point that I wish to mention is prayer. It is vital that everyone should appreciate the need for prayer and should actually pray, but Religious, as people called to be specialists in prayer, must seek God and love God above all things; in all circumstances, they must strive to live a life hidden with Christ in God, a life from which love of neighbor springs and becomes a pressing need. You must therefore, through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, intensify your personal and communal familiarity with the principal source of apostolic and charitable activity, and in this way you will be sharing intimately in the mission which takes its origin from the Father. As I said in my message to the Plenary Meeting of the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, "your first duty is to be with Christ. A constant danger for those engaged in apostolic work is to become so engrossed in work for the Lord as to forget the Lord of the work". And so, in the taxing routine of your apostolic tasks, always make sure that you devote periods of each day to personal and community prayer. These times of prayer must be carefully guarded and suitably prolonged, and you must not hesitate to supplement them by periods of more intense recollection and prayer, at times especially set aside for this purpose. You must always ensure that the natural center of your communities is the Eucharist: you will accomplish this by your fervent daily participation in the Mass, and by community prayer in and oratory where the Eucharistic presence of Christ expresses and realizes what must be the principal mission of every religious family (cf. *Evangelica Testificatio*, 48).

The third point that I wish to mention is loving docility to the Church's Magisterium, which is an obvious consequence of the special ecclesial position which is yours. As you know, religious life has no meaning except in the Church and in faithfulness to her directives. "It would be a serious mistake to make the two realities — religious life and ecclesial structures — independent one of the other, or to oppose one to the other as if they could subsist as two distinct entities, one charismatic, the other institutional. Both elements, namely, the spiritual gifts and the ecclesial structures, form one, even though complex reality" (*Mutuae Relationes*, 34). So I exhort you to be always ready to embrace the teaching of the Church, and in fidelity to your charism, to collaborate in the pastoral activity of your local dioceses, under the direction of your Bishops united to Peter and in union with Christ. Your adherence to the word of God as it is proclaimed by the Church will be the measure of your effectiveness in communicating the truth and the freedom of Christ. The same Holy Spirit who makes us attentive to "the signs of the times" has endowed Christ's Church with the apostolic and pastoral charism of Magisterium, so that she may effectively transmit Christ's vivifying and liberating word of truth. Let us always remember the words of Jesus: "You will learn the truth and the truth will make you free" (Jn. 8:31).

6. It is so appropriate that our meeting takes place today in this Sanctuary dedicated to Mary, Mother of Perpetual Help, the title which reminds us that we are in constant need of her protection. As the Council teaches, the Mother of God is the Christian's model in faith, love and perfect union with Christ (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 63); and in a special way she is the *Mother and model of those who live the consecrated life*.

You show your devotion to Mary by celebrating her feasts, by daily prayer in her honor and especially the Rosary, and by imitating her life. May that devotion grow stronger every day. Your consecrated life should mirror Mary's life: the "yes" which she uttered at the Annunciation was nothing but a confirmation of her previous attitude, and the point of departure for a journey in the Lord's company that lasted all her life. In this way, Mary reminds Religious of the need to respond ever more generously to the Lord's plans for them. Each one will give this response in the first place by her openness to the Holy Spirit, by her continual conversion to Christ, by her chastity, poverty and obedience, in short by the unending dis-

covery of her vocation and mission in the Church. And this constitutes that "continued formation" that for a number of years has been put forward as being so necessary.

7. The consecrated love of your religious life is lived in the context of an ecclesially approved Institute and for this reason has a *community element*. It concerns all Religious, whatever their place in their communities. Each Institute has responsibility for the formation of its members according to its proper charism and in fidelity to the Magisterium of the Church. In this regard the union among sisters, devotion to others, interest in the world's problems, and the wholesome organization of daily life will sustain and foster the efforts of all concerned.

8. I would like to extend an earnest invitation to you to intensify your apostolic collaboration *at the service of Christian families*. This is in harmony with the conclusions reached by the recent Synod of Bishops. The links between families and the religious life are both profound and vital; the Christian family is the normal source of vocations to the religious life. Religious life will help families to become ever more Christian and to witness ever more clearly to the love of Christ, by assisting them in the Christian education of their children, in caring for the sick and in meeting the problems of life.

9. By your contact with families and through the example of holiness that you give in all your apostolates, you are able to be instruments of God's grace in regard to religious vocations. Indeed, you have been given this role to play: *through prayer and your joyful lives of consecration* to the Lord you are called to make the religious vocation in the Church something attractive to young girls and young women today. They must be able to perceive clearly — being convinced by the witness you give — that your lives are permeated with a personal love for your spouse Jesus Christ, a love that also embraces him in the whole of humanity. In my first Encyclical I mentioned that we "cannot live without love". We remain incomprehensible to ourselves if we do not experience it and make it our own (cf. *Redemptor Hominis*, 10). And it is when we do bear witness to a joyful and sacrificial love that our way of life becomes credible and the call of Christ, humanly speaking, becomes

attractive and worth following. To be able to show the young that consecrated love for Jesus can itself fulfill the deepest aspirations of the human person is a great mission of faith, and, dear Sisters, it is yours.

Finally, I thank you once again for your help in making this pilgrimage possible through your prayers and your ready aid. I entrust all your intentions to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, and I ask her to assist you to live your vocation ever more generously, for the coming of the Kingdom of her beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. For in the words of Saint Peter: "Without having seen him, you love him; though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy" (1 Pt. 1:8).

Beloved Sisters: Praised be Jesus Christ!

PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Baclaran Shrine
Manila, 17 February, 1981

Today I have been able to come here for the second time in my life. The first time that I stopped here was when I was going to the Eucharistic Congress in Australia; and as I celebrated Mass in the late evening *I was the witness* of a truly filial devotion, and of the immense trust that you, O Mother of Perpetual Help, enjoy among the faithful, the people who live in this great capital city of the Philippines.

Today, I come *as the Successor* of Saint Peter in the See of Rome, since, through the inscrutable decrees of Divine Providence, it pleased Christ to call me to the universal ministry in the Church. I come, in the footsteps of my predecessor Paul VI, *as a pilgrim* to the Churches and peoples of the Far East. I come to raise to the altars, far from Rome and at the same time in close union with her, *the Martyrs* who gave their lives for Christ at Nagasaki in the years 1633, 1634 and 1637. Among them was the Filipino, *Lorenzo Ruiz*, the first son of the Church in this land to attain the glory of beatification.

To you, *O Queen of Martyrs* and Mother of the Church, I wish to entrust in a special way this papal ministry of mine and its manysided significance. It is *from the blood of martyrs* that, from the very beginning, the Church of your Son was born and grew strong, *the Church* of Jesus Christ, with whose Sacrifice on the Cross you, Mother, cooperated with the maternal sacrifice of your heart (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 58).

Many indeed are the examples we find of such witness borne by the holy and blessed Martyrs *in various parts* of the great Continent of Asia. The foundation of faith sealed with blood seems already deeply rooted in the soil of history. But it is not ourselves, we human beings, who can measure and say whether this is the sufficient *foundation* for the building up of the service of the Gospel and of the Church in these vast areas of land and on the countless surrounding islands. The

judgment of this we leave to the *mercy of God himself*, to the Heart of our Redeemer and Lord, and to the Holy Spirit who guides humanity and the Church through the testimony of blood towards the Kingdom of love and truth.

And yet, all this *immense work* that is ever before us, I, John Paul II, with the full consciousness of my human weakness and unworthiness *desire* — as I always do — *to entrust to you, Mother of Christ and of the Church*, who with your ceaseless maternal love watch over her everywhere, ready to serve with every form of help in every human heart and in the midst of all peoples. And especially among those who are most sorely tried by suffering, by poverty and by every sort of affliction whatsoever.

Thus, on the threshold of my pastoral visit to the Far East I commend to you and entrust to you with absolute confidence, as to the Mother of our Redeemer, *all the nations and peoples of Asia and the surrounding islands*. I commend to you and entrust to you the Church, particularly in those places where she is most in difficulty, where, her mission is not properly understood, nor her irrepressible wish to serve individuals and peoples. I commend to you today, on the threshold of this pilgrimage, the hospitable *Philippines and the Church* which, being rooted particularly strongly here also feels particularly strongly its missionary responsibility. May it not lack the strength needed *for the work of evangelization*. May it persevere, like that faithful servant who constantly awaits the coming of the Lord, in the service of its own people and in openness to all others.

Mother of Perpetual Help, accept this humble dedication and place it in the Heart of your Son — you, who when you stood beneath his Cross on Calvary were given to each of us as our Mother. Amen.

HOMILY OF MASS FOR MEN RELIGIOUS

Manila Cathedral
17 February, 1981

Dearly beloved in Christ,

Four hundred years ago this year, Bishop Domingo de Salazar arrived in Manila. He had been sent by Pope Gregory XIII to be the first Bishop of this newly created Diocese, and he had come to continue here in your country the work of evangelization and to build upon the achievements of the missionaries who had preceded him.

As I celebrate the Eucharist today in the Cathedral of Manila I feel a spiritual closeness to Bishop de Salazar and to Pope Gregory. The same love for the Gospel, and for the Filipino people which inspired them has in turn prompted me, the present Bishop of Rome, to come to your beloved land to proclaim the message of Christ and to strengthen you in the faith. This is a moment of great joy for me as I celebrate the Eucharist with you in the Cathedral of Manila, as we unite our hearts and voices in proclaiming the greatness of God and in giving praise and glory to the Father, and the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. We do this recalling the great efforts at renewal made by this local Church in Manila during the year 1979, and asking God to bring to fruition the work begun in the Archdiocesan Synod.

During these days it will be my special honor to beatify Lorenzo Ruiz, one of your countrymen, the father of a family and a layman of courageous faith. Among all the events by which you have commemorated *the fourth centenary of the Church in Manila, the beatification of Lorenzo Ruiz* and his fifteen martyrs companions holds a principal place. May it also be an encouragement for all of you — Bishops, priests, religious and laity — to strive after the holiness that is found in Christ Jesus.

2. At this time I wish to address a special message to the men religious — both priests and brothers — who are present here, and through them to all the men religious of the Philippines. May I begin, my brothers, by expressing my gratitude

to the Lord for your presence in the Church and for your collaboration in the Church's mission of proclaiming the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the passage from Saint John which we have just heard, we are reminded of *the essence of religious life*. "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit" (Jn. 15:16). Through the initiative of the Savior and your own free response, *Christ has become the purpose of your life and the center of all your thoughts*. It is because of Christ that you made your profession of the evangelical counsels; and it is Christ who will sustain you in faithfulness to himself and in loving service to His Church.

Religious consecration is essentially an act of love: Christ's love for you and in return your love for him and for all his brethren. This mystery is proclaimed today in the Gospel when Jesus says to his disciples: "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love (Jn. 15:9). Christ wants you to abide in him, to be nourished by him daily in the celebration of the Eucharist and to be nourished by him daily in the celebration of the Eucharist and to surrender your lives to him through prayer and self-denial. Trusting in his word and confident of his mercy, you respond to Christ's love. You choose to follow him more closely in Chastity, poverty and obedience; and you want to share more completely of the life and holiness of the Church. You want to love all those whom Christ loves as brothers and sisters.

3. The world today needs to see your love for Christ. It needs the *public witness of religious life*. As Paul VI once said: "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses" (AAS 66 [1974], 568). If the non-believers of this world are to come to believe in Christ they need your faithful witness — a witness which springs from your complete trust in the bountiful mercy of the Father and your persevering hope in the power of the Cross and Resurrection

And so the ideals, values and convictions which underlie your commitment to Christ must be translated into the language of daily life. In the midst of the people of God in the local ecclesial community, your public witness is part of your contribution to the mission of the Church. As St. Paul Says, "You are a letter from Christ...written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts" (2 Cor. 3.3).

4. As religious brother and priests you are engaged in a *great variety of apostolic activities*: proclaiming the word of God, administering the sacraments teaching, catechizing, caring for the sick, assisting the poor and orphans, exercising charity, serving by prayer and sacrifices, building up the local communities to reflect the Gospel and embody the Kingdom of God. As you carry out these works of service with steadfast perseverance, remember the advice of St. Paul: "Whatever you do, work at it with your whole being, do it for the Lord rather than for men" (Col. 3:23).

All these apostolic activities retain their importance today. They continue to be vital dimensions of evangelization, bearing prophetic witness to God's love and contributing to full human advancement. I am sure that the community in general, as well as the ecclesial community, will be grateful to the religious for helping the Church to maintain her commitment to these diverse expressions of her pastoral activity.

At the same time, you rightly seek additional ways of bearing witness to Christ and serving his people. The Church must indeed be attentive to the needs of the men and women of our time. She cannot be indifferent to the problem which they face or to the injustices which they suffer. As you seek new ways of furthering the Gospel and of promoting human values, I offer you my encouragement and the assurance of my prayers. At the same time I ask you to observe this guideline: that each apostolic endeavor should be in harmony with the teaching of the Church, with the apostolic purpose of your individual Institutes and with the original charism of your founders. May I also remind you of my words at Puebla: "You are priests and religious; you are not social or political leaders or officials of a temporal power... Let us not be under the illusion that we are serving the Gospel if we 'dilute' our charism through an exaggerated interest in the wide field of temporal problems" (AAS 71 [1979] p. 193). It is important for people to see you as "servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. 4:1).

5. Faithfulness to Christ in religious life requires a *threefold fidelity*: fidelity to the Gospel, *fidelity to the Church*, fidelity to the particular *charism of your Institutes*.

First of all, you must be *faithful to the Gospel*. We are reminded of this by the Second Vatican Council, which taught: "the fundamental norm of religious life is the following of

Christ as it is presented to us in the Gospel" (Perfectae Caritatis, 2). For this reason you make it your first priority to listen to the word of God, ponder it in your heart and seek to put it into practice. May you find time every day to meditate on God's word, being confident in its power to enlighten our minds and to bring to life within you the spirit of the Beatitudes.

Secondly, your *religious consecration*, in addition to strengthening your commitment to Christ, also binds you inseparably to the life and holiness of his Spouse, the Church. And it is in the local ecclesial community that this is given concrete expression. This is the reason why it is so important for you to work in close collaboration with the clergy and laity of the local Church, and to accept willingly the authority and ministry of the local Bishops as the focus of its unity.

In this connection I would like to underline two relevant expressions of this commitment to the local Church. The first is the relationship of religious priests with the diocesan clergy. Religious priests should be happy to take part in the apostolate of the local Church, in a loyal and disinterested way, with the diocesan priests, whose tasks they are called to share, not by way of exception, but on a regular basis. The second is the relationship with the National Conference of Bishops. In the spirit of the *Document Mutuae Relationes*, religious superiors should seek, accept, and cultivate a frank and filial dialogue with the Pastors, whom the Holy Spirit has placed to govern the Church of God. In this sense it cannot be stressed too much how important are the relations between the National Conference of Bishops, whose task it is to work out and establish pastoral plans for the country, and Association of Major Religious Superiors, which assume the task of promoting the religious life, taking care that it should remain faithful to its deepest roots and to the charism that characterizes it.

As religious you are in a position to make a special contribution to the promotion of the unity of the Church. Your experience of community life, common prayer and corporate apostolic service prepares you for this task. May you dedicate yourselves to the great cause of unity with renewed vigor, seeking in a spirit of openness and respect, to break down barriers of division and to encourage the progress of harmony and mutual collaboration.

Finally, may you always be faithful to the particular charisms of your individual Institutes. To illustrate this point I wish to acknowledge two events of great significance to the

Church in the Philippines occurring this year: first, the three hundredth anniversary of the Christian Brothers of De La Salle. The instruction of young people in the Christian faith and in the other subjects remains as indispensable for the mission of Christ as at the time when this Congregation was founded. And the Church in the Philippines has been greatly blessed through their consecrated lives and dedicated service

The second event is the celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the presence of the Society of Jesus in the Philippines. Through their missionary efforts, through their work in schools and parishes and through the spirituality of St. Ignatius, the priests and brothers of the Society of Jesus have made a great contribution to the Philippines and throughout the world.

Similarly, all the religious families represented here today, each in a distinctive way, contribute to the holiness and life of the Church. An indication of the effectiveness of your contributions has been, and continues to be, your *faithfulness to the spirit of your founders, to their evangelical intentions and to the example of their sanctity*. May this faithfulness to your respective charisms always be seen as part of your fidelity to Christ.

TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE NATION

Malacañang Palace
Manila, 17 February, 1981

Mr. President,

It gives me great joy to be in the Philippines, and your kind invitation to come to Malacañang honors me greatly. I take this opportunity to express to you my sincere gratitude for everything you have done to make this visit come about, as well as for your generous collaboration in making available to me the services and facilities that enable me to travel to different parts of the country and meet as many people as possible on these beautiful islands. I look upon my stay among the Filipino people as a unique opportunity for learning more about the achievements and aspirations of these blessed nation, for bringing personally a fraternal greeting to the nations of Asia, and for offering support and encouragement to the local churches of this continent. The enthusiastic welcome which your people have accorded me during this first day of my visit evokes from me the full measure of my *pastoral love and concern for the people of the Philippines*. Once again, I thank you and, through you, all your fellow-citizens. Maraming salamat po! (Thank you very much sir!)

Dear People of the Philippines,

In my desire to know personally the great peoples of Asia, I wanted my first papal visit to be to the Philippines. I have come here retracing the steps of Paul VI, whose memorable visit to this land is still recalled, I am sure, with love and gratitude and whose inspiring presence still lives on in the hearts and minds of the Filipino people. I come here because it is my heart's desire to celebrate with my brothers and sisters the common faith that unites the Catholic population of this land with the See of Peter in Rome. At the same time I mention with satisfaction and pleasure the friendly relations between the Philippines and the Holy See. These relations are indeed a worthy expression of a special affection of your people for the Bishop of Rome.

The Philippine nation is deserving of particular honor since, from the beginning of its Christianization, from the moment that Magellan planted the Cross in Cebu four hundred

and sixty years ago, on April 15, 1521, all through the centuries, its people have remained true to the Christian faith. In an achievement that remains unparalleled in history, the message of Christ took root in the hearts of the people within a very brief span of time, and the Church was thus strongly implanted in these nation of seven thousand islands and numerous tribal and ethnic communities. The rich geographical and human diversity, the various cultural traditions, and the people's spirit of joy and sharing, together with the fruits of the missionary efforts, have successfully blended and have shaped, through periods which were sometimes not devoid of shadows and weaknesses, a clear national identity that is unmistakably Filipino and truly Christian. The attachment to the Catholic faith has been tested under succeeding regimes of colonial control and foreign occupation, but fidelity to the faith and to the Church remained unshaken and grew even stronger

Due homage must be paid to this achievement of the Filipino people, but what you are also creates an obligation and it confers upon the nation a *specific mission*. A country that has kept the Catholic faith strong and vibrant through the vicissitudes of its history, the sole nation in Asia that is approximately ninety percent Christian assumes by this very fact the obligation not only to preserve its Christian heritage but to bear witness to the values of its Christian culture before the whole world. Although small in size of land and population compared to some of its neighbors, the Philippine nation has undoubtedly a special role in the concert of nations, in order to consolidate peace and international understanding, and more particularly in maintaining stability in South East Asia, where it has a vital task.

The Filipino people will always draw the strength and inspiration that they need to carry out this task from their noble heritage — *a heritage not only of Christian faith but also of the rich human and cultural values* that are their own. Every man and woman, whatever his or her status or role, must strive in all earnestness to preserve to deepen and to consolidate these values — these priceless gifts — against the many factors which seriously threaten them today. Preserve, through your lucid and deliberate efforts, your sense of divine, your prayerfulness and your deeply religious consciousness. Preserve and reinforce your respect for the role of women in the home, in education and in other challenges of life in society. Keep and strengthen your reverence for the aged the disabled and the sick. Above all maintain your great esteem for the family.

Preserve the indissolubility of marriage bond. Keep inviolate the right to life of the unborn child and uphold firmly the exalted dignity of motherhood. Proclaim vigorously the right of parents to be free from economic, social and political coercion, as they endeavor to follow the dictates of an upright conscience in determining the size of their family in accordance with the will of God. Establish firmly the serious responsibility of parents to raise their children in accordance with their human dignity. Defend the children from corrupting influences and uphold the structures of family life. A nation goes the way that the family goes, and when the integrity and stability of family life is imperilled, so will the stability of the nation and the tasks it must assume before the judgment of history.

The challenge that faces each nation, and more particularly a Christian nation, is *a challenge to its own internal life*. I am sure that the leaders and the people of the Philippines fully realize their responsibility to construct an exemplary society and that they are willing to work together to achieve this end in a spirit of mutual respect and civic responsibility. It is the joint effort of all the citizens that build a truly sovereign nation, where not only the legitimate material interests of the citizens are promoted and protected, but also their spiritual aspirations and their culture. Even in exceptional situations that may at times arise, one can never justify any violation of the fundamental dignity of the human person or the basic rights that safeguard this dignity. Legitimate concern for the security of a nation, as demanded by the common good, could lead to the temptation of subjugating to the State the human being and his or her dignity and rights. Any apparent conflict between the exigencies of security and of the citizens basic rights must be resolved according to the fundamental principles upheld always by the Church — that social organization exists only for the service of man and for the protection of his dignity, and that it cannot claim to serve the common good when human rights are not safeguarded. People will have faith in the safeguarding of their security and the promotion of their well-being only to the extent that they feel truly involved, and supported in their very humanity.

It is my hope and prayer that all the Filipino people and their leaders will never cease to honor their commitment to a

development that is fully human and that overcomes situations and structures of inequality, injustice and poverty in the name of the sacredness of humanity. I pray that everyone will work together with generosity and courage, without hatred, class struggle or fratricidal strife, resisting all temptation to materialistic or violent ideologies. The moral resources of the Philippines are dynamic, and they are strong enough to withstand the pressures that are exercised from the outside to force this nation to adopt models of development that are alien to its culture sensitivities. Recent initiatives that are worthy of praise augur well for the future, since they manifest confidence in the capacity of the people to assume their rightful share of responsibility in building a society that strives for peace and justice and protects all human rights.

Mr. President, dear friends,,

The presence here of so many representatives of the constituted bodies of national and local government, of the judiciary and the military honors me greatly, and I wish to express to them *the great esteem in which the Church holds that are invested with WITH responsibility* for the common good and the service of their fellowmen. How exalted is the mission of those to whom the people have entrusted the leadership of the nation, and in whom they place their trust to see enacted those reforms and policies that aim at bringing about a truly human society, where all men, women and children receive what is due to them to live in dignity, where especially the poor and underprivileged are made the priority concern of all. Those that are entrusted with the tasks of government do honor to Christianity when they uphold their credibility by placing the interests of the community above any other consideration, and by regarding themselves first and foremost as servants of the common good.

In closing these brief remarks, I wish to praise the special qualities of the filipino people, steeped in a solid Christian tradition of faith and love for neighbor. Throughout your history, you have heeded the appeal of the Gospel, the invitation to goodness, to honesty, to respect for the human person, and to unselfish service. Your commitment to the ideals of peace, justice and fraternal love hold the promise that the future

of this land will match its past history. But *the challenge is great and it faces each individual* of this land. No one is exempt from personal responsibility. Everybody's contribution is important. Now that we are approaching the end of this second millennium, you must be ready to continue on the road that faith in Christ and his message of love have charted for you. May God's grace sustain you. May the Blessed Virgin Mary, invoked under innumerable titles and honored in shrines and institutions all over the land, remain forever the loving and caring Mother of the Filipino people.

And may her Son, Jesus Christ, the loving and merciful Savior of mankind, give you the great gift of his peace — now and forever.

Mabuhay ang Pilipinas! (Long live the Philippines)

ADDRESS TO THE BISHOPS

Villa San Miguel, Metro Manila

17 February, 1981

Dear Brothers in our Lord Jesus Christ,

1. Since my arrival on Philippine soil, I have already had the occasion to state that my first and principal reason for coming here is the Beatification of Lorenzo Ruiz, whose martyrdom shows forth the holiness of the Church. At the same time I consider my pastoral visit a pilgrimage to the living shrine of the people of God in this land. And today, in you, the Bishops, I greet every ecclesial community that makes up the Church in the Philippines.

My thoughts go likewise to the past generations who have received and passed on the Catholic faith. In the name of the universal Church I express praise and thanksgiving to God for this great gift that your people have received and preserved. I give thanks also for the special vocation that has been given to the Church in the Philippines. In coming to you it is my desire to fulfill my pastoral service to the faithful in your land and to all of you, their Bishops. And so we gather together to re-present the scene of the Acts of the Apostles where Peter and the Eleven assemble to speak about Jesus and to reflect on the power of his Spirit. Just being with you is enough to draw strength and power from the One who is in our midst. And on my part I wish, in fidelity to Christ, *to confirm you in the faith that you hold and proclaim.*

My coming is linked to the conviction that *the word of God is powerful* and, when faithfully preached, is light and strength for our people. It is in truth the foundation of their faith. That is why we never cease to communicate to them the conviction of Saint Paul: "Your faith rests not on the wisdom of men but on the power of God (1 Cor. 2:5).

As pastors of God's people we have the role of announcing "God's design in its entirety" (Acts 20:27). Through *the full proclamation of Christ* and his Gospel a gentle but invincible force is unleashed in the world. In this regard let me share with you two testimonies of particular interest for you as Bishops in the Philippines.

The first is that of *Paul VI*. It was the great testimony that he gave ten years ago in Quezon Circle. Speaking about Christ he said: "I feel the need to proclaim him, I cannot keep silent. 'Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel' (I Cor. 9:16). I am sent by him, by Christ himself, to do this, I am an apostle, I am a witness... I must bear witness to his name: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God (cf. Mt. 16:16). He reveals the invisible God, he is the firstborn of all creation, the foundation of everything created. He is the Teacher of Mankind, and its Redeemer... Jesus Christ is our constant preaching; it is his name that we proclaim to the ends of the earth (cf. Rom. 10:18) and throughout all ages (cf. Rom. 9:5)" (November 29, 1970). This was his mission ten years ago, and some of you were present then, together with the late Cardinal Santos and with the other Bishops of that time. And I am convinced that, sometime in the future, yet another Successor of Peter will gather with your successors in this same proclamation of the faith.

2. The second testimony that I wish to recall with you is likewise a very special one. Certainly a number of you were present to hear *John Paul I* speak the following words to the Philippine Bishops gathered in Rome for their *ad limina* visit: "On our part we hope to sustain you, support you, and encourage you in the great mission of the episcopate: to proclaim Jesus Christ and to evangelize his people... A great challenge of our day is the full evangelization of all those who have been baptized. In this, the Bishops of the Church have a prime responsibility. Our message must be a clear proclamation of salvation in Jesus Christ" (September 28, 1978). It was a memorable testimony for its contents and for the circumstances in which it was given. It was the last public act of John Paul I; it was the last hour of his public ministry. It was his legacy — and it was for you. And I wish to perpetuate his testimony and to make it my own today.

3. This proclamation of Jesus Christ and salvation in his name is *the basis for all pastoral service*. It is the content of all evangelization and catechesis. And it is a credit to you that you accomplish it in union with the successor of Peter and with the whole Church. It must always be so. Your unity with the universal Church is the authentication of all your pastoral initiatives and the guarantee of their supernatural effectiveness. This unity was indeed the concern that motivated Saint Paul to take counsel so that the course he was pursuing

and has pursued "would not prove useless" (Gal. 2:2). I thank God today for your *Catholic unity* and the strength it gives you.

4. Fortified by the word of Christ and strengthened in the unity of his Church, you are well able to pursue effectively your pastoral ministry in imitation of Jesus the Good Shepherd. The suggestion that Saint Paul received in his consultation I would repeat today: "The only stipulation was that we should be mindful of the poor — the one thing that I was making every effort to do" (Gal. 2:10). And may this be the special mark of your ministry too: *concern for the poor*, for those who are materially or spiritually in need. Hence your pastoral love will embrace those in want, those afflicted, those in sin.

And let us remember always that the *greatest good we can give them is the word of God*. This does not mean that we do not assist them in their physical needs, but it does mean that they need something more, and that we have something more to give: the Gospel of Jesus Christ. With great pastoral insight and evangelical love, John Paul I also expressed this thought succinctly on that day he died: "From the days of the Gospel, and in imitation of the Lord, who 'went about doing good' (Acts 10:38), the Church is irrevocably committed to contributing to the relief of physical misery and need. But her pastoral charity would be incomplete if she did not point out even 'higher needs'. In the Philippines Paul VI did precisely this. At a moment when he chose to speak about the poor, about justice and peace, about human rights, about economic and social liberation — at a moment when he also effectively committed the Church to the alleviation of misery — he did not and could not remain silent about the "higher good", the fulness of life in the Kingdom of heaven".

5. Another aspect of your ministry is the fraternal interest that you have for *your brother priests*. They need to be convinced of your love; they need your example of holiness and they have to see you as their spiritual leaders, as heralds of the Gospel, so that they too can concentrate all their energies on their proper priestly role in the building up of Christ's Kingdom of justice and peace. In this regard it is important that the laity be given the full responsibility that is specifically theirs. Through their activity in the temporal order they have a special task to fulfill, in order to bring about the consecration of the world to God. It is a lofty task, and they need their Bishops and priests to support them through spiritual leader-

ship. At the same time it has to be apparent in the Body of Christ, where there is a diversity of functions, that the laity are worthy of trust, that they can accomplish what the Lord has assigned specifically to them. This will also make it possible for the clergy to pay full heed to the apostolic injunction to concentrate on "prayer and the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4). The Spirit of God continues to confirm these priorities of the priestly ministry for each generation in the Church.

6. In reflecting on the Church in the Philippines, the missionary aspect emerges in various ways. There is first of all your glorious missionary beginning, in which your ancestors embraced the message of salvation that was proclaimed to them. To reflect on this is to praise God in your history, in the generosity of the missionaries that continues into the present. To reflect on your missionary past is to be challenged to go forward with the same zeal. In order to understand your missionary destiny, it is enough to listen to the Prophet Isaiah who urges you: "Look to the rock from which you were hewn" (Is. 51:1). There are indeed many places where the name of Jesus is not yet known and where his Gospel is yet to be proclaimed among you. It will be your zeal and that of your priests, together with the commitment of the whole ecclesial community, that will devise means to pursue initial evangelization and subsequent catechesis in the face of a harvest that is immense. At the same time you will hear other nations, especially your neighbors in Asia, calling to you "Come over . . . and help us" (Acts 16:9). There is no doubt about it: the Philippines have a special missionary vocation to proclaim the Good News, to carry the light of Christ to the nations. It must be accomplished with personal sacrifice, and in spite of limited resources, but God will not be wanting with his grace and he will supply your needs. Paul VI confirmed this missionary vocation of yours during his visit here, and repeatedly thereafter. From many points of view, dear Brothers, you are truly called to be a missionary Church.

7. As you endeavor to fulfill your pastoral charge, I know that you will recall the words with which the Gospel records the calling of the Apostles: "And he appointed Twelve to be with him and to be sent out to preach" (Mk. 3:14). The two aspects of the apostolic vocation may seem mutually exclusive, but it is not so. Jesus wants us both to stay with him and to go out to preach. We are meant to be his companions and his friends, as well as his tireless apostles. In a word, we *are called*

to holiness. There can be no successful episcopal ministry without holiness of life, because our ministry is modeled on that of the chief Pastor and the Bishop of our souls, Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Pt. 5:4; 2:25).

My dear Brothers, in our intimate friendship with Jesus Christ we shall find strength for fraternal love, the power to touch hearts and to proclaim a convincing message. In the love of Jesus we shall discover the way to build community in Christ and to serve our people, giving them the word of God. By sharing in the holiness of Jesus we shall exercise *an authentic prophetic role*: announcing holiness and courageously practising it as an example to be followed in the ecclesial community. To be faithful to the tradition that is ours, let us remember the Apostle Peter exhorting us: "Be examples to the flock" (1 Pt. 5:3).

8. To these important aspects of our pastoral ministry that I have mentioned — *God's word, unity and holiness* — I would add a final word of fraternal exhortation, and it is this: *let us trust fully in the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ*; let us trust in his power to renew, by the action of his Spirit, the face of earth. Our mission and our destiny, linked with that of our people, are in the hands of God, who has given all power of redemption and sanctification to Jesus Christ. And it is Christ who tells us today that we are strong in him and sustained by his promise: "I am with you always until the end of the world (Mt. 28:20).

And finally, as Bishops we feel ourselves enveloped by the gentle and maternal love of Mary, Mother of Jesus and Queen of the Apostles. I am confident that by her intercession she will assist the Church in the Philippines — and you my brother Bishops in particular — to proclaim Jesus Christ the salvation of Asia and the eternal light of the world.

9. The joy of this meeting is increased by the presence of the *other Asian Bishops* — all of you united in this common mission of proclaiming Jesus Christ.

We are rightly gratified by the awareness that exists in the Church today — thanks to the action of God's Spirit in our times — of the need to bring the oGspel to bear upon all cultures, to make it incarnate in the lives of all peoples, to present the Christian message in a way that is ever more effective. The goal is a noble one, a delicate one; it is a goal to which the Church is firmly committed. Indeed, on the opening day of the Second Vatican Council, John XXIII announced that the Coun-

cil's principal aim was to ensure "that the sacred deposit of Christian doctrine should be more effectively guarded and taught" (October 11, 1962).

In all your efforts, my brother Bishops, to pursue this aim throughout the post conciliar period, be assured of the support of the universal Church, which embraces every nation under heaven and yet proclaims the same Christ to every people and to every generation. Be mindful above all of *the sovereign action of the Holy Spirit*, who alone can stir up the new creation. For this reason Paul VI could declare that "techniques of evangelization are good, but even the most advanced ones could not replace the gentle action of the Spirit... It must be said that the Holy Spirit is the principal agent of evangelization: it is he who impels each individual to proclaim the Gospel and it is he who in the depths of consciences causes the word of salvation to be accepted and understood" (Evangelii Nuntiandi, 75).

It is to the Holy Spirit that we turn humbly to ask that our mission as evangelizers be fruitful for the Kingdom of God and for the glory of the name of Jesus: *Veni Sancte Spiritus! Veni Sante Spiritus!*

TO PROFESSIONAL GROUPS AND TO THE CATECHISTS

Araneta Coliseum
Quezon City, Metro Manila
18 February, 1981

Dear professional people, my dear friends in Christ,

1. It is a joy for me to be able to greet the representatives of various professions from different parts of the Philippines: lawyers, doctors, nurses, engineers, educators and members of other professions as well. Many of you are in positions of leadership or community service in the world, or lay leaders in the Church — you are people who have had the benefit of education and training. Permit me to go immediately to the heart of my message. It is this: *Jesus Christ needs you for the building up of his kingdom on earth.* And the Church needs your special gifts, individually and collectively to fulfill her mission of communicating Christ. Moreover, millions of your fellow-men and women count on your services in order to live worthy lives in accordance with their human and Christian dignity.

2. You can see then that this meeting emphasizes *the Church's great interest in you*, and her desire to consult, to listen to and to bring together all those who play a responsible part in the different fields of culture, and who exercise this responsibility in a Christian spirit of service. As representatives of professions that require greater educational attainment, and as creators and spreaders of culture, you share the Church's life and mission in a specific way.

This present meeting also emphasizes the need to go beyond an individualistic way of life. It is up to you to create *ever more effective forms of association and collaboration* between Catholics belonging to the professions in general and within each profession in particular, so that you can reflect upon your responsibilities as Christians in the light of faith and the Church's social teaching.

3. You are people who have reached your present positions as a result of *hard and serious efforts*, both personal and collective. Personal efforts, in the sense that the studies which you undertook in order to obtain your professional qualifica-

tions certainly demanded of you sacrifice, self-discipline and intellectual rigor. It is only after you have reached the goal that you can properly appreciate the path that has led to it. One only reaps the fruits of what was well sown in the first place. But you are also the result of a great effort on the collective level. For your families and your nation have had to invest great material and spiritual resources in order to train and perfect ever more numerous builders of society, with a solid intellectual and technical education.

4. You have a twofold calling. In the first place, you have to meet your personal needs and those of your families, through the exercise of your professions. In this you have sometimes experienced difficulties and frustrations and perhaps even discouragement. And yet you must not give up, knowing as you do that you are also *called upon to make your contribution to the service of the common good*. When things are going well, never shut yourselves off from society for the sake of making money, gaining power or acquiring more knowledge; do not retreat into a position of privilege. May you put your talents to good use by serving ever more generously the needs and aspirations of all your brothers and sisters in the Philippines. I am thinking in particular of that great number of people who, as a result of different circumstances — injustice, poverty, the need to make a bare living, the lack of cultural stimulus — have been unable to attain the levels of university training and education that you have enjoyed.

Thus there is a close link between your demanding professional activities and the hard toil of the factory worker, the life of the worker on the land, the self-denial of the housewife in her home. This is why your sensitivity to human and Christian values will be the source of a *creative energy* that will help you to place your skills and your activity really and effectively at the service of your people, in response to their needs.

The complete development of the people of your country, and the satisfaction of their spiritual and material needs, call for much effort on your part; health-care for everyone; the defense of the sacred nature of human life and its promotion; the affirmation of the role of law in social and political relations if true order and real freedom are to be ensured; the building of worthy housing, properly adapted to every family and every individual; the education of youth by teaching directed towards the search for truth and its affirmation; the balanced and

fruitful management of natural resources in order to ensure that everyone has a fair share of their benefits: all these are matters that concern you directly.

It is often the case that the great percentage of the lay people who are zealously endeavoring as organized groups to permeate temporal affairs with the spirit of the Gospel and to build genuine Christian communities come mostly from non-professional groups. Thus an unfortunate impression is created that the leader/professional groups are not deeply interested in religious activities. In a country where the vast majority of people look up to the leaders and are easily encouraged by example, this apostolate of witness and example has great effectiveness and should be increasingly adopted. I sincerely hope that you can offer more and more of your talent and time in the service of the Church, in the lay apostolate of building up an authentic Christian community. Those, for example, who are recognized leaders in the field of health can do much to promote the Catholic principles regarding the intrinsic value of life in all its stages. Similarly, in the other professions, true Christian leadership is most effective.

5. May your efforts in this direction always be sustained by inflexible integrity of conduct, in the midst of the professional problems that you meet. But even more, may they be inspired by a desire to help those who are most in need, so that your service will be ruled by the criteria of justice and truth, of freedom and integrity, and be crowned with love. Remember always that as Christians you are called *to live in accordance with the principles that you have learned from Christ and his Church*. You are called to live upright lives consistent with your Gospel principles.

6. Everyone is aware that the discipline that you exercise call for constant renewal, in order that you may keep up with the rapid pace of new discoveries. Your capacity to adapt yourselves and to keep abreast of these developments will depend on your constant study of the basic principles underlying these disciplines. And may your Catholic faith also be constantly renewed; may it grow deeper and develop, through the radical dynamism of *constant conversion to Christ* a conversion animated by a life lived according to the Gospel and in harmony with the Magisterium, nourished by a life of personal piety based upon prayer and the reception of the sacraments. May the testimony of your faith shine brightly in your professional lives, as well as in your personal and family lives.

7. You are aware of the present-day risks involved in shutting oneself up within the narrow limits of a "specialization". Such specializations can narrow one's horizons, fragment one's personal life and obscure the rich nature of life in general. It is very clear that professional specialization must be considered within the wider setting of what is called general culture. It is in this context that I urge you to take as your fundamental points of reference the religious and ethical values that are the powerful promoters of culture, by shedding their light on man's different problems and deepest aspirations, and by transforming his whole life and all his knowledge. Your professional experience will thus gain in depth, perspective and fruitfulness.

As Catholics with greater educational attainment and as representatives of the professions, you are called upon to show how your knowledge and professional work blend with the wealth and resources of the culture of the people of the Philippines. That culture is rooted in the Christian tradition, and is therefore imbued with liberating and life-giving wisdom concerning the being and dignity of the human person, concerning the meaning of his life, his death and his final destiny.

I greet you once more, and in your persons I greet your families and all the representatives of the professions in this great country. May God grant you his abundant blessings!

8. And now I would like to address myself to another group among you, those men and women so very dear to the Church and to your Pope the *catechists*.

Thank you, my-dear catechists, for the gift of your presence. Thank you for permitting me to tell you, and through you, all the other catechists of the country who are not here with us, *how much you are needed*.

The world needs you because it needs catechesis. For the most precious gift that the Church can offer the modern world — confused and restless as it is — is to form Christians sure about essentials and humbly joyful in their faith. Catechesis does this, and it does this through you.

The Church needs you. She needs you in order to be able to accomplish her absolutely fundamental task of forming Christ in the hearts of people, of putting people in intimate communion with Christ (cf. *Catechesi Tradendae*, 5). In catechesis, it is Christ, the Word Incarnate and the Son of God, who is taught, and everything else that is taught is with reference to him.

How noble and important then is your service! But it is difficult as well as noble, delicate as well as important. Catechesis is not just a matter of transmitting ideas. It involves above all *communicating Christ and his life-giving message* and helping people to give their response of faith and love.

What do you need, my dear catechists, in order to elicit the proper response to Christ's message of life? You need to *be faithful to Christ, to his Church and to man.*

You must be faithful first of all to Christ, to his truth, to his mandate; otherwise there would be distortion, betrayal. As catechist you are, after all, *echoes of Christ* (cf. *Catechesi Tradendae*, 6). The Church too should be the object of your consistent faithfulness. For catechesis, which is growth in faith and the maturing of the Christian life, is a work that Christ wills to accomplish in his Church. An authentic catechist must necessarily be an ecclesial catechist. Finally, you must be faithful to man, for the Lord's words and message is intended for every human person. Not an abstract, imaginary person, but the individual who lives in time, with his or her difficulties, problems and hopes. It is to this person that the Gospel must be proclaimed, so that through it he or she may receive from the Holy Spirit the light and strength to come to full Christian maturity. To a large extent, the effectiveness of catechesis will depend on its capacity to give meaning, Christian meaning, to everything that constitutes man's life in this world.

Beloved catechists, I have spoken to you with deep affection. I would like to stay with you longer, but I must meet your other brothers and sisters as well. Before leaving, however, I assure you of my confidence, give you my love and assure you of the peace of Christ.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother and Model of all catechists, guide you in your great mission to communicate Christ. May she give joy to you and your families and protect the Philippines forever.

TO THE STUDENTS OF THE PHILIPPINES

University of Sto. Tomas
Manila, 18 February, 1981

Mga giliw kong kabataan ng Maynila at ng buong Pilipinas: tanggapin ninyo ang aking taos pusong pagbati at pagmamamal! (Dear young people of Manila and of the Philippines: accept my heartfelt greetings and affection!)

1. There is no hiding the joy I feel at this longed-for meeting with you, my dear friends. "Friendship" is a word that we all like. But the reality it points is far more beautiful. *Friendship indicates sincere love*, a two-way love that wishes everything good for the other person — a love that brings about union and happiness. It is no secret that the Pope loves young people like you, and that he feels immensely happy in your company.

It is only right that it should be so. He is the vicar of Christ and must therefore follow *Christ's example*. The Gospel records the intensity with which Jesus offered his friendship to each one of his disciples (cf. Jn. 15:15). It also notes the special affection that he had for the young (Mk. 10:21). It was on the basis of this friendship that Jesus set before his young friends the mission that was assigned to them. Like Jesus I would like to speak to you of *our own special vocation*. The Second Vatican Council pointed out that Catholic universities should prepare their students to be "truly outstanding in learning, ready to undertake responsible duties in society, and witnesses in the world to their faith" (Gravissimum Educationis, 10). I would add, for my part, that, if you are to be in position tomorrow to fulfill your threefold mission as fully mature adults, servants of society and representatives of the Gospel, you must today live to the full your vocation as *young people, as university students, and as real Catholics*.

2. First and foremost, be genuine young people. What is it to be young? To be young means possessing within oneself an incessant newness of spirit, nourishing a continual quest for good, and persevering in reaching a goal. Being genuinely

young in this sense is the way to prepare for your future, which is to fulfill your vocation as fully mature adults. Never try to ignore then the irresistible force that is driving you toward the future.

The Church is not frightened at *the intensity of your feelings*. It is a sign of vitality. It indicates pent-up energy, which of itself is neither good nor bad, but can be used for good causes or for bad. It is like rain water that accumulates on the mountains after days and days of raining. When whatever holds it bursts, it unleashes forces capable of wiping whole towns off the map, overwhelming their inhabitants in a sea of tears and blood. But, if properly channeled, dry fields are irrigated, producing the necessary and the much needed energy. In your case it is not only food or material things that are involved; it is the destiny of your country, the future of your generation and the security of children yet unborn. It is without any doubt an exciting but crucial challenge for you, my dear young. And I am positive that you can meet this challenge, that you are willing to assume this responsibility. Above all that you are ready to prepare yourselves now, today.

You will agree with me that it is worth your while to *accept self-discipline*, which not only indicates strength of character on your part but also offers valuable service to others. The effort involved is one that fits in perfectly with your lives as young people in the field of sports. Even as far back as the time of Saint Paul, Christian mortification was spoken of in these terms. The young athlete who is prepared to undergo hard training in order to improve his sporting performance should be generous about the self-discipline required for his fully human training.

As young people, you look to the future. You are not stagnantly fixed in the present. You must therefore decide in what direction you want to go, and then keep an eye on the compass. Young people do not like mediocre ideals. They prefer to launch out into the deep. It is your right, or rather, it is your duty, to aim high. Your aspirations must be sublime; *your ideals must be high*. Dear young people, strive to build a character that is strong, rich and consistent, one that is free and responsible, sensitive to genuine values, a character that accepts the superiority of "being" over "having", one that perseveres in challenges and shuns escapism, facile compromise and heartless self-centered calculation.

In going forward along the path of truth, sincerity and authenticity, you have an ideal model. *The model for you is Christ: Christ in his humanity, Christ the man.* Notice that he is not only your goal: he is also the way that leads you where you are going. And on the way he acts as a shepherd; he even goes so far as to give himself as food for your journey.

If you agree to model your youth on Christ, you will find the whole process summed up in a single word in Luke's Gospel. The word is that Jesus "grew". "Jesus grew in wisdom and in the stature, and in favor with God and man" (Lk. 2:52). This is not just a statement of what happened in history. This is also an invitation to you. Christ's words "follow me" (Mt. 4:19) should also strike a special chord in your hearts. *Accepting Christ's call is a sure way of responding to your vocation* to be a fully mature adult, and this is the fundamental aspiration of every worthy young person.

3. "The direction that society will take tomorrow depends mainly on the minds and hearts of today's *university students*" (*Gravissimum Educationis*, note 33). This wise observation by Pope Pius XII is an invitation to you to be aware of the privilege and the *responsibility* that so many of you here today have as young people in an insitute of higher learning.

The university offers you a whole array of excellent means for completing your formation. *You must not however think of yourself alone.* You are called to help build up human society. As university students you have at your disposal abundant means that you must learn to know and appreciate fully.

The structure of a university is very much a community structure. The word "university" itself originally meant a society of professors and students. The university rests on the columns of society and are anxious to play their part in it all the sooner" (audium et Spes, 7). Your desire is laudable; your youthful impitience very understandable. *But you must prepare yourselves Carefully* now for your noble service will be in direct proportion to the resources of truth that are yours.

A university student must therefore have a permanent program for capturing youth. It is no easy task. It demands study and perseverance; it call for generosity and self-sacrifice. The assimilation of truth is conditioned by the surrounding culture. First you must personally make a critical examination

and try to form *an organic synthesis*. Only in this way will a university student be in a position to contribute the expert, committed and creative service that society expects of him or her.

Needless to say, the conquest of truth must be carried out with complete respect for different viewpoints and in open dialogue with others: a dialogue that in every field reaches particular intensity in a university. Finding myself here in this illustrious University of Santo Tomas, which has given us such cordial and generous hospitality, I must make at least a brief reference to a particular aspect of the dialogue between the Church and the world: I mean the fact that it enable us "to see more clearly how faith and reason converge on the one truth, following in the footsteps of the doctors of the Church, especially Saint Thomas Aquinas" (Gravissimum Educationis, 10).

4. Thirdly, I would have you note that the *Catholic faith* that YOU PROFESS FITS IN perfectly with your two other characteristics of being young and of being university students.

The Catholicity of the Church has within it — for her divine Founder willed it so — *an intrinsic dynamism* that is in perfect accord with the enthusiasm of youth. The very words "catholicity" and "university" sound almost synonymous. Neither the Church nor the university admit boundaries. In the vertical dimension there is a difference, in that the Church is not content with a merely hypothetical openness to transcendence: she professes that such openness is a fact.

For a young university student, being a Catholic is not just something extra. It involves values that are original and specific; it gives an incomparable power both for building a better world and for proclaiming the Kingdom of God. As young Catholic University students you are called to work in harmony with students of different religions and ideologies, in a common effort to advance truth, to serve man and to honor God. You are called to sincere ecumenical collaboration with all those who are your brothers and sisters in Christ. But at the same time you are called to make a specifically Catholic contribution at the university level to the evangelization of culture. As catholics you must confess Christ openly and without embarrassment in the university environment that is yours.

In this way you are also contributing to maintaining the Catholic character of your University in its institutional commitment to the Gospel of Christ as proclaimed by the Catholic Church. Being dedicated to the further evangelization of your

culture in depth, you are able, as Catholics, to bring new elements for an open and enriching dialogue. Hence as young Catholic university students you have a special testimony to give. Not to give it would be to deprive humanity of an expert and necessary contribution — one that can be made only by someone who is proud to be in the ranks of Christ's followers.

Dear young people,, the mission that Christ gives you is a universal one, but at the same time it is to be realized in a unique way to each one of you. The particular way the mission is carried out depends on the missionaries, on you! It is up to you to discover all the right ways to fulfill Christ counts on your support. He needs you to spread the Good News of his love and the Gospel of eternal salvation. How providential it is that our meeting of friendship should conclude on the theme of evangelization in a country with a great mission for Christ. This is a challenge for everyone. Each of you is called to take up the torch and proclaim the truth of Christ. This is a challenge for everyone. Each of you is called to take up the torch and proclaim the truth of Christ. You can do it! You can do it with your youthful enthusiasm and with confidence — the assurance — displayed by the first Apostles when the Church was young. You can do it, provided you do it together, and provided you do it with Christ and his Church!

* * *

5. I conclude with a loving and grateful remembrance of the Virgin Mary.

She is our MOTHER, an intimate, discreet and loving Mother. Although her affection is for all, it is a fact that the young have special need of her care, particularly today.

She is our TEACHER, because she is our Mother. Students have a wonderful lesson to learn from her attitude of profound reverence before the unfathomable mystery of God, and from her search for truth through contemplation and prayer.

She is QUEEN OF THE APOSTLES: of all the apostles, both those of the Church's beginning and those in present-day history. Her presence is a discreet and effective today as it was at Cana Galilee. May she be with you always. May she intercede for you with her divine Son, as she did then she in order to prevent a shadow filling on the happiness of the bride and groom, who were young people just like yourselves — children of hers just like you, each and every one of you.

And in the name of her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is forever the friend of the youth of the world. I leave you with this heritage of yours, which is faith, hope and love.

TO THE PEOPLE OF TONDO

Manila, 18 February, 1981

Mga ginigiliw kong kapatid kay Kristo,
(My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,)

1. Kay tindi ng ligaya na aking nadarama sa mga sandaling ito! (What intense happiness I feel at this very moment!) I have looked forward to this visit, because I wanted to tell you that you are the Pope's beloved friends, to whom he wishes to bring the message of love that Jesus entrusted to his Church. *My visit to you as the successor of the Apostle Peter is a visit of love.* It cannot be anything else, because I see in you Christ himself and to him I have pledged my love. In telling Peter that he was to be the shepherd of the flock, Jesus asked him three times, with ever greater insistence: "*Simon, son of John, do you love me?*" (Jn. 21:15 ff.). And Saint Peter professed his love for Christ. I too profess my love for Christ, and in coming to you I simply want to give testimony to that love. I simply to repeat to you the words of Christ who said: "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you" (Jn. 15:9).

2. I thank the Lord for giving me this opportunity to come to Tondo District and meet the people of Foreshoreland, and in particular the people of the Parish of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage. *The name Tondo is linked in a special way with the name of my predecessor Paul VI*, the first worldwide pilgrim Pope of modern times. When he came here more than ten years ago, he blessed the beginnings of this parish in the middle of an area where human and Christian needs were many and deep. He pleaded for greater respect for the rights of the human person, for the dignity of the children of God; he asked for greater awareness of the plight of the people on the part of civil and Church authorities. I have been told that much has happened since that time, that the various sectors of society have shown greater concern, and especially that the people of Tondo themselves have achieved much by forming their own organizations for spiritual, pastoral, social and economic development. But so much more needs to be done to make Tondo a place of hope for every man, woman and child who calls this place home.

3. When we think about the many problems that face you daily, when we think about the many people in other areas, in the slums of the big cities and in the neglected rural zones in other parts of the Philippines, then we think about Christ. *In the faces of the poor I see the face of Christ. In the life of the poor I see reflected the life of Christ.* In turn, the poor and those discriminated against identify more easily with Christ, for in him lay discover one of their own. Right from the beginning of his life, at the blessed moment of his birth as Son of the Virgin Mary, Jesus was homeless, for there was no place for him in the inn. (Lk. 7:7). When his parents took him up to Jerusalem for the first time, to present their offering in the temple, they were numbered among the poor and they offered the gift of the poor (cf. Lk. 2:25). In his childhood he was a refugee, forced to flee the hatred that broke loose in persecution, to leave his own land and live in exile on foreign soil. As a boy, he was able to confound the learned teachers with his wisdom, but he still worked with his hands as a humble carpenter like his foster-father Joseph. After speaking out and explaining the Scriptures in the Synagogue at the Nazareth, "the carpenter's son" was rejected (Mt. 1:55, cf. Lk. 4:29). Even one of the disciples chosen to follow him asked: "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (Jn. 1:46). He was also the victim of injustice and torture and was put to death without anyone coming to his defense. Yes, he was the brother of the poor; it was his mission — for he was sent by God the Father and anointed by the Holy Spirit — to proclaim the Gospel to the poor (cf. Lk. 4:18). He praised the poor when he uttered this unsettling challenge to all who want to be his followers: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 5:3).

4. *Blessed are the poor in spirit!* This is the opening statement of the Sermon on the Mount, in which Jesus proclaimed the Beatitudes as the program for all who want to follow him. The Beatitudes were meant not only for the people of his own day but for all generation throughout the ages; they are an invitation to everyone who accepts the name of Christian. This was the message that I held up in Brazil to the slum dwellers in the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro and to the inhabitants of the muddy peninsula of Salvador de Bahia. This is the message that I present to rich and poor alike, the message that the Church in the Philippines, as elsewhere, must make her own and put into practice. Any Church that wants to be a Church of the poor must heed this challenge, discover its full depth and implement its full truth.

Here in Tondo, and in other parts of this land, there are many poor people, and in them I also see the *poor in spirit* whom Jesus called blessed. The poor in spirit are those that keep their eyes on God, and their hearts open to his divine workings. They accept the gift of life as a gift from on high, and value it because it comes from God. With gratitude towards the Creator and mercy towards their fellow human beings, they are ready to share what they have with those in greater need. They love their families and children and share their homes and tables with the hungry child and the homeless youth. The poor spirit grow rich in human qualities; they are close to God, ready to listen to his voice and to sing his praise.

5. Being poor in spirit does not mean being unconcerned with the problems that beset the community, and nobody has a keener sense of justice than the poor people who suffer the injustices that circumstances and human selfishness heap upon them. Finding strength in human solidarity, the poor by their very existence indicate the obligation of justice that confronts society and all who have power whether economic, cultural or political. *And so it is the same truth of the first beatitude that indicates the path that every person must walk.* It tells those that live in material poverty that their dignity, their human dignity, must be preserved, that their inviolable human rights must be cherished and protected. It also tells them that they themselves can achieve much if they use their skill and talents, and especially their determination to be the artisans of their own progress and development.

The first beatitude tells the rich, who enjoy material well-being or who accumulate a disproportionate share of material goods, that man is great not by reason of what he possesses but by what he is — not by what he has but by what he shares with others. Poor in spirit is the rich man who does not close his heart, but faces up to the intolerable situations that perpetuate the poverty and misery of the many who are constantly hungry and deprived of their rightful chances to grow and develop their human potential, who lack decent housing and sufficient clothing, who suffer illness for want of even basic health care, who grow desperate for want of employment that would enable them to provide, through honest work, for the needs of their families. Poor in spirit indeed is the rich man who does not rest to long as a brother or sister is entrapped in injustice and powerlessness. For in spirit is the one who holds political

power and remembers that it is given for the common good only, and who never ceases to devise means to organize all sectors of society according to the demands of the dignity and equality that is the birthright of every man, woman and child that God has called into existence.

6. The Church herself, the Church of Asia, in the Philippines and in Tondo, will heed the call of the Beatitudes and be the *Church of the poor because she must do what Jesus did and proclaim the Gospel to the poor.* (cf. Lk. 4:18). But the preference that the Church shows for the poor and underprivileged does not mean that she directs her concern only to one group or class or category. She preaches the same message to all: that God loves man and sent his Son for the salvation of all, that Jesus Christ is the Savior, "the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn. 14:6). Being the Church of the poor means that she will speak the language of the Beatitudes to all people, to all groups or professions, to all ideologies, to all political and economic systems. She does so, not to serve political interests, not to offer pretexts for violence, but to save man in his humanity and in his supernatural destiny.

Defending the human dignity of the poor and their hope for a human future is not a luxury for the Church, nor it is a strategy of opportunism, nor a means for currying favor with the masses. It is her duty because it is God who wishes all human beings to live in accordance with the dignity that he bestowed on them. It is the mission of the Church to travel the path of man "because man — without any exception whatever — has been redeemed by Christ, and because with man — with each man without any exception whatever — Christ is in way united, even when man is unaware of it" (*Redemptor Hominis*, 14). The Church will therefore preach to the poor the whole Gospel; she will encourage them to be faithful to the divine life which they have received in Baptism, the life is nourished in the Eucharist and which is revived and supported through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. For the same reason, I encourage you, the people of Tondo, and all the People of God in the Philippines, to exercise your individual and corporate responsibility for increasing catechetical instruction as you endeavor to implement fully the social teachings of the Church. Be fully convinced of how important it is for every future generation of Filipinos to be aware of the supreme dignity to which they are called, which is eternal life in Christ Jesus.

7. My dear friends of Tondo, *be faithful to Christ and joyfully embrace his Gospel of salvation.* Do not be tempted by ideologies that preach only material values or purely temporal ideals, which separate political, social and economic development from the things of the spirit, and in which happiness is sought apart from Christ. The road towards your total liberation is not the way of violence, class struggle or hate; it is the way of love, brotherhood and peaceful solidarity. I know that you understand me, you the poor of Tondo, for you are blessed and possess the kingdom of heaven. And when I go away, always remember these words of Jesus: "If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (Jn. 8:36).

Because of Christ I make all your concerns and struggles of my own; because of my love in Christ I am with you in your efforts to secure a worthy future for yourselves and your children; because of Christ's supreme love for you I preach to you an uplifting Gospel of eternal life.

I pray for you, for each one of you, for your families, for your children, for the young and the old, for the sick and the suffering. I pray that the strength of Jesus may be in your hearts as you work together to improve your lives, to be good Christians and good citizens. I pray that you will find Jesus in each other and in every fellow human being. And I pray that together you will find him and adore him — the eternal Son of God — in the arms of his Mother, Mary.

And may our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage be a loving Mother to you all!

Mabuhay kayong lahat! (Long live you all!)

Jesus na aking kapatid
sa lupa nami'y bumalik
Iyong mukha'y ibang-iba
Hindi kita nakikilala

Jesus my brother
you have come back to our earth
you have the face of another
whom I do not recognize.

Tulutan mo'ng aking mata
mamulat sa katotohanan
ikaw poon makikilala
sa taong mapagkumbaba.

Teach my eyes to see
what truly is;
to know you, Lord
in the little man, the humble
man I see.

HOMILY AT THE MASS FOR THE BEATIFICATION

Luneta Park, Manila

18 February, 1981

Dear Brothers and sisters in the Lord,

1. The City of Manila and all the Philippines are filled with joy on this day as they sing a *hymn of glory to Jesus Christ*. For, according to his Gospel promise, Christ is truly acknowledging, in the presence of his Father in heaven, those faithful martyrs who acknowledged him before men (cf. Mt. 10:32). And because of the nearness of Luneta Park to old Manila "intra muros", the hymn of glory to God which has just been sung by numberless voices is an echo of the *Te Deum* sung in the Church of Santo Domingo on the evening of December 27, 1637, when the news arrived of the martyrdom at Nagasaki of a group of six Christians. Among them were the head of the mission, Father Antonio Gonzalez, a Spanish Dominican from Leon; and Lorenzo Ruiz, a married man with a family, born in Manila "extra muros": in the suburb of Binondo (cf. *Positio super Martyrio*, Rome 1979, pp. 478-9).

These witnesses had also in their turn sung psalms to the Lord of mercy and power, both while they were in prison and during their execution by the gallows and the pit, which lasted three days. The song of these "designated" martyrs — to use a definition made by my predecessor Benedict XIV — was followed in Manila, then as now, by the song of thanksgiving for the martyrs now "consummated" and "glorified". *Te martyrum candidatus laudat exercitus*: they belonged indeed to a white-robed throng, whose members included those of the white legion of the Order of Preachers.

2. Our hymn is at the same time a *hymn of faith that conquers the world* (cf. 1 Jn. 5:4). The preaching of this faith enlightens like life the sun all who wish to attain the knowledge of truth. Indeed, although there are different languages in the world, the power of the Christian traditions is the same. And so, as Saint Irenaeus explains, the Churches founded in Germany or in Spain believe and teach no differently from the Churches

founded in the East or in the central parts of the world (cf. *Adversus Haereses*, Book 1, 10, 1-3: PG 7, pp. 550-554).

I therefore greet with deep affection in Christ Jesus the European Churches in Italy, France and Spain, and the Asian Churches in Taiwan, Macau, the Philippines and Japan, represented here or at least spiritually united to this ceremony of the beatification of sixteen martyrs who belong to them by birth, apostolic work or martyrdom.

3. The Lord Jesus by his blood truly redeemed his servants, gathered from every race, tongue, people and nation, to make them a royal priesthood for our God (cf. Rev. 5:9-10). The sixteen blessed martyrs, by the exercise of their priesthood — that of baptism or of Holy Orders — performed *the greatest act of worship and love* of God by the sacrifice of their blood united with Christ's own Sacrifice of the Cross. In this way they imitated Christ the priest and victim in the most perfect way possible for human creatures (cf. S. Th. II - II, q. 124, a. 3). It was the same time an act of the greatest possible love for their brethren, for whose sake we are all called to sacrifice ourselves, following the example of the Son of God who sacrificed himself for us (cf. I Jn. 3:16).

4. This is what Lorenzo Ruiz did. Guided by the Holy Spirit to an unexpected goal after an adventurous journey, he told the court that he was a Christian, and must die for God, and would give his life for him a thousand times (cf. *Positio*, p. 417).

Kahit maging sanglibo man
Ang buhay n'yaring katawan
Pawa kong ipapapatay,
Kung inyong pagpipilitang
Si Kristo'y aking talikdan.
(Had I many thousands of lives
I would offer them all for him.
Never shall I apostatize.
You may kill me if that is what you want.
To die for God — such is my will.)

Here we have him summed up; here we have a description of his faith and the reason for his death. It was at this moment that this young father of a family professed and *brought to completion the Christian catechesis that he had received* in the

Dominican Friars' school in Binondo: a catechesis that cannot be other than Christ-centered, by reason of the mystery it contains and the fact that it is Christ who teaches through the lips of his messenger (cf. *Catechesis Tradendae*, 5-6).

This is the Christian essence of the first Beatus of the Philippine nation, today exalted as a fitting climax to the fourth centenary of the Archdiocese of Manila. Just as the young Church in Jerusalem brought forth its first martyr for Christ in the person of the deacon Stephen, so *the young Church in Manila*, founded in 1579, brought forth its first martyr in the person of Lorenzo Ruiz, who had served in the parish church of Saint Gabriel in Binondo. The local parish and the family, the domestic church, are indeed the center of faith that is lived, taught and witnessed to.

5. The example of Lorenzo Ruiz, the son of a Chinese father and Tagala mother, reminds us that *everyone's life and the whole of one's life must be at Christ's disposal*. Christianity means daily giving, in response to the gift of Christ who came into the world so that all might have life and have it to the full (cf. Jn.10:10). Or, as so aptly expressed in the theme of my visit to this country: *To die for the faith is a gift to some; to live the faith is a call for all*. I too have come from the city of the martyrs Peter and Paul to this capital city to speak to you about the meaning of our existence, about the value of living and dying for Christ. And that is what I wish to affirm by this act of beatification, desired by myself and by my predecessor Paul VI, and requested by the various local Churches and by the Dominican Order.

6. But the attractive figure of the first Filipino martyr would not be fully explained in its historical context without *extolling the witness given by his fifteen companions*, who suffered in 1633, 1634 and 1637. They form the group led by two men: Domingo Ibañez de Erquicia, the vicar provincial of the Japanese mission and a native of Regil in the Spanish Diocese of San Sebastian; and Jacobo Kyuhei Tomonaga, a native of Kyudetsu in the Diocese of Nagasaki. Both of these belonged to the Dominican Province of the Holy Rosary in the Philippines, established in 1587 for the evangelization of the Far East. The whole group of Lorenzo's companions was composed of nine priests, two professed brothers, two members of the Third Order, and a catechist and a guide-interpreter. Nine were Japanese, four were Spaniards, one a Frenchman, and one an Italian. They had *one reason for their evangelical witness*:

the reason of Saint Paul, baptized by Ananias *to carry the name of Christ to all peoples* (cf. Acts 9:15): "We have come to Japan only to preach faith in God and to teach salvation to little ones and to the innocent and to all the rest of the people." Thus did the martyr Guillaume Courtet sum up their mission before the judges at Nagasaki (cf. *Positio*, pp. 412, 414).

7. I shall have the joy of speaking again about these brave apostles in a few days' time, in Nagasaki, near that holy hill called Nishizaka, where they suffered martyrdom. *By their place of death they are all Japanese.* That archipelago was the land of their true and definitive birth, the birth that brings the adopted children of God to eternal light.

8. For the moment, as we consider the place where they are being beatified, I would dwell upon the fact that the city of Manila, the island of Luzon and the island of Formosa, which at that time came under a single civil government, were the wide and providential starting-point of the nine priests who later sailed for Nagasaki. There was a ministry among the Chinese of the suburb of Binondo, among the Japanese colony in Manila, among the peoples of the regions of Bataan, Pangasinan, Cagayan, and, further north, in Formosa. For some of them there was a teaching assignment in the College of Santo Tomas in Manila, which in 1645 became the present Pontifical University, the oldest and the largest Catholic University in the Far East.

Four of the new Beati were professors in the College, one was also the Rector, and a fifth had studied there. In the first century of the evangelization of the Far East, begun by the preaching of Saint Francis Xavier, the Philippine Islands had already, in this university institution, a further means of carrying out the mission of evangelization (cf. *Sapientia Christiana*: AAS 71 1979), p. 478). A fruitful program aimed at imparting theological knowledge and propagating the faith, which still today is enhanced by the cultural heritage of the Philippines and vivified by the Christian spirit, is a fitting instrument for assisting the spread of the Gospel (cf. *Sapientia Christiana*, loc. cit., p. 479). The harmonious mingling of faith and culture is spoken of by the Filipino poet and national hero Jose Rizal, in these verses:

Tal la Educación estrecha alianza
Con alma Religión une sincera:
Por ella Educación renombre alcanza:

Y ay! del ser que ciego desechando
De santa Religión sabias doctrinas,
De su puro raudal huye nefando.

(cf. Alianza Intima Entre la Religion y la Educacion, 19 April 1876).

All the more therefore, it is my duty and the object of my apostolic ministry to confirm my brethren in the truth (cf. Lk. 22: 32), and to repeat to the missionaries, to the students of the theological and human sciences, as well as to all the Catholics of East Asia, the words of Christ: "You shall be my witness . . . to the ends of earth" (Acts 1:8).

9. Let us endeavor to imitate the commitment to faith and the — *fidelity to commitment* of those who, through their difficult missionary task, accepted with joy and steadfastness hard journeys, difficulties of climate, betrayal even by their friends, privations of every kind and terrible tortures. They were so much in love with Christ's Passion that they could cry out, like Miguel de Aozaraza contemplating Christ's wounds: "What beatiful carnations, what blood red roses shed for love of you, my God!" (cf. *Positio*, p. 446). They asked Mary, as did Giordano Ansalone, to enable them to recover their health, so that they could die only as victims for Christ (cf. *Positio*, p. 298).

I entrust all this to Mary, who, with her rosary, helped our martyrs to imitate and to proclaim her Son; to be intrepid guardians of his word, like the courageous women Magdalena of Nagasaki and Marina of Omura. I entrust the destiny of the Philippines and of all Asia to Mary, Queen of the Rosary, who with the title of "La Naval" is venerated as the guardian of freedom for the Catholic faith.

10. This is the full meaning of this beatification: to animate all the Christians of the Far East and to spread the word of the Lord (cf. 2 Thess. 3:1). In a special way I say this to you Filipinos, who form the only predominantly Catholic nation in the eastern part of the continent of Asia. It is an invitation that I also extend to the other Christians of the nearby lands that border the Pacific Ocean like a symbol of the long search for God described by Saint Catherine of Siena: "A deep sea, in which the further I enter it the more I find; and the more I find the more I look for you. You are insatiable, for as the soul becomes satiated in your abyss, it is not satiated, because it always remains hungry for you, thirsty for you desiring to see you by the light of your light". (*Dialogue*, Chapter 167).

Dearly beloved: amidst the efforts needed for our own Christian lives, and for spreading the light of Christ throughout Asia and the whole world, let us look today to these zealous martyrs who give us deep assurance and fresh hope when they tell us: "In all this we are more than conquerors because of him who has loved us" (Rom. 8:37). And this is the mystery we celebrate today: the love of Jesus Christ, who is the light of the world. Amen.

* * *

En esta ceremonia de la beatificacion del primer martir filipino y de los otros quince hermanos que dieron su vida por la fe en Cristo, quiero recordar en su propia lengua los cuatro martires espaneoles Domingo Ibanez de Erquicia, Lucas Alonso, Antonio Gonzalez y Miguel de Aozaraza.

Es un homenaje que gustosamente rindo en primer lugar a ellos que, siguiendo las huellas de San Francisco Javier y la ensenanza de su Fundador Santo Domingo de Guzman, difundieron la fe cristiana en estas tierras y dieron el supremo testimonio de fidelidad a la Iglesia.

Al mismo tiempo es un debido tributo de agradecido recuerdo a Espana, que a lo largo de cuatro siglos y medio llevo a cabo la evangelizacion de Filipinas, haciendo de ella la unica Nacion de Oriente con gran mayoria catolica. Me alegro poder proclamar esto en presencia de la Mision Extraordinaria Espanola venida para asistir a la Beatification y a la que, junto con los otros connacionales de los nuevos Beatos aqui reunidos, dirijo mi cordial saludo y mi pensamiento complacido.

* * *

A ce propos, je suis heureux de saluer les membres, civils et ecclesiastiques, de la Delegation venue de France et plus precisement de Montpellier, diocese d'origine du Père Guillaume Courtet. Soyez fiers chers amis, de ce fils de votre pays, qui temoigne si hautement de sa vocation religieuse, du zele missionnaire le plus pur et de l'amour du Christ par-dessus tout.

* * *

In questa solenne circostanza desidero salutare, infine i membri della Delegazione d'Italia e tutti gli Italiani che partecipano al rito. Ad essi desidero esprimere il mio compiacimento, e quello di tutta la Chiesa, per la presenza, nel gruppo

dei nuovi Beati Martiri, anche di un loro connazionale: il sacerdote domenicano Giordano Ansalone. Possa il nuovo Beato intercedere presso Dio perche gli Italiani, consapevoli della loro ricca tradizione cristiana, che ha animato e fecondato tutta la loro storia, la loro cultura, la loro arte, diano una continua ed esemplare testimonianza di vita, modellata sul messaggio di Gesu.

* * *

I also want to express my happiness at the presence of the official delegation from Japan, May I say first of all that I look forward to being in your country within a few days, at which time I shall render special honor to the martyrs beatified here today. Of the sixteen, nine were Japanese. This large number is a great tribute to your nation and to the Catholic Church in Japan. May the heroic witness of the martyrs be for all believers a source of inspiration and hope.

* * *

And finally my greetings go to the official Philippine delegation and to His Excellency President Marcos. In this first beatification ceremony to take place outside of Rome and in this first Filipino Beatus, Lorenzo Ruiz, you have cause for continued rejoicing. And the whole Church rejoices with you, uniting in one voice, to praise the greatness of God and wonders of his love.

TO THE CHINESE COMMUNITY IN ASIA

Apostolic Nunciature
Manila, 18 February, 1981

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I find it very significant and important to have the opportunity to say a brief word to Chinese Christians during my pastoral visit to Asia.

I greet in a particular way Archbishop Matthew Kai of Taipeh and the other bishops accompanying him who have honored me with their presence during my pastoral visit to the Philippines. Most sincerely I thank you for coming as the representatives of the Christians of Overseas Chinese Communities to meet me here in Manila. Some of you have lived for generations in the Philippines or in other Asian countries; others have come here more recently. I know that it is your desire to be fully integrated into the life of the country where you live, and to contribute by your work, as good citizens, to the prosperity of the nation that is now your home. At the same time you wish to remain united in spirit with your relatives and friends in China. You wish to preserve the traditional Chinese moral values and culture that link you to your families' country of origin, the country you will always love dearly and to the progress of which you are willing to offer all the help desired.

You are also members of the local Church communities. These strengthen your commitment to Christ, and imbue you with the same Christian spirit that has been, in the past, the hallmark of the Chinese Christian communities in various countries of the world. Famous people in Chinese history have encountered Christ and have become Christians through the contact they had with those fervent and dynamic communities. If you maintain that spirit, if you live inspired by the Christian faith and strengthened by the specifically Chinese moral traditions, you will in a profound way be truly Christian and truly Chinese, and contribute to the richness of the whole Church.

Through you who are present here, I now wish to reach out to all who are in China and to greet, with joy and affection, all my brothers and sisters in Christ who live in that vast land.

2. I, John Paul II, Bishop of Rome and successor of Peter, greet you in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, my dear brothers and sisters in China. On my first pastoral visit to Asia I shall meet with the Bishops, clergy, religious and laity of the Church in the Philippines and in Japan, in order to speak to them about the merciful love of God, to proclaim the name of Jesus "for there is no other name under heaven given by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12), and to encourage them to witness to the Gospel. Travelling so close to the borders of your country, I also wanted to speak to you, for across the distances that separates us we are all united "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:12). Ever since God's providence in its mysterious ways called me from my native Poland to the See of Peter in Rome, I have ardently desired to express my affection and esteem to all my brothers and sisters of the Church in China, and to praise the Lord for the great things that he has wrought in the hearts of those who profess his name in the cities and villages of your immense land.

The Spirit of the Lord is at work in all peoples and nations, and to this Spirit I have wanted to bear witness by making it the Special goal of my pilgrimage to Asia to honour the Martyrs of Nagasaki. Through them I pay homage to all the men and women in Asia who have offered up their lives for the name of Jesus, giving proof thereby that the Gospel of Christ and his Church are not alien to any people or any nation but that they live in the hearts and in the minds of the people of all races and nations around the world. And so, in greeting you, I make my own the words of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Church in Rome: "First I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you and for the way in which your faith is spoken of all over the world... I am longing to see you either to strengthen you by sharing a spiritual gift with you, or what is better, to find encouragement among you from our common faith" (Rom. 1:8).

3. Through my humble words, I also want to express my esteem for your great country. Your country is great indeed, not only in terms of geographical extension and population, but especially because of its history, the wealth of its culture and the moral values that the people have cultivated all through the ages. The Jesuit Father Matteo Ricci, understood and appreciated Chinese culture fully from the beginning, and his example should serve as an inspiration to many. Others, at

times, did not show the same understanding. But whatever difficulties there may have been, they belong to the past, and now *it is the future that we have to look to.*

Your country is indeed devoting all its energies to the future. It wishes to ensure, through scientific and technological development, and through the industrious collaboration of all its people, that its citizens can live in true happiness. I am convinced that every Catholic within your frontiers will fully contribute to the building up of China, since a genuine and faithful Christian is also a genuine and good citizen. A Christian — in any country of the world — is faithful to God, but he also has a deep sense of duty and of love towards his native land and his own people. He respects the things of the spirit and at the same time he consecrates his talents and skills to the common good. A good Chinese Catholic works loyally for the progress of the nation, observes the obligation of filial piety towards parents, family and country. Strengthened by the Gospel message, he will cultivate, like all good Chinese, the “five main virtues” of charity, justice, temperance, prudence and fidelity.

4. The Church seeks to respect the traditions and cultural values of every people, following what Saint Paul said when he entreated the early Christians of Philippi to treasure “whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious” (Phil. 4:8). From earliest times, the Church has learned to express the truth of Christ through the help of ideas and in the culture of various peoples, because the message that she preaches is intended for all peoples and nations. The Christian message is not the exclusive property of any one group or race; it is addressed to everyone and belongs to everyone. There is therefore no opposition or incompatibility in being at the same time *truly Christian and authentically Chinese.*

In proclaiming Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God and Savior of the world, the Church has no other aim than to be faithful to the mission entrusted to her by her Divine Founder. She has no political or economic goals; she has no worldly mission. She wants to be, in China as in any other country, the herald of the kingdom of God. She desires no privileges, but only that all those who follow Christ may be able to express their faith freely and publicly and live accordance to their consciences.

Christ came to serve and to bear witness to the truth. In the same spirit the Church will offer her contribution to fostering human brotherhood and the dignity of every human being. She therefore encourages her members to be *good Christians and exemplary citizens* dedicated to the common good and to the service of their fellowmen and collaborating through their personal efforts to the progress of their country.

5. All this I say to you, dear brothers and sisters, because I feel so near to you. The course of history, shaped by human decisions, has been such that for many years we have not been able to have contact with each other. Very little was known about you, your joys, your hopes, and also your sufferings. Recently, however, from various parts of your immense land information about you has reached me. But in those long years you have undoubtedly lived through other experiences which are still unknown, and at times you will have wondered in your consciences what was the right thing for you to do. For those who have never had such experiences it is difficult to appreciate fully such situations. Yet, I want you to know that, all through this period and up to the present day, I, and the universal Church with me, have been with you in thought, in prayer, in genuine brotherly love and in pastoral concern. I place my trust in your faith and in the Lord who promised: "Do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour (Mt. 10:19). If you remain united with the Lord in faith and prayer, *he will strengthen and guide you.*

I also wish to express my deep admiration of the testimonies of heroic faith that many of you have shown and are still showing today. The whole Church is proud of you and feels strengthened through your witness. At the same time she hopes that you in your turn have been strengthened by her continuous prayer and communion in our Lord Jesus Christ.

6. What unites us, dear brothers and sisters, is not a bond of physical nature or a political allegiance, but faith in him who is the Son of God and Savior of the world and who has proclaimed the brotherhood of all men. It is he, Jesus Christ, who loves all people irrespective of their race or culture, or their social or political status. We are all brothers and sisters, and at the center of Jesus' message is the call to universal brotherhood. Is it not inspiring to discover that a similar message is aptly expressed in your Chinese saying: "*Between the four*

seas, all men are brothers”? More than at any other time, there is a need for us to proclaim this message all over the world, since injustice and discrimination among people and nations still linger on.

7. As I am travelling so near to your great country, let me send you a message that comes from my heart and from our common faith. At this time of grace and change, I say: open your hearts and minds to God, who in his divine providence guides all events and pursues his plan in all that happens. Out of human suffering and even out of weakness and error, the Lord creates new growth. It is my sincere and heartfelt hope that some day soon we shall be able to join together, praising the Lord and saying: “Behold how good and pleasant it is to dwell in unity as brothers” (Ps. 133:1).

I entrust you all to Mary, Virgin most faithful Queen of China. May the peace of Jesus Christ her Son be with you all. May God bless China!

TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS

Apostolic Nunciature
Manila, 18 February, 1981

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I have come to this part of the world to meet the Catholic communities of the Philippines and Japan, and to present to both nations the expression of the profound esteem in which the Church holds them. At the same time I am also very pleased to have the opportunity to be with you this evening, since, as diplomats accredited to the Government of this land, you represent peoples not only in Asia but throughout the whole world. Later in my program, I shall address myself directly to the Asian peoples; but I cannot let the present occasion pass without expressing here before you the joy I experience in being able, through you, to greet the peoples and the Governments of your nations, many of whom maintain most cordial relations with the Holy See. I wish to reiterate the deep esteem which the Catholic Church has for the noble cultural religious traditions of all peoples, and to reaffirm her desire to be of service to all in the common pursuit of peace, justice human advancement.

2. The Church has no political ambitions. When she offers her own specific contribution to the great permanent tasks of mankind — peace, justice, development and every worthy effort aimed at promoting and defending human dignity — she does so because she is convinced that such *action is related, to her mission*. This mission is concerned with the salvation of man: the whole human being, the individual person who fulfills his or her eternal vocation in temporal history, within a complex of communities and societies. When giving attention to individuals' and peoples' needs and aspirations, the Church follows the command of her Founder; she implements the solicitude of Christ for each and every person, especially for the poor and for those who are suffering. Her own contribution to the humanization of the society and the world derives from Jesus Christ and his Gospel. Through her social teaching, the Church does not present prefabricated models, nor does she align

herself with prevailing and passing practices. Rather, with reference to Jesus Christ she strives to bring about a transformation of hearts and minds so that man can see himself in the full truth of his humanity.

3. The Church's action therefore is not political, or economic or technical. The Church is not competent in the fields of technology or science, nor does she assert herself through power politics. *Her competence, like her mission, is religious and moral in nature*; and she must remain within her proper field of competence, lest her action be ineffective or irresponsible. It is the Church's practice therefore to respect the specific area of responsibility of the State without interfering in the tasks of the politicians and without participating directly in the management of temporal affairs. At the same time the Church encourages her members to assume their full responsibility as citizens of a given nation and to seek together with their fellow human beings the paths and models which can best promote the progress of society. She sees as her specific contribution the strengthening of the spiritual and moral bases of society, and as a service to humanity she assists people in forming their consciences correctly.

4. It is in this sense that I wish my journey through Asia to be *a call for peace and for human progress*, and an encouragement for all those who are engaged in protecting and promoting the dignity of all human beings. I also hope that my meeting with you this evening will reinforce your own sense of mission in the service of your countries and of the whole human family. For is it not the mission of a diplomat to be a builder of bridges between nations, to be a specialist in dialogue and understanding, to be a defender of the dignity of man, so that the common welfare of all may be promoted?

Beyond the fostering of the legitimate interests of your own nation, your mission directs you in a special way *to the wider concerns of the whole human family*, particularly on this Asian continent. Inspired as you are by the noblest ideals of brotherhood, you will, I am sure, share my concern for peace and progress in this area, and you will understand the need to face the deeper causes of the problems that plague nations and peoples. In my recent Encyclical on the Mercy of God I have indicated what I believe to be the "sources of uneasiness." I have cited the fear connected with the prospect of a conflict that, in view of the stockpiling of atomic weapons, could mean the partial self-destruction of humanity. I have drawn attention

to what human beings can do to other human beings through the means provided by an ever more sophisticated military technology. But I have also drawn attention to other elements when I wrote: "Man rightly fears falling victim to an oppression that will deprive him of his interior freedom, of the possibility of the expressing the truth of which he is convinced, of the faith that he professes, of the ability to obey the voice of conscience that tells him the right path to follow. The technical means at the disposal of modern society conceal within themselves not only the possibility of destruction through military conflict, but also the possibility of a peaceful subjugation of individuals, of environments, of entire societies and of nations, that for one reason or another might prove inconvenient for those who possess the necessary means and are ready to use them without scruple" (no. 11). I have mentioned the tragic problem of the many who suffer from hunger and malnutrition and of the increasing state of inequality between individuals and nations whereby "side by side with those who are living in want, suffering, misery and often actually dying of hunger" (*ibid.*).

5. But in that same document, I also stated (and I would like to leave this thought with you for your reflection): "The experience of the past and of our own time demonstrates that justice alone is not enough, that it can even lead to the negation and destruction of itself, if that deeper power, which is love, is not allowed to shape human life in its various dimensions" (no. 12).

Yes, dear friends, my message to you this evening concerns this same power of love. A love that is deeply felt and effectively expressed in concrete actions, individual as well as collective is indeed the moving force that enables man to be true to himself. *Only love can make peoples really responsive to the call of the needy.* And may it be this same force — fraternal love — that impels you to ever higher peaks of service and solidarity. Ladies and gentlemen, in the lofty diplomatic mission that is yours be assured of my total support.

PEOPLE'S MASS FOR PEACE

Quezon Memorial Circle

Metro Manila, 19 February, 1981

Here in Quezon Circle we have listened to the words of the Lord our God as recorded by the Prophet Isaiah: "Peace, peace to the far and to the near, says the Lord; and I will heal them" (Is. 57:19). And looking out today over this vast assembly, I proclaim to all of you, far and near, the peace of the Lord, the peace of Christ! With the Apostle Peter I say: "Peace to all of you who are in Christ" (1 Pt. 5:14).

1. Dearly beloved brothers and sisters here in the Philippines: we are celebrating today the peace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ — the peace that was announced by the angels at his birth; the peace that he communicated to all who came into contact with him during his earthly life; the peace that he gave to his Apostles when he stood among them after his Resurrection, saying: "Peace be with you" (Jn. 19:19).

We are celebrating the peace that Christ won for us by his Paschal Mystery — by his Passion, death and Resurrection from the dead. We are able to enjoy peace because God sent his own Son into the world to be our Redeemer.

2. And the peace that we are celebrating is *our redemption from sin*, our deliverance from God's anger and from eternal punishment. Without Christ we would have remained, in the words of Saint Paul, "children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3) But in truth we have been liberated by Christ; everything is new in our relationship with God. Christ has reconciled us to himself, "making peace by the blood of his cross" (Col. 1:20). We have been called out of the darkness of sin into the Kingdom of God's marvelous light, where we have received mercy and grace and peace from Jesus Christ.

3. Through God's love we have not only received the gift of human life but we have also become adopted children of God. *Through Christ's great peacemaking act* — his Sacrifice on the Cross — we have become his brothers and sisters, and, with him, heirs of eternal life. Because of this new relationship of ours with God in Christ, *peace is* now possible: peace in our

hearts and in our homes, peace in our communities and in our nations, peace throughout the world.

Yes, Jesus Christ is the supreme Peacemaker of human history, the Reconciler of human hearts, the Liberator of humanity, the Redeemer of man. "He is our peace." (Eph. 2:14).

4. It is God the Father's plan that the peace which his beloved Son Jesus Christ won for us on Calvary *should be communicated to every human being*, individually and as a member of society. This communication of Christ's peace takes place in the Church through the action of the Holy Spirit working through God's word and the sacraments.

By faith and *Baptism* we take on a relationship with God that makes peace truly possible. We become in fact the children of God and are incorporated into the Body of Christ. We are baptized into Christ's death (cf. Rom. 6:14) — his great peace-making act — so that we may share in his Resurrection and walk in newness of life.

Through the *Sacrament of Penance* Jesus offers us pardon and peace. Precisely because of its importance as the Sacrament of Reconciliation, I stressed in my first Encyclical "man's right to a more personal encounter with the crucified forgiving Christ" (*Redemptor Hominis*, 20), and urged the faithful observance of the centuries-old practice of individual confession. Today I present once again the Sacrament of Penance as a *gift of Christ's peace* and his love, and I ask you all to make every effort to profit from this opportunity of grace.

And the *Eucharist*, my dear friends, is *the culmination of our sacramental peace*, in which we re-present to the Father the Sacrifice of his Son and receive in return the gift of reconciliation and peace — the gift of Jesus himself. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, communicates himself and becomes our peace.

5. Dear brothers and sisters: it is indeed important for us *to understand* how God puts us into contact with Christ and communicates to us the peace of Christ. It is vitally important for parents to transmit to their children an understanding of the faith, and a deep appreciation of sacramental life, so that each generation may be aware of Christ's peace. The success of the Church's mission in this regard depends on you, it is intimately linked with the family's irreplaceable catechetical activity.

6. At the same time Christ invites us and bids us *bring his peace to the world*. This is the way he wants us to live; he has spelled it out for us in the Gospel Beatitudes: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God" (Mt. 5:9). We are called to pass on the healing that we have experienced, and the reconciliation that we have been given so lavishly. And in the Second Reading today we are told what we must do: "Clothe yourselves with heartfelt mercy, with kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another . . . Forgive as the Lord has forgiven you" (Col. 3:12ff). Having been forgiven, we are called to forgive. Having been justified by God's grace, we are called to give witness to justice in our lives, for we know full well that peaceful relationships can exist in the world only when the justice of Christ permeates hearts and is expressed in all the structures of society.

7. But in order to *communicates peace* in accordance with Christ's words, *we must live that peace*. In the words of the Apostle Paul, "Christ's peace must reign in your hearts, since as members of the one body you are called to that peace" (Col. 3:15). Yes, dear brothers and sisters, there must be peace in our families, between husbands and wives, between parents and children; peace in our communities; peace in our parishes and local Churches; peace in society and over the earth: peace in the hearts of the ministers of Christ, in the hearts of the religious and laity, in the hearts of all those who embrace his Gospel of love.

8. *Only then can our proclamation and communication of peace be effective*: peace to the poor and to the rich, peace to the young and to the old, peace to the sick and the suffering, to prisoners and to all who mourn. Peace to those who are crushed by the burden of sin, and to those who stumble beneath the weight of their cross. Peace to all who serve with us in the name of Christ and for the glory of his Father. Peace to all our brothers and sisters in Christ, to all our fellow human beings: the peace of reconciliation, of justice, of freedom from fear, of liberation from oppression and sin, of deliverance from eternal death. The peace of Christ's Kingdom, the peace of hope, the peace of Jesus himself. Dearly beloved this is indeed the peace that I proclaim to you today — to those far and near: the peace of God's Kingdom, the peace of Christ.

9. Peace is yours as a gift from the Lord, as a responsibility and a challenge. Let us listen to Jesus, today and all the days of our lives. He is speaking to our hearts, as he says: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God". Amen.

TO PRIESTS AND SEMINARIANS

Cebu City

19 February, 1981

Dear priests and seminarians,

I greet you in the Name of Jesus! It is a joy for me to be with you, and through you to greet the priests of all the Philippines, and to bless and encourage the seminarians throughout this nation.

1. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings glad tidings, announcing peace, bearing good news, announcing salvation, and saying to Zion, 'Your God is King!' (Is. 52:7). These words of the prophet Isaiah readily come to mind when we recall the apostolic zeal of those *missionary priests* who over four centuries ago *began to preach the Gospel of salvation* to the people of these islands. It was the mysterious working of God's grace which made their hearts anxious and set their feet in motion until peace and salvation had been announced in this land. Consider the Dominican priest Fray Domingo de Salazar. He left his native Spain to go first to Venezuela, then to Mexico, briefly to Florida, and finally to the Philippines. Here he became the first Bishop in the Philippines — at Manila in 1578; here he preached the Good News not only to the people of these Islands but also to his compatriots, in order to persuade them that the Lord's Gospel means justice and not slavery for the people they had come to colonize. It was Bishop Domingo de Salazar too, who, on his return to Spain, decommended the foundation of the ecclesiastical province of the Philippines.

2. *You are the heirs of the missionary task* begun by Fray Domingo and the early evangelists of these islands: the Augustinians, Franciscan, Jesuit and Dominican priests whose evangelizing feet will forever be called beautiful. In paying homage to those missionaries and to all the other missionaries — to those of every generation in the Philippines, including the present generation — I praise the grace of God that sustained them in their zeal for His Kingdom. In God's mysterious design you have been called by Christ to announce his glad tidings here

in your homeland. Together let us reflect upon this priestly task which is yours today, my brother priests, and for which, dear seminarians, you must diligently prepare yourselves.

3. It is faith in Jesus Christ, who is Lord forever, that is the response which God invites when he sends out his word over the earth. *It is faith at the heart of the priest's vocation* that animates his ministry and grounds the witness of his life. In his letter to the Romans, Saint Paul says: 'If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Faith in the heart leads to justification, confession on the lips to salvation. But how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe, unless they have heard of him? And how can they hear unless there is someone to preach? Scripture says, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who announce good news!' ... Faith, then, comes through hearing, and what is heard is the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:9-17).

4. To preach the word of God: this is the work of every generation. The "faith which comes through hearing" is a response which leads people to confess with their lips that Jesus is Lord and to become his disciples. *The proclamation of the word and the response of faith set up the initial encounter, the basic community of the Church.* And it is for this encounter that the priestly apostle is "sent" to preach: *in persona Christi* he offers the Sacrifice of the Eucharist, which recapitulates the entire proclamation of the word and in which Christ's own invitation to believe and to be built up into the Church is continually heard by his people. As the Vatican Council teaches: "By sacred ordination and by the mission they receive from their bishops, priests are promoted to the service of Christ, the Teacher, the Priest, and the King. They share in his ministry of unceasingly building up to the Church on earth into the People of God, the Body of Christ, and the Temple of the Holy Spirit" (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 1).

5. This Church is missionary by her very nature (cf. *Ad Gentes*, 2). All Christians who believe and are made one in Christ share in the missionary task of apostolic service to the world. But "hearing" the call to faith — the word of salvation — must be a constant summons to conversion and renewal within the Church herself, and it is to the Apostles and their successors in the Episcopate, together with their priestly collaborators, that the Lord has entrusted the role of shepherding

his missionary people. By God's own plan, *the Church cannot exist without those apostolic men "sent" to preach*, to be within the Church herself a sacramental sign of the fundamental and perennial call to "believe in our hearts" that Jesus is Lord.

6. Today there are some who ignore or *misunderstand this important dimension of the nature of the Church*, and suggest that only by diminishing the importance of the priesthood can the laity be given their full place in the Church. Perhaps this is due to an over-reaction to those priests who, through human frailty or spiritual blindness, have not taken to heart the profound lesson Jesus taught when he replied to the request of mother of James and John: "You know how those who exercise authority among the Gentiles lord it over them; their great ones make their importance felt. It cannot be like that with you. Anyone who aspires to greatness must serve the rest, and whoever wants to rank first among you must serve the needs of all. Such is the case with the Son of Man who has come, not to be served by others, but to serve, to give his own life as a ransom for the many" (Mt. 20:25-28).

Nevertheless, an attitude which sees opposition or rivalry between the ministerial priesthood and the priesthood of the faithful fails to perceive the design of God in instituting the Sacrament of Holy Orders within his Church. The Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Church clearly teaches that "though they differ from one another in essence and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchial priesthood are nonetheless inter-related. Each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ" (*Lumen Gentium*, 10). In the ministerial priesthood of Holy Orders, God has set within his Church a visible sign, by which the divine dialogue which he has initiated — the word of salvation inviting the response of faith — is sacramentally, and therefore efficaciously, represented. Priesthood is therefore a sacrament whose "celebration" affects the entire Church, and the whole Church — laity and clergy alike — must take care that its "celebration" is not diminished through misunderstanding or misplaced zeal for a multiplication of *ministries intended as a substitution for the ministerial priesthood*.

7. Jesus is Lord! *This proclamation of the word reaches its most perfect moment in the Eucharist*: "The other sacraments, as well as every ministry of the Church and every work of the apostolate, are linked with the Holy Eucharist and are directed

towards it . . . Hence the Eucharist shows itself to be the source and summit of all Evangelization" (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 5). The celebration of the Eucharist is the heart of priestly ministry and of Christian life, because it is Christ's own service of self-sacrificing love. Through each Eucharist the Church herself is continually formed anew and given her definitive shape: Christ, through the ministry of his priests, call all his disciples together, makes them one in his love, and sends them forth to be bearers of the unity and love of the Eucharistic banquets as the pattern and model of all human community and service.

8. My brother priests, this missionary Church, this Eucharistic people, depends upon you for the authentic proclamation of the Good News. But if you are *to be effective preachers of the word, you must be men of deep faith who are hearers and doers of the word as well*. For with Saint Paul we must always say; "It is not ourselves we preach but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor. 4:5). For this reason we must never cease examining carefully how we live our priestly lives, lest they become a countersign which disfigures the sacramental presence which the Lord intends us to be in and for his Church.

9. For this purpose I offer you today three brief reflections on living the priestly life according to the mind and heart of Christ.

In the first place, *Jesus has called priests to a special intimacy with himself*. The very nature of our task requires it. If we are to preach Christ and not ourselves, we must know him intimately in the Scriptures and in prayer. If we are to lead others to the encounter and response of faith, our own faith must itself be a witness. In the Holy Scriptures, God's word is ever before us. Let us therefore make the Scriptures the nourishment of our daily prayer and the subject of our regular theological study. Only in this way can we possess the word of God — and be possessed by the Word — in that intimacy reserved for those to whom Jesus said: "I call you friends" (Jn. 15:15).

The second consideration I wish to offer you concerns *the unity of the priesthood*. The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council reminded us that "all priests, together with bishops, so share in one and the same priesthood and ministry of Christ that the very unity of their consecration and mission requires their hierarchical communion with the order of bishops" (*Pres-*

byterium Ordinis, 7). This unity must take shape concretely in the realization that priests, diocesan and religious, form a single *presbyterium* around their bishop. The collegiality which describes the entire episcopal order's union of faith and sharing in responsibility with the Bishop of Rome is reflected by analogy in the unity of priests with their Bishop and with each other in their common pastoral task. We must not underestimate the importance of this unity of our priesthood for the effective evangelization of the world. The sacramental sign of priesthood itself must not be fragmented or individualized: we constitute one priesthood — the priesthood of Christ — to which our harmony of life and apostolic service must testify. The fundamental oneness of the Eucharist offered by the Church requires that this unity be lived out as a visible, sacramental reality in the lives of priests. On the night before he died, Jesus invoked his heavenly Father: "I pray also for those who will believe in me through their word, that all may be one as you, Father, are in me, and I in you; I pray that they may be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me" (Jn. 17:20-1). Our unity in the Lord, sacramentally visible at the center of the Church's own unity, is an indispensable condition for the effectiveness of everything we do: our preaching of the faith, our service of the poor as a preferential option, our efforts at building basic Christian communities as vital units of God's Kingdom, our work for promoting Christ's justice and his peace, all our varied parochial apostolates, every endeavor to furnish spiritual leadership to our people — all of this depends totally on our union with Jesus Christ and his Church.

In the third place I wish to reflect with you on *the value of life of authentic priestly celibacy*. It is difficult to over-estimate the profound witness to the faith that a priest gives through celibacy. The priest announces the Good News of the kingdom as one unafraid to forgo the special human joys of marriage and family life in order to bear witness to his "conviction about things we do not see" (Hebr. 11:1). The Church needs the witness of celibacy willingly embraced and joyfully lived by her priests for the sake of the Kingdom. For celibacy is by no means marginal to priestly life; it gives testimony to a dimension of love patterned upon the love of Christ himself. This love speaks clearly the language of all genuine love, the language of the gift of oneself for the sake of the beloved; and its perfect symbol is forever the Cross of Jesus Christ!

10. My dear seminarians! All that I have already said to my brother priests I say with you in mind. This precious time of seminary formation is given to you so that a solid foundation may be laid for the task that awaits you as priests. You may be sure that the whole Church looks on with prayerful anticipation as the Lord's words to you — "Come, follow me" — take ever deeper root in your lives! And what is true of all God's people is all the more true of these priests whose companions in preaching the word of God you are preparing to become. For the priests know well how much work is to be done, and they have "prayed the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the harvest" (Mt. 9:37). They now rejoice to see in you an answer to their fervent prayer. Hence you seminarians are already united with the priests in this prayer for an increase of priestly vocations. To those young people in whom the Lord is even now planting the hidden seeds of this vocation you must offer yourselves as companions and guides, and you must be eager to set before them the example of your own intimate union with Jesus and of your own zealous apostolic service of his people.

Yes, you must always keep Jesus before your eyes. He is the real reason why you are in the seminary; it can never be for any motive of personal advancement or prestige, but only to prepare for a ministry of service based on the word of the Lord. Jesus has chosen you to bring the light of his word to your brothers and sisters. You can see, then, how important it is for you personally to know the word of God, to embrace it with all its challenges of love and sacrifice, and, like Mary, to reflect on it in your hearts (cf. Lk. 2:51). The seminary exists to prepare you for your mission of proclaiming the holiness and truth of the Incarnate Word of God. But if the seminary is to fulfill its purpose in your regard, you must open your hearts in generosity to the Spirit of God, so that he may form Jesus in you.

11. Jesus is Lord! As Saint Paul assures us, "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord!', except in the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 12:3). Let us be confident in *the Holy Spirit's guidance of the whole Church*, and in his power that is active in your priestly ministry. With trust and untiring zeal, let us preach the word of Christ so as to bring spontaneously to the lips of our brothers and sisters the refrain of the prophet: "How beautiful upon the

mountains are the feet of him who brings glad tidings, announcing peace, bearing good news, announcing salvation, and saying to Zion, 'Your God is King'!"

May Mary, Regina Cleri, Mother of priests and seminarians, help you to place your complete confidence in that same Holy Spirit, who caused her to become the Mother of Jesus, who is Lord forever!

TO FAMILIES
Lahug Airport, Cebu City
19 February, 1981

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

1. Finding myself in this important city known as the cradle of Christianity in the Philippines, I want to express my deep joy and profound thanksgiving to the Lord of history. The thought that for 450 years the light of the Gospel has shone with undimmed brightness in this land and on its people is cause for great rejoicing. Four and a half centuries of fruitful interaction between the local culture and the Christian message have resulted in this harmonious blending called "Filipino Christian culture". Any Christian coming here from any part of the world finds himself at home among people sharing the same aspirations and the same hope that are centered in Jesus Christ. Praised be the Name of Jesus for what his love has wrought!

God's providence in the Philippines has been truly wonderful. The Christianization that took place in the sixteenth century was not something merely accidental. Divine grace was at work when the people of this region had their first contact with the image of the Santo Niño. It is an important historical fact, rich in religious meaning, that on January 1, 1571 the village kingdom of Sugbu was renamed the "Villa del Santo Niño", and thus the first city of the Philippines was placed under the patronage of the Child Jesus.

2. Divine providence has made it possible for us to be together here today, in order to offer a *Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to our Father in heaven* for the four and a half centuries of Christianity in this country. The whole Church thanks God that the people who "were once far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:12-13). She thanks God for the four hundred and fifty years that his Name has been glorified here, that true worship has been offered to him, that the Blessed Virgin Mary has been devoutly and lovingly venerated, and that millions of people have been reborn in Christ. The unforgettable ceremonies held yesterday in Manila honoring the Filipino Protomartyr, Blessed Lorenzo Ruiz, forcefully illustrate that the Christian faith has taken deep root in the Filipino soul.

In a particular way the Church thanks God that the tiny Christian community of Sugbu, under the patronage of the Infant Jesus has now become a flourishing archdiocese of two million people, almost all of whom are Catholics, with an active and zealous clergy, both diocesan and religious, with dedicated men and women religious, and with an encouraging number of seminarians. I am also deeply gratified to know that there are numerous Catholic institution and organizations and movements of the laity. It can truly be said that growth in faith and Christian living has been until now a constant feature of the Church in Cebu as well as in the whole of the Philippines. The glorious past gives great hope for the future. The harmonious relationship, under the leadership of Cardinal Julio Rosales, the Coadjutor Archbishop and the Auxiliary Bishop, between the hierarchy and the diocesan and religious clergy; the deep commitment to evangelization by priests, religious and laity; the existence of a solid ecclesial sense and the profound religiosity of the people — all this constitutes a great spiritual force for the building up of a dynamic Church in Cebu.

3. Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, the centuries-old veneration of the Santo Niño here in Cebu prompts me to speak to you today about the family. The Infant Jesus himself was born of the Virgin Mary and lived in a family, and it was in the family of Nazareth that he began the mission which the Father had entrusted to him. "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given" (Is. 9:6). In him a new era dawned, in him the world was re-created, in him a new life was offered to humanity, a life redeemed by and in Christ.

Because the Creator wills that life should take its origin from the love of a man and a woman joined in a covenant of sharing in marriage, and because Christ elevated this union of spouses to the dignity of sacrament, we must look at the family, at its nature and mission, in the bright light of our Christian faith. With legitimate pride one can state that whatever the Church teaches today on marriage and the family has been her constant teaching in fidelity to Christ. The Catholic Church has consistently taught — and I repeat here with the conviction that springs from my office as chief Pastor and Teacher — that *marriage was established by God*; that marriage is a covenant of love between one man and one woman; that the bond uniting husband and wife is by God's will indissoluble; that marriage between Christians is a sacrament symbolizing the union of Christ and his Church; and that marriage must be open to the transmission of human life.

4. When Jesus was going about, teaching and healing, he was one day confronted by some Pharisees who wanted to test him about marriage. Jesus answered, clearly and firmly, by reaffirming what Scripture had said: "From the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder" (Mk. 10-6-9). By making them male and female God established the complementarity of the sexes, for a man leaves his father and mother in order to be joined to his wife in that union of love that permeates all levels of human existence. This union of love enables man and woman to grow together and to care properly for their children. The union that makes them one cannot be broken by any human authority; it is permanently at the service of the spouses themselves. Thus the love between a man and a woman in marriage is a love that is both faithful and fruitful. It is a holy love, *sacramentally symbolizing the union of love between Christ and the Church*, as Saint Paul wrote to the Ephesians: "This is a great mystery, and I mean in reference to Christ and the Church" Eph. 5:33).

5. For these reasons, the Church will never dilute or change her teaching on marriage and the family. For these reasons, the Church condemns any attempt through the practice of polygamy to destroy *the unity of marriage*, and any attempt through divorce to destroy the marriage bond. For these reasons also the Church states clearly that marriage should be open to the transmission of human life. God willed the loving union of husband and wife to be the source of new life. He wishes to share, as it were, his creative power with husbands and wives, endowing them with procreative power. God desires that this tremendous power to procreate a new human life should be willingly and lovingly accepted by the couple when they freely choose to marry. Parenthood has a dignity all of its own, guaranteed by God himself. On my part I owe it to my Apostolic Office to reaffirm as clearly and as strongly as possible what the Church of Christ teaches in this respect, and to reiterate vigorously her condemnation of artificial contraception and abortion.

6. Yes, from the moment of conception and through all subsequent stages, *all human life is sacred*, for it is created in the image and likeness of God. Human life is precious because

it is a gift of God, whose love knows no limit; and when God gives life, it is forever. Whoever attempts to destroy human life in the womb of the mother, not only violates the sacredness of a living, growing and developing human being, and thus opposes God, but also attacks society by undermining respect for all human life. I want to repeat here what I stated when visiting my homeland: "If a person's right to life is violated at the moment in which he is first conceived in his mother's womb, an indirect blow is struck also at the whole moral order, which serves to ensure the inviolable goods of man. Among those goods, life occupies the first place. The Church defends the right to life, not only in regard to the majesty of the Creator, who is the first Giver of this life, but also in respect of the essential good of the human person" (June 8, 1979).

7. When the Church holds up before you the ideals of Christian marriage and the Christian family, when she insists that the love of husband and wife and the love of parents should be marked by generosity, she knows that there are many factors today that threaten family life and tempt the human heart. The selfish pursuit of pleasure, sexual permissiveness and the fear of a permanent commitment are destructive forces. As a good mother, the Church stands by her children in difficult times; she stands by the couples who experience difficulties in abiding by her teachings. With love and with a understanding of human weakness, but also with an understanding of *the power of Christ's grace* in individual human hearts, the Church constantly challenges her children. She challenges them to be conscious of the dignity of their Baptism and of the gift of sacramental grace that they have been given precisely in order that they might be able to reflect Christ's sacrificial love in their lives, develop their own love in a faithful and indissoluble union, and respond with generosity to the gift of parenthood. As the Second Vatican Council declared: "Authentic married love is caught up into divine love and is governed and enriched by Christ's redeeming power and the saving activity of the Church. Thus this love can lead the spouses to God with powerful effect and can aid and strengthen them in the sublime role of being a father or a mother" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 48). To all of you Christian couples — spouses and parents — I offer the invitation: walk with Christ! It is he who reveals to you the

dignity of the covenant you have made; it is he who gives immense value to your conjugal love; it is he, Jesus Christ, who can accomplish in you immeasurably more than you can ask or imagine (cf. Eph. 3:21).

8. In a Christian community, everyone has a responsibility for families. Programs that focus on the family and on the dignity of marriage are of great importance: programs to prepare those who are getting married, and programs for those who are already married. In regard to their children parents have an irreplaceable role to play, not only as the first educators in the faith and as models of virtue, but also as examples of faithful conjugal love. In the community of love and trust that each family ought to be, parents and children can be *evangelized and at the same time instruments of evangelization*. Sincere respect for life and human dignity, unselfish charity and the sense of duty and justice, rooted firmly in the Gospel, come from a family where wholesome relations between parents and children prevail, and where each member of the family tries to be a servant to each other. A family where prayer, loving support and formation in the faith are of constant concern will bring untold benefits not only to the members of the family themselves, but also to the Church and to society.

9. I am most happy to know that all over the Philippines the *Family Apostolate* has received enthusiastic endorsement and support. I wish to praise the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines for having declared the present decade, 1981 to 1990, "The Decade of the Family" and for having prepared a comprehensive pastoral program for this purpose. I commend most heartily the different organizations and movements, which in close collaboration with the hierarchy, devote their zealous efforts to the family. I encourage all Catholic educators, but especially parents themselves, to devote great attention to the proper formation of the young in regard to human sexuality, placing in proper perspective the purpose of the Creator from the beginning, the redemptive power of Christ, and the influence of a true sacramental life. The delicate responsibility for sex education belongs principally to the families, where an atmosphere of loving reverence will be conducive to a fully human and Christian understanding of the meaning of love and life.

10. And so, my brothers and sisters in Christ, my friends of Cebu City and the surrounding areas, I am taking leave of you. This has been a memorable time for me: to be with you, to share with you the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Christian family, and to experience and reciprocate your love in the midst of God's family — the Church. May the Santo Niño bless you. May Mary the Mother of Jesus and Saint Joseph her spouse assist you and all families in the Philippines to reflect the holiness and joy and love of the *Holy Family of Nazareth*.

Pagpalain kayo nang Poong Maykapal! (May Almighty God bless you!)

FEATURES

THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON BALANCE-SHEET OF A PAPAL VISIT

By

Joseph M. de Torre

"It is in the name of Christ, and because she must preach his message of Love to the whole world, that the *Church speaks out on behalf of the dignity of man*, created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26) and redeemed by Jesus Christ. Because she believes in the God-given dignity it as her mission to embrace in her solicitude man in his totality: man whose definitive destiny is God, man who must live, in the concrete reality of his daily life, according to the dignity that is his." (italics in the original)

John Paul II, Address in Bacolod City,
February 20, 1981.

It was afternoon, February 21, the eve of the Pope's departure from the Philippines. I was in the auditorium of Radio Veritas, in Manila, on the third seat from the corridor leading down to the stage, in the last row next to the corridor parallel to the stage, linking both entrances. The Pope was about to come in through the entrance closer to my seat. So, I was thanking God for my good fortune and anticipating the joy of being able to touch him and maybe kiss his hand (this is what happened later).

Right behind me on the corridor was a TV camera facing the entrance, and behind the corridor the other half of the auditorium likewise jam-packed. In the first row of that other half, between the TV camera and the entrance, I spotted a woman with a little child, and immediately I pictured the Pope stopping and taking the child in his arms before proceeding to the corridor leading down to the stage. This is exactly what actually happened a few minutes later. It was therefore no surprise to me. Then I grabbed his approaching left hand without haste, and kissed it gratefully. I followed him with my eyes and clapping hands as he poured out his obvious affection on all those lining up down the corridor. Upon reaching the stage, where he was to deliver his message to the Peoples

of Asia, he was still reaching out to other eager hands close to the stage, and it took some time before he finally went to his seat.

This is a sample of the charisma of John Paul II: his irresistible humanity, the disarming evidence of his love for every human being, especially those most in need, like infants and those who suffer. Just before embracing that child, he had addressed a group of lepers in another hall of Radio Veritas, while earlier in the morning he had visited the refugees in Morong, Bataan. The previous day in Bacolod City he had said:

"The Church... shows a special solidarity with those that are suffering and in need, with those that weep and are humiliated, with those that have been left at the margin of society and of life; she does this so that they may be helped to become aware of their dignity as human beings and as children of God."

He expressed himself in similar terms in the depressed district of Tondo in Manila, and to the rural workers at Legazpi City. What is striking about John Paul II is that for him this is no mere theoretical doctrine. Everybody coming close to his person agrees that this humanism wells up from the depth of his being. It is a love for humanity deeply rooted in his heart and mind, and passionately expressed: a humanism best deserving the application of the Roman poet's famous sentence, *Humanus sum et nihil humani alienum a me puto* (I am human, and I consider nothing human as alien to me).

This humanism, patent also in his literary production prior to his election to the papacy, may have been fostered in him through his having suffered under two totalitarian ideologies degrading the individual as a mere economic unit. It is however thoroughly and essentially, not accidentally, Christian, while being humanistic enough to be the basis for a dialogue with all men of good will, regardless of religion, race or culture, as he expressed in his message to the Peoples of Asia, as well as in his addresses to the Chinese community in Manila, to the Diplomatic Corps, and to the Muslims in Davao.

What is specific about the love for man that Christ demands of his disciples (cf. Jn. 13:34-35) is that it has to surpass merely human considerations and reach the measure of God's love for man "created in the image and likeness of God": man

must love man without limits (cf. Mt. 5:43-48). And the dignity of man stems from having God as his Father. This is the basis of all the sacred and inviolable rights of man, as the Pope recalled in his address to the Filipino People from Malacañang Palace.

From this unsurpassable dignity of the human person in this material universe, made possible to him not through his animal dimension but through his spiritual powers of intelligence and freedom, which transcend all materiality and reach beyond death, there follow the logical consequences of

- (a) reverence for human life at any stage of its existence and in its sources;
- (b) the personal and social duty to work;
- (c) the right to education and culture;
- (d) the strict obligation to promote the common good through social justice.

This is the christian humanism (the social doctrine of the Church) which John Paul II has tried to communicate once again, this time in the Philippines. That he has done his best to communicate it is undeniable thanks to the overwhelming sincerity of his personal conduct and character, and his charming personality. The immediate response of the Filipinos was exuberant, especially in Cebu, where Christianity was first planted in the country in the 1520's. As to the long-range results, they will depend on how seriously and systematically his teachings are studied and implemented, and how the clergy, the religious and the laity fulfil their respective roles, as explained by the Pope at the Baclaran church, at the Manila cathedral, at the Sacred Heart school in Cebu, at the Araneta Coliseum, at the Quezon Circle Mass, in his address at Bacolod, and at the Mass in Iloilo City. Even in his address to the Diplomatic Corps he brought up this point talking about the relations of Church and State. The clergy and the religious represent the transcendent or eternal aspect of the Church (priests are "dispensers of the mysteries of God", he reminded them at the Manila cathedral in the words of St. Paul, i.e. ministers of the Word and of the Sacraments not "social or political leaders"), while the laity have the specific role of building up the earthly society, guided by the spirit and values of the Gospel.

Let me now summarize what he said on each of the above mentioned four logical consequences of the dignity of the human person.

The sacredness of human life and of its sources

The homily during the multitudinous Mass at the Lahug airport in Cebu City, in which he gave a lucid summary of the Church's doctrine on the family, was probably the climax of his six-day visit to the Philippines, both as regards the response of the people present and as regards the tone and somenity of his statements. Twice in it he made an explicit mention of his "Apostolic Office" "as chief Pastor and Teacher", and made it abundantly clear, with unusually forceful language, that this teaching is of extraordinary importance, touching as it does the very origin of human life. Let me quote some passages:

its origin from the love of a man and a woman joined
its origin from the love of a man anda woman joined
in a covenant of sharing in marriage, and because
Christ elevated this union of spouses to the dignity
of sacrament, we must look at the family, at its nature
and mission, in the bright light of our christian faith.
With legitimate pride one can state that whatever the
Church teaches today on marriage and the family has
been her constant teaching in fidelity to Christ. The
Catholic Church has consistently taught — and I re-
peat here with the conviction that springs from my
office as chief Pastor and Teacher — that *marriage*
was established by God; that marriage is a covenant of
love between one man and one woman; that the bond
uniting husband and wife is by God's will indissoluble;
that marriage between Christians is a sacrament sym-
bolizing the union of Christ and his Church; and that
mariage must be open to the transmission of human
life." (italics in the original)

"This union of love enables man and woman to
grow together and to care properly for their children
The union that makes them one cannot be broken by
any human authority; it is permanently at the service
of the children and of the spouses themselves. Thus
the love between a man and a woman in marriage
is a love that is both faithful and fruitful."

After having looked at the past and the present and emphasized the *constant fidelity* of the Church to Christ all the while, now the Pope looks to the future and declares:

"For these reasons, the Church will never dilute
or change her teaching on marriage and the family."

And then goes on to stress the doctrine in forceful and solemn terms:

"For these reasons, the Church condemns any attempt through the practice of polygamy to destroy the *unity of marriage*, and any attempt through divorce to destroy the marriage bond. For these reasons also the Church states clearly that marriage should be open to the transmission of human life. God willed the loving union of husband and wife to be the source of new life. He wishes to share, as it were, his creative power with husbands and wives, endowing them with procreative power. God desires that this tremendous power to procreate a new human life should be willingly and lovingly accepted by the couple when they freely choose to marry. Parenthood has a dignity all of its own, guaranteed by God himself. On my part I owe it to my Apostolic Office to reaffirm as clearly and as strongly as possible what the Church of Christ teaches in this respect, and to reiterate vigorously her condemnation of artificial contraception and abortion.

"Yes, from the moment of conception and through all subsequent stages, *all human life is sacred*, for it is created in the image and likeness of God. Human life is precious because it is a gift of God, whose love knows no limit; and when God gives life, it is forever. Whoever attempts to destroy human life in the womb of the mother, not only violates the sacredness of a living, growing and developing human being, and thus opposes God, but also attacks society by undermining respect for all human life." (*italics in the original*)

There follows an exhortation to generosity and fortitude based on a strong faith and union with Christ through the sacraments:

"When the Church holds up before you the ideals of christian marriage and the christian family, when she insists that the love of husband and wife and the love of parents should be marked by generosity, she knows that there are many factors today that threaten family life and tempt the human heart. The selfish pursuit of pleasure, sexual permissiveness and the fear of permanent commitment are destructive forces. As a good mother, the Church stands by her children in

difficult times; she stands by the couples who experience difficulties in abiding by her teachings. With love and with an understanding of human weakness, but also with an understanding of *the power of Christ's grace* in individual human hearts, the Church constantly her children. She challenges them to be conscious of the dignity of their Baptism and of the gift of sacramental grace that they have been given precisely in order that they might be able to reflect Christ's sacrificial love in their lives, develop their own love in a faithful and indissoluble union, and respond with generosity to the gift of parenthood." (Italics in the original)

Finally, he highlights the irreplaceable role of parents as educators of their children:

"In regard to their children parents have an irreplaceable role to play, not only as the first educators in the faith and as models of virtue, but also as examples of faithful conjugal love. In the community of love and trust that each family ought to be, parents and children can be *evangelized and at the same time instruments of evangelization*. Sincere respect for life and human dignity, unselfish charity and the sense of duty and justice, rooted firmly in the Gospel, comes from a family where wholesome relations between parents and children prevail, and where each member of the family tries to be a servant to each other. A family where prayer, loving support and formation in the faith are of constant concern will bring untold benefits not only to the members of the family themselves, but also to the Church and to society." (Italics in the original)

The Pope had brought up the topic that very morning at the Quezon Memorial Mass, before flying to Cebu, and the previous day in his address to the professionals at the Araneta Coliseum he mentioned twice the sacredness of human life, referring to the professionals engaged in health care. The day after Cebu, he would bring it up again in Iloilo City.

The dignity of human work

He took up this topic at the Araneta Coliseum, at the youth rally in the University of Santo Tomas, in his address to the people of Tondo, in his address to the sugar planters at Bacolod, and in his homily during the Mass in Legazpi City.

At the Araneta Coliseum, he told the professionals "in positions of leadership or community service in the world... who have had the benefit of education and training" to lend that service to society reflecting "upon your responsibilities as Christians in the light of faith and the Church's social teaching". He called them "builders of society... called upon to make your contribution to the service of the common good". And getting down to specifics, he said:

"The complete development of the people of your country, and the satisfaction of their spiritual and material needs, call for much effort on your part; health care for everyone the defense of the sacred nature of human life and its promotion; the affirmation of the role of law in social and political relations if true order and real freedom are to be ensured; the building of worthy housing, properly adapted to every family and every individual; the education of youth by teaching directed towards the search for truth and and its affirmation; the balanced and fruitful management of natural resources in order to ensure that everyone has a fair share of their benefits..."

To the students gathered at the University of Santo Tomas, in one of the most boisterous and emotional displays of enthusiasm and one of the biggest and most uncontrollable crowds, the Pope spoke about their responsibility towards the future, which depends on how *they* work now with self-discipline and love for the truth. This is the way to channel the irresistible energies of youth for the benefit of society, without allowing themselves to be won over by ideologies which degrade human dignity.

He reminded the people of Tondo (where he went right after the students meeting) of their human dignity, exhorting them to work for their own social upliftment, because by work man improves himself and society. The struggle for equality cannot be a class struggle, but an effort based on the awareness that all men have the same dignity and the same rights, but they all have to work, and so build up together the earthly city in loving and peaceful cooperation. The workers "themselves can achieve much if they use their skills and talents, and especially their determination to be the artisans of their own progress and development."

To the agricultural workers of the island of Negros at Bacolod City, two days later, the Pope said:

"Human labor remains the superior element in the economic enterprise, for through it man exerts his dominion over the material world for the building of his own human dignity (cf. *Gaudium et spes*, 67). The man or the woman who works becomes a cooperator of God. Made to the image of God, man received the mission of governing the universe so that its riches can be developed and used for the benefit of all, in order to grant every human person the possibility to live according to his own dignity and thus give the glory to God... Never forget the great dignity that God has granted you, never let your work degrade you but remember always the mission that God has entrusted to you: to be by the work of your hands, his collaborators in the continuation of the work of creation."

But it was in Legazpi City, talking to the rural workers of the Bicol region, where the Pope developed this point at length, and reminded me of the late Msgr. Escriva's abundant and influential teaching on the value of work, by quoting a favorite biblical passage of the latter: that man was created *ut operaretur*, to work (Gen. 2:15):

"In the Book of Genesis we read that 'the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and to keep it' (Gen. 2:15). And in our reading today we heard God's command: Fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over creation (cf. Gen. 1:28)...

"Our response to God's gift is made with human effort and work. These characterize man's struggle in time and space to subdue nature...

"Let us reflect together on the *dignity of work*, the *nobility of work*. Do I have to tell you about it? You know the dignity and the nobility of your work, you who work to live, to improve your life, to provide for your children's sustenance, education and well-being. Your work is noble because it is a service for your families and for the wider community, which is society. Work is a service in which man himself grows to the extent to which he gives himself for others.

"For this reason, a fundamental concern of one and all — rulers, labor leaders and businessmen — must be this: *to give work to everyone*. But there is a

deeper reason why every man has the right to work; it is in order to be in a position to fulfill completely his human vocation, that is to become in Christ a co-creator with God. Man becomes more fully man by means of work freely undertaken and performed. Work is not punishment, but an honor. It has become difficult and burdensome only because of sin: 'With sweat on your brow shall you eat bread' (Gen. 3:19), but it always retains its uplifting dignity...

Promotion of the common good through social justice

After the topic on the family, the Pope kept his strongest statements and his greatest insistence for this issue. He dealt with it especially in his addresses to the people of Tondo and to the agricultural workers at Bacolod City, and in the homily in Legazpi City. To the people of Tondo, a depressed district of Manila, he said:

"The first Beatitude tells the rich, who enjoy material goods, that man is great not by reason of what he has but by what he shares with others. Poor in spirit is the rich man who does not close his heart, but faces up to intolerable situations that perpetuate the poverty and misery of the many who are constantly hungry and deprived of their rightful chances to grow and develop their human potential, who lack decent housing and sufficient clothing, who suffer illness for want of even basic health care, who grow desperate for want of employment that would enable them to provide, through honest work, for the needs of their families... "The Church herself, the Church in Asia, in the Philippines and in Tondo, will heed the call of the Beatitudes and be the *Church of the poor because she must do what Jesus did and proclaim the Gospel to the poor* (cf. Lk. 4:18). But the preference that the Church shows for the poor and underprivileged does not mean that she directs her concern only to one group or class or category. She preaches the same message to all: that God loves man and sent his Son for the salvation of all, that Jesus Christ is the Savior, 'the way, and the truth, and the life' (Jn. 14:6). Being the Church of the poor means that she will speak the language of the Beatitudes to all people, to all groups or professions, to all ideologies, to all political and economic systems. She does so, not to serve political interests, nor to

acquire power, nor to offer pretexts for violence, but to save man in his humanity and in his supernatural destiny." (*italics in the original*)

But peaceful means must always be used:

"Do not be tempted by ideologies that preach only material values or purely temporal ideals, which separate political, social and economic development from the things of the spirit, and in which happiness is sought apart from Christ. The road towards your total liberation is not the way of violence, class struggle or hate; it is the way of love, brotherhood and peaceful solidarity."

The same echoes of Puebla, Rio and Recife, could be heard in his speech at Bacolod City:

"There are in today's world too many situations of injustice. Injustice reigns when some nations accumulate riches and live in abundance while other nations cannot offer the majority of people the basic necessities. Injustice reigns when within the same society some groups hold most of the wealth and power, while large strata of the population cannot decently provide for the livelihood of their families, even through long hours of backbreaking labor in factories or in the fields. Injustice reigns when the laws of economic growth and ever greater profit determine social relations, leaving in poverty and destitution those who have only the work of their hands to offer. Being aware of such situations, the Church will not hesitate to take up the cause of the poor and become the voice of those who are not listened to when they speak up, not to demand charity, but to ask for justice."

And referring more specifically to the rural setting:

"Yes, human dignity must be promoted by the land. Because the land is a gift of God for the benefit of all, it is not admissible to use this gift in such a manner that the benefits it produces serve only a limited number of people, while the others—the vast majority—are excluded from the benefits which the land yields. It is not admissible that in the general development process of a nation there should continue to exist the injustice whereby progress worthy of man does not

reach precisely those people who live in the rural areas, who in sweat and toil make land productive, and who must rely on the work of their hands for the sustenance of their families. It is not admissible that people who work the land must continue to live in a situation that offers them no hope for a better future. No, in giving the land to humanity, God had a different purpose, for his gift was a gift of love to humanity."

He asked the landowners to "compare constantly your actions and attitudes with the ethical principles regarding the priority of the common good regarding the social purpose of economic activity. The right of ownership is legitimate in itself, but it cannot be separated from its wider social dimension".

He also recalled the right of workers to a just salary and to free association:

"Ninety years ago already, the great social Encyclical *Rerum novarum* spelled out very clearly that the worker is entitled to wages that give him a just share in the wealth he helps to produce, and that working conditions should be geared not to the ever increasing economic profit of the enterprise but to the inviolable, dignity of man as an individual, as a provider for his family and as a builder of the society to which he belongs. It has been the constant teaching of the Church that workers have a right to unite in free associations for the purpose of defending their interest and contributing as responsible partners to the common good."

And he also reiterated the need for peaceful means:

"When man himself, man with his unsurpassed dignity, is the measure that is applied to the special problems, then there will be no room for violence in the struggle for justice. To adopt man as the criterion of all social activity means committing oneself to the transformation of every unjust situation without destroying what one seeks to protect: a society based on brotherhood, justice and love. Violence can never be a means of solving social conflict, and class struggle which opposes one group to another cannot create justice since its premise is destruction and contempt for man. To construct a truly human society in the Philippines, every man and woman must make a choice for justice and love, for solidarity and brotherhood

against selfishness and hatred. Choose human dignity and a better future will be yours."

In Legazpi City he insisted once more:

"Providing employment must not be taken lightly, or considered a secondary aspect of the economic order and of development. It should be a central element in the aims of economic theory and practice.

"But it is not only employment that justice requires. For to be so poorly paid that you can hardly support yourselves and your families, that you become slaves rather than free and responsible workers — this too is not just. This is not the will of God.

"What then are the requirements of justice in this regard? That working conditions should be as worthy as possible, and that social security should be perfected so as to enable everyone, on the basis of growing solidarity, to face up to risks, difficult situations and social burdens; that wages should be regulated in their various and complementary forms; that workers should have a real and just share in the wealth that they help to produce in enterprises, in professions and in the national economy.

"You can be sure that your Pope is with you on this issue and on similar issues, because what is at stake is man and his dignity."

He put it all in a nutshell in the afternoon of the same day, in his address to the Peoples of Asia from Radio Veritas:

"From the humblest rural laborer to the person in a high position of responsibility, all men and women must be conscious of the common good and strive to promote common progress in social and economic development. In this context, I would like to insist on the importance of creating worthy employment for all, and likewise on the importance of fostering a true understanding of the meaning of work. In the agricultural sector, as well as in industry and service-related employment, a man's work enables him to share in the development process, and also enables him to discharge the duties that, out of love, he assumes for the members of his family.

Human labor, while promoting social and economic development, must also promote the total well-being and true advancement of the human person."

Totus tuus

I cannot close these reflections on the christian humanism of John Paul II, as expressed through his teaching in the Philippines, without referring to his motto *Totus tuus* (All I am is yours), which became the rallying cry of the Filipinos in their tumultuous reception. As is well known "All I am is yours" refers to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and it is from her that Jesus took his Humanity, instrument of his Divinity for the Redemption of man, thus infinitely enhancing the dignity of the human person.

Be fittingly then Our Lady was, as on previous similar occasions, very conspicuous in this papal visit. His first stop as he left the airport upon arrival was the church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, popularly known as the Baclaran church, where he made an act of consecration to Mary, before addressing a huge gathering of religious sisters. He made many references to her in his speeches. In Tondo he chose the parish of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage for his visit, and in Iloilo he crowned a large statue of Our Lady of the Candles, Patroness of the City. But he was particularly moving at the University of Santo Tomas, where he concluded his address to the students thus:

"I conclude with a loving and grateful remembrance of the Virgin Mary. She is our *Mother*, an intimate, discreet and loving Mother. Although her affection is for all, it is a fact that the young have special need of her care, particularly today.

"She is our *Teacher*, because she is our Mother. Students have a wonderful lesson to learn from her attitude of profound reverence before the unfathomable mystery of God, and from her search for truth through contemplation and prayer.

"She is *Queen of the Apostles*: of all the apostles, both those of the Church's beginning and those in present-

day history. Her presence is discreet and effective today as it was at Cana of Galilee. May she be with you always. May she intercede for you with her divine Son, as she did then in order to prevent a shadow falling on the happiness of the bride and groom, who were young people just like yourselves Children of hers just like you, each and every one of you.

"And in the name of her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is forever the friend of the youth of the world, I leave you with this heritage of yours, which is faith, hope and love."

Manila, February 1981

(The quotations are taken from the official hand-outs during the papal visit.)

ACCULTURATION

by

Jaime Cardinal Sin, D.D.

(Continued from last issue)

The third possibility is the case of cultures that are not inconsistent, but simply different. This case should offer no particular trouble. To be different is not a crime, it is the most natural thing in human beings.

To violate human rights, as in the case of certain cultures, is wrong. To be inconsistent with the prevailing culture is to stand in its way and thereby invite conflict. But merely to be different is, not only not wrong, it is positively a *right*.

Just as a man has a right to freedom, so does he have a right to be different, since difference is the inevitable consequence of freedom. If things are predetermined, you exclude from them the possibility of behaving in one way or in another, you exclude freedom from them. Things can be free only if this predetermination is removed. But if you remove the predetermination, if you grant the possibility of behaving this way or that, of moving towards this or that, if you grant a choice of alternatives, then you must be prepared to accept the fact that one will behave this way, and another will behave that way; that one will move in this direction, and the other will move in that direction; that one will choose this, while the other will choose that. In other words, freedom is the seed of differences; you cannot have the one without the other.

Why, then, do we find people reacting positively in favour of freedom even as they react negatively against those who differ from them?

I have no wish to deny that, as a matter of fact, things and people that are different do arouse certain negative feelings in us. When confronted by something different from that with which we are familiar, we eye it with a certain wariness; if possible, we give it a wide berth, just in case... "Just in case" betrays suspicion, distrust, even fear. However, these feelings arise not because the different is different, but because the different is the *unknown*. What is different but

known causes no such feelings. It is the unknown as such that makes us wary, suspicious, distrustful, fearful. And why? Because we do not know how to deal, how to cope with the unknown. The negative reaction ultimately stems from the consciousness of our own inadequacy. The unknown merely discloses that inadequacy to ourselves. The threat of the unknown, then, is rather the threat of our own inadequacy; the fear of the unknown is largely a fear of our own inadequacy. When a man has trained and prepared himself, and is thus reasonably confident that he is adequate to any contingency, the unknown is no longer an object of fear. Instead it becomes a challenge that pumps adrenalin into the bloodstream and makes a man tingle with the thrill and excitement of anticipated adventure.

Still, it might be argued that the nation must have unity; it cannot afford the luxury of differences, because these represent a threat, a danger to unity.

People who argue in this manner seem to me to be somewhat confused. They seem to confuse unity with uniformity. Unity is not the same as uniformity. Uniformity is, indeed, incompatible with differences. You cannot have uniformity if you allow any differences. But differences are compatible with unity. Eliminate differences. You will achieve unity, but it is the unity of robots who are uniform in their behaviour. But men are not robots. Robots are preprogrammed, predetermined. Men are free. And the unity proper of free men is a unity in diversity, a unity that transcends differences because it blends and harmonizes the differences.

Differences, they say, are a danger, a threat, a risk. But, then, so is freedom. Freedom itself is a threat, a danger, a risk. Must we, therefore, renounce our freedom?

No; that is not the answer. The answer is that, as men, we must dare to be free. Why? Because freedom is not only a threat, it is also an opportunity. If you are not daring enough to brave the danger and take the risk, you will miss the unlimited opportunities that freedom has to offer.

Dare we must because we are men. We must dare to be free; we must dare to be different, we must dare to work with, and make use of, differences. To dare to be different is not only to risk danger; it is also to reach out for opportunities that cannot be had otherwise.

Opportunities for enrichment. Life, reality is incredibly complex, infinitely varied, enormously rich in perspectives. All this wealth cannot be sufficiently grasped by any one single human mind, nor can it be encompassed sufficiently from one single point of view. If men dare to be different, dare to look at life from different angles, and then contribute their diverse experiences into a common pool, they can only benefit and grow richer in the process.

Opportunities for growth in maturity. The immature rush into a decision without considering a problem in all its aspects. When men sit down together to discuss a problem, if they dare to be different, they will bring new points of view, new aspects, fresh insights into consideration. From this dissection of a problem, and the careful examination of the different options that thus become available, the human mind can only emerge better equipped, more experienced, more mature.

Opportunities for growth in responsible freedom. Freedom is responsible when it is exercised with due deliberation. And that is exactly what happens when men with different opinions must decide on a common course of action.

Opportunities for growth in unity. I have already said that the unity proper of free men and women is not the programmed uniformity of robots. It is a unity resulting from free decisions and free actions. A free people does not need a unity grown flabby from lack of exercise; it does not need a unity that has become fragile from being; too long taken for granted. What it needs is a *vital* unity. Now, all life is a balanced tension, or a tensioned balance of conflicting energies. And a vital unity is the unity of a balanced tension of differences. Such a unity keeps itself in existence through a continuous balancing of the tensions generated by differences. In other words, it is a unity that keeps committing itself in decision after decision; a unity that affirms itself in a choice after choice; a unity that asserts itself in facing and surmounting odds after odds; a unity that constantly renews itself and grows stronger day after day. A unity that does not grow stale, but remains healthily and vitally vibrant and zestful.

One final question: "Where lies the secret of this vital unity?"

Thoughts divide men, opinions divide men, men are divided in the views they hold. What, then, binds and keeps them to-

gether? Centuries ago, St. Augustine, with penetrating insight, said that men are united and bound together by the things they love.

Emmet Fox expresses this beautifully in the following words: "There is no difficulty that ENOUGH LOVE will not conquer; no disease that ENOUGH LOVE will not heal; no door that ENOUGH LOVE will not open; no gulf that ENOUGH LOVE will not bridge; no wall that ENOUGH LOVE will not throw down; no sin that ENOUGH LOVE will not redeem. It makes no difference how deeply seated may be the trouble, how hopeless the outlook, how muddled the tangle, how great the mistake — a SUFFICIENT REALIZATION OF LOVE WILL DISSOLVE IT ALL. If only YOU could LOVE ENOUGH, YOU would be the happiest and most powerful being in the world!"

Love is the only thing that can bind on keep men together in unity. Love is the great lesson that man need to learn. So indispensable is this lesson, so great the need that it be learned well, that GOD who is LOVE ITSELF did not, and could not, entrust the teaching of it to anyone save His own Son. God so loved the world that He sent His only-begotten Son into this world, not to condemn it, but to save it, so that all who believe in Him would not perish but have everlasting life.

"If YOU could LOVE ENOUGH, YOU would be the happiest and most powerful being in the world!"

Jesus Christ is that being; Jesus Christ is that man. He have shaken the world to its foundations because He alone had enough love to redeem it. Love is the ultimate energy; love is the ultimate force. That ultimate energy, that ultimate force Jesus has given into our hands. The love of God created the world; the love of God in Jesus Christ saved the world. That love He bequeathed to us on the last night of his mortal life: A new commandment I give you: that you LOVE one another. AS I LOVE LOVED YOU.

Three days ago we celebrated the birth into this world of the love of God made flesh in Christ Jesus. Let now each one of us be the incarnaiton and birth of Christ's love in this troubled and divided world of ours!

HOMILETICS

Biblical Notes and Outlines for Homilies April-May 1981

by

Fr. Herman Mueller, S.V.D.

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT (April 5, 1981)

All three readings speak about the resurrection to newness of life. The prophet Ezekiel prophesies over the dried bones and they come back to live (first reading). Jesus tells Martha: "I am the resurrection and the life" and calls Lazarus back to life after he has been in the tomb for four days (gospel). St. Paul exclaims: "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, then he who raised Christ from the dead will bring your mortal bodies to life also (second reading).

FIRST READING: EZEKIEL 37:12-14

Ezekiel (=God is comforting) is the third of the Major Prophets, roughly contemporaneous with Jeremiah, and the greatest figure of Judaism during the exile, thus called "Father of Judaism". He is unique among the prophets in having received his call outside of the land of Israel in Babylonia probably at Tel-Abid (3:15), where he lived and prophesied from about 593 till 570 B.C. He is the prophet of the new covenant and the Holy Spirit.

After the introduction, speaking about Ezekiel's call and mission (1:1-3:21) the first part (3:22-24:27) contains prophecies against Judah and Jerusalem predicting the exile in 587/6 B.C. The second part (25:1-32:32) brings prophecies against the Gentiles (25:1-39:32). The third and last part (33:1-48:35) talks about the restoration of Israel: (1) The new covenant, the resurrection of the nation, the downfall of Gog (33:1-39:29), (2) the vision of the new kingdom of God (40:1-48:35).

The first reading of today is taken from the first subdivision of the third part. The whole chapter 37 contains the

vision of the dry bones as a symbol of the restoration of Israel. In a plain near Tel-Abib Ezekiel sees (in imagination) many dry bones, apparently of soldiers killed in action. Through a prophesy God will breath life into them, just as in Gen. 2:7. And thus the Jews in exile, comparable to these bones because they would say: "Our bones are dried up, we have no hope, we are as good as dead" (37:11) will come back to life again, will return from exile. Thus this vision is a prediction of the restoration of Israel under the figure of a resurrection from the dead, not a doctrine of the resurrection itself. But since probably a disciple of Ezekiel, influenced by Is. 26:19 added Ez. 37:12-13: "I will open your graves, and raise you from your graves" an expectation of a general resurrection at the last day begins to emerge which is developed only in later apocalyptic literature. Resurrection is here therefore a two level theme: (1) restoration of God's people from exile (God brings his people to newness of life and puts his Spirit within them) and (2) eschatological resurrection of the dead (but only indirectly and more hidden).

READING OF THE GOOD NEWS: JOHN 11:1-45

Jesus is the light, as he showed by healing the blind. More profoundly he is the life, as he demonstrates by raising Lazarus. The lastest of the seven miracles (wine at Cana 2:1-11, healing of royal official 4:46-54, curing of invalid 5:1-9, multiplication of loaves 6:1-15, walking on lake 6:16-21, curing of blind 9:1-7; raising of Lazarus 11:1-45) in the fourth gospel is the greatest of them all, being a sign as the others: The natural life given here is a pledge of the supernatural life to be given by the glorified Christ. It concludes Christ's public life and introduces Christ's passion, for it is the proximate cause of the decision to kill Jesus and thus to glorify him. Jesus' gift of life to man led man to put him to death. But according to God's design, death and resurrection belong together.

1. *Jesus' trip to Bethany* 11:1-16

The village of Bethany lay on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, some two miles from Jerusalem. Lazarus fell ill, and his sisters sent a message to the Lord, stating the mere fact. More is not needed for a friend to help. Jesus answers: "This sickness is not to end in death; rather it is for God's glory." A typical double-meaning word of John. His listeners understood that Jesus would help healing. Jesus means (1) The miracle of Lazarus' resurrection will glorify Jesus, (2) Lazarus'

resurrection will lead to Christ's death and thus his resurrection and glorification. Jesus delays because God has his own purposes with the sickness of Lazarus (v. 15). The apostles warn Jesus not to go to Jerusalem, since the Jews wanted to stone him. He however insists, his hour of death, determined by the Father, has not arrived yet. The purpose of his going is the raising of Lazarus, to "wake him from sleep". Again a double-meaning expression. When Jesus is misunderstood he explains: Lazarus is dead and he is glad because now he can perform greater miracle: raising from the dead instead of healing.

2. *Jesus' conversation with Martha and Mary* 11:17-32

In the Orient dead people had to be buried the very day of death, since decay sets in so suddenly. Relatives came to console the relatives of the dead for seven days. When Martha hears the news that Jesus is coming, she goes to meet him. She is the active type as Luke depicts her too. Mary remained at home, seated. For that was the position to receive the guests who came to console her. Martha meets the Lord before the village. She believes that Jesus can heal sicknesses and her words have an overtone of reproach (that he did not come before Lazarus was dead). Yet she also has hope that Jesus can do something. Does she think of a raising of the dead? When Jesus promises here that her brother will rise, i.e., Jesus will bring him back to life, Martha takes this as referring to the end of the world. General resurrection was believed in by many Jews at that time.

In explanation, Jesus says that he is both the life and the resurrection. And this again on two levels: (1) He give eternal life already here on earth to those who believe in him, raising them from the spiritual death. (2) On the last day he will raise the (physical) dead. Martha believes. But her faith is still inadequate. She addresses Jesus with the title: Lord, Messiah, Son of God (v. 27), probably the same titles which were used in early Christian professions of faith. Yet v. 39 shows that she does not as yet believe in his power to give life, that he is life itself (v. 25). In order to make Martha understand that he has the power to give life now, he will act out a drama of the gift of life by raising Lazarus.

Martha quietly calls Mary to give her a chance to talk to Jesus alone. But the mourners notice her leaving and follow her, since they think she will go to the tomb to cry as it was custom to do. Her words have the same overtone of reproach as her sister's that Jesus did not come earlier.

3. *The raising of Lazarus 11:33-44*

When Jesus sees Mary and the crowd weeping he shudders, moved with the deepest emotions. "Moved with deepest emotions" is the translation of *embrimasthai*, he "shudders" renders *tarassein*. Both expressions (in v. 38 occurs only the term *embrimasthai*) are probably variant translations of the one original Aramaic expression which meant "to be strongly moved". It is discussed why Jesus was moved. (1) Out of love for Lazarus. (2) He was angry because of lack of faith, which is probable in v. 38 for the people, but Mary's weeping could not be considered as lack of faith, since Jesus weeps himself. (3) He was angry because he found himself face to face with the realm of Satan, here represented by death, as we see it in similar ways in Mt. 9:30; Mk. 1:43, 14:5. (4) This death reminded him of his own death, soon to come.

Upon his request they show Jesus the tomb and he starts weeping himself, a sign of how much he loved Lazarus.

Christ prays. Since he and the Father are one and he always does his will, Christ's prayer is heard. Therefore people will see a miraculous work which is the work of the Father. Thus they will come to know the Father. Christ calls and Lazarus comes out, dressed in a *sadin*, similar to a night gown. The chin was bound with a *soudarion* (sweat cloth) in order to keep the mouth closed and hands and feet were held together with bands. Lazarus was probably not swathed, otherwise one could not explain that he came out, unless someone thinks, he was flying in the air.

The historicity is doubted by some since the Synoptics do not have this miracle. But vice-versa they have miracles John does not have. Or they consider it unheard of that a dead (raised) man shall live for some more year. But no argument is convincing and John's faithfulness to historical tradition gives us the presumption for the basic historicity.

HOMILY

JESUS THE LIFE AND RESURRECTION

1. One of the most important moments in the life of every Christian is his baptism. When the priest pours water on the forehead of the child and says: "N, I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" that child

lives no longer just a human life but also a divine life, God's own life. To illustrate this divine life and thus also the mystery and greatness of baptism the liturgy of baptism uses water and light (candle) and in earlier years, when baptism was administered by submersion, the candidate went to the tomb and came up again, as it were, he rose to new life. These symbols are already used in the gospel of John to illustrate that Jesus is the new life. The third Sunday in Lent presented us Christ as the living water, the second Sunday as the light of the world and this Sunday pictures Christ as the life and resurrection. All this Christ is because of his word in the gospel, which when rightly received leads to baptism. And he who lives this new, this divine life will never die. His physical death will be real, but it cannot touch this divine life. That physical death will be only transitory, since the divine life a person was living for many years will guarantee also his new physical life, his resurrection.

2. We all have to learn this lesson in our life: Our real life is the divine life Christ gives us in his gospel and in his sacrament of baptism, the life in the Holy Spirit who lives in us since baptism. And this life cannot be extinguished. It will go on to eternal life in which also our resurrected body will participate one day. This is the lesson Jesus wanted to teach Martha and Mary in the gospel of today and thus also us, because "Everything written before our time was written for our instruction" (Rom. 15:4) and "all these things happened as an example for us" (1 Cor. 10:6).

3. Before a person can live a new life he has to rise, he has to come out of the tomb. John 5:24-30 corresponds in many ways with John 11:25-26 and supplements it. "I solemnly assure you, an hour is coming, has indeed come, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who have heeded it shall live" (Jn. 5:25). This is the first meaning of "I am the resurrection and the life" (Jn. 11:25) which Jesus said to Martha. The miracle Christ was about to perform, i.e. to call Lazarus back to a new physical life was supposed to be the sign for Martha, Mary and anybody who is going to believe in Christ that He is the new life, which we can live only by coming out of the tomb of our self-centeredness.

4. Martha, Mary and Lazarus had often spoken with Jesus. They had recognized him as a true friend. As a matter of fact, Jesus felt at home in their house. The story of the two sisters and the brother of Bethany is one of the finest in the gospels. One cannot help thinking that Jesus felt it as great gift to have

somebody to whom he could go at any time, as we all enjoy a place and a person to whom we can open up, to have a person who will not laugh at our dreams, who will not misunderstand our confidence, a person where our tensions are relaxed and we can place our weary feet, knowing that this person has an understanding heart. But this alone did not make the sisters and the brother Lazarus understand Jesus fully yet. And Jesus was not just looking for earthly companions and friends. He always wanted to lead people higher. He did not just want to be an earthly friend. But we can assume that this mere human friendship with Jesus prepared them to listen to him more and more and understand him as the resurrection and the life. — Charity and hospitality has always been a way to understand also God better. And if a man is "naturally" good he will sooner or later reach the source of goodness, or at least be placed before the decision to accept God the source and power of all goodness and the life.

5. Charity is an eye-opener to recognize God. But there is often another eye-opener: the death of one of our friends or relatives. This was what God had in mind with the death of Lazarus for Martha and Mary. When the two sisters sent the message to Jesus telling him: "Lord, the one you love is sick" (Jn. 11:3), they knew, such a word would be enough for a friend to act and help. And yet, Jesus did not help right away. He stayed where he was for two more days so that Lazarus would die meanwhile. His death and later resurrection would glorify Jesus as the life, especially in the eyes of the sisters of Lazarus. So when Jesus finally came to Bethany and consoled the sisters they saw him as the friends and expressed in a subtle yet not to be missed reproach: "If you had been here, my brother would have never died" (Jn. 11:21.32), their disappointment that he did not come earlier. How could a friend let down a friend! And yet somehow they sensed that here something must be different. Thus Martha express her confidence that God will grant Jesus everything what he will ask of the Father. But when Christ tells her that Lazarus will rise again, she understands this as referring to the end of time. And when Jesus explains to her: "I am the resurrection and the life: whoever believes in me; though he should die, will come to life; and whoever is alive and believes in me will never die" (Jn. 11:25a-26) she proclaims Jesus as Lord, Messiah and Son of God (Jn. 11:27). How much she understood with all these titles Jesus as the life and the resurrection is not clear. At least she listened and tried to follow Christ's lead. That will be all we can do in our life too. Obviously she

still did not think that Christ would call Lazarus back to life when she did not want the stone to be moved back for fear that the decaying body would pester the air (11:39). And yet her faith was growing so that she could believe in Christ as the resurrection and the life, also and especially for her, for her supernatural, divine life that Jesus wanted to communicate to her by making her rise from the spiritual death. The death of her brother made her and her sister receptive to Christ's word.

6. The raising of Lazarus was for Martha and Mary and is now for all of us a sign and a means to make us believe in Christ as the source of divine, supernatural life. When Jesus calls loudly, "Lazarus, come out" (11:43), it is a call also for Martha and Mary: "Come out, and accept my word and have eternal life!" For them it was, if we borrow the words of Jn. 5:28 "the hour in which all those who are dead hear the voice of the Son of God and those who heed it shall live." Jn. 11 does not say explicitly that Martha and Mary believed in Christ as source of eternal life, but we can assume it knowing that Jesus hardly ever performed a miracle without the faith of people concerned.

7. Christ goes on speaking now in his gospel, "Come out! Be raised to eternal, divine life! Accept me as the source of life, as the resurrection and the life, giving everybody who believes in me this divine life!" Christ is not judging anybody, he is not condemning. "God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him avoids condemnation, but whoever does not believe is already condemned for not believing in the name of God's only Son" (Jn. 3:17-18). And this decisive moment and hour is now when Christ speaks to us in his gospel. Everybody has to make up his mind and either accept Christ in his word and have eternal life already now: "I solemnly assure you the man who hears my word and has faith in him who sent me possesses eternal life. He does not come under condemnation, but has passed from death to life." (Jn. 5:24). The last judgment at the end of times will be only a great drama telling us what decision each man has made many years ago; the judgment itself took place long before the last judgment.

8. This new, this divine life Paul describes in Rob. 8. We do not live just a human life, we do not live just according to the flesh. We live a life in the Spirit, since Christ's Holy Spirit

lives in us since baptism. And if the Holy Spirit lives in us, we also let ourselves be guided by him, we walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:25).

9. Christ is the resurrection, of course also by raising us up from the physical dead as he raised up Lazarus. This is for most the most obvious meaning of today's gospel. St. Paul adds to this: As the Holy Spirit was raising Christ from the dead, he will also raise us up (Rom. 8:11), since this Holy Spirit lives in us.

At the parousia Christ will cry aloud into all tombs of the globe: "Come out!" "An hour is coming in which all those in their tombs shall hear (Christ's) voice and come forth. Those who have done right shall rise to live; the evildoers shall rise to be damned" (Jn. 5:29).

10. If we want a guarantee that we will rise to eternal life it is this: To be open to God's word, to accept Christ present in his word, to experience him as life now, to live the new life now. It is not just chance that Jesus in Jn. 5:24-29 speaks about rising to life by accepting Jesus in the gospel (5:24-25) and rising to eternal life at the end of times (5:28-29).

PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION (April 12, 1981)

With this Sunday we begin the most solemn season in the church year, the Holy Week. In the beginning there was a single festival of redemption, the Christian pasch, re-presenting (not only commemorating) the passion, death, resurrection, exaltation of Jesus, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and Christ's parousia. Later the unitary feast was broken up into its constituent parts which were celebrated on different days: Good Friday, Easter Day, Ascension Day, and Pentecost; and the parousia became one main theme of Advent. Then Palm Sunday and Holy Thursday were added.

Palm Sunday re-enacts Christ's solemn entry into Jerusalem. But soon Palm Sunday became an anticipation of Good Friday with the passion of Our Lord read according to the different Synoptic gospels this year, being cycle A, it is the version of Matthew. That the triumphal entry became a subsidiary motif is also expressed in the new name of the Sunday: Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion, putting thus the old separate Passion Sunday and Palm Sunday together in one Sunday.

Thus there would be two possible themes for a homily: Christ's solemn entry into Jerusalem or his passion.

**GOSPEL FOR THE PROCESSION WITH PALMS:
MATTHEW 21:1-11**

Jesus entered Jerusalem to go to his passion. He wanted to place people before the final decision to accept his message and thus the kingdom or not. They refused to accept it and rejected him. Paradoxically his solemn entry became an entry of a king after all, although his crown was of thorns and the throne the cross. And thus Jesus let himself be celebrated, the only time in his life. Matthew as the gospel of fulfillment sees here a prophecy of Zechariah 9:9: "Your king comes to you without display, astride an ass, astride a colt, the foal of a beast of burden." According to Hebrew synonymous parallelism the first half of the verse says what the second half says in the same way with a different synonym: The king comes on an ass, to be exact on a colt, thus using an animal which no one had ridden before. Matthew however places an "and" between ass and colt and thus makes two animals out of them on which the disciples lay their cloaks. Jesus sat on the colt, the ass went along with the colt.

A second peculiar feature of Matthew's report is the change in the cry of the crowd. He changes Mark's "Blessed is the reign of our father David to come" (11:10) to: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" (21:9) Jesus announced the kingdom which comes in his own person, words, and works. The Hosanna and Benedictus are thus sung before Christ's going to the cross which is the climax of the inbreaking of the saving act of God in Jesus Christ.

No wonder then (and this is the third feature proper to Matthew) the crowd hails Jesus as "the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee" (21:11), who brings the final decisive word of God.

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 50:4-7

This is the third Servant of Yahweh Song of Deutero-Isaiah. The situation is: Israel in exile rejects the message of the prophet, since it is "weary" to hear his constant predictions of deliverance, although the exile still goes on. But the prophet

is unafraid. God has given him the word and he must pronounce it, even at the cost of personal suffering. God will one day prove him right.

Jesus is in a fuller sense that prophet. People rejected his message of the kingdom and put him to death. Yet he is unafraid; he goes on as the prophet and the teacher. Here is the detailed analysis:

1. The Servant's mission as prophet and teacher
 - a. charismatic endowment v. 4
 - b. fidelity in his profession v. 5
2. The prophet's fate: persecution and suffering v. 6
3. Behavior of the prophet:
 - a. firmness in the suffering v. 7
 - b. confidence in God vv. 7-9
 - c. his innocence vv. 8-9

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO MATHEW 26:14-27:66

Everything prior to the passion narratives in the gospels consists of small pericopies which are also read as small units in the liturgy. The passion story, however, was from the beginning a continuous narrative and is also read as a continuous narrative in the liturgy. Essentially the narrative of the four evangelists is the same. But each evangelist has some characteristics peculiar to him.

One intention of Matthew's gospel is to show that Jesus was rejected by the Old Israel, and this rejection was climaxed by Christ's death. But in Christ's passion and death the New Israel, the true Israel is born.

A second characteristic of Matthew is: He shifts the responsibility of Christ's condemnation from Pilate to the people who are rejecting Jesus. That does not mean the Jewish race as a whole but those who blinded themselves, especially the leaders. Matthew has Pilate warned by his wife's dream, and thus he washes his hands in innocence while the people shout: "Let his blood be on us and on our children" (27:25).

A third characteristic of Matthew: In these events Scripture is fulfilled and thus the scandal of the cross partly removed. Consequently Christ's death and his apparent failure

is only one side. In reality faith erupts into the world; after all, and the Church is born. Such features are: the soldiers give Christ a drink of wine flavored with gall, fulfilling thus Ps. 69(68):22. They divide his garments, fulfilling Ps. 22(21):19. People deride him: "He relied on God; let God rescue him now if he wants" which reminds at Ps. 22(21):9. Even the betrayal of Judas and his thirty pieces of silver for which a funeral lot is bought was foretold by Zechariah 11:12-13. As we will see, Ps. 22(21) is underlying the whole passion narrative which to a great extent we find already in Mark, not only in Matthew. It is used as responsorial psalm. Peculiar to Matthew is the far-flung cosmic repercussions: the tearing of the Temple curtain (also in Mark though), indicating that the old Temple is replaced by the new Temple. Christ and his Church, the earthquake (Mt. 27:51), the resurrection of the dead saints (Mt. 27:52), and the faith of the centurion (also in Mark). Thus it is clear: Christ did not die in degradation and humiliation but in triumph. Calvary is not end but a beginning. Christ went into death voluntarily and did not want to use Peter's sword, nor ask the Father for legions of angels (Mt. 26:52-56).

HOMILY

THE PAINS AND THE FRUITS OF CHRIST'S PASSION ACCORDING TO PSALM 22(21)

1. Psalm 22 (21) is *the* passion psalm. In the search of overcoming the scandal of the cross the early Christian community found this psalm especially helpful. It describes the suffering of the righteous in expressions and details which astoundingly anticipate the events of the passion of Jesus. But even more it gives a deep insight into the nature and fruits of innocent suffering. Some would be tempted to say that some of the details of the narration have been taken from the psalm rather than from historical memory. That could possibly be true (but even this we cannot prove) for some peripheral details like the division of the garments but certainly not for the main facts which were scandalous for a Jew which one would not make up to fit a psalm.

2. Although we are seldom sure of the very words of Christ in the gospels we may assume that Jesus prayed this psalm on the cross as it seems according to the gospel. Christ prayed

this psalm because it expressed best his sentiments. He did not just pray it to give us a good example or because he just picked up that psalms and since these words were in the psalm he prayed them. There were many other psalms he could have selected. We do not know who first prayed this psalm. One thing is sure: nobody could pray it more fully than Jesus.

3. Ps. 22:2-12 describes the pains of Christ's soul. It starts with the most desolate cry anybody can ever utter: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me" (Ps. 22:2 = Mt. 27:46). How can a Godman say this! If he had the beatific vision on earth, he could hardly voice such a word. But most scholars today assume that Jesus did not have the beatific vision on earth, for Scripture seems to suggest something else, especially Christ's prayer in the garden of Gethsemani and this word of his on the cross. For every man there comes a time when he feels forsaken by God, although God does not forsake anybody. This was even more true for the Lord on the cross, as it was in the garden. Jesus had become the sinner for us all, taking upon himself the sins of all mankind vicariously. A man who commits a mortal sin turns his back on the Lord; this means greatest loneliness because he is really left alone since he wants to be alone, separated from God. Becoming the scapegoat, as it were, of all mankind, how lonely must the Lord have felt. And this was his struggle on the cross. Jesus imagine himself forsaken by God, who seems not to answer him as he cries aloud to him for help. He struggles to find the bridge which will lead out of his affliction and will bring him to God, on whose nearness his whole existence depends; but he sees only the abyss which separate him from God.

Even greater than the pains of his body is the great pain of this feeling that he has been put to shame by God, even in the eyes of his enemies. He suffers much more from the fact that the scorn of his adversaries affects his relationship with God and ironically affirms his own feeling that God has broken off his relationship with him and that he is hoping for God in vain. The real sting of his suffering is the strain on his faith.

And yet, the attack on his faith evokes in him at the same time strength, too. He knows that God had freed his fathers from Egypt. Would he not free him also (vv. 4-5)! This same God has been with him from the earliest days of his life in the womb of his mother (vv. 9-10). The thought that God directs his enables him, after all, to stretch out his hands to God in prayer: "He not far from me, for I am in distress" (v. 12).

4. *Ps. 22:13-22. The pains of his body*

a. *He is imprisoned* vv. 13-14. With the picture of bullocks the psalmist hints at Christ's imprisonment by his enemies. The sight of bullocks (enemies) alone is already frightening.

b. *He is ill treated* vv. 15-16. Some features from the first part (vv. 2-12) were already mentioned during the early part of crucifixion in Mt. 27:39: "People going by kept insulting him, tossing their heads and saying: 'So you are the one who was going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days! Save yourself'" refers to Ps. 22:8: "All who see me, scoff at me; they mock me with parted lips, they wag their heads." Similarly Ps. 27:43: "He relied on God; let God rescue him now if he wants to" takes up Ps. 22:9: "He relied on the Lord let him deliver him, let him rescue him, if he loves him." Other features of the pains of his body are also clearly recognizable in Ps. 22. Only a crucified could fully say: "I am like water poured out, all my bones are racked" (Ps. 22:15). And what thirst did Christ have to suffer ("My throat is dried up like baked clay, my tongue cleaves to my jaws" Ps. 22:16). So much so that he could only shout: "I am thirsty" (Jn. 19:28).

c. *Stripped of his garments, nailed to the cross* vv. 17-22.

Ps. 22 in these verses looks even more as if it were tailored after Jesus crucified. "And they crucified him" (Mt. 27:35) evokes Ps. 22:17: "They have pierced my hands and my feet; I can count all my bones." After this "they (the soldiers) divided his clothes among them casting lots" (Mt. 27:35) reminds one of Ps. 22:19: "They divide my garments among them and for my vesture they cast lots."

5. *Ps. 22:23-32. The fruits of Christ's passion*

Thus far we meditated on Christ's spiritual and bodily pains. But Christ did not only overcome the temptations against faith and thus took the crucifixion upon himself, remaining united with the Father; he also won great fruits:

a. *He redeemed mankind by his death* vv. 23-27

The result is that people praise God for the redemption. They praise him that God did not leave Jesus alone. This vicarious suffering of Christ is understandably only touched upon in this psalm. It is an insight which is expressed a little clearer in Is. 52:13-53:12, the fourth Servant of Yahweh Song

which in many ways is similar to Psalm 22. "He was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins. Upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we are healed. We had all gone astray like sheep... But the Lord laid upon him the guilt of us all" (Is. 53:5-6). It is God's mystery why he chose Christ's passion and death to redeem us from our sins.

b. *All tribes turn to the Lord God because of Christ's death* vv. 23-27

Without Christ's death pagans would be still follow their idols. And although He was humbled being lifted up on the cross, he was exalted at the same time so that all families will adore Him. This idea again is clearer expressed in the fourth Servant of Yahweh Song: "My servant shall startle many nations, because of him kings shall stand speechless" (Ps. 52:15). "Through his suffering, my servant shall justify many... Therefore I will give him his portion among the great, and he shall divide the spoils with the mighty because he surrendered himself to death and was counted among the wicked" (Is. 53:12).

c. *The Messiah himself will live* vv. 30b-32

That's the paradox of Christ crucifixion: It was not an end but the beginning of a new life for Christ and for anybody who follows him.

HOLY THURSDAY (April 16, 1981)

The Easter Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday) is the center of the Church's year and reaches its climax with the Mass of the Paschal Vigil. The readings are for all three years (A, B, and C) the same.

The theme of Holy Thursday comes out clearly in the acclamation (after the second reading): "I give you a new commandment: Love one another as I have loved you" (Jn. 13:34). This theme gives the atmosphere and the background to the whole of the paschal triduum. Holy Thursday commemorates Christ's gift of himself in the Eucharist. The passover (first reading) foreshadowed Christ's Last Super. Paul gives us the oldest report (second reading) of the institutions of Holy Eucharist. The Holy Eucharist shall be reenacted till the end of times. To prepare his disciples for that great act of love, Christ washed their feet (gospel).

FIRST READING: EXODUS 12:1-8. 11-14

The Torah (Ex. 12:8) prescribes that at the beginning of the fifteenth day of Nisan (Nisan being our March-April) the Jews are to eat the paschal lamb, slain earlier that afternoon. With it they are to eat unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The children of the family are told of the meaning of the events. The Passover recalled the tenth plague in Egypt when the angel passed over the Hebrew homes which had the blood of the paschal lamb on the door; whereas the angel slew all the firstborn of the Egyptians who were not saved by the blood of the paschal lamb. Thus Christ the real paschal lamb saved us from final destruction by his death on the cross.

The sequence of events at the meal was:

1. After the usual handwashing the first cup of wine was blessed and drunk.
2. Then came the double benediction: a. of the wine, b. of the feast day.
3. The Easter food (*hasoreth* [special sauce], bitter herbs, unleavened bread, Easter lamb) was placed on the table.
4. The master of the house took some bitter herbs, dipped them into the *hasoreth* and was eating the herbs, and all guests did the same.
5. The second cup of wine was mixed and blessed.
6. A boy asked about the meaning of the feast (cf. Ex. 12:26f; 13:8).
7. The master of the house explained the meaning.
8. The first part of the Hallel was (Ps. 113-114) was recited as thanksgiving for deliverance from Egypt.
9. The second cup of wine was drunk.
10. All washed their hands again. The master of the house blessed and broke the unleavened bread, dipped bitter herbs into the *hasoreth* and all were eating both.
11. Then came the real meal with the Easter lamb. Everything was to be eaten, but no bone should be broken.

12. After the meal the third cup of the wine was mixed (called "cup of blessing") for here was said the thanksgiving after meal.

13. The third cup of wine was drunk.

14. The fourth cup of wine was mixed and the second part of the Hallel (Ps. 114-118) was sung.

15. Ps. 22 and 136 were sung and the fourth cup of wine was drunk.

READING OF THE GOOD NEWS: JOHN 13:1-15

John has the long and beautiful Eucharistic Sermon in Jn. 6, talking about the essence and the meaning of Holy Eucharist. This might be the reason why he felt no need to report the institution of Holy Eucharist proper as the Synoptics do. Instead, he speaks about the washing of the feet of the apostles as a sign of humility, impressing on them the commandment of brotherly love as he loved us. A *mandatum* (commandment) he has given us. This Latin term gave this day its traditional English name Maundy Thursday.

Christ's washing of the feet of the apostles is a symbolic act of what his whole life is about: He humiliated himself and became man in the incarnation and he even died for us on the cross. Therefore God has exalted him (cf. Phil. 2:6-11). The exemplary meaning for all of us is obvious: Greatness consists in serving. And there are no limits.

A rubric of today's liturgy suggests three subjects for the homily of today: 1. institution of Holy Eucharist (first and second reading), 2. institution of the priesthood (second reading and gospel), 3. commandment of brotherly love (in all three readings).

HOMILY

HOLY EUCHARIST MUST BE WELL PREPARED

1. When the Lord gave the wonderful sermon in the synagogue of Capharnaum talking about the institution of Holy Eucharist he said: "If you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. He who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has life eternal, and I will raise him up on the last day" (Jn. 6:53-54). There will

be no life without the Holy Eucharist. And vice versa, the Holy Eucharist makes our divine life grow. As eating food makes us tall and strong so eating the bread at the table of the Lord makes us grown-up brothers and sisters of Christ.

2. But this eating of the Lord's body is not something mechanical, something magic. It is possible that somebody goes to the Eucharistic table and yet betrays the Lord, yes even loses his life. It is not sure if Judas Iscariot received Holy Communion. Since John who tells us about the incident does not have the institution of the Holy Eucharist, we do not know, when Jesus gave the bite to Judas and what kind of bite it was (Jn. 13:36). Most think it was a piece of appetizer Jesus gave to Judas, not the consecrated bread. And although Luke does not clearly say that Judas received Holy Communion, the mere fact that Luke places the foretelling of his betrayal after the institution of Holy Eucharist would seem to say: "Whatever the exact historical happening and the sequence of events was: Holy Communion and then leaving of Judas for the betrayal, or the leaving of Judas and then Holy Communion, it is possible that somebody receives Holy Communion and yet betrays the Lord." After all, Peter received the Eucharistic food and betrayed Christ three times. It is true: One can be close to the Lord, live with him under one roof and yet betray him. We must be on our guard. And this is certainly one intention of the report in Lk. 22. Was it not also the intention of Christ's washing of the feet of the apostles recorded in Jn. 13?

3. One can be close to the Lord and yet grow cold as Judas did. He had done things so often, and slowly they become routine for Judas. To go to Mass should never become routine for us. It would rather be something we are looking forward to, something which we prepare very well, as if it were the last Mass in our life. The Lord prepared the first Mass very well, as Lk. 22:7-13 tells us: He sent Peter and John to prepare the upper room for him. Thus Jesus and his apostles could be really alone for themselves without being disturbed by anybody. Judas was not even able to disturb that first Mass and have Jesus arrested. The arrest in a private house would have been easier and faster than in the garden of Gethsemani. But Judas did not know the place.

4. Judas was a loner, an outsider. He was the only apostle from Judea. (Iscariot means: from Cariot, a small town near Jerusalem). All the other apostles were from Galilee. It seems that Judas never really felt at home with them; he may

over to death for our sins and raised up for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). St. Paul tells us. This is a typical Hebrew parallelism: what is said in the first half of the verse is said again in the second half a little differently, often with different synonyms. Here the redemption is described as taking away our sins which happens through Christ's death. The second line pictures redemption as justification which is given to us by Christ's resurrection. Obviously justification is both: removal of our sins and pouring in of divine life. And both are effected through Christ death and resurrection.

4. This is also illustrated by the concept of sacrifice. The essence of a sacrifice is not that it be desrtoped (this would be only the case in a holocaust), but that it is transformed into a more perfect form and thus becomes really acceptable to the person to whom it is offered. Christ's sacrifice on the cross became perfect when the Father accepted it. And the stamp that he accepted it is Christ's resurrection.

5. The resurrection of Christ is a historical fact in the sense that it really happened, not in the sense that it could be checked as normal human events can be checked and recorded. A transfigured body as Christ has since his resurrection is beyond the categories of time and space and language. And now such a body acts we do not know, we will know only when we have a transfigured body. The gospels are only an attempt to describe it, but cannot really do it, since it is impossible. On the one side, Christ seems to act almost the same as before his resurrection. It even seems that he eats. On the other hand, he behaves completely diferent: He can enter locked doors as no human body can, he comes and disappears suddenly.

6. Christ is risen, he is alive, he goes on living for all eternity. What he stood for on earth goes on. The apostles experienced him as alive in the appearance. And their faith and thus our faith, rests on the appearances of the Lord. That is the reason why Christ appeared for a certain period of time after the resurrection. The exact time is secondary. The figure of forty days, occuring only in the tradition of Luke (Acts 1:3), is a round number. There were no eyewitnesses, in the strict sense, to the resurrection: Nobody saw Christ coming out of the tomb. And with mere eyes one could not even see him coming out. No camera, if there had been any, could have caught the risen Lord on the film. A transfiguredbody is beyond such human mass media. Enlightened by eyes of faith the disciples saw the risen Lord.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**(May 17, 1981)**

On the fifth, sixth and seventh Sunday of Easter the gospel is taken from the Farewell Address of Christ (Jn. 14-17). Today we learn: Christ is going to prepare a home for us. He is the way to the Father because He is the truth and the life (gospel). The two readings speak about ministries of the Church. The early Church elected seven men for the Hellenistic members (first reading). In the Church we all are a royal priesthood, an edifice of living stones (second reading). As one can see, the two readings would lend themselves for a homily different from the gospel.

FIRST READING: ACTS 6:1-7

The number of Christians in the early Christian community was growing fast. Jerusalem was the center of mission activity (Acts 2:1-9:31), and the converts were mainly Jews. But soon Hellenists also joined the ranks, and the Church became international. This internationality, however, caused some difficulties and frictions, as to be expected. We are all the same — and so were the Jews and the Hellenists — thinking that our nation is the best, whereas in reality God has created them all, and every nation shall bring in a share to the universal Church.

The frictions started over the distributions of alms to the poor. Among the Jews it was the custom that everybody who was living at a certain place for at least one month put some money into the poor box in the Temple, called "*quppah*". Two men collected the money, and by this means twice a week the poor received the equivalent of two meals a day. This system, it seems, was taken over by the Christians, as soon as there were more poor. Certain people were in charge of certain groups. Probably the widows were on one list. Here now it happened that the Greek-speaking widows were neglected and complained to the apostles.

This however was only one point and the place where the problem of frictions of different nations showed. The apostles were Jews and there could be only twelve in all the history of the Church. But could the Hellenists not have leaders of their own, whatever the exact name for them would be? Nowadays we would call them bishops.