

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

THE OFFICIAL INTERDIOCESAN BULLETIN

THE LOVE THAT MAKES SAINTS

Editorial

REDEMPTIONIS DONUM

John Paul II

THEOLOGICAL FORMATION
IN CONTEXT: PASTORAL
AND SPIRITUAL DIMENSIONS

Fausto Gomez, O.P.

THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND
OBLIGATIONS OF THE FAITHFUL

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ACCORDING TO
THE NEW CANON LAW

Herman Graf, S.V.D.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	652 THE LOVE THAT MAKES SAINTS
FEATURES	
• John Paul II	654 REDEMPTIONIS DONUM
	682 WORK AND DIGNITY OF THE PERSON IN LIGHT OF THE CHURCH'S SOCIAL TEACHINGS
• Fausto Gomez, O.P.	687 THEOLOGICAL FORMATION IN CONTEXT: PASTORAL AND SPIRITUAL DIMENSIONS
CANON LAW	
• Jose Ma. Tinoko, O.P.	697 THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE FAITHFUL
CASES AND INQUIRIES	
• Excelso Garcia, O.P.	720 A CHAPLAIN'S FACULTIES
	723 CONCELEBRATION WITH A STIPEND
DOCUMENTATION	
• Arch. Rosalio Castillo Lara	725 REPLIES TO QUERIES ON THE CODE OF CANON LAW
• Antonio Mabutas, D.D.	727 NATIONAL APPELLATE MATRIMONIAL TRIBUNAL
• Augustinus Card. Casaroli	730 APPOINTMENT OF MSGR. TEODORO BACANI
	731 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW DIOCESE OF SAN JOSE
SANCTITY IN THE PHILIPPINES	
• Pablo Fernandez, O.P.	733 JOSE BAGUMBAYAN, BARTOLOME LINGON AND MAGDALENA ILING OF TAYTAY
LITURGY	
• Herman Graf, S.V.D.	740 THE SATURDAY EVENING MASS ACCORDING TO THE NEW CANON LAW
HOMILETICS	
• Ramon Perez, O.P.	742 HOMILETICAL NOTES
INDEX	758 INDEX FOR VOLUME LX

EDITORIAL

THE LOVE THAT MAKES SAINTS

In the month of November, the Holy Mother Church honors All Saints. These were people who traveled this world with daily vicissitudes. Similar experiences we encounter daily. They had their joys and sorrows, fears and hopes, failures and achievements, as we have ours.

What brought them up to their earthly and heavenly pedestals was basically their love patterned after Christ's.

Every contemporary man and woman (priests, religious, single, married, rich, poor, young or old) should ask oneself what kind of love he or she has. Is it a love patterned after Christ's? Saint Paul in his letter to the Romans (Chap. 12:9-21) gives us the qualities of Christian love.

Love must be sincere.

Love prefers good to evil.

Love brings profound respect for others.

Love teaches one to face trials.

Love helps one to know how to pray.

Love makes hospitality a special care.

Love teaches one to bless those who persecute him.

Love teaches one not to curse.

Love helps one to treat everyone with equal kindness.

Love makes one establish real friendship with the poor.

One who loves does not pay evil with evil, but lets everyone see that he is interested only in the highest ideals.

Love teaches one to live at peace with everyone, regardless of race and culture.

Real love never approves of revenge. It leaves that to God.

Are these the qualities of our love?

Are they achievable?

Yes, with the grace of God, these qualities may be achieved. One who has love adorned with these qualities may possibly encounter contradictions. However, one should remember that whatever contradictions he encounters are meant simply to test the authenticity of his love.

The saints are those who love so much. Their love is adorned with sincerity, endurance, universality, unvengefulness and reliance.

This is the kind of love that makes saints.

VICENTE CAJILIG, O.P.

THE COVER: BEF 1984

The cover design depicts God bestowing His manifold gifts and the life of grace steeped with the charisms of His Spirit to man who thirstily reaches up for them.

The outline of a structure in the background purports to show the instrumentality of Holy Mother Church in her sacraments to copiously convey the same spiritual wealth.

Reynaldo Cruz
artist

FEATURES

APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION: TO MEN AND WOMEN RELIGIOUS

REDEMPTIONIS DONUM

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus!

I

Greeting

1. *The gift of the Redemption*, which this extraordinary Jubilee Year emphasizes, brings with it a particular call to conversion and reconciliation with God in Jesus Christ. While the outward reason for this extraordinary Jubilee is of a historical nature — for what is being celebrated is the 1950th anniversary of the Crucifixion and Resurrection — at the same time it is the interior motive that is dominant, the motive that is connected with the very depth of the mystery of the Redemption. The Church was born from that mystery, and it is by that mystery that she lives throughout her history. The period of the extraordinary Jubilee has an exceptional character. The call to conversion and reconciliation with God means that we must meditate more deeply on our life and our Christian vocation in the light of the mystery of the Redemption, in order to fix that life and vocation ever more firmly in that mystery.

While this call concerns everyone in the Church, in a special way it concerns you, men and women *Religious*, who, in your consecration to God through the vows of the evangelical counsels, strive towards a particular fullness of Christian life. Your special vocation and the whole of your life in the Church and the world take their character and their spiritual power from the same depth of the mystery of the Redemption. By following Christ along the “narrow and... hard” way,¹ you experience in an extraordinary manner how true it is that “with him is plenteous redemption”: *copiosa apud eum redemptio*.²

2. Therefore, as this Holy Year moves towards its close, I wish to address myself in a particular way to all of you, the

¹ Cf. Mt. 7:14.

² Ps. 130 [129]:7.

men and women Religious, who are entirely consecrated to contemplation or vowed to the various works of the apostolate. I have already done so in numerous places and on various occasions, confirming and extending the evangelical teaching contained in the whole of the Church's Tradition, especially in the Magisterium of the recent Ecumenical Council, from the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* to the Decree *Perfectae Caritatis*, in the spirit of the indications of the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelica Testificatio* of my predecessor Paul VI. The Code of Canon Law, which recently came into force and which in a way can be considered the final conciliar document, will be for all of you a valuable aid and a sure guide in concretely stating the means for faithfully and generously living your magnificent vocation in the Church.

I greet you with the affection of the Bishop of Rome and Successor of Saint Peter, with whom your Communities are united in a characteristic way. From the same See of Rome there also reach you, with an unceasing echo, the words of Saint Paul: "*I betrothed you to Christ* to present you as a pure bride to her one husband".³ The Church, which receives after the Apostles the treasure of marriage to the divine Spouse, looks with the greatest love towards all her sons and daughters who, by the profession of the evangelical counsels and through her own mediation, have made a special covenant with the Redeemer of the world.

Accept this word of the Jubilee Year of the Redemption precisely as a word of love, spoken by the Church for you. Accept it, wherever you may be: in the cloister of the contemplative Communities, or in the commitment to the many different forms of apostolic service: in the missions, in pastoral work, in hospitals or other places where the suffering are served, in educational institutions, schools or universities — in fact in every one of your houses where, "gathered in the name of Christ", you live in the knowledge that the Lord is "in your midst".⁴

May the Church's loving word, addressed to you in the Jubilee of the Redemption, be the reflection of that loving word that Christ himself said to each one of you when he spoke one day that mysterious "Follow me"⁵ from which your vocation in the Church began.

³ Cf. 2 Cor. 11:2.

⁴ Cf. Mt. 18:20.

⁵ Cf. Mt. 19:21; Mk. 10:21; Lk. 18:22.

II

Vocation

"And Jesus looking upon him loved him"

3. "Jesus looking upon him loved him"⁶ and said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me".⁷ Even though we know that those words, addressed to the rich young man, were not accepted by the one being called, their content deserves to be carefully reflected upon; for they present the interior structure of a vocation.

"And Jesus looking upon him loved him". This is the love of the Redeemer: a love that flows from all the human and divine depths of the Redemption. This love reflects the *eternal love of the Father*, who "so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life".⁸ The Son, invested with that love, accepted the mission from the Father in the Holy Spirit, and became the Redeemer of the world. The Father's love was revealed in the Son as *redeeming love*. It is precisely this love that constitutes the true price of the Redemption of man and the world. Christ's Apostles speak of the price of the Redemption with profound emotion: "You were ransomed . . . not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot", writes Saint Peter.⁹ And Saint Paul states: "You were bought with a price".¹⁰

The call to the way of the evangelical counsels springs from the interior encounter with the love of Christ, which is a redeeming love. Christ calls precisely through this love of his. In the structure of a vocation, the encounter with this love becomes something specifically personal. When Christ "looked upon you and loved you", calling each one of you, dear Religious, that redeeming love of his was directed towards a particular person, and at the same time it took on a *spousal character*: it became a *love of choice*. This love embraces the whole person, soul and body, whether man or woman, in that person's unique

⁶ Mk. 10:21.

⁷ Mt. 19:21.

⁸ Jn. 3:16.

⁹ 1 Pt. 1:18-19.

¹⁰ 1 Cor. 6:20.

and unrepeatable personal "I". The One who, given eternally to the Father, "gives" himself in the mystery of the Redemption, has now called man in order that he in his turn should give himself entirely to the work of the Redemption through membership in a Community, of brothers or sisters, recognized and approved by the Church. Surely it is precisely to this call that Saint Paul's words can be applied: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit...? You are not your own; you were bought with a price".¹¹

Yes, Christ's love has reached each one of you, dear Brothers and Sisters, with that same "price" of the Redemption. As a consequence of this, you have realized that *you are not your own*, but belong to Christ. This new awareness was the fruit of Christ's "loving look" in the secret of your heart. You replied to that look by choosing him who first chose each one of you, calling you with the measurelessness of his redeeming love. Since he calls "by name", his call always appeals to *human freedom*. Christ says: "If you wish...". And the response to this call is, therefore, a free choice. You have chosen Jesus of Nazareth, the Redeemer of the world, by choosing the way that he has shown you.

"If you wish to be perfect..."

4. This way is also called the way of perfection. Speaking to the young man, Christ says: "If you wish to be perfect...". Thus the idea of the "way of perfection" has its motivation in the very Gospel source. Moreover, do we not hear, in the Sermon on the Mount: "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect"?¹² *The calling of man to perfection* was in a certain way perceived by thinkers and moralists of the ancient world and also afterwards, at the different periods of history. But the biblical call has a completely original nature: it is particularly demanding when it indicates to man perfection in the likeness of God himself.¹³ Precisely in this form the call corresponds to the whole of the internal logic of Revelation, according to which man was created *in the image and likeness of God himself*. He must therefore seek the perfection proper to him in the line of this image and likeness. As Saint Paul will write in the Letter to the Ephesians: "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And

¹¹ 1 Cor. 6:19-20.

¹² Mt. 5:48.

¹³ Cf. Lv. 19:2; 11:44.

walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God".¹⁴

Thus the call to perfection belongs to the very essence of *the Christian vocation*. On the basis of this call we must also understand the words which Christ addressed to the young man in the Gospel. These words are in a particular way linked to the mystery of the Redemption of man in the world. For this Redemption gives back to God the work of creation which had been contaminated by sin, showing the perfection which the whole of creation, and in particular man, possesses in the thought and intention of God himself. Especially *man* must be *given and restored to God*, if he is to be fully restored to *himself*. From this comes the eternal call: "Return to me, for I have redeemed you".¹⁵ Christ's words: "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have, and give to the poor..." clearly bring us into the sphere of the evangelical counsel of poverty, which belongs to the very essence of the religious vocation and profession.

At the same time these words can be understood in a wider and, in a sense, essential way. The Teacher from Nazareth invites the person he is addressing to *renounce* a programme of life in which the first place is seen to be occupied by the category of possessing, of "having", and to *accept* in its place a programme centred upon the value of the human person, and upon personal "being" with all the transcendence that is proper to it.

Such an understanding of Christ's words constitutes as it were a wider setting for the ideal of evangelical poverty, especially that poverty which, as an evangelical counsel, belongs to the essential content of your mystical marriage with the divine Spouse in the Church. Reading Christ's words in the light of the superiority of "being" over "having", especially if the latter is understood in a materialistic and utilitarian sense, we as it were touch *the very anthropological bases of a vocation* in the Gospel. In the framework of the development of contemporary civilization, this is a particularly relevant discovery. And for this reason the very vocation to "the way of perfection" as laid down by Christ becomes equally relevant. In today's civilization, especially in the context of the world of well-being based on consumerism, man bitterly experiences the essential incompleteness of personal "being" which affects his humanity because of the abundant and various forms of "having"; he then becomes

¹⁴ Eph. 5:1-2.

¹⁵ Is. 44:22.

more inclined to accept this truth about vocation which was expressed once and for all in the Gospel. Yes, the call which you, dear Brothers and Sisters, accepted when you set out on the way of religious profession, touches upon *the very roots of humanity*, the roots of man's destiny in the temporal world. The evangelical "state of perfection" does not cut you off from these roots. On the contrary, it enables you to anchor yourselves even more firmly in the elements that make man man, permeating this humanity, which in various ways is burdened by sin, with the divine and human leaven of the mystery of the Redemption.

"You will have treasure in heaven"

5. Vocation carries with it the answer to the question: *Why be a human person — and how?* This answer adds a new dimension to the whole of life and establishes its definitive meaning. This meaning emerges against the background of the Gospel paradox of losing one's life in order to save it, and on the other hand, saving one's life by losing it "for Christ's sake and for the sake of the Gospel", as we read in Mark.¹⁶

In the light of these words, Christ's call becomes perfectly clear: "Go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me".¹⁷ Between this "go" and the subsequent "come, follow me" there is a close connection. It can be said that these latter words determine the very essence of a vocation. For a vocation is a matter of following the footsteps of Christ ("sequi" — to follow, hence "sequela Christi"). The terms "go... sell... give" seem to lay down the precondition of a vocation. Nevertheless, this condition is not "external" to a vocation but is already inside it. For a person discovers the new sense of his or her humanity not only *in order "to follow" Christ* but *to the extent that* he or she actually does follow him. When a person "sells what he possesses" and "gives it to the poor", he discovers that those possessions and the comforts he enjoyed were not the treasure to hold on to. *The treasure is in his heart*, which Christ makes capable of "giving" to others *by the giving of self*. The rich person is not the one who possesses but the one who "gives", the one who is *capable of giving*.

¹⁶ Mk. 8:35; cf. Mt. 10:39; Lk. 9:24.

¹⁷ Mt. 19:21.

At this point the Gospel paradox becomes particularly expressive. It becomes a *programme of being*. To be poor in the sense given to this "being" by the Teacher from Nazareth is to become a dispenser of good through one's own human condition. This also means to *discover* "the treasure". This treasure is *indestructible*. It passes together with man into the dimension of the eternal. It belongs to the divine eschatology of man. Through this treasure man has his definitive future in God. Christ says: "You will have treasure in heaven". This treasure is not so much a "reward" after death for the good works done following the example of the divine Teacher, but rather the *eschatological fulfilment* of what was hidden behind these good works here on earth, in the inner "treasure" of the heart. Christ himself in fact, when he invited his hearers, in the Sermon on the Mount,¹⁸ to store up treasure in heaven, added: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also".¹⁹ These words indicate the eschatological character of the Christian vocation. They indicate even more the eschatological nature of the vocation that is realized through spiritual marriage to Christ by the practice of the evangelical counsels.

6. *The structure of this vocation*, as seen from the words addressed to the young man in the Synoptic Gospels,²⁰ is traced little by little as one discovers the fundamental *treasure* of one's own humanity in the perspective of that "treasure" which man "has in heaven". In this perspective the fundamental treasure of one's own humanity is connected to the fact of "being, by giving oneself". The direct point of reference in such a vocation is the *living person of Jesus Christ*. The call to the way of perfection takes shape from him and through him *in the Holy Spirit*, who continually "recalls" to new people, men and women, at different times of their lives but especially in their youth, all that Christ "has said",²¹ and especially what he "said" to the young man who asked him: "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?".²² Through the reply of Christ, who "looks upon" his questioner "with love", the strong leaven of *the mystery of the Redemption* penetrates the consciousness, heart and will of a person who is searching with truth and sincerity.

Thus the call to the way of the evangelical counsels always has its beginning in God: "You did not choose me, but I chose

¹⁸ Cf. Mt. 6:19-20.

¹⁹ Mt. 6:21.

²⁰ Cf. Mt. 19:21; Mk. 10:21; Lk. 18:22.

²¹ Cf. Jn. 14:26.

²² Mt. 19:16.

you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide".²³ The vocation in which a person discovers in depth the evangelical law of giving, a law inscribed in human nature, is itself a *gift*! It is a gift overflowing with the deepest content of the Gospel, a gift which reflects the divine and human image of the mystery of the Redemption of the world. "In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins".²⁴

III

Consecration

Religious Profession is a "fuller expression" of baptismal consecration

7. Your vocation, dear Brothers and Sisters, has led you to religious profession, whereby you have been consecrated to God through the ministry of the Church, and have been at the same time incorporated into your religious Family. Hence the Church thinks of you, above all, as persons who are "consecrated": *consecrated to God in Jesus Christ* as his exclusive possession. This consecration determines your place in the vast community of the Church, the People of God. And at the same time this consecration introduces into the universal mission of this people a special source of spiritual and supernatural energy: a particular style of life, witness and apostolate, in fidelity to the mission of your Institute and to its identity and spiritual heritage. The universal mission of the People of God is rooted in the messianic mission of Christ himself — Prophet, Priest and King — a mission in which *all share in different ways*. The form of sharing proper to "consecrated" persons corresponds to your manner of being rooted in Christ. The depth and power of this being rooted in Christ are decided precisely by religious profession.

Religious profession creates a new bond between the person and the One and Triune God, in Jesus Christ. This bond develops on the foundation of the *original bond* that is contained in the sacrament of Baptism. Religious profession "is deeply

²³ Jn. 15:16.

²⁴ 1 Jn. 4:10.

rooted in baptismal consecration and is a fuller expression of it".²⁵ In this way religious profession, in its constitutive content, becomes a new consecration: the consecration and giving of the human person to God, loved above all else. The commitment undertaken by means of the vows to practise the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience, according to the determinations proper to each religious Family as laid down in the Constitutions, in *the expression* of a total consecration to God and, at the same time, the means that leads to its achievement. This is also the source of the manner proper to consecrated persons of bearing witness and of exercising the apostolate. And yet it is necessary to seek the roots of that conscious and free *consecration* and of the subsequent *giving of self to God as his possession* in Baptism, the sacrament that leads us to the Paschal Mystery as the apex and centre of the Redemption accomplished by Christ.

Therefore, in order to highlight fully the reality of religious profession, we must turn to the vibrant words of Saint Paul in the Letter to the Romans: "Do you not know that all of us who have been *baptized* into Christ Jesus were *baptized* into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ... we too might walk in newness of life";²⁶ "Our old self was crucified with him so that... we might no longer be enslaved to sin";²⁷ "So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus".²⁸

Upon the sacramental basis of Baptism in which it is rooted, religious profession is a new "burial in the death of Christ": new, because it is made with awareness and by choice; new, because of love and vocation; new, by reason of unceasing "conversion". This "burial in death" causes the person "buried together with Christ" to "*walk like Christ in newness of life*". In Christ crucified is to be found the ultimate foundation both of baptismal consecration and of the profession of the evangelical counsels, which — in the words of the Second Vatican Council — "constitutes a special consecration". It is at one and the same time both *death and liberation*. Saint Paul writes: "Consider

²⁵ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree *Perfectae Caritatis*, 5; cf. also Document of the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes "Essential Elements in the Church's Teaching on Religious Life as Applied to Institutes Dedicated to Works of the Apostolate" (31 May 1983), Nos. 5ff.

²⁶ Rom. 6:3-4.

²⁷ Rom. 6:6.

²⁸ Rom. 6:11.

yourselves dead to sin". At the same time he calls this death "freedom from the slavery of sin". Above all, though, religious consecration, through its sacramental foundation in holy Baptism, constitutes a new life "for God in Jesus Christ".

In this way, simultaneously with the profession of the evangelical counsels, in a much more mature and conscious manner, "*the old nature is put off*" and likewise "*the new nature is put on*, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness", to use once more the words of the Letter to the Ephesians.²⁹

A covenant of spousal love

8. Thus, then, dear Brothers and Sisters, all of you who throughout the Church live the covenant of the profession of the evangelical counsels: *renew* in this Holy Year of the Redemption your *awareness* of your special *sharing* in the Redeemer's *death* on the Cross — that sharing through which *you have risen* with him, and continually rise with him to a new life. The Lord speaks to each of you, just as he once spoke through the prophet Isaiah:

"Fear not, for *I have redeemed you*;
I have called you by name,
you are mine".³⁰

The evangelical call: "If you would be perfect... follow me"³¹ guides us with the light of the words of the divine Teacher. From the depth of the Redemption there comes Christ's call, and from that depth it reaches the human soul. *By virtue of the grace of the Redemption*, this saving call assumes, in the soul of the person called, the actual form of the profession of the evangelical counsels. In this form is contained your answer to the call of redeeming love, and it is also an answer of love: a love of *self-giving*, which is the *heart of consecration*, of the consecration of the person. The words of Isaiah — "I have redeemed you... you are mine" — seem to seal precisely this love, which is the love of a total and exclusive consecration to God.

This is how the *special covenant of spousal love* is made, in which we seem to hear an unceasing echo of the words concern-

²⁹ Cf. Eph. 4:22-24.

³⁰ Is. 43:1.

³¹ Mt. 19:21.

ing Israel, whom the Lord "has chosen as his own possession".³² For in every consecrated person the Israel of the new and eternal Covenant is chosen. The whole messianic People, the entire Church, is *chosen in every person* whom the Lord selects from the midst of this people; in every person who is consecrated *for everyone* to God as his exclusive possession. While it is true that not even the greatest saint can repeat the words of Christ: "For their sake I consecrate myself"³³ in the full redemptive force of these words, nevertheless, through self-giving love, through the offering of oneself to God as his exclusive possession, each one can through faith stand within the radius of these words.

Are we not reminded of this by the other words of the Apostle in the Letter to the Romans that we so often repeat and meditate upon: "I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship"?³⁴ These words are as it were a distant echo of the One who, when he comes into the world and becomes man, says to the Father: "*You have prepared a body for me . . . Lo, I have come to do your will, O God*".³⁵

In this particular context of the Jubilee Year of the Redemption, let us then go back again to the mystery of the body and soul of Christ, as the complete subject of spousal and redemptive love; spousal because redemptive. *For love he offered himself, for love he gave his body "for the sin of the world"*. By immersing yourselves in the Paschal Mystery of the Redeemer through the consecration of the religious vows, you desire, through the love of total giving, to fill your souls and your bodies with the spirit of sacrifice, even as Saint Paul invites you to do in the words of the Letter to the Romans, just quoted: "to offer your bodies as a sacrifice".³⁶ In this way the *likeness of that love which in the Heart of Christ* is both redemptive and spousal is imprinted on the religious profession. And such love should fill each of you, dear Brothers and Sisters, from the very source of that *particular consecration* which — on the sacramental basis of holy Baptism — is *the beginning of your new life* in Christ and in the Church: it is the beginning of *the new creation*.

³² Ps. 135 [134]:4.

³³ Jn. 17:19.

³⁴ Rom. 12:1.

³⁵ Heb. 10:5, 7.

³⁶ Rom. 12:1.

Together with this love, may there grow deeper in each one of you *the joy of belonging exclusively to God*, of being a particular inheritance of the Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Spirit. Now and then repeat with the Psalmist the inspired words:

"Whom else have I in heaven?
And when I am with you,
the earth delights me not.
Though my flesh and my heart waste away,
God is the rock of my heart
and my portion for ever".³⁷

Or:

"I say to the Lord, My Lord are you
Apart from you I have no good.
O Lord, my allotted portion and my cup,
You it is who hold fast my lot".³⁸

May the knowledge of belonging to God himself in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world and Spouse of the Church, *seal your hearts*,³⁹ all your thoughts, words and deeds, with the sign of the biblical spouse. As you know, this intimate and profound knowledge of Christ is actuated and grows deeper day by day through the life of personal, community and liturgical prayer proper to each of your religious Families. In this too, and especially so, the men and women Religious who are dedicated essentially to contemplation are a powerful aid and a stimulating support for their brothers and sisters devoted to the works of the apostolate. May this knowledge of belonging to Christ *open* your hearts, thoughts and deeds, with the key of the mystery of the Redemption, to all the sufferings, needs and hopes of individuals and of the world, in the midst of which your evangelical consecration has been planted as a particular sign of the presence of God for whom all live,⁴⁰ embraced by the invisible dimension of his Kingdom.

The words "Follow me" spoken by Christ when he "looked upon and loved" each one of you, dear Brothers and Sisters, also have this meaning: you take part, in the most complete and

³⁷ Ps. 73 [72]:25-26.

³⁸ Ps. 16 [15]:2, 5.

³⁹ Cf. *Song* 8:6.

⁴⁰ Cf. Lk. 20:38.

radical way possible, *in the shaping of that "new creation"*⁴¹ which must emerge from the redemption of the world by means of the power of the Spirit of Truth operating from the abundance of the Paschal Mystery of Christ.

IV

Evangelical counsels

The Economy of Redemption

9. Through your profession, the way of the evangelical counsels opens up before each one of you. In the Gospel there are many exhortations that go beyond the measure of the commandment, indicating not only what is "necessary" but what is "better". Thus for example the exhortation not to judge,⁴² to lend "expecting nothing in return",⁴³ to comply with all the requests and desires of our neighbour,⁴⁴ to invite the poor to a meal,⁴⁵ to pardon always⁴⁶ and many other invitations. If, in accordance with Tradition, the profession of the evangelical counsels has *concentrated on the three points of chastity, poverty and obedience*, this usage seems sufficiently clearly to emphasize their importance as key elements and, in a certain sense, as a "summing-up" of the entire economy of salvation. Everything in the Gospel that is a counsel enters indirectly into the programme of that way to which Christ calls when he says: "Follow me". But chastity, poverty and obedience give to this way a particular *Christocentric characteristic* and imprint upon it a specific sign of the economy of the Redemption.

Essential to this "economy" is *the transformation* of the entire cosmos *through the heart of man*, from within: "For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God... and will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God".⁴⁷ This transformation takes place in step with that love which Christ's call infuses in the depth of the individual — that love which consti-

⁴¹ 2 Cor. 5:17.

⁴² Cf. Mt. 7:1.

⁴³ Lk. 6:35.

⁴⁴ Cf. Mt. 5:40-42.

⁴⁵ Cf. Lk. 14:13-14.

⁴⁶ Cf. Mt. 6:14-15.

⁴⁷ Rom. 8:19-21.

tutes the very substance of consecration: a man or woman's vowing of self to God in religious profession, on the foundation of the sacramental consecration of Baptism. We can discover the bases of the economy of Redemption by reading the words of the First Letter of Saint John: "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If any one loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides for ever".⁴⁸

Religious profession places in the heart of each one of you, dear Brothers and Sisters, *the love of the Father*: that love which is in the Heart of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world. It is love which embraces the world and everything in it *that comes from the Father*, and which at the same time tends to overcome in the world everything that "does not come from the Father". It tends therefore to conquer the threefold lust. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life" are hidden within man as *the inheritance of original sin*, as a result of which the relationship with the world, created by God and given to man to be ruled by him,⁴⁹ was disfigured in the human heart in various ways. In the economy of the Redemption the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience constitute the most radical means for transforming in the human heart this relationship with "the world": with the external world and with one's personal "I", which in some way is the central part "of the world" in the biblical sense, if what "does not come from the Father" begins within it.

Against the background of the phrases taken from the First Letter of Saint John, it is not difficult to see the fundamental importance of the three evangelical counsels in the whole economy of Redemption. *Evangelical chastity* helps us to transform in our interior life everything that has its sources in the lust of the flesh; *evangelical poverty*, everything that finds its source in the lust of the eyes; and *evangelical obedience* enables us to transform in a radical way that which in the human heart arises from the pride of life. We are deliberately speaking here of an overcoming as a transformation, for the entire economy of the Redemption is set in the framework of the words spoken in the priestly prayer to the Father: "I do not ask you to take

⁴⁸ 1 Jn. 2:15-17.

⁴⁹ Cf. Gen. 1:28.

them out of the world, but to guard them from the evil one".⁵¹ The evangelical *counsels* in their essential purpose aim at "the renewal of creation": "the world", thanks to them, is to be subjected to man and given to him in such a way that man himself may be perfectly given to God.

Participation in the self-emptying of Christ

10. The internal purpose of the evangelical counsels leads to the discovery of yet other aspects that emphasize the close connection of the counsels with the economy of the Redemption. We know that the economy of the Redemption finds its culminating point in the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ, in whom there are joined *self-emptying* through death and birth to a new life through the *Resurrection*. The practice of the evangelical counsels contains a deep reflection of this paschal duality:⁵¹ the inevitable destruction of what in each of us is sin and its inheritance, and the possibility of *being reborn each day to a more profound good* hidden in the human soul. This good is manifested under the action of grace, towards which the practice of chastity, poverty and obedience renders the human soul particularly sensitive. The entire economy of Redemption is realized precisely through this sensitivity to the mysterious *action of the Holy Spirit*, the direct author of all holiness. Along this path the profession of the evangelical counsels opens out in each one of you, dear Brothers and Sisters, a wide space for the "new creation"⁵² that emerges in your human "I" precisely from the economy of the Redemption and, through *this human "I"*, also into the interpersonal and social dimensions. At the same time it emerges in humanity as part of the world created by God; that world that the Father loved "anew" in the eternal Son, the Redeemer of the world.

Of this Son Saint Paul says that "though he was in the form of God . . . *he emptied himself*, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men".⁵³ The characteristic of self-emptying contained in the practice of the evangelical counsels is therefore a completely Christocentric characteristic. And for this reason also the Teacher from Nazareth explicitly indicates *the Cross as the condition for following in his footsteps*.

⁵⁰ Jn. 17:15.

⁵¹ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree *Perfectae Caritatis*,

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⁵² 2 Cor. 5:17.

⁵³ Phil. 2:6-7.

He who once said to each one of you "Follow me" has also said: "If any one would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (that is to say, walk in my footsteps).⁵⁴ And he said this to all his listeners, not just to the disciples. The *law of renunciation* belongs therefore to the very essence of the Christian vocation. But it belongs in a particular way to the essence of the vocation linked to the profession of the evangelical counsels. To those who walk the way of this vocation even those difficult expressions that we read in the Letter to the Philippians speak in a comprehensible language: for him "I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him".⁵⁵

Renunciation therefore — the reflection of the mystery of Calvary — in order "to be" more fully in the crucified and risen Christ; renunciation in order to recognize fully in him the mystery of one's own human nature, and to confirm this on the path of that wonderful process of which the same Apostle writes in another place: "Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day".⁵⁶ In this way the economy of the Redemption transfers the power of the Paschal Mystery to the level of humanity, docile to Christ's call to life in chastity, poverty and obedience, that is, to a life according to the evangelical counsels.

V

Chastity-poverty-obedience

Chastity

11. The Paschal character of this call makes itself known from various points of view, in connection with each individual counsel.

It is indeed according to the measure of the economy of the Redemption that one must also judge and practise that *chastity* which each of you has promised by vow, together with poverty and obedience. There is contained in this the response to

⁵⁴ Mk. 8:34; Mt. 16:24.

⁵⁵ Phil. 3:8-9.

⁵⁶ 2 Cor. 4:16.

Christ's words, which are at the same time an invitation: "There are eunuchs who have made themselves *eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of heaven*. He who is able to receive this, let him receive it".⁵⁷ Prior to this Christ had emphasized: "Not all men can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given".⁵⁸ These last words clearly show that this invitation is a counsel. To this also the Apostle Paul devoted a special reflection in the First Letter to the Corinthians.⁵⁹ This counsel is addressed in a particular way to the love of the human heart. It places greater emphasis on the *spousal character* of this love, while poverty and still more obedience seem to emphasize primarily the aspect of redemptive love contained in religious consecration. As you know, it is a question here of chastity in the sense "of making themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of heaven", question, that is, of virginity or celibacy as an expression of spousal love for the Redeemer himself. In this sense the Apostle teaches that they "do well" who choose matrimony but they "do better who choose virginity".⁶⁰ "The unmarried man is *anxious about the affairs of the Lord*, how to please the Lord",⁶¹ and "the unmarried woman or girl is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit".⁶²

There is contained neither in the words of Christ nor in those of Paul any lack of esteem for matrimony. The evangelical counsel of chastity is only an indication of that particular possibility which for the human heart, whether of a man or of a woman, constitutes *the spousal love of Christ himself*, of Jesus the "Lord". "To make themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of heaven" is not in fact merely a free renunciation of marriage and family life but a *charismatic choice* of Christ as one's exclusive Spouse. This choice not only specifically enables one to be "anxious about the affairs of the Lord" but — when it is made "for the Kingdom of heaven" — it brings this *eschatological Kingdom of God* close to the life of all people in the conditions of temporality, and makes it in a certain way present in the midst of the world.

In this way, consecrated persons accomplish the interior purpose of the entire economy of the Redemption. For this purpose expresses itself in bringing near the Kingdom of God

⁵⁷ Mt. 19:12.

⁵⁸ Mt. 19:11.

⁵⁹ Cf. 1 Cor. 7:28-40.

⁶⁰ Cf. 1 Cor. 7:38.

⁶¹ 1 Cor. 7:32.

⁶² 1 Cor. 7:34.

in its definitive, eschatological dimension. Through the vow of chastity, consecrated persons share in the economy of the Redemption through *the free renunciation* of the temporal joys of married and family life; on the other hand, precisely by their "having made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of heaven", they bring into the midst of this passing world *the announcement of the future resurrection*⁶³ and of eternal life: life in union with God himself through the beatific vision, and the love which contains in itself and completely pervades all the other loves of the human heart.

Poverty

12. How very expressive in the matter of poverty are the words of the Second Letter to the Corinthians which constitute a concise synthesis of all that we hear on this theme in the Gospel! "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that *though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich*".⁶⁴ According to these words poverty actually enters into the interior structure of the redemptive grace of Jesus Christ. Without poverty it is not possible to understand the mystery of the gift of divinity to man, a gift which is accomplished precisely in Jesus Christ. For this reason also it is found *at the very centre of the Gospel*, at the beginning of the message of the eight Beatitudes: "Blessed are the poor in spirit".⁶⁵ Evangelical poverty reveals to the eyes of the human soul the perspective of the whole mystery, "hidden for ages in God".⁶⁶ Only those who are "poor" in this way are also interiorly capable of understanding the poverty of the one who is infinitely rich. The *poverty* of Christ conceals in itself this *infinite richness of God*; it is indeed an infallible expression of it. A richness, in fact, such as the Divinity itself, could not have been adequately expressed in any created good. It can be expressed only in poverty. Therefore it can be properly *understood only by the poor*, the poor in spirit. Christ, the God-man, is the first of these: he who "though he was rich became poor" is not only the teacher but also the spokesman and guarantor of that *salvific poverty* which corresponds to the infinite richness of God and to the inexhaustible power of his grace.

⁶³ Cf. Lk. 20:34-36; Mt. 22:30; Mk. 12:25.

⁶⁴ 2 Cor. 8:9.

⁶⁵ Mt. 5:3.

⁶⁶ Eph. 3:9.

And thus it is also true — as the Apostle writes — that “by his poverty we have become rich”. It is *the teacher and spokesman of poverty who makes us rich*. For this very reason he says to the young man of the Synoptic Gospels: “Sell what you possess and give... and you will have treasure in heaven”.⁶⁷ In these words there is a call to enrich others through one’s own poverty, but in the depths of this call there is hidden the testimony of the infinite richness of God which, transferred to the human soul in the mystery of grace, creates in man himself, precisely through poverty, a source for enriching others not comparable with any other resource of material goods, a source for bestowing gifts on others in the manner of God himself. This giving is accomplished in the context of the mystery of Christ, who “has made us rich by his poverty”. We see how this process of enrichment unfolds in the pages of the Gospel, finding its culmination in the paschal event: Christ, the poorest in his death on the Cross, is also the one who enriches us infinitely with the fullness of new life, through the Resurrection.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, poor in spirit through your evangelical profession, receive into the whole of your life this *salvific profile of the poverty of Christ*. Day by day seek its ever greater development! Seek above all “the Kingdom of God and his righteousness” and the other things “shall be yours as well”.⁶⁸ May there be accomplished in you and through you the evangelical blessedness reserved for the poor,⁶⁹ the poor in spirit!⁷⁰

Obedience

13. Christ, “though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a Cross”.⁷¹

Here, in these words of the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians, we touch the very essence of the Redemption. In this reality is inscribed in a primary and constitutive way the

⁶⁷ Mt. 19:21; cf. Mk. 10:21; Lk. 18:22.

⁶⁸ Mt. 6:33.

⁶⁹ Lk. 6:20.

⁷⁰ Mt. 5:3.

⁷¹ Phil. 2:6-8.

obedience of Jesus Christ. Other words of the Apostle, taken this time from the Letter to the Romans, confirm this: "For as *by one man's disobedience* many were made sinners, so *by one man's obedience* many will be made righteous".⁷²

The evangelical counsel of obedience is the call which derives from this obedience of Christ "unto death". Those who accept this call, expressed by the words "Follow me", decide — as the Council says — *to follow Christ* "who, *by an obedience* which carried him even to death on the Cross, redeemed humanity and made it holy".⁷³ By living out the evangelical counsel of obedience, they reach the deep essence of the entire economy of the Redemption. By fulfilling this counsel they desire to gain a special sharing in the obedience of that "one alone" by whose obedience all "will be made righteous".

It can therefore be said that those who decide to live according to the counsel of obedience are placed in a unique way between *the mystery of sin*⁷⁴ and *the mystery of justification and salvific grace*. They are in this "place" with all the sinful background of their own human nature, with all the inheritance "of the pride of life", with all the selfish tendencies to dominate rather than to serve, and precisely by means of the vow of obedience they decide *to be transformed* into the likeness of Christ, who "redeemed humanity and made it holy by his obedience". In the counsel of obedience they desire to find their own role in the Redemption of Christ and their own way of sanctification.

This is the way which Christ marked out in the Gospel, speaking many times *of fulfilling the will of God*, of ceaselessly *searching* for it. "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work".⁷⁵ "Because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me".⁷⁶ "He who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what is pleasing to him".⁷⁷ "For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me".⁷⁸ This constant fulfilling of the will of the Father also reminds us of that messianic confession of the psalmist in the Old Testament: "Behold

⁷² Rom. 5:19.

⁷³ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree *Perfectae Caritatis*, 14.

⁷⁴ "Mysterium iniquitatis": cf. 2 Thess 2:7.

⁷⁵ Jn. 4:34.

⁷⁶ Jn. 5:30.

⁷⁷ Jn. 8:29.

⁷⁸ Jn. 6:38.

I come; in the written scroll it is prescribed for me. *To do your will, O my God, is my delight, and your law is within my heart*".⁷⁹

This obedience of the Son — full of joy — reaches its zenith in the face of the Passion and Cross: "Father, if it is your will, take this cup from me; yet not my will but yours be done".⁸⁰ From the prayer in Gethsemane onwards, Christ's readiness to do the will of the Father *is filled to the very brim of suffering*, becoming that obedience "unto death, even death on a Cross" spoken of by Saint Paul.

Through the vow of obedience consecrated persons decide to imitate with humility the obedience of the Redeemer in a special way. For although submission to the will of God and obedience to his law are for every state *a condition of Christian life* nevertheless in the "religious state", in the "state of perfection", the vow of obedience establishes in the heart of each of you, dear Brothers and Sisters, *the duty of a particular reference* to Christ "obedient unto death". And since this obedience of Christ constitutes the essential nucleus of the work of the Redemption, as is seen from the words of the Apostle quoted above, therefore also in the fulfilling of the evangelical counsel of obedience, we must discern a *particular moment* in that "economy of the Redemption" which pervades your whole vocation in the Church.

From this derives that "total availability to the Holy Spirit" who is at work above all in the Church, as my predecessor Paul VI puts it in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelica Testificatio*,⁸¹ and who is likewise manifested in the Constitutions of your Institutes. From this derives that *religious submission* which in a spirit of faith consecrated persons show to their legitimate superiors, who hold the place of God.⁸² In the Letter to the Hebrews we find on this theme a very significant indication: "Obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account." And the author of the Letter adds: "Let them do this joyfully, and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you".⁸³

On the other hand, Superiors will bear in mind that they must exercise in a spirit of service the power conferred on them

⁷⁹ Ps. 40 [39]:8-9; cf. Heb. 10:7.

⁸⁰ Lk. 22:42; cf. Mk. 14:36; Mt. 26:42.

⁸¹ Cf. *Evangelica Testificatio*, 6: AAS 63 (1961), p. 500.

⁸² Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree *Perfectate Caritatis*,

⁸³ Heb. 13:17.

through the ministry of the Church, and they will show willingness to listen to their brothers or sisters in order to discern more clearly what the Lord asks of each one. At the same time they retain the authority proper to them to decide and order what they consider appropriate.

Hand in hand with submission-obedience thus conceived goes the *attitude of service* which informs your whole life *after the example of the Son of Man*, who "came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many".⁸⁴ And his Mother, at the decisive moment of the Annunciation-Incarnation, entering from the very beginning into the whole salvific economy of the Redemption, said: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word".⁸⁵

Remember also, dear Brothers and Sisters, that the obedience to which you committed yourselves by consecrating yourselves without reserve to God through the profession of the evangelical counsels is a particular *expression of interior freedom*, just as the definitive expression of Christ's freedom was his obedience "unto death": "I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord".⁸⁶

VI

Love for the Church

Witness

14. In the Jubilee Year of the Redemption the entire Church wishes to *renew her love for Christ*, the Redeemer of man and of the world, her Lord and also her divine Spouse. And so in this Holy Year the Church looks with special attention to you, dear Brothers and Sisters, who, as consecrated persons, occupy a special place both in the universal community of the People of God and in every local community. While the Church wishes *also your love for Christ* to be renewed through the grace of the extraordinary Jubilee, at the same time she is fully aware that this love constitutes a special possession of the whole Peo-

⁸⁴ Mk. 10:45.

⁸⁵ Lk. 1:38.

⁸⁶ Jn. 10:17-18.

ple of God. The Church is aware that in the love that Christ receives from consecrated persons, the love of the entire Body is directed in a special and exceptional way towards the Spouse, who at the same time is the Head of this Body. The Church expresses to you, dear Brothers and Sisters, her gratitude for your consecration and for your profession of the evangelical counsels, which are a special witness of love. She also expresses anew her great confidence in you who have chosen a state of life that is a special gift of God to the Church. She counts upon your complete and generous collaboration in order that, as faithful stewards of this precious gift, you may "think with the Church" and always act in union with her, in conformity with the teachings and directives of the Magisterium of Peter and of the Pastors in communion with him, fostering, at the personal and community level, a renewed ecclesial awareness. And at the same time the Church prays for you, that your witness of love may never fail⁸⁷ and she also asks you to accept in this spirit the present message of the Jubilee Year of the Redemption.

Precisely in this way the Apostle Paul prayed in his Letter to the Philippians, "that your love may abound more and more... with all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruits of righteousness....".⁸⁸

Through the work of Christ's Redemption "God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us".⁸⁹ *I constantly ask the Holy Spirit to grant to each one of you, according to your own gift,⁹⁰ to bear special witness to this love. May "the law of the Spirit that gives life in Christ Jesus..." be victorious within you, in a way worthy of your vocation, that law that has "set us free from the law of death".⁹¹ Live then this new life in the measure of your consecration and also in the measure of the different gifts of God which correspond to the vocation of your individual religious Families. The profession of the evangelical counsels shows each of you how with the help of the Spirit you can put to death⁹² everything that is contrary to life and serves sin and death; everything that is opposed to true love of God and others. The world needs the authentic "contradiction" provided by religious consecration, as an unceasing stimulus of salvific renewal.*

⁸⁷ Cf. Lk. 22:32.

⁸⁸ Phil. 1:9-11.

⁸⁹ Rom. 5:5.

⁹⁰ Cf. 1 Cor. 7:7.

⁹¹ Rom. 8:2.

⁹² Cf. Rom. 8:13.

"Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect".⁹³ After the special period of experimentation and renewal provided for by the *Motu Proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae*, your Institutes have recently received or are preparing to receive the Church's approval of your renewed Constitutions. May this gift of the Church encourage you to know them, to love them and, above all, to live them in generosity and fidelity, remembering that obedience is an unambiguous manifestation of love.

It is precisely this witness of love that the world today and all humanity need. They need this *witness to the Redemption* as this is imprinted upon the profession of the evangelical counsels. These counsels, each in its own way, and all of them together in their intimate connection, "bear witness" to the Redemption which, by the power of Christ's Cross and Resurrection, leads the world and humanity in the Holy Spirit towards *that definitive fulfilment* which man and, through man, the whole of creation find in God, and only in God. Your witness is therefore of inestimable value. You must constantly strive to make it fully transparent and fully fruitful in the world. A further aid to this will be the faithful observance of the Church's norms regarding also the outward manifestation of your consecration and of your commitment to poverty.⁹⁴

Apostolate

15. From this witness of spousal love for Christ, through which the entire salvific truth of the Gospel becomes particularly visible, there also comes, dear Brothers and Sisters, as something proper to your vocation, *a sharing in the Church's apostolate*, in her universal mission, which is accomplished contemporaneously in every nation in many different ways and through many different charisms. Your specific mission is in harmony with the mission of the Apostles, whom the Lord sent "to the whole world" to "teach all nations",⁹⁵ and it is also linked to the mission of the hierarchical order. In the apostolate which consecrated persons exercise, their spousal love for Christ becomes, in an organic way as it were, *love for the Church* as the Body of Christ, for the Church as the People of God, for the Church which is at one and the same time Spouse and Mother.

⁹³ Rom. 12:2.

⁹⁴ Cf. CIC, Canon 669.

⁹⁵ Cf. Mt. 28:19.

It is difficult to describe, or even to list, the many different ways in which consecrated persons fulfil *through the apostolate their love for the Church*. This apostolate is always born from that particular gift of your Founders, which, *received from God* and approved by the Church, has become a charism for the whole community. That gift corresponds to the different needs of the Church and the world at particular moments of history, and in its turn it is extended and strengthened in the life of the religious communities as one of the enduring elements of the Church's life and apostolate. In each of these elements, in each field — both of *contemplation so fruitful for the apostolate* and of *direct apostolic action* — the Church's constant blessing accompanies you, as does at the same time her pastoral and maternal solicitude, with regard to the spiritual identity of your life and the correctness of your activity in the midst of the great universal community of *the vocations and charisms* of the whole People of God. Through each of the Institutes separately and through their organic integration in the whole of the Church's mission, special emphasis is given to that economy of the Redemption, the profound sign of which *each one of you*, dear Brothers and Sisters, *bears within himself or herself* through the consecration and profession of the evangelical counsels.

And thus, even though the many different apostolic works that you perform are extremely important, nevertheless the *truly fundamental* work of the apostolate remains *always what* (and at the same time who) *you are* in the Church. Of each one of you can be repeated, with special appropriateness, these words of Saint Paul: "For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God".⁹⁶ And at the same time this "being hidden with Christ in God" makes it possible to apply to you the words of the Master himself: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven".⁹⁷

For the sake of this light with which you must "shine before men", of great importance among you is the witness of mutual love, linked to the fraternal spirit of each Community, for the Lord had said: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another".⁹⁸

The fundamentally communitarian nature of your religious life, nourished by the teaching of the Gospel, by the sacred liturgy

⁹⁶ Col. 3:3.

⁹⁷ Mt. 5:16.

⁹⁸ Jn. 13:35.

and above all by the Eucharist, is a special way of accomplishing this interpersonal and social dimension: by caring for one another, by bearing one another's burdens, you show by your unity that Christ is living in your midst.⁹⁹ Important for your apostolate in the Church is every kind of *sensitivity to the needs* and sufferings of the individual, which are seen so clearly and so movingly in today's world. For the Apostle Paul teaches: "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ";¹⁰⁰ and he adds that "love is the fulfilling of the law".¹⁰¹

Your mission must be seen! Deep, *very deep must be the bond which links it to the Church!*¹⁰² Through everything that you do, and especially through everything that you are, may the truth be proclaimed and reconfirmed that "Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her":¹⁰³ the truth that is at the basis of the whole economy of the Redemption. From Christ, the Redeemer of the world, may the inexhaustible source of your love for the Church pour forth!

VII

Conclusion

The eyes enlightening the heart

16. This Exhortation which I address to you *on the Solemnity of the Annunciation* in the Jubilee Year of the Redemption is meant to be an expression of that love which the Church has for men and women religious. You, dear Brothers and Sisters, are truly a *special treasure of the Church*. And this treasure becomes more understandable through meditation on the reality of the Redemption, for which the present Holy Year offers a continuous opportunity and a welcome encouragement. Recognize, therefore, in this light, your *identity* and your *dignity*. May the Holy Spirit — through Christ's Cross and Resurrection — "having the eyes of your hearts enlightened", enable you "to know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints".¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree *Perfectae Caritatis*, 15.

¹⁰⁰ Gal. 6:2.

¹⁰¹ Rom. 13:10.

¹⁰² The Code of Canon Law explicitly mentions this with regard to apostolic activity: cf. Canon 675, par. 3.

¹⁰³ Eph. 5:25.

¹⁰⁴ Eph. 1:18.

These "eyes enlightening the heart" the Church unceasingly asks for each one of you *who have already taken* the road of the profession of the evangelical counsels. The Church, together with you, asks for the same "enlightened eyes" for many Christians, especially for young men and women, that they may *discover this way and not be afraid to enter upon it*, that — even in the midst of the adverse circumstances of life today — they may hear Christ's "Follow me".¹⁰⁵ You too must strive for this through your prayer and also through the *witness* of that love whereby "God abides in us and his love is perfected in us".¹⁰⁶ May this witness become present everywhere and universally clear. May the people of our times, in their spiritual weariness, find in it both support and hope. Therefore serve your brethren with the joy that wells up from a heart in which Christ has his dwelling. "And may the world of our time . . . be enabled to receive the Good News not from evangelizers who are dejected and discouraged . . . but from ministers of the Gospel whose lives glow with fervour, who have first received the joy of Christ".¹⁰⁷

The Church, in her love for you, does not cease "kneeling before the Father"¹⁰⁸ that he may effect in you "... the strengthening of the inner nature",¹⁰⁹ and as in you, so also in many others of your baptized brothers and sisters, especially young people, so that they may find the same way to holiness which in the course of history so many generations have travelled together with Christ, the Redeemer of the world and Spouse of souls, often leaving behind them the bright radiance of God's light against the dark and grey background of human existence.

To all of you who travel this road in the present phase of the history of the Church and the world there is addressed this fervent hope of the Jubilee Year of the Redemption, that "you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have the power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God".¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Lk. 5:27.

¹⁰⁶ 1 Jn. 4:12.

¹⁰⁷ Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 80: AAS 68 (1976), p. 75.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Eph. 3:14.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Eph. 3:16.

¹¹⁰ Eph. 3:17-19.

Message of the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

17. On the feast of the Annunciation in this Holy Year of the Redemption, I place the present Exhortation *in the Heart of the Immaculate Virgin*. Among all persons consecrated unreservedly to God, she is the first. She — the Virgin of Nazareth — is also the one *most fully consecrated to God*, consecrated in the most perfect way. Her spousal love reached its height in the divine Motherhood through the power of the Holy Spirit. She, who as Mother, carries Christ in her arms, at the same time, *fulfills in the most perfect way his call*: "Follow me". And she follows him — she, the Mother — as her Teacher of chastity, poverty and obedience.

How *poor* she was on Bethlehem night and how poor on Calvary! How *obedient* she was at the moment of the Annunciation, and then — at the foot of the Cross — *obedient* even to the point of assenting to the death of her Son, who became obedient "unto death"! How *dedicated* she was in all her earthly life to the cause of the Kingdom of heaven *through most chaste love*.

If the entire Church finds in Mary her *first model*, all the more reason do you find her so — you as consecrated individuals and communities within the Church! On the day that calls to mind the inauguration of the Jubilee of the Redemption, which took place last year, I address myself to you with this present message, to invite you to renew *your religious consecration according to the model of the consecration of the very Mother of God*.

Beloved Brothers and Sisters! "God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord".¹¹¹ Persevering in fidelity to him who is faithful, strive to find a very special *support in Mary*! For she was called by God to the most perfect communion with his Son. May she, the faithful Virgin, also be the Mother of your evangelical way: may she help you to experience and to show to the world *how infinitely faithful is God himself*!

With these hopes I bless you with all my heart.

From the Vatican, on 25 March, in the Jubilee Year of the Redemption 1984, the sixth of my Pontificate.

JOANNES PAULUS PP. II

¹¹¹ 1 Cor. 1:9.

Work and the Dignity of the Person in Light of Church's Social Teaching

JOHN PAUL II

Because of the brevity of my stay in these countries, I have not been able to meet separately with the workers, even if during the course of my apostolic visit I have met them scattered among the people of God. Thus, in this significant place, San Pedro Sula, I am consigning to some of the workers' representatives a written message addressed to all the workers of Central America, Belize and Haiti, accompanied by a most cordial and renewed greeting to them and to their families, whom I heartily bless.

* * *

Dearest workers,

1. Within the framework of my apostolic visit through the lands of the geographical area of Central America, I send you workers of the various countries a cordial remembrance and greeting, which I extend to your families.

It is true that this area of the world seems to be prevalently rural in character. However, the still incipient industrialization which your peoples are called to accomplish to a major degree, in a not distant future, makes me reflect on the important role which you will have as builders of society in your nations.

I therefore wish to make several reflections with you on your work and dignity, in the light of the Church's social teaching.

PRIORITY OF WORK OVER CAPITAL

2. If the dignity of every worker is to be respected and if the value of his work is to be assured, all those who are employed in the working process will have to agree on the

priority of work over capital as a way towards the industrial development of these nations (cf. *Laborem Exercens*, 12).

No one is unaware that many presently existing conditions are unjust; that the economic structures do not serve man; that so many unfair situations do not elevate human dignity; that rising industrialization already creates a certain degree of unemployment, particularly harmful for youth. The task which asserts itself is that of facing the complexity of these problems honestly on the socio-economic level, but much more on the *human and cultural* level.

In proposing these objectives, it is not intended simply to accuse a system, nor to make a type of class analysis which sets one ideology against another. The Church speaks from a Christian vision of man and his dignity: because it is convinced that there is no need to resort to ideologies or to propose violent solutions; but to commit oneself in man's behalf, for each man and for all men, for their integral dignity, starting with the Gospel, presupposing for this the human and spiritual value of man as a worker who has a right, that the product of his work contributes equally to his own well-being and to the common well-being of society.

It is true that the worker has not always had the opportunity to reach sufficient development; thus he must be helped, technically and culturally, to make him qualified to reach it, with the aim of freeing him from injustices and of giving him the means of achieving a contribution to his own well-being and that of others, in harmony and in peace with the other sectors of the world of work.

RESPECT FOR THE PERSON

3. In order for this to be achieved progressively, it will be necessary to develop the systems and processes which conform to the principle of the priority of labour over capital, implanting structures and methods which overcome the opposition between labour and capital (cf. *Laborem Exercens*, 13).

The option which presents itself to us is not one of the *status quo* or of ideological class struggle, with its corresponding violence. The Church addresses itself to hearts and minds, and above all to the ability to change which exists in everyone. The way to put an end to the violence of class opposition is

not by ignoring injustices, but by correcting them, as the Church insistently recalls in its social teaching.

Therefore, it proposes as a means the study of new ways of organization of labour, according to the demands which arise from the worker's dignity, from his family life and from the common good of society; above all, in a society which begins to be industrialized, and in which the temptation can be strong to allow the strength of the market to be the determining factor in the productive process. In this case one arrives at an unacceptable reduction of the worker's person to the position of an object.

On the contrary, the Church always teaches that every effort for social progress must respect the predominantly subjective nature of the person and of his work, that is to say, when "on the basis of his work, each person is fully entitled to consider himself a part — owner of the great work-bench at which he is working with everyone else" (*Laborem Exercens*, 14).

Each person and the distinct organizations of society must collaborate in finding or in creating social structures, which help eliminate injustices and which assure these objectives: first of all the associations or unions constituted for this purpose and which, in conformity with the principle of subsidiarity, must enjoy proper freedom of action, in a way which responds in the fairest way possible to society's needs.

On the theme of work, the first and indispensable condition is a *just salary*, which constitutes the concrete means of verifying the justice of a socio-economic system (cf. *Laborem Exercens*, 19). Nevertheless, the elements which make up a just salary and which go beyond pure remuneration for a specific work accomplished are various.

A just salary obviously includes this as a base, but in the first place and above all, it considers the subject, that is to say, the worker. It recognizes him as an associate and collaborator in the productive process, and it remunerates him *for what he is in this process*, besides for what he has produced. Naturally, these must be kept in mind: *the members of his family and their rights*, so that they can live in the community in a dignified way, and thus can have the due opportunities for their own development and mutual aid.

MUST SHARE BENEFITS

A just salary must consider the worker and his family as collaborators for the good of society. And his salary must be such that the worker and his family can enjoy *the benefits of culture*, giving them also the possibility of contributing on their part to the elevation of the culture of the nation and of the people.

Accomplishing this is not an easy task. Furthermore, it does not belong only to two people to stipulate the respective contracts. The determination of a just salary also requires *the active collaboration of the indirect employer*. The structures of government must have their share of the balance. Because it is not admissible for the powerful to acquire large earnings, leaving the worker only the crumbs. Nor is it admissible for the government and the employers, both those inside and those outside the country, to draw up agreements among themselves, for the benefit of both of them, excluding from the process the voice of the labourer or his sharing in the benefits.

The objective is thus the organization of the labour and industrial world so that the channels of communication and participation are guaranteed. Now then, utilizing these channels, all workers, directors, proprietors of the means of production and the government must collaborate to reach the undeniable goal of a just salary, which includes all the factors necessary to assure justice for the worker in the fullest and most profound sense (cf. *Dives in Misericordia*, 14). Only when each one of these components assumes its own responsibility, in collaboration with the others, can society go beyond the polarization of ideology and class struggle, to assure the harmonious growth of the worker, the family and of society.

TWO BASIC PROBLEMS

5. There are two other problems, distinct but connected with each other, to which I would like to call attention. They are the problems of *illiteracy* and *unemployment*. Facing these problems means, first of all, making oneself aware of the situation and then mobilizing available resources in order to eradicate such problems. It also means keeping the problem of work within human dimensions, considering all of man's cultural and religious values.

A necessary *programme for the elimination of illiteracy* must lead every citizen toward culture, preparing him so that he has the opportunity to participate in the direction of society and can develop his own creative energies, to contribute to his country's common heritage. This will redound to the good of persons, the family and society.

This objective will have to be at the basis of any programme of human elevation, since it is one of the primary demands of man's dignity and the prior condition for his further progress in whatever field.

The problem of *unemployment* is a scourge to our world, due to various economic and political causes. The Church is also worried about this problem, which has not only social or economic significance, but also personal, psychological and human significance, because it humiliates the person in his own eyes and induces in him a certain sense of uselessness and lack of defence, constituting a painful experience above all for young people and for the fathers of families.

It is necessary to try with all the available social forces to integrate every worker in the various activities of *productive labour*. And perhaps it will be fitting to set aside a part of the labour profits, to convert them into new work places for the unemployed. Furthermore, it will be necessary to try to promote activities which also are united to the productive system, like social welfare, educational and cooperative projects, cultural and similar initiatives.

CHURCH'S DESIRE

6. Dearest workers, the Church wants for you, and wants to help you inasmuch as it depends on it, to achieve higher goals of justice and dignity. It desires your material well-being and that of your families. However, it must not stop there. You are human beings with a vocation which goes beyond the earthly life. Thus, I exhort you to open yourselves to God, to welcome and follow Christ's teachings and examples, to live your Christian faith responsibly as children of God and of the Church.

I ask for you light, strength, hope and the courage of faith. And to you, to all the workers of the countries I have visited these days, and to your families, I leave my affectionate greeting, my blessing and my cordial remembrance. (*L'Osservatore Romano*, Vol. XVI, N. 18 [782]).

Theological Formation in Context: Pastoral and Spiritual Dimensions

By FAUSTO GOMEZ, O.P.

0. INTRODUCTION

The Third General Assembly of the Conference of Catholic Theological Institutions (COCTI) was held at Tantur's Ecumenical Institute for Theological Research, Jerusalem from August 15 to 19, 1984 to reflect on "Theological Formation in Context: Spiritual and Pastoral Dimensions." Over fifty participants — most of them Deans representing Faculties and Institutes of Theology from all over the World-gathered together for five days to exchange information and share views on current programs and experiences about theological formation.

The theme for COCTI's Third General Assembly had been approved by its member-institutions (around 100) during the Second General Assembly held at Catholic University, Washington in August 1981. Thus, the Tantur Conference had been well prepared in advance: a survey on the programs of pastoral and spiritual theology offered by COCTI members had been conducted and its results analyzed and sent to members; the thematic papers had been received by all the participants who had been given the chance of choosing from the three sub-themes to be discussed at the Intercontinental Workshops of the Third General Assembly. The sub-themes were 1) *Spiritual formation*, 2) *Pastoral formation*, and 3) *Socio-cultural context*. Moreover, the Regional Groups — as it is usual in COCTI's conferences — also met a few times at Tantur's Institute to evaluate their collaborative programs and prepare an action plan for future theological endeavors.

1. PASTORAL FORMATION

The survey on Pastoral Theology and Spirituality was answered by 82 theological institutions from all over the world. We will only mention here a few major findings of the survey.

Regarding *pastoral formation*, 64 institutions (or 78%) do have a pastoral formation program. In most cases (35), the

pastoral program is part of the theological formation curriculum and mainly consisting of specialized courses. In 19 institutes, there is a special program in pastoral formation.

The main subjects of the pastoral formation curriculum are: teamwork (38 cases); individual counselling (35); group counselling (28); communications (17); others (9).

At times, moreover, the pastoral praxis of the student is not directly connected with their theological formation; in fact, almost half of the survey participants confirm that the students of their institutions are involved in pastoral activities not connected with their theological formation. Anyway, the pastoral fieldwork is thus organized: in parishes (42 cases); in schools (35); with youth organizations (26); in hospitals (26); others (23).

Summing up: in 49% of the institutes, the pastoral program is considered to be well received, while 21% of them have a rather negative appreciation. Furthermore, the majority feels that the pastoral formation program can really be improved.

Six thought-provoking and often provocative and practical papers were briefly presented to the participants in Plenary Sessions. Two dealt with pastoral formation; three, with spiritual formation, and one, on doing theology within a particular socio-cultural context.

On Pastoral Formation, two case studies were presented and discussed: one from the Faculty of Theology of the University of Nijmegen, Holland done by Professor Frans Haarsma, and the other from Bogota, Colombia prepared by Professor Jesus Andres Vela, S.J. of Javeriana's Faculty of Theology.

Professor Haarsma presented briefly the salient points of his paper "La Formation Pastorale à l'université de Nimègue" (*Pastoral Formation at the University of Nimegue*). After presenting the historical events leading to the creation of the University chair in pastoral theology in 1964, he concentrated on pastoral formation: its objectives; its integration with the social sciences; its four specializations at Nijmegen. He defined pastoral theology as a theological science of applied action. Pastoral formation, Professor Haarsma stressed, is a scientific and, therefore, professional formation in which theory and praxis or, more precisely, orthodoxy and ortopraxis interact. Underlining repeatedly the urgent need of an interdisciplinary approach to pastoral problems, the speaker stated: "We find in this inter-

disciplinarity (particularly the integration of theology and the social sciences) the key formula for the whole formation in pastoral theology."

Fr. Andres Vela spoke on "Un modelo de formación de agentes pastorales en América Latina" (*A Model for the Formation of Pastoral Workers in Latin America*). In this talk, he developed briefly the concept of theological reflection and social reality ("interaction") and the various possible "interests" (technical, practical, emancipating) of the participants in a Latin American Pastoral Seminar. Instead of using the classic method of "seeing-judging-acting," the Pastoral Seminar implements the more dynamic one of (also composed of three stages) "Perception of Pastoral Action — Analysis of its Presupposed Theories — Transformation of the same Action." Thus, the pastoral worker or agent is a promoter of theological reflection in its relation to pastoral practice. That reflection, however, is never abstract or purely speculative, for it is a theological reflection on a given praxis that returns to it to improve it. Fr. Andres Vela concluded:

The formation of a pastoral agent in Latin America has to begin from his pastoral praxis 'situated' in the Latin American context, as it is at the historical moment in which we are living. In the style of Puebla, which starts from the evangelizing fact of the present, going back to a past, taking into account the future of the evangelization of Latin America.

In their short dialogical exchange, Professors Hearsma and Andres Vela pointed out some of the differences there are in pastoral formation between European and First World Countries on one hand, and Latin America and Third World Countries, on the other. The speakers mentioned in particular the different audience attending pastoral formation programs: while in Nijmegen, the majority of the students are young lay men and women who wish to serve the Gospel in various ways; in Latin America, most of the participants are candidates to the priesthood or religious life, or priests and religious. Another noticeable difference: while in Latin America the point of departure and reference for pastoral formation are the Basic Christian Communities, in European countries, these communities (and other communities) in general are rather weak, with some outstanding exceptions. Furthermore, while in Latin America, generally speaking, there exists close collaboration between pastoralists and hierarchy (both inspired by Medellin and

Puebla), in Europe there are frequent tensions, arising from criticisms of theologians to the Church (these criticisms even if they be legitimate will probably have a destructive influence in pastoral formation — according to Haarsma). Thus, while in Europe, pastoral workers might encounter problems with the institutional Church, in Latin America their problems will arise from the oppressors who happen to be, in the majority, socio-logical Christians but practical atheists. Finally, Fr. Andres Vela noted with emphasis, pastoralists in Latin America cannot be and are not, in general, identified with the theology of liberation, although all of them consider their work as a commitment to and a march towards liberation.

After discussing the survey and the papers on pastoral formation, the Intercontinental Workshop reported a consensus on some pastoral formation models, experiences and ideas. The group stressed the need of intermingling experience and reflection: pastoral programs are for life. Pastoral formation is initiated with pastoral theology (to include always some practice) offered during the First Cycle of theological studies and afterwards, and most particularly during the pastoral year. Pastoral formation is a necessary dimension of Theology and a service to the church. It is directed towards proclamation: it forms persons capable of proclaiming the Gospel in a given situation.

The social analysis of reality is thus important in pastoral formation: in particular, the socio-religious analysis of the situation. There are different methods to do this, and, it is better to do it with more than one method. It was reported to the General Assembly that "social analysis must not be done with the Marxist method only"; however, it was added, "one method is better than none."

Another point that was stressed during the open forum was that this socio-religious analysis to be effective must be concrete: it begins not by studying the global but the local community situation. This is the way it is done effectively in some Latin American countries: the analysis starts by getting to know the concrete situation of the community that lives its faith within a social reality; afterwards, comes the analysis of the local, national and, finally, the international reality.

2. SPIRITUAL FORMATION

On *spiritual formation*, the COCTI survey disclosed some interesting findings. There is general interest in the spiritual

attitudes and formation of the student theologians: while 60% of the schools affirm this, 44% of these add that the interest is shared by most staff members (17 cases).

The specific subjects offered in spirituality and spiritual formation are theology of spirituality (49 cases); history of spirituality (29); spirituality and psychology (27); modern spirituality (25) and spiritual counselling (23). Thirty-one (31) institutes, moreover, also offer forms of spirituality of eastern religions.

Concerning spiritual practice programs, half of the institutes surveyed did not even answer. Fourteen (14) cases reported daily common prayer sessions, and other 14, weekly sessions, while 23 organized retreats and other 23, recollection days. This rather negative picture is completed by adding that only in a low number of cases student-staff participation in common spiritual practices was reported.

In more than half of the schools (55%), concrete efforts are made to integrate faith into daily life. However, when the institutions were asked whether the spiritual formation program is integrated with similar programs offered by the religious communities, most of them did not answer.

In general, we can sum up with the presenter of the survey: The spiritual formation program is appreciated in 33% of the institutes, while in 21% it is not. About 30% see possibility for improving the programs.

Three case studies on spiritual formation were presented to the participants in COCTI's Third General Assembly. Fr. Howard Gray, S.J., discussed the case involving Jesuit Theologians at Weston School in Massachusetts; Fr. Samuel Rayan, S.J., wrote a paper on Jesuit Theologians at Delhi's Institute, while Fr. M. Amaladoss, S.J., prepared a study on "The Challenge of Spiritual Formation in a Seminary Today — An Indian Case Study." The three authors relied heavily, as expected, on interviews and participant observation.

Substantially, Fr. Gray said, spiritual formation is a formation in spiritual maturity which is community oriented and includes the following elements: personal assimilation of religious experience; emphasis on some kind of religious verification; a concern for the life of prayer; a call for ascetism; a need for an experience of God's call in reality, and a need for pastoral preparation for spiritual leadership. After stating that his

North American and Jesuit approach is different from the approaches of Rayan and Amaladoss, Fr. Gray said that the American model of spiritual formation seems to him to over-emphasize the psychological dimension of spiritual formation while not emphasizing enough its social aspect.

This social dimension is clearly underlined by Samuel Rayan. According to him, spiritual formation in Indian context is faced with a double challenge and a double corresponding imperative. Firstly, there is the challenge of massive poverty and social divisions, and the corresponding imperative of liberation and historical praxis to transform social relationships, power structures, cultural patterns, and their economic foundations. Secondly, there exists the challenge of living religious traditions and secular movements, and the corresponding imperative of dialogue. At times, the challenges and imperatives interact.

In Indian context, spiritual formation — Rayan writes — “may not be viewed apart from theological training, authentic sensibility and socio-political commitment.” Although at Rayan’s Theological Institute there are diverse viewpoints on spirituality, its objectives and methods, Rayan’s view is openly in the key of liberation, social justice and preferential option for the marginalized. Writes Rayan:

Formation in the Institute aims at evoking and fostering a radical sensitivity to the Presence of the Mystery and the call of the Gospel as these reveal themselves in history, in the reality of the people, in their movements and struggles, in prayer as well as in nature.

The spiritual formation program, which emphasizes freedom and response-ability, and tends towards a holistic view and experience of reality is an attempt to build into a simple whole “silence, symbol and struggle; life, liturgy and contemplation.” Although not all the personnel at the Institute have assimilated this radical program, all are struggling honestly with it — and growing up; in fact, Rayan says, “those in touch with the reality of the poor are discovering the depth of that reality and the transcendence to which it points.”

It was a pity that theologian Rayan was not able to attend the Tantur meeting. (His paper, as well as Amaladoss’ were presented briefly by Professor A. Soosai, S.J., President of Vidya-jyoti Institute of Religious Studies. I am sure that some

participants would have liked a dialogue with him. For my part, I think, this program of spiritual formation is overly social — even radical; besides, his stress on integration and holistic experience sounds rather utopian — not to say idealistic, as it was pointed out in the Intercontinental Workshop on Spiritual Formation.

At this workshop, Amaladoss' paper was also discussed. His study on an Indian major and big seminary was analyzed. Amaladoss' conceptual framework: spiritual formation refers to the growth of the whole person, that is, his body and soul, his emotions and mind; man's growth in the spirit as an individual person and a member of the community. Furthermore, spiritual formation must be inculturated and, therefore, dialogical. It has to be person-centered; and aims at the growth of the person in living context.

In his case study, Fr. Amaladoss mentions and develops properly what he calls the aids to spiritual growth, namely, the atmosphere, the spiritual exercises and guidance. He also points out — but in lower key, compared with Rayan — the need for the students "to have some sort of involvement with the people outside." He concludes his study with a partly negative evaluation, which prompted some workshop participants to judge his paper as "pessimistic." Amaladoss' ending: the structures of the seminary are artificial and alienating; there are not enough effective attempts at inculturation. Moreover, he continued, real personal relationships (an important element in facilitating personal and spiritual growth) must be fostered; and the seminarian must be made responsible for his own growth.

At the Intercontinental Workshop on Spiritual Formation, other points were discussed. Every theological formation has a spiritual dimension. Spiritual formation is formation in the spiritual life — a life lived in the dimension of the Gospel, in the light of the Kingdom of God. Spiritual life, however, must be an incarnate spirituality which tries to integrate faith and life, interpersonal relationships, individual piety and liturgical prayer. Although we may distinguish between spiritual formation and spiritual theology, the latter should go beyond a merely academic and doctrinal dimension.

The proper task of theology is the understanding of faith. This faith, however, must be lived and proclaimed. Authentic spiritual formation and spiritual life have to lead professors and students, first, to conversion, and, second, to commitment to community service. Considering that spirituality is a constitu-

tive element of theology and theological formation, there is need of interdisciplinary dialogue among professors regarding this matter; likewise, there is a need of wider dialogue between the seminary or religious houses' formators and the teaching staff. Finally, it has been stressed that spirituality must avoid the extremes of "angelism" and "sociologism"; although perfect integration is an utopian goal, still we are obliged to strive after integration between faith and life.

3. THEOLOGICAL FORMATION: SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT

The third sub-theme was studied by Alberto Munera, S.J. in his paper "Hacer Teología en una Facultad implicando el Contexto Socio-Cultural" (*Doing Theology in a Faculty Taking into Consideration the Socio-Cultural Context*). Fr. Munera presented to the Assembly the case study of the Faculty of Theology of the Universidad Javeriana where he is a professor. He discussed first the constitutive elements connected with theological formation in context; then, he proceeded to establish the theological justification for doing theology in the socio-cultural context of Latin America, to end up with some relevant questions for further reflection and deepening.

It is interesting to note that, among the various constitutive elements cited, the first one is the option of the Faculty of doing not Liberation Theology (opposed to political pluralism) but historical-hermeneutical theology. The second important element is immersion in the socio-cultural context of the marginalized and oppressed. The third and final element is the use of the inductive method which takes as point of departure the analysis of reality. The method has three stages: starting by praxis, it then reflects on praxis to return finally to praxis and start again. The theological justification of this manner of doing theology hinges on the pervading influence of anthropology because, as Munera says, "every theological task is an anthropological task and vice-versa." Hence, "anthropology in a Faculty like ours cannot simply be a theme to be studied but a project to inspire us and be carried out by us."

As expected, the Intercontinental Workshop on the Socio-cultural Context had the greater number of participants and also the most dramatic reports and debates. We shall briefly mention important points. In general, the group asserted that the method praxis-reflection-praxis constitutes an effective means to implicate the socio-cultural context in theological formation;

there is, however, the danger to unduly stress action. Moreover, there is a close relationship between theology and the social sciences, but still there exists a lack of a real integration of the social sciences in theology. Truly, the theological study can be considered as an anthropological tool to identify the self and the other, but it can turn into individualistic (this is a real danger in First World countries) or a collectivistic (danger in Third World) identity.

The socio-cultural context cannot but be included in doing authentic theology. There are nevertheless diverse socio-cultural contexts and issues. The priority issues spelled out by the group were structural violence; issues of peace and war; issue of religion and faith; issue of mass media; social justice, oppression and poverty; secularization and feminism, etc. How should theology respond to these issues? In the first place, the consensus paper of the Workshop cautioned us realistically, "let us not expect too much from theology." And yet, theology is obliged to respond to those issues in its own way, particularly, by being always related to the realities of life; by the competence of its professors (not only in the field of theology); and by giving a bigger role to laymen and women in our faculties.

In a world where also theology has often become too critical of others (of capitalism, of the institutional church, of the structures of injustice, etc.), it was refreshing to hear a report on some positive elements in the socio-cultural context of our world-elements to be recognized by the church and by theology itself. These are a new vision of the human person; a growing sense of universal human solidarity; the historical fact of the UN's Declaration of Human Rights, and finally, the mass media and the new information technology that provide new data on human solidarity.

The shadows and lights of the current socio-cultural contexts make certain unavoidable demands to theological formation today. A new theology is needed — a renewed method of theologizing. Remedial programs are required to introduce students to new ways of learning. A new spirituality must be developed to maintain a balanced tension between heaven and earth — a socially committed spirituality where God and man mutually interact. Theological formation, then, to be complete must be contextualized and integrate with its radically academic aspect, the pastoral and spiritual dimensions.

4. COCTI LOOKS AHEAD

The Conference of Catholic Theological Institutions (COCTI) was founded in 1978, when it became independent from

its mother association, the International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU). Fortunately for both, COCTI and IFCU are careful to continue maintaining mutually fruitful friendly relationship.

COCTI's First General Assembly was held in Porto Alegre (Brazil) in 1978, and its second, in Washington, D.C. in 1981. The Third General Assembly was successfully held in Tantar, Jerusalem on August 15-19, where COCTI's identity became clearer and its strength greater. COCTI's success story belongs to the Faculties of Theology and Theological Institutes who are members (around 100) and to the different COCTI Councils. The most outstanding single person in this story is Professor Marc Caudron, the Dean of the Faculty of Theology of the Catholic University of Leuven and COCTI President 1978-1984.

At Tantar, a new COCTI Council was installed headed by John Padberg, S.J., President of Weston School of Theology. While continuing with the exchange of information programs among theological institutions and the holding of General Assemblies, COCTI's priorities for the next three years will certainly include the strengthening of the Regional Groups represented in the Council, namely, Europe, North America, Latin America, and Asia; and the renewing efforts to establish more firmly an African Group.

At COCTI's Third General Assembly, the Asia Group was composed of six members, representing as many Faculties or Institutes of Theology from three countries — four from India, one from Australia and one from the Philippines (the Faculty of Theology of the University of Santo Tomas). Asian COCTI is presently made up of twelve schools of Theology. One of its major tasks for the next three years include precisely increasing the number of member-schools. Although a collective collaborative plan of action among Asian theological institutions is rather difficult, due to the huge distances separating the members, the diversity of cultures existing among them, and the perennial lack of financial resources, the Asian Group is committed to expand and strengthen the face of COCTI in Asia.

Meanwhile, preparations for the celebration of COCTI's Fourth General Assembly began at Tantar on August 19, 1984 at the Final Plenary Session of the Third General Assembly. At this session, the theme, sub-themes, place, year and month for next Assembly were approved. *Theme*: "Theological Institutions in Contemporary Society." *Sub-themes*: 1) Theological Method; 2) Theological Pluralism; and 3) Communication of Theology. *Place*: Faculty of Theology of the University of Salzburg, Salzburg, Austria. *Month and Year*: August 1987.

THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE FAITHFUL

The newest and certainly not the least significant innovation in the 1983 Code of Canon Law is the inclusion of the fundamental rights and obligations of the faithful in the totality of Book II, dedicated to the People of God. The Second Vatican Council's teaching concerning the dignity of the pilgrim members of God's People necessarily had to be proclaimed and protected within the ecclesial community in terms of canonical norms with the constitutional force. The long awaited and desired inclusion of this topic, therefore, closed once and for all the almost endless debates and discussions that centered on this crucial issue concerning the Church and which had polarized to some extent the whole Christian world.

The term faithful, whose rights and obligations the Church wants to delineate, is basic and its correct understanding in both its theological and constitutional, as well as the juridical aspects, is paramount in any indepth discussion of the People of God.

The Constitutional Condition of the Faithful

The primordial fact by means of which the People of God is formed is the convocation and consequent congregation of all men who accept the salvific message of Christ and constitute themselves as His disciples. These men are the Christian faithful encompassing all persons pertaining to the Church through baptism whatever their function or their state is in the same Church.¹

This notion expresses what is common to all members of God's People, anterior to whatever distinction which may accrue posteriorly; and consequently, is applicable to each and everyone who pertains to the Church, from the Pope to the last baptized person.²

¹ *Lumen Gentium*, Cpt. II, n. 32; *Codex Juris Canonici*, (Typis Polyglottis Vaticana, 1983), Can. 204.

² *LG*, 31.

In this connection, it is important not to confuse the term *faithful* with the term *laity*. These two are not synonymous terms since one is generic — faithful, and the other is specific — laity; not to mention the fact that the term laity is a result of functional juridical considerations. The faithful are all those who pertain to the Church based on the principle of equality; while the laity is a type of faithful or are those members of God's People whose characteristic note is secularity. They are faithful determined through the variety of functions in the Church, distinct from the religious and the clerics.³

The common aspect, therefore, that makes the faithful what he is, is the affirmative answer to the divine call directed by the Church to all men without exception, and the acceptance of this summon to be children of God through baptism. This condition locally precedes all forms of distinction since it refers to a radical fact — that of being a Christian, to which is posteriorly added functions, the principle of differentiation. From this, it is easy to conclude that the main characteristics which make up the concept of the faithful are: 1) baptism; 2) pertinence to the People of God; 3) possession of the condition common to all God's People.

To be a faithful, hence, or to be a member of the People of God, is a constitutional position based on ontologico-sacramental roots. Expressed more scientifically, the being of a Christian (to be faithful) presupposes a primordial ontological dimension, not only a juridical one. This is because the condition of the baptized is primarily ontological — a person raised to be a child of God or in possession of the baptismal character, but, which condition is expressed and manifested through a juridical dimension.

In other words, the baptized, by virtue of his elevation to the supernatural order, acquires the unique condition of "the dignity and freedom of the sons of God"⁴ — a note proper of the People of God, of men regenerated in Christ the Lord. Juridically, the conditions of dignity and freedom demand that they be expressed externally in the sphere of self-determination and responsibility; in short, through fundamental rights and duties.

³ J. Hervada, "La Constitución de la Iglesia", *Derecho Canónico*, I, (Eusa, Pamplona, 1974), p. 222; J. Hervada — P. Lombardia, *El Derecho del Pueblo de Dios*, (Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, S.A., Pamplona, 1970), p. 268; cf. also A. del Portillo, *Fieles y laicos en la Iglesia. Bases de sus respectivos estatutos jurídicos*, (Pamplona, 1969).

⁴ LG, 9.

The faithful, by the mere fact of being such, is encountered in a position or fundamental juridical condition in the People of God which forms an integral part of his constitutional right. This fundamental juridical condition of the faithful is primary and basic within and in conformity positively with the divine fundamental will of Christ. It is for this reason that other possible juridical situations within the totality of canonical ordination which has the faithful as direct subject are to be considered only as concretizations, derivations and determinations of this fundamental or constitutional condition.

The constitutional or fundamental condition of the faithful, by its nature immutable, is made explicit in various concrete rights and duties in conformity with both constitutional and historical factors since its faithful concretization requires that it be in accordance with a deeper study and understanding of the fundamental will of Christ (*momentum constitutivum*) as well as in conformity with concrete historical situation (*momentum historicum*). The essential constitutive moment of this constitutive condition — its nucleus is the essential bond of union which the faithful has with the Church; his dignity, liberty and responsibility as his basic condition. Its historical factors are the determinant concretization and immediate evolutive explicit expression of the said essential nucleus always in conformity with the progress and development of the pilgrim, the growing and perpetually renewing Church or People of God.⁵ These factors — since they form part of the Constitutional Law of the Church are inseparable although logically distinguishable.

Fundamental Rights of the Faithful

The notion of fundamental right, we have seen, presupposes an equalitarian vision of those who belong to the Church — viewed in connection with the radical equality derived from the constitutional condition of the faithful, conceived anteriorly to any form of inequality based on the principle of the variety of functions.

The fundamental rights emanate from the constitution of the Church, based on principles of Divine Law, and are themselves juridico-positive concretization and expressions of the immediate recognition of the ontologico-sacramental reality of the faithful. Said in another way, fundamental rights belong

⁵ LG, 4 & 8.

to all members of the faithful, simply by virtue of their being such, by reason of their status within the Church — i.e., by reason of their dignity and liberty as sons of God.⁶

Viewed in its intimate essence, Hervada describes fundamental rights as the expressions or the reflections of the fundamental will of Christ made subjective in the faithful as an exigency of their ontologico-sacramental conditions as baptized.⁷ Authors are wont however, to distinguish this notion which they consider as common usage in fundamental theory from that utilized in Constitutional Law. In this latter, fundamental rights are those rights of the faithful which immediately and directly emanate from the constitution of the church, in so far as they are positive rights. This is the reason why those effective social and juridical positions of liberty resulting from the constitutional structure of the faithful or those spheres of autonomy whose exercise and defense are confided to free responsibility and attributed by Constitutional Law to the faithful, are likewise, considered fundamental rights.⁸

The fundamental right of the faithful is the recognition of the exigencies of the being proper of a Christian; and following the celebrated view of St. Thomas Aquinas in this regard, they are, to be considered as explicit expressions of divine law obtained in the manner of conclusions and gifted with a basic degree of *exigibilitas* through the proper law of Christ.⁹

Characteristics of the Fundamental Rights of the Faithful

It is a basic principle that all juridical situations possess a sense by means of which one can understand its nature, delineate the limit of its extension and understand its finality. Since the basis of the fundamental rights is the dimension of justice inherent on the condition of the members of God's People as faithful — it is safe to assume from this fact the characteristics and notes of the fundamental rights.

⁶ P. Lombardia, "The Fundamental Rights of the Faithful", *The Future of Canon Law*, ed. No. Edelby, T. Jimenez - Urresti, P. Huizing, (Paulist Press, N.Y., 1969), p. 82.

⁷ J. Hervada, *Op. cit.*, p. 224.

⁸ Cf. Viladrich, *Teoría de los derechos fundamentales del fiel. Presupuestos críticos*, (Pamplona, 1969).

⁹ S. T., I-II, q. 98, a. 3.

Modern jurists¹⁰ are in full agreement that fundamental rights are not spheres of individualistic action, in the sense that they are to be considered as a sort of isolated defense mechanism against the Christian community at large, or spheres of non-solidarity with the same. Hervada claims that on the contrary, they are juridical reflexions of the liberating sense of redemption which generate in the faithful the participation in the dignity and liberty of the Christian, and afford other spheres of personal responsibility. In addition, they are manifestations of the condition of the baptized as active members of the Christian community, as well as guarantees and concrete expressions both of the action of the Holy Spirit in so far as they touch directly on the faithful's response to this action.¹¹

From these insights, one can easily glean that the intrinsic extension and the limit of the exercise of the fundamental rights of the faithful exist and are expressed in the measure that they are manifestations of the responsibility of the faithful, of their active participation in the mission of the Church, and of the communitarian and unifying sense of God's People — all designed and within the fundamental will of Christ.

Together with these intrinsic limitations are extrinsic ones composed of the rights of the other members of the Church or other faithful, the function proper of the hierarchy and the common good itself of the church.

Notes, Titulars, Acquisition, Loss and Suspension of the Fundamental Rights

The fundamental rights of the faithful have four significant notes. They are first of all *universal*, proper of all the faithful since they reside and are based on the ontologico-sacramental condition of the faithful. They are *perpetual*, lost only in death; hence, they persist as long as the condition of the baptized exists, which is perpetual. They cannot be renounced or be given up voluntarily. This is due to the fact that being exigencies of the ontologico-sacramental condition of the faithful and expressions of Christ's fundamental will, they are not within the power of the faithful to surrender but are to be extended or exercised on the contrary, towards all.

¹⁰ Cf. ex. gr., A. Prieto, "Los derechos subjetivos públicos en la Iglesia", *Iglesia y Derecho* (Salamanca, 1965), pp. 325 ss; A. del Portillo, *Op. cit.*

¹¹ J. Hervada, *Op. cit.*, pp. 224 ss.

A logical consequence of this enumeration is the conclusion that the titulars of the fundamental rights of the faithful are each and all of the faithful themselves, whatever their condition is or functions are in the body of Christ's Church. It means that they are *common* to all the faithful and are anterior to all other rights that could accrue to them posteriorly by reason of social condition or state such as to be, ex. gr., a cleric, a religious or a lay person, or through ministerial function as with the other rights that flow from ecclesiastical office, incardination or from the various forms of the ministry.

The fundamental rights are, therefore, also rights *erga omnes*. Hence, all faithful are obliged to respect them. This is the reason why in this sense, the fundamental rights give origin to a general obligation of respect whose subject is the entire People of God itself. This general obligation of respect comprehends a multilateral obligation of the faithful to the titulars of these fundamental rights, as well as to the hierarchy, and an institutional obligation of the whole People of God, which includes not only respect but also, and most important of all, the fulfillment of these same rights.

The fundamental rights are acquired as we have indicated, through baptism by means of which a person is made subject of the rights and duties of a Christian.¹²

Although the fundamental rights of the faithful cannot be lost radically, their use, however, can be suspended when its efficacy or exercise is paralyzed.

Loss or extinction of a juridical situation — fundamental rights in our discussion, would mean the radical disappearance of the same, which is tantamount to its destruction. In this sense, fundamental rights, as earlier affirmed, cannot be destroyed or lost except in death since they are always present in the conditions of the baptized.

On the contrary, *suspension* which is the paralyzation of its efficiency or its exercise is brought about by a circumstance or extrinsic factor which impedes its expression. Several distinct causes can lead to the suspension of the exercise of the fundamental rights: the commission of certain delicts which can be the abuse of the fundamental rights themselves or very graphically, those delicts which imply rupture within the ecclesial communion

¹² CIC, Can. 204, § 1.

such as heresy, apostasy and schism; those which lead only to non-delictual rupture of ecclesial communion like the situation of the separated brethren; or other exceptional situations which make imperative the suspension of some of the fundamental rights.

Normally, suspension does not totally involve all the fundamental rights but only some of them; nevertheless, in certain exceptionally grave cases a condition could exist wherein all the rights are practically suspended.

Requisites and Presuppositions for the Exercise of the Fundamental Rights

We have seen from the preceding discussions that the exercise of the fundamental rights is not absolute nor arbitrary. Their just and right use, hence, should logically be regulated by a series of presuppositions and requisites. *Presuppositions* are those conditions which must be present in the faithful in order to exercise the said right: like for example, the state of grace in order to avail of the right to receive some of the sacraments, or the needed information and required competence in order to use the liberty to form an opinion.¹³

Requisites are those qualities or inherent conditions needed to exercise the fundamental rights lawfully. Thus, for example, one should possess truth and prudence in order to be able legitimately to use the right of free opinion, together of course, with the necessary reverence to the hierarchy.¹⁴

Since these requisites and presuppositions flow from the very nature itself of the subject matter which these same rights are concerned with, or from the possible consequences of the use of these rights, as well as from the determination or particular concretization of the same by law, it corresponds to ecclesiastical authority to regulate all inter-subjective relations which can originate from these rights.

Although each and every fundamental right possesses presuppositions and requisites proper of its own, it is not impossible to enumerate some which are common to all of them. Among the general presuppositions, authors commonly mention the ff: a) the capacity to act [use of reason]; b) the bond of ecclesias-

¹³ LG, 37.

¹⁴ LG, 37, CIC, Can. 212, § 3.

tical communion; and, c) absence of censures which could cause the suppression of the fundamental rights.

In its turn, common requisites for the exercise of the fundamental rights are a) freedom, or absence of force or coercion, b) communitarian or social responsibility, c) reasonableness (*rationabilitas*) or the exercise of the mentioned right in accordance with divine law and right reason; and, d) their use in conformity with the laws of the Church which regulate them.

The Cataloguing of the Fundamental Rights in the New Code of Canon Law

Before the promulgation of the 1983 Code of Canon Law the enumeration of the fundamental rights of the faithful was not exhaustive since authors, although properly guided by the various texts of Vatican II documents especially chapters 2 and 4 of *Lumen Gentium*, relied solely on each other and always appended their treatises with the apology that their discussion was not based on the actual enumeration of these same rights but were given only as examples in a tentative outline.¹⁵

At present, this situation does not exist anymore and an official enumeration of the fundamental rights of the faithful is provided for officially from canons 209 to 222 of the New Code. Cataloguing them, however, is another point and authors in this regard show divergent views. We shall illustrate two authors whose works, I believe, are worthy of consideration not only for their logical value but also for their doctrinal analysis

J. Hervada and P. Lombardia,¹⁶ enumerating the various fundamental rights, classify them according to a scientific systematization based on the fact that since these rights emanate from the constitutional condition of the faithful, they are nothing but the series of concretizations, derivations or determinations of the fundamental or the constitutional condition of the faithful.

According to them, four aspects or elements can be considered as integrating factors of the constitutional condition of the faithful, namely: a) *Conditio communis* or the relation of solidarity and communion of the People of God, with respect to faith and the various means for sanctification; b) *Conditio libertatis*

¹⁵ Cf. P. Lombardia, *Op. cit.*, pp. 85-86; J. Hervada, *Op. cit.*, pp. 225-226.

¹⁶ Cf. *Op. cit.*, pp. 249-311.

or that sphere of autonomy the faithful possesses to pursue his proper end with full and personal responsibility; c) *Conditio subjectionis* or that condition of being bound to the order of the People of God established by Christ and to the legitimate Pastors. This results from the institutional and hierarchical characters of the People of God; d) *Conditio activa* or the particular condition of members of the People of God called to participate actively through his life and actions, in the mission of the Church.

Accordingly, Hervada and Lombardia distribute the various rights following their classification, as follows: A. *Juridical Situations derived from "Conditio Communis"*: 1) Juridical situations with respect to the Word of God; 2) Juridical situations in the order of the Sacraments: a) Eucharist, b) Penance, c) Confirmation and Unction of the Sick; 3) Right to participate in liturgical actions; 4) Other juridical rights; B. *Juridical Situations contained in "Conditio Libertatis"*: 1) Right to personal apostolate, 2) Right to one's proper spirituality, 3) Right to association, 4) Right to elect one's personal condition in life, 5) Liberty on temporal matters, 6) Other juridical situations; C. *Juridical Situations derived from "Conditio Activa"*: 1) Rights to one's proper opinion, 2) Right to information, 3) Right to investigation and teaching, 4) Right and duty to help in the necessities of the Church; D. *Juridical Situations which arise from "Conditio Subjectionis"*: 1) Dependence with respect to the institutional structure founded by Christ, 2) Binding state to the hierarchy, 3) Right to petition, 4) Right to the proper and adequate development of hierarchical activities, 5) Faculty to intervene in the political sphere of the Church.

James H. Provost, writing after the promulgation of the new Code, catalogues the various rights of the laity in a different way.¹⁷

Enumerating sixteen rights which he concedes are at least listed in the New Code as common to all the faithful, he starts by declaring as the first and primordial right the fact that "whatever their sources, these are all Church rights".¹⁸

Under "*Rights of All the faithful*", he mentions, 1) right to petition; 2) right to public opinion; 3) right to form associations; 4) right to assembly; 5) and right to apostolic work.

¹⁷ James H. Provost, "Rights for Christians in the Revised Code". *The Catholic World*, Vol. 226, (May/June, 1983), pp. 110-112.

¹⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 112.

Included under "*Sacramental Life*", he mentions: 1) right to receive from the spiritual goods of the Church, especially the proclamation of the Word and the sacraments; 2) right to worship under one's own rite; 3) and right to a personal way of spirituality or spiritual life. A third heading, Provost considers, is "*Education*" under which he includes: 1) the right to learn about the gospel; 2) the right to be educated in truths, traditions, customs and meaning of their faith. Lastly, he recognizes fundamental rights which he groups under the heading "*Human Rights*", as ff.: 1) right to a good name; 2) right to choose freely one's state of life; 3) freedom from whimsical punishment; 4) right to vindicate one's right in the Church; 5) right to defend one's right if they are violated; and 6) the right to due process of law if one is hauled into Church court.

With proper modifications and adjustments the cataloguing advanced by Hervada and Lombardia affords a clearer and more systematic picture of the whole listing of the rights of the faithful. For our purpose, however, we shall indicate the list of the fundamental rights and obligations as they are enumerated in the new Code.

A. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

1. Rights to work for spreading the divine plan of salvation to all people of every time and place.¹⁹

This fundamental right which is a duty, at the same time forms the framework and basis for all the rest, since it is from it that the Christian obtains his mission to sanctify the whole world and bring to it the message of salvation. *Lumen Gentium* teaches that the goal of God's People is the Kingdom of God begun by God Himself on earth, and which is to be extended further until it is brought to perfection at the right time.

The faithful, therefore, since they have become disciples of Christ through membership in the Church in baptism, are entrusted with the task to spread the Church and her mission to all regions of the earth and into the history of mankind, so that the People of God while remaining one and unique will be spread throughout the world and exist in all ages.²⁰

¹⁹ "Omnes christifideles officium habeant et jus ad laborandi ut divinum salutis nuntium ad universos homines omnium temporum ac totius orbis magis magisque perveniat." (Can. 211).

²⁰ LG, Chap., 2.

2. Liberty to reveal their needs and desires to the Pastors of the Church, especially on spiritual matters.²¹

According to the new Code, the faithful have the right to reveal to church authorities their need, especially spiritual ones. This, however, does not exclude other needs about which the Church should be concerned. Thus, in addition to asking for guidance, spiritual support and solace, Christians could petition, according to J.H. Provost, for material aid through the works of mercy and charity which the Church sponsors.²²

In this connection, *Christus Dominus* exhorts each bishop to exercise his office as a father and pastor who stands in the midst of his people as one who serves. He is, hence, enjoined to know his sheep, to be a true father duly acquainted with the needs of his flock in the social circumstances in which they live.²³ All of these manifestations are in direct anticipation of the faithful's right to send their needs to their pastor.

Priests in turn, are enjoined to acknowledge and promote the dignity of the people entrusted to their care, by listening to them willingly, considering their wishes in a fraternal spirit... and to reconcile their differences in mentality, etc.²⁴ All of these, in order to achieve unity in God's People and assure its salvation and sanctification.

3. Right to express their opinion on things which concern the good of the Church.²⁵

In this particular denomination, taken from *Lumen Gentium*, 37, two juridical situations which are connected with each other can be discerned, namely: the liberty to form one's opinion in those matters already authentically defined by the Church's teaching office, and the right to freely manifest this same opinion.²⁶

²¹ "Christifidelibus integrum est, ut necessitates suas, praesertim spirituales, suaque optata Ecclesiae Pastoribus patefaciant." (Can. 212, § 2.).

²² *Op. cit.*, p. 110.

²³ *CD*, n. 16

²⁴ *PO*, n. 9.

²⁵ "Pro scientia, competentia et praestantia, quibus pollent ipsis jus est, immo et aliquando officium, ut sententiam suam de his quae ad bonum Ecclesiae pertinent sacris Pastoribus manifestent eamque, salva fidei morumque integritate et reverentia erga Pastores, attentisque communi utilitate et pereonarum dignitate, ceteris christifidelibus notam faciant." (Can. 212, § 3.).

²⁶ *GS*, 62.

The said manifestation could be made either orally or through pertinent writings which *Gaudium et Spes* expresses as the right of freely manifesting one's proper opinion through the liberty of words and the use of various means of social communication.²⁷ Furthermore, *Lumen Gentium*, opines that sometimes there exists the duty to manifest this same opinion.²⁸

This right presently recognized by the Code follows the lead of the II Vatican Council expressed in the dogmatic constitution *Lumen Gentium*, n. 37 with special reference to those dedicated to the study of the sacred sciences as mentioned in the constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 62.

From the juridical standpoint, the exercise of the liberty to form one's opinion demands certain presuppositions: the necessary information which the new Code refers to as "*scientia, competentia et praestantia*". Furthermore, the proper use of this right is conditioned by the three requisites of truth, prudence and reverence towards the hierarchy.²⁹

The factor which limits the exercise of this right is the scandal which could result from the manifestation of an opinion on the rest of the faithful.

4. Right to receive from the sacred Pastors assistance from the spiritual goods of the Church, especially the Word of God and the sacraments.³⁰

This right is expressed in n. 37 of the constitution *Lumen Gentium*. And although authors usually treat of this theme more as an obligation of the hierarchy by virtue of its mission *ad omnes gentes*, it is likewise true that to listen to the proclamation of the Word and to participate in the fruits of the sacraments is a characteristic very proper of a disciple of Christ. The preaching of the Gospel is directed to achieve faith and personal salvation which are free acts and very personal aims directly connected with the personal dimension of the faithful. The equilibrium resulting from the principle of personal liberty and the personal and communitarian relation of the faithful with

²⁷ GS, 62.

²⁸ LG, 32.

²⁹ LG, 37.

³⁰ "Ius est christifidelibus ut ex spiritualibus Ecclesiae bonis, praesertim ex verbo Dei et sacramentis, adjumenta a sacris pastoribus accipiant" (Can.213).

respect to the gospel message gives rise to a complex juridical situation which results in this obligation.

The juridical situation or relation of the faithful with respect to the sacraments, however, is not the same for all of them and even though authors frequently speak of a right to the sacraments, their sole purpose is to generalize in order to avoid repetitions and circumlocutions. In this connection, therefore, we shall prescind from the three sacraments of matrimony, holy orders and baptism since, with regards to the first two, the rights connected with them are not distinct from the respective rights to form a family and to assume the condition of a cleric which does not pertain to the *conditio communis* but to the *conditio libertatis*. The right to receive baptism, for its part, is obviously not a fundamental right of the faithful.

Since the Eucharist is the mystical bond which completes and perfects the union and unity of the People of God, it is obvious that all the faithful should have the fundamental right to participate in it. And since it is within the condition of the faithful to realize and signify his union with the People of God and communicate the mystery of the Pasch, there exists, furthermore, a generic duty in relation to the Eucharist.³¹

Similar to the Eucharist, the faithful possesses both a fundamental and generic right with regard to the sacrament of Penance. The condition of the "esse" of a faithful implies the necessity to live in conformity with the doctrine of Christ since baptism confers an ontological condition of conformity with Him, this exigency being proper of a Christian. When a Christian does not conform himself to this situation, he harms one of the most basic dimensions of his being a Christian to uphold the sanctity and unity of the Church which is among its most essential characteristics.

The condition of being a faithful demands that a person lives as a genuine disciple of Christ; and Christian solidarity and corresponsibility require that a faithful live in sanctity. In this sense, the faithful have a generic right to receive the sacrament of penance, if necessary.

Through penance, a Christian found in this particular situation of rupture with the Church is reconciled with her besides obtaining divine pardon for his offense. Hence, apart from the

³¹ J. Hervada & P. Lombardia, *Op. cit.*, p. 295.

pardon for his offense against the Church, he obtains full reintegration to ecclesial communion.³²

To speak, therefore, of a right to receive the sacrament of penance means that the faithful possesses the full and strict right to unite himself with the Church since that is the will of God, besides the fact that as a member of the Church through baptism, he has to maintain the same. For this reason, once he repents, he has the right to reincorporate himself fully to ecclesial communion.

Concerning the sacrament of confirmation and unction of the sick, there is no question that the faithful has the right to receive them.

5. Right to worship God according to the prescriptions of one's own rite; and the right to one's spirituality.³³

The constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 14 declares that the faithful have the right to participate in the liturgical life of the Church. This implies that in addition to the sacraments, they have the right to participate in non-sacramental liturgical actions. The Code of 1983 further adds that they have the right to follow a proper form of spiritual life in conformity with the doctrine of the Church; and of their own proper rite according to approved liturgical books.

The right to one's own spirituality involves two aspects: first is the liberty to answer the divine call to his personal salvation and sanctification, free from all possible harmful and disordered interventions from the rest of the members of the Christian community; and second, is the fact that since one of the basic characteristics of the People of God is variety, it is an obvious consequence that sanctity can be attained in various ways.³⁴ This means that the faithful is free to select his own personal spirituality. And since his sanctification is derived from and geared towards the sanctification of the whole Church itself, of which he is a member, the Code further prescribes that he must use all his power to achieve not only his own but that of the Church's continuous holiness and growth.³⁵

³² LG, n. 11.

³³ "Jus est christifidelibus, ut cultum Deo persolvant juxta praescripta proprii ritus a legitimis Ecclesiae Pastoribus approbati, utque propriam vitae spiritualis formam sequantur, doctrine quidem Ecclesiae consentaneam." (Can. 214).

³⁴ LG, 32, 41.

³⁵ "Omnes christifideles, secundum propriam condicionem, ad sanctam vitam ducendam atque ad Ecclesiae incrementum ejusque jugem sanctificationem promovendum vires suas conferre debent." (Can. 210)

6. Liberty to freely found and moderate associations for charitable and pious purposes, etc.³⁶

Historically, this right has been recognized by authors like Lombardi as early as the 19th century. But from the time of the 1917 Code, it suffered some weakening and was consequently abandoned in many doctrinal sectors, and has resurfaced only recently when it was once again proclaimed a fundamental right by the II Vatican Council.³⁷

According to the doctrine of Vatican II, this right includes the ability to found associations and to maintain their internal autonomy like directing their activities, confecting proper statutes, etc., as well as the right to become members in the said associations. This right traces its fundament from the social virtue of man, as well as from the social character itself of the People of God.³⁸

7. Right to promote and sustain apostolic activity.³⁹

By virtue of their baptism and confirmation, all the faithful have been called to participate in the Church's mission with their own apostolate.⁴⁰ This apostolate is not received from the hierarchy although to guarantee its catholicity or to be able to claim the name "catholic", these activities require the consent of competent ecclesiastical authority.

As implied in the Code, this apostolate is very varied, ranging from the personal testimony which emanates connaturally from a life conformed to the gospel, to christian education which is part of parental duty. This sphere of activity which is fundamental is immediately and directly derived from the ontologico-sacramental condition of the faithful and, as such, demands that it be exercised according to his status and condition as faithful.

³⁶ "Integrum est christifidelibus, ut libera condant atque moderentur consociationes ad fines caritatis vel pietatis, aut ad vocationem christianam in mundo fovendam, utque conventus habeant ad easdem in communi persequendos." (Can. 215)

³⁷ AA, 19.

³⁸ AA, 18.

³⁹ "Christifideles cuncti, quippe qui Ecclesiae missionem participant, jus habent ut propriis quoque inceptis, secundum suum quisque statum et condicionem apostolicam actionem promoveant vel sustineant; nullum tamen inceptum nomen catholicum sibi vindicet, nisi consensus accesserit competentis auctoritatis ecclesiasticae" (Can. 216).

⁴⁰ LG, 33, AA, 3.

8. Right to christian education and instruction.⁴¹

This right is related to the anterior and is based on the active participation which the faithful have in the life of the Church. It is obvious that without proper education and information one cannot participate adequately in the life of the Church or in the formation of one's proper opinion. The right to Christian education and information is limited by the demands of the welfare of the faithful, i.e., by the degree and manner in which one participates effectively in the life of the Church, always within that potential participation which has been assured and established by the divine foundational will of Christ and by the common good of the Church.

9. Freedom of inquiry and of expression in sacred sciences.⁴²

The II Vatican Council at the start recognized the liberty to free investigation and its manifestation.⁴³ From the context of its pronouncements, it can be inferred that these manifestations refer to those aspects proper of the exposition of a scientific opinion; namely, university or scholastic teaching and scientific dialogue through the usual media of scientific journals, congresses, symposia, etc.

Concomitantly, however, there is need to speak of the right of those engaged scientifically in ecclesiastical studies to know the opinion of their colleagues. This right is based on the nature itself of scientific investigation which demands continuous comparison, balance and interchange of findings and opinions.⁴⁴ The exercise or the use of this right is characterized by adherence to the scientific spirit in general, i.e., respect for the demands of scientific vigor and honor requiring that hypotheses, theses, theories, and opinions should be presented only as such.

⁴¹ "Christifideles quippe qui baptismo ad vitam doctrinae evangelicae congruentem decendam vocentur, jus habent ad educationem christianam, qua ad maturitatem humanae personae prosequendam atque simul ad mysterium salutis cognoscendam et vivendum rite instruantur" (Can. 217).

⁴² "Que disciplinis sacris incumbunt justa libertate fruuntur inquirendi necnon mentem suam prudenter in iis aperiendi, in quibus peritia gaudet, servato debito erga Ecclesiae magisterium obsequio." (Can. 218).

⁴³ GS, 62.

⁴⁴ GS, 44..

10. Right of immunity from coercion in choosing one's state of life.⁴⁵

In this section we refer to those permanent conditions in life which characterize the existence of the faithful in a stable and profound manner, or what are juridically termed as the state of life of a person. Included in this condition, on the one hand, are the clerical, the religious and the lay states; and on the other hand, the matrimonial state and the celibate state.

To be a cleric connotes not only the assumption of a ministry in the Church but likewise a distinct condition of life. In this latter, we mean the peculiar conditions which configure the life of a cleric as such, like the peculiarity of this state, for example, and the prevalence of the ecclesiastical ministry over other possible functions, conditions or personal dispositions. In other words, the clerical state includes those factors which confirm the cleric as a person whose primordial mission, foremost and perpetual within the human and ecclesial context, is to be that of a person dedicated to the sacred ministry by virtue of the vocation he has received through valid ordination. This peculiar ontologico-sacramental personal condition can be assumed only through the free acceptance of the faithful of sacred ordination without its being imposed on him socially or juridically. There exists, therefore, the freedom to accept or not this particular condition.⁴⁶

The religious vocation carries with it analogical conditions although with distinct facets.⁴⁷ There exists the fundamental right to assume this state, since the existence of the religious

⁴⁵ "Christifidelibus omnes jure gaudent ut a quacumque coactione sint immunes a statu vitae eligendo". (Can. 219).

⁴⁶ The assumption of the clerical state, however, is not only an exercise of freedom since there exists, likewise, the right to ask for, and to a certain point, to receive the same. In fact, since the vocation to the clerical ministry is a hierarchical call in both the social and juridical plane, it demands or presupposes a divine vocation, a charismatic call which the faithful receives as properly his own. This charismatic impulse is manifested in various ways. Sometimes it is integrated in the call proper of the hierarchy itself; at other times, it is manifested in the faithful as something presupposed for the hierarchical vocation. In this latter case, the initiative corresponds to the faithful who is protected by the right to ask for ordination and to whom is given all the means in order that his particular petition would be accepted. It is only in this sense that we can speak of the right to be received in the clerical ministry. Beyond this the right does not extend. Hence, there is no right to be ordained since it pertains to the hierarchy, in the last analysis, to give the final decision concerning the organization and the regulation of the sacred ministry.

⁴⁷ The right to religious life is composed of the ff. facets: a) the right to initiate new forms and institutes of religious life; b) the right to join institutes already formed and not to be impeded from joining the religious

life is a phenomenon of Christian existence. Besides, the religious life is an expression of Christian liberty and a form of life taught concretely and specifically by Christ.

The faithful, has likewise the right to remain in the condition of the laity.⁴⁸ The right to remain in the lay state comprehends the right to remain permanently in the conditions of the laity and to develop the Christian virtuality in and of this particular condition. We speak here of a fundamental liberty because of the fact that there is no place for coercion as is true in the assumption of the condition of a cleric or of a religious.

Apart from these three conditions, it is necessary to add and consider the right to marriage and to the celibate life. When we talk of matrimony as understood in this regard, we do not refer to *jus connubii*, or the natural right to contract marriage. This is not a fundamental right of the faithful, but a natural right of man based on human nature and not on his condition as faithful.

The right to marriage as a fundamental right of the faithful, distinct from the natural right although connected with it, is rooted in the Christian doctrine of which all faithful are followers. Since matrimony is not only a natural vocation, but a Christian vocation as well, being related positively with the mystery of the Church—the sacrament of the union of Christ with the Church—the institution is a cause and a distinct and generic way of Christian life and sanctity. Consequently, there exists the fundamental liberty to contract the same.⁴⁹

vocation; c) necessary autonomy of government and right to establish internal rules; d) the liberty to embrace the religious life in the sense of not being forced into it; e) the right to remain permanently in the religious life. These various facets represent the totality of rights to the personal condition of the religious life and the right to join the same in order to lead its form of life. (cf. PC, 1 6, 10)

⁴⁸ Juridically speaking, it is not possible to speak of the right to assume the condition of the laity for the simple reason that it is a situation connatural to the fact of being baptized. In other words, it is the condition which a person who has been baptized remains into and in which he perseveres by reason of the baptismal vocation, if afterwards he does not assume another condition or state of life, i.e., that of the cleric or the religious. Consequently, the condition of the laity is not demanded or assumed. It is simply had or possessed. And since there is no possibility of social exigency in this regard, one cannot, therefore, speak technically of a right.

⁴⁹ The liberty to enter the marriage state is a positive liberty based and inherent in the Christian sense of this peculiar institution, not a residual or consequential liberty which the assumption of Christian celibacy implies.

Regarding Christian celibacy, what is implied is that particular condition of life which a faithful assumes following the doctrine of Christ, characterized by a concrete supernatural finality — *propter regnum coelorum*, a prevalent ascetical orientation and a primordially apostolic order. Celibacy, understood thus, is not to be confused with the natural state of celibacy, but as it appears in the context of Christ's message as a counsel, a possibility to the Christian person *sans* a social or juridical obligation of assuming the same. In this manner, celibacy has configured with it the fundamental liberty to assume the same or not, the freedom of a person of not being permanently coerced to assume it, and the right to remain permanently in the said state.

It is important to add finally, that the right to celibacy pertains to all the faithful, including the laity since it is a condition not exclusively for the religious or the clergy. Religious life is simply a form of living celibacy and for the clergy it is a general norm, except for married deacons of the Occidental Church, to require celibacy as a condition of the cleric.

11. Right to one's good name and reputation.⁵⁰
12. The right to vindicate and defend one's self in the competent forum.⁵¹
13. Right to be judged according to the prescriptions of law applied with equity.⁵²
14. Right not to be published by canonical penalties unless done according to the norm of law.⁵³

Other juridical situations in which the faithful is titular are the right which has reference to his good name or fame, and the corresponding right to vindicate lawfully in the Church the injury he may suffer with regards to the totality of the rights he has in the Church.

⁵⁰ "Nemini licet bonam famam, qua quis gaudet, illegitime laedere, nec jus cujusque personae ad propriam intimitatem tuendam violare." (Can. 220).

⁵¹ "Christifidelibus competet et jura, quibus in Ecclesiae gaudent, legitime vindicent atque defendent in foro competenti ecclesiastico ad normam juris. (Can. 222, § 1).

⁵² "Christifidelibus jus quoque est ut, si ad iudicium ab auctoritate competente vocentur, judicentur servatis juris praeceptis, cum aequitate. (Can. 222, § 2).

⁵³ "Christifidelibus jus est, ne poenis canonicis nisi ad normam legis pletentur." (Can. 221, § 3).

With regards to the former, it should be borne in mind that the right of protecting one's reputation does not bestow the corresponding right to prejudice or violate the good name of another.

In defending one's proper rights, the proper forum is the ecclesiastical court which at the same time has the power to judge him, assuring of course, that the prescriptions of Canon Law are applied to him with equity. And if canonical punishment is to be applied to him, only those provided for according to the norms of law should be invoked.

THE FUNDAMENTAL DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE FAITHFUL

Similar to fundamental rights, the fundamental duties and obligations of the faithful are derived from the constitution of the Church immediately and directly.

Being basically juridical, they are not to be confused with those duties or obligations of a moral nature, although both represent primary obligations of the faithful. Hence, even if some primary moral duties are considered at the same time as fundamental duties, there are others which are not such because of the lack of juridical nature or orientation. In this connection neither should those juridical relations nor bonds which are wider in scope, be confused with the fundamental obligations or duties, since these former include actually the latter. This is the case for example, of the relation which exists between the faithful and the hierarchy which is wider and fuller than that of the duty of obedience, which latter is only one of the aspects of the said relation.

The basis or font of fundamental duties and obligations are likewise, similar to that of the fundamental rights, although their sense or *raison d'être* is the fulfillment of the foundational will of Christ, in so far as it has attributed to the faithful certain spheres of responsibility, and has established the Church as hierarchy.

Fundamental duties are *obligatory* and this peculiar characteristic is limited by the rationability and possibility of its fulfillment. The former demands that it be in conformity with divine law and the dictates of right reason; while the latter means that in cases of physical or moral impossibility, it can not be obligatory. Grave difficulties and inconveniences, as well as

other circumstances, may likewise, in certain cases, diminish or extinguish the obligation or affect the manner of its obligatory force.

Consequent to its characteristic *universality* and its nature as *perpetual*: active participation in the life of the Church, personal prestations, economic prestations, etc. are considered objects of fundamental duties.

Finally, fundamental duties and obligations are classified as *generic* and *concrete*. Duties are considered generic when they contain an obligation whose concretization is done through ordinary laws, customs or other normative processes. The generic duty of the faithful, for example, to participate in the public cult of the Church is concretized by positive law into the weekly attendance at Sunday Mass and the Paschal Communion. They are considered concrete when the constitution of the Church itself already limits them, although they necessarily exhibit certain historical conformation.⁵⁴

The new 1983 Code enumerates nine fundamental duties of the faithful, two of them considered simultaneously as rights.⁵⁵

They are —

1. The obligation of seeing to it, that even in the way they act, they always preserve communion with the Church.⁵⁶
2. The obligation to fulfill the office to which they are bound not only for the universal Church but also for the particular Church and its continuous satisfaction.⁵⁷
3. The duty to live a holy life according to their own condition, and to promote the growth and continuous satisfaction of the Church.⁵⁸
4. The right and obligation to work for spreading the divine plan of salvation.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ J. Hervada, "La Constitución de la Iglesia," *Derecho Canónico*, Vol. 1, (Pamplona: Eunsu, 1974), pp. 226-227.

⁵⁵ We refer to the right and duty of all the faithful to work for spreading the divine plan (Can. 211) and the right and duty to express their opinion to the sacred Pastor on things which concern the good of the Church (Can. 212, § 3); Cf. also pp. 10-11.

⁵⁶ "Christifideles obligatione adstringuntur, sua quoque ipsorum agendi ratione, ad communionem semper servandam cum Ecclesia" (Can. 209, § 1).

⁵⁷ "Magna cum diligentis officia adimpleant, quibus tenetur erga Ecclesiam tum universam, tum particularem ad quam, secundum juris praescripta, pertinent," (Can. 209, § 2).

⁵⁸ Cf. footnote n. 35.

⁵⁹ Cf. footnote n. 19.

5. The obligation to accept with ready Christian obedience and conscious of their responsibilities, whatever their sacred Pastors declare or decree.⁶⁰
6. The right and duty to express their opinion to the sacred Pastor on things which concern the good of the Church.⁶¹
7. The obligation to subsidize the necessities of the Church in order to provide what is needed in divine worship, apostolic and charitable works, and the honest sustenance of minister.⁶²
8. The obligation to promote social justice and assist the poor with their own resources.⁶³
9. The obligation to respect the common good of the Church as well as the rights of others and their own duties towards others.⁶⁴

The faithful as members of Christ's Body assume the responsibility entrusted to them by Christ as their mission. As the instruments of redemption for all, sent forth as the light of the world and the salt of the earth, the Church and all Her members are entrusted with the task of precisely extending the kingdom of God until it is brought to perfection by Him at the end of time.⁶⁵ This unique task means that the faithful has the obligation of being witnesses to Christ, of giving answer to those who seek the hope of eternal life.

Their incorporation into the Church through baptism consecrates them as sons of God, reborn in the Spirit, and imbues them with the duty to confess before men the faith they have received from God through the same Church. And having been endowed by the Holy Spirit with special strength through con-

⁶⁰ Quae sacri pastores, utpote Christum repraesentantes, tamquam fidei magisteri declarant aut tamquam Ecclesiae rectores statuunt, christifideles, propriae responsibilitatis conscii, christiana obedientia prosequi tenentur." (Can. 212, § 1).

⁶¹ Cf. footnote n. 25.

⁶² "Christifideles obligatione tenentur necessitatibus subveniendi Ecclesiae, ut eidem praesto sint quae ad cultum divinum, ad opera apostolica et caritatis atque ad honestam ministrorum sustentationem necessaria sunt." (Can. 222 § 2)

⁶³ "Obligatione quoque tenentur justitiam socialem promovendi necnon, praecepti Domini memores, ex propriis redditibus pauperibus subveniendi." (Can. 222, § 2)

⁶⁴ "In iuribus suis exercendis christifideles tum singuli tum in consociationibus adunati rationem habere debent boni communis Ecclesiae necnon iurium aliorum atque suarum erga alios officiorum." (Can. 223, § 1)

⁶⁵ LG, 9.

firmation, they are further obliged strictly to spread and defend the faith both by word and deed as true witnesses of Christ.⁶⁶

The generic and theological duties of the faithful receive their determination in these nine enumerations in which the faithful's role in the Church, as partakers and recipients of the special gift of ministry, ensures their contribution towards attaining the common good of the Church.

It is interesting to note that the consistent criterion availed of as the measure for the exercise of the rights and duties of the faithful, singly or in association with others, is the common good of the Church.⁶⁷ And because of this, ecclesiastical authority is imbued with the duty to moderate the exercise of this same faculty.⁶⁸

Theologically, these duties and obligations as well as the rights of the faithful spring from the nature and reality of hierarchical communion. For the faithful, by the very fact of having been baptized and through his inclusion in the ecclesiastical organization, is a member of the ecclesial society; and therefore, is in communion with its Pastors — the Pope and the bishops. This hierarchical communion means, among others, that they share in the mission which the Church entrusted to all members as messengers of Christ's actions.

The juridical aspect of hierarchical communion, which is the relation of service to the ecclesiastical organization with respect to the faithful, engenders in these latter the duty to develop their activity, in harmony with the needs of the common good and the utility of the faithful in general.

Consequently, from this sense of service, there arise in the faithful the rights and duties proper for the adequate unfoldings of the activities of the Church. This means the unravelling of those activities of the faithful, demanded by the common good and concretized as fundamental rights and duties.

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⁶⁶ *LG*, 10-11.

⁶⁷ Cf. footnote no. 64.

⁶⁸ "Ecclesiae auctoritati competit, intuitu boni communis, exercitium iurium, quae christifideles sunt propria, moderari." (Can. 223, § 2).

CASES AND INQUIRIES

1. A Chaplain's Faculties

May I inquire from you the following:

1. *Has a hospital chaplain the same faculties as a parish priest in his parish?*
2. *Can a chaplain exercise his faculties within the hospital upon any person?*
3. *Is the hospital chaplain bound to keep the books for whatever ministerial functions he carries out, as a parish priest?*

A Hospital Chaplain

The case proposed by our consultant is a practical one. We will try to answer the questions in a short and clear way.

1. The first question should be answered in the negative: the faculties of a hospital chaplain are not the same as the faculties enjoyed by a parish priest in his parish. Canon 566 of the new Codex (cfr. *Manual for Parish Priests*, n. 358) enumerates the faculties enjoyed by a chaplain as follows:

“§ 1. — A chaplain must be given all the faculties which due pastoral care demands. Besides those which are given by particular law or by special delegation, a chaplain has by virtue of his office the faculty to hear confessions of the faithful entrusted to his care, to preach to them the Word of God, to administer the Viaticum and the anointing of the sick, and to confer the sacrament of confirmation when they are in danger of death.

§ 2. — In hospitals and prisons and on sea voyages, a chaplain has the further faculty to be exercised only in those places, to absolve from *latae sententiae* censures, which are neither reserved nor declared, without prejudice to canon 976.”

The faculties contained in the first paragraph are common to all chaplains; the faculty, however contained in the second

paragraph is given by the Codex only to chaplains of hospitals, prisons and of boats on sea voyages, to be exercised only in those places, not outside.

The foregoing faculties given to the chaplains are only partially the same as those granted to the parish priests. The faculty to hear confessions, to preach, to administer the Viaticum and the anointing of the sick, and to confer the sacrament of confirmation in danger of death granted to the chaplains are only some of the faculties enjoyed by the parish priests. However, the parish priests have other faculties not enjoyed by the chaplains of hospitals, for instance the faculty to assist at marriages and to perform funerals. The hospital chaplain may administer the sacrament of baptism only in danger of death or when a pastoral reason requires it (can. 860: MFPP, n. 481).

It is worth noting, however, that the faculty to absolve from censures given to the chaplains is not enjoyed by the parish priests. The circumstances in which the chaplains carry out their ministry require said faculty.

The answer, therefore, to the first question is: A hospital chaplain has only some of the faculties enjoyed by a parish priest. He can exercise those faculties upon the persons entrusted to his care.

2. As to the second question concerning the subjects of the chaplain of the hospital, the letters of his appointment should be taken into consideration. If nothing is stated on the matter, it seems that the following should be considered as his subjects:

a) Patients confined in the hospital for regular treatment, during the time they stay in the same; likewise, patients brought to the hospital and treated in the same under emergency conditions, though for one reason or another they are not admitted in the hospital;

b) Medical staff attending the patients of the hospital;

c) Nursing staff who in one way or another take care of the patients;

d) Other personnel who habitually are hired and engaged in the maintenance of the premises of the hospital.

The persons enumerated in b), c), and d) should be considered as subjects of the hospital chaplain as long as they stay

in the hospital premises. Outside the hospital they fall under the pastoral ministry of their parish priest only.

Out-patients who go to the hospital for occasional treatment as well as relatives visiting the patients confined in the hospital should not be considered as subjects of the hospital chaplain. The reason is because these persons can easily seek spiritual assistance from their proper parish priest.

As we have said before, the letter of appointment of the chaplain should carefully be studied. Perhaps these letters determine with precision the persons upon whom the chaplain should exercise his faculties. Whatever we have said in this regard is based on the general expressions used in canon 564 "*alicuius communitatis aut peculiaris coetus christifidelium*", and in canon 566 "*fidelium suae curae commissorum*".

It should be noted, however, that the hospital, as such, is not exempted from the jurisdiction of the pastor of the place where the hospital is located. The parish priest may exercise his pastoral ministry upon the persons of the hospital. They are also his parishioners, though due to the special circumstances surrounding them they are under the special care of the hospital chaplain.

3. Finally, the question on the obligation of a chaplain to have the books which a parish priest has to keep, should be answered in the negative. The data on the administration of sacraments to be recorded according to the universal law should be registered in the parochial books. The chaplain, must inform the parish priest of the place where the hospital is located about the data that should be recorded. The chaplain, as such, is not bound to keep the books as a parish priest is bound. Whether it would be advisable for him to keep a register of the sacred functions performed by him, is a different matter. Undoubtedly it would be advisable to record the aforesaid functions though in an unofficial manner.

2. Concelebration With A Stipend

Quite often I have been invited to concelebrate with a parish priest. Sometimes I accept and sometimes I don't. The real reason, however, for my refusal to concelebrate is that I have no clear idea of the lawfulness of concelebrating with a stipend. Will you clarify the following:

1. *Is it licit to concelebrate and accept a stipend for the concelebrated Mass?*
2. *How many times can a priest concelebrate in a day?*
3. *If a concelebrant has said or will say another Mass, what are the implications?*

A Student Priest

1. Starting with the first question, we answer it in the affirmative. A priest who concelebrates may receive a stipend or offering for the concelebrated Mass. Canon 945, § 1 (cfr. *Manual for Parish Priests*, n. 552) states: that "in accord with the approved usage of the Church, it is lawful for a priest who celebrates or *concelebrates* Mass to receive an offering to apply the Mass according to a definite intention." This norm, however, is to be understood in accordance with what we will say in the answer to the third question.

2. In regards to the second question, the answer is: a priest may concelebrate only once a day. This does not mean, however, that any priest may concelebrate once daily. Canon 905 § 1 (cfr. MFPP, n. 518) reads: "With the exception of instances when, in accord with the law, it is lawful for a priest to celebrate the Eucharist more than once on the same day, it is not lawful for a priest to celebrate more than once a day." Therefore, a priest is expressly not allowed by law to binate. The law, however, grants the local Ordinaries faculty to allow individual priests to binate but only under certain circumstances. Canon 905, § 2 (cfr. MFPP, n. 518) says: "If priests are lacking, the local Ordinary may permit priests, for a just cause, to celebrate twice a day and even, if pastoral need so requires, three times on Sundays and holidays of obligation." Note that the scarcity of priests is the reason for the Ordinary to allow bination and trination. It has nothing to do with concelebration.

Thus, a priest who has said Mass privately cannot concelebrate on the same day, because he cannot binate; nor a priest who has concelebrated may celebrate alone again for the same reason.

3. The third question implies that a priest who has said or will say a private Mass, binates by concelebrating, since he concelebrates and says another Mass alone before or after the concelebration. The question of bination itself does not render the case difficult for it may be granted by the Ordinary, as mentioned above. Rather, what constitutes the problem is the *Mass concelebrated*, since that may be a bination not allowed by law.

The Sacred Congregation for the Divine Cult issued on August 7, 1972 a Declaration concerning this matter and stated that only priests who have to say a Mass *for the welfare of the faithful* are allowed to binate by concelebrating; priests who do not have to say the Mass for the benefit of the faithful may not concelebrate, since they are not allowed by law to binate. This is in regard to bination alone.

A different problem arises when a priest, as explained in the preceeding paragraph, says a private Mass for the benefit of the faithful and concelebrates in another. May he accept a stipend for the concelebrated Mass? Canon 951, § 2¹ is clear on the matter by saying: "A priest who on the same day concelebrates a second Mass may not under any title accept an offering for that Mass." This norm is the same given on August 7, 1972 by the Sacred Congregation for the Divine Cult: "It is not lawful for priests celebrating a Mass for the pastoral welfare of the faithful and concelebrating in another Mass to accept under any title a stipend for the concelebrated Mass." Priests, therefore, who due to pastoral reasons, celebrate a private Mass and concelebrate in another, may accept a stipend for the private Mass, not for the concelebrated one. Note that the priest may not claim any right, *even under any extrinsic title for the inconvenience in concelebrating*, for any offering on the occasion of the concelebrated Mass.

FR. EXCELSO GARCIA, O.P.

¹ This paragraph two of canon 951 was unintentionally omitted in the printing of the *Manual for Parish Priest*, n. 556. We apologize for the omission.

DOCUMENTATION

PONTIFICAL COMMISSION FOR AUTHENTIC INTERPRETATION OF THE CODE OF CANON LAW

Replies to queries on the Code of Canon Law

*We publish the Latin text (with our English translation) of three replies of the Pontifical Commission for the Authentic Interpretation of the Code of Canon Law, which appeared in the last fascicule of the "Acts of the Apostolic See".**

Patres Pontificiae Commissionis Codici iuris canonici authentice interpretando, propositis in plenario coetu diei 26 iunii 1984 quae sequuntur dubiis, respondendum esse censuerunt ut infra ad singula:

The Fathers of the Pontifical Commission for the Authentic Interpretation of the Code of Canon Law decided to reply as follows to the following doubts presented to them in their plenary meeting of 26 June 1984.

I

D. — Utrum, ad normam Can. 917, fidelis qui Sanctissimam Eucharistiam iam recepit, possit eam eadem die suscipere altera tantum vice, an quoties eucharisticam celebrationem participat.

R. — *Affirmative ad primum; Negative ad secundum.*

D. — *Whether, according to can. 917, one who has already received the Most Holy Eucharist may receive it on the same day only a second time, or as often as one participates in the celebration of the Eucharist.*

R. — *Affirmative to the first: negative to the second.*

II

D. — Utrum ad comprobandum statum liberum eorum qui, etsi ad canonicam formam adstricti, matrimonium attentarunt coram civili officiali aut ministro acatholico, necessario requiratur processus documentalis de quo in Can. 1686, an sufficiat investigatio praematrimonialis ad normam Can. 1066-1067.

R. — *Negative ad primum: Affirmative ad secundum.*

* Published in *L'Osservatore Romano*, 15 October 1984.

D. — To prove the state of freedom of those who, although bound to the canonical form, attempted marriage before a civil official or a non-Catholic minister, is the documentary process mentioned in can. 1686 necessarily required, or does the pre-nuptial investigation dealt with in can. 1066-1067 suffice?

R. — Negative to the first: affirmative to the second.

III

D. — a) Utrum, ad normam Can. 502, par. 1, membrum Collegii Consultorum quod desinit esse membrum Consilii Presbyteralis remaneat in suo munere consultoris.

R. — Affirmative.

D. — a) Whether, according to can. 502, par. 1, a member of the college of consultors who ceases to be a member of the presbyteral council remains in office as consultor.

R. — Affirmative.

D. — b) Utrum perdurante quinquennio, si quis consultor a muneri cesset, Episcopus diocesanus alium in eius loco nominare debeat.

R. — Negative et ad mentem.

D. — b) If during the five year term a consultor should cease from office, must the diocesan bishop appoint another to replace him?

R. — Negative and "ad mentem".

Mens autem est ut obligatio alium consultorem nominandi adest tantummodo si deficiat numerus minimus in Can. 502, par. 1 requisitus.

The mind of the legislator is that an obligation to appoint another consultor exists only when the minimum number required by can. 502 par. 1 is lacking.

(Continued on page 757)

NATIONAL APPELLATE MATRIMONIAL TRIBUNAL

I DECRETUM

General Secretariat:
Intramuros, Manila

Ad normam can. 1439 C.I.C., Ego infrascriptus Praeses Conferentiae Episcoporum Insularum Philippinarum, obtento "nil obstat" ex parte Signaturae Apostolicae, Tribunal Nationale Matrimoniale Secundae Instantiae pro Insulis Philippinarum ad instantiam et in nomine omnium Episcoporum erigo.

1. Nomen huius Tribunalis vulgo erit "National Appellate Matrimonial Tribunal".
2. Hoc Tribunal competens est ad cognoscendas ac definien-
das in altero iurisdictionis gradu omnes causas a Tribu-
nalibus Ecclesiasticis in primo gradu iudicatas, incolumi
semper manente facultate provocandi in secunda instan-
tia ad Tribunal Rotae Romanae iuxta can. 1444, par. 1,
1o C.I.C.
3. Moderator huius Tribunalis Nationalis Appellationis est
Archiepiscopus Oscar V. Cruz, Ph.L., S.T.L., I.C.D.
4. Sedes huius Tribunalis in civitate Manilensi, 1000 Gen.
Solano St., San Miguel, Philippinarum, collocatur.
5. Expensae huius Tribunalis a Conferentia Episcoporum
Insularum Philippinarum et a Partibus in causis solvun-
tur.
6. Vicarius Iudicialis, Iudices, Defensores Vinculi et Promo-
tores Iustitiae huius Tribunalis Secundae Instantiae a
Conferentia Episcoporum Insularum Philippinarum per
suffragium eliguntur. Electi habentur qui maiorem
suffragiorum partem obtinuerint. Electi munera ha-
bent ad quinquennium, et iterum eligi possunt. Cae-
teri Tribunalis Ministri designantur ad nutum Vicarii
Iudicialis.
7. Hoc Tribunal Nationale Matrimoniale Secundae Instan-
tiae vigere incipiet die 15 iunii 1984 A.D.

(Sgd.) ✠ ANTONIO MABUTAS
Praeses
Conferentia Episcoporum
Insularum Philippinarum
15 maii 1984 A.D.

II

**SUPREMUM
SIGNATURAE APOSTOLICAE
TRIBUNAL**

die 28 maii 1984

Prot. N. 15832/83 V.T.

Excellentissime Domine,

Hisce adiunctum litteris mitto Excellentiae Tuae Reverendissimae, tamquam Praesidi Conferentiae Episcopalis, exemplar authenticum Decreti diei 28 maii 1984 quo Hoc Supremum Tribunal adprobat erectionem Tribunalis nationalis appellationis pro ista natione.

Velit Excellentia Tua Reverendissima invitare Vicarium iudiciale istius Fori ut unoquoque anno mittat ad hanc Signaturam Apostolicam relationem de statu et activitate Tribunalis, redactam iuxta schemata hisce, in exemplari, adnexa.

Occasionem nactus, cuncta fausta Tibi adprecor ac permaneo.

Excellentiae Tuae Reverendissimae

addictissimus

(Sgd.) Aurelius Card. Sabattani
Praef.

Excmo ac Revmo Domino
D.no Antonio MABUTAS Y LLOREN
Praesidi Conferentiae Episcoporum
Insularum Philippinarum
Archiepiscopo Davaensi
(cum insertis)

III

SUPREMUM
SIGNATURAE APOSTOLICAE TRIBUNAL

Prot. N. 15832/83 V.T.

Viso ac mature perpenso decreto diei 15 maii 1984 quo Conferentia Episcoporum Insularum Philippinarum erigit in urbe Manilensi Tribunali unicum seu nationale Ilo instantiae ad pertractandas causas universas, scilicet non tantum causas nullitatis matrimonii, sive formales sive summarias, sed etiam separationis coniugum necnon causas contentiosas et criminales definitas a Tribunalibus ecclesiasticis Io gradus illius nationis, incolumi semper manente facultate provocandi in secunda instantia ad Tribunal Rotae Romanae iuxta legis praescripta;

Vi can. 1445, par. 3, 3o Codicis Iuris Canonici et attento art. 2, par. 1 "Normarum pro Tribunalibus Interdioecesanis, vel regionalibus aut interregionalibus" ab hoc Supremo Tribunali editarum die 28 decembris 1970;

Perpensa instantia Exc.mi Archiepiscopi Davaensis die 15 maii 1984 missa, qui, nomine Episcoporum Conferentiae de qua supra, petit adprobationem Sanctae Sedis; necnon audito Nuntio Apostolico istius nationis;

SUPREMUM SIGNATURAE APOSTOLICAE TRIBUNAL

petitam adprobationem concedit ut, praefatum decretum vim habeat et executioni mandetur.

Tribunal nationale appellationis in urbe Manilensi constitutum sedem propriam habeat a sede tribunalis primae instantiae omnino distinctam, et Vicarium iudiciale, vicarios iudiciales adiunctos, Iudices, Defensores vinculi atque Promotores iustitiae et alios administros ab iis, qui in tribunalibus dioecesanis operam dant, diversos.

Decernant Exc.mi Episcopi de tempore quo novum Tribunal nationale Appellationis vigere incipiat et de regimine causarum, nunc in altera instantia pendetium, ad normam art. 22 eiusdem Normarum.

Datum Romae, e sede Supremi Signaturae Apostolicae Tribunalis, die 28 maii 1984.

(Sgd.) AURELIUS Card. SABATTANI,
Praef.

APPOINTMENT OF MSGR. TEODORO BACANI

JOANNES PAULUS EPISCOPUS
Servus Servorum Dei

dilecto filio THEODORO BACANI, sacerdoti Manilensi electo iusdem Sedis sacri Praesulis Auxiliari atque Episcopo simul titulo Gaurianensi, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Quandoquidem id potissimum Nostra summi interest ut per fratres in Episcopatu Nostros Ordinarios locorum per orbem eorumque operis Socios Episcopos singulae partes ipsius Domini gregis diligenter quidem efficacienterque non modo custodiantur sed prosperentur etiam et amplificentur, festinamus idcirco semper preces eorundem Ordinariorum exaudire saepius iam sibi Auxiliares poscentium episcopos ad certiores hominum sibi commissorum spiritalem curationem. Sic pariter obsequi nunc studemus Venerabili Fratri Nostro, Jacobo S.R.E. Cardinali Sin Archiepiscopo Manilensi, talem a Nobis adiutorem flagitanti Episcopum quicum graviora usque communicare possit apostolatus ibi onera. Te autem cogitamus, dilecte Fili, aptumque aestimamus quem ad illud destinemus munus quippe in quo laeti deprehendamus tum doctrinae soliditatem tum permagnam erga Ecclesiam fidelitatem. De sententia proin Venerabilium Fratrum Nostrorum S.R.E. Cardinalium praepositorum Sacrae Congregationis pro Episcopis Auxiliarem nominamus sacrorum quem diximus Antistitis eodemque tempore Episcopum vacantis Sedis titulo GAURIANENSIS secundum singula ea quae sacris continentur canonibus. Ut tamen ordinationem episcopalem extra urbem Romam suscipias libenter permittimus dummodo antea rite nuncupaveris catholicae fidei professionem coram quovis Episcopo necnon ius iurandum pronuntiaveris fidelitatis erga Nos et Successores Nostros ac formulas sic a te adhibitae ad Sacram Congregationem pro Episcopis cito curaveris transmittendas consueto modo signatas sigilloque munitas. Quod reliquum est, hortamur te, dilecte fili, totum ut te dedere pergas ministerio inter gregem Manilensem ad Ordinarii tui nutum sicque velut Episcopus maiora importes gratiarum dona et fructuum spiritualium commoda clero et populo illi, cui adeo fidenter te addimus Auxiliarem Episcopum. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die sexto mensis Martii, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo octogesimo quarto, Pontificatus Nostri sexto.

Augustinus Card. Casaroli
a Publicis Ecc. negotiis

Marcellus Rossetii
Protonot. Apost.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW DIOCESE OF SAN JOSE

JOANNES PAULUS EPISCOPUS

Servus Servorum Dei

ad perpetuam rei memoriam

Saepe catholicorum utilitas postulat ut alicuius ecclesiasticae circumscriptionis fines mutentur et nova disponantur ratione; quod cum contingit, Nostrum est diligenti cura consulere. Quare, quoniam Venerabilis Frater Cicero Tumbocon Episcopus Cabanatuanensis, ob dioecesis aplitudinem obque magnum fidelium numerum, audita Conferentia Episcopali in Insulis Philippinis, petiit ut aliquibus territoriis ab eadem dioecesi distractis, nova constitueretur dioecesis, Nos, re bene considerata, cognita propensa sententia Venerabilis Fratris Brunonis Torpigliani, Archiepiscopi titularis Mallianensis, in Insulis Philippinis Apostolici Nuntii, et auditis Venerabilibus Fratribus Nostris S.R.E. Cardinalibus Sacrae Congregationis pro Episcopis negotiis praepositiis, aequae fieri censuimus si postulationi concederemus. Quocirca, Nostra Apostolica potestate, eorum, quorum interest, vel eorum qui sua interesse praesumunt, suppleto consensu, quae sequuntur decernimus. A dioecesi Cabanatuanensi detrahimus municipia: Carranglan, Cuyapo Guimba, Licab, Llanera, Lupao, Muñoz, Nampicuan, Pantabangan, Quezon, Rizal, Santo Domingo, Talugtog et San Jose City, et ex his novam dioecesim constituimus Sancti Josephi in Insulis Philippinis, iisdem circumscriptionis finibus, quibus municipia terminantur, quae supra memoravimus. Novae dioecesis sedem episcopalem in urbe San Jose appellata collocamus, et templum ibidem Deo in honorem Sancti Josephi dicatum, ad gradum et dignitatem ecclesiae cathedralis evechimus, insignibus et privilegiis ornatum, quae ad ceteras cathedrales ecclesias spectant. Eandem novam dioecesim suffraganeam facimus archidioecesi Lingayensi-Dagupanensi, eiusque Episcopum pro tempore, cum ceteris Praesulibus Ordinariis locorum per omnia exaequatum iuri metropolitico Archiepiscopi Lingayensis-Dagupanensis subicimus. Ut autem Pastor noviter institutae dioecesis convenienter adiuvetur, decer-

nibus ut quam primum collegium consultorum pro iure eligatur; et ad eins dignam et congruam sustentationem providendam, statuimus ut hoc fiat Curiae emolumentis, fidelium oblationibus et portione ei obveniente ex divisione, ad normam canonis 122 facienda, bonorum quae hucusque mensae episcopalis Cabanatuanensis fuerunt. Quod ad seminarium dioecesanum condendum et ad candidatorum formationem attinet, praescripta iuris communis servari volumus normasque a Sacra Congregatione pro Institutione Catholica statutas, simul monentes ut selecti eiusdem seminarii alumni in philosophicis et theologicis disciplinis erudiendi atque sacerdotes studiis penitus excolendi, Roman mittantur ad Pontificium Collegium Philippinum. Item servari volumus sacros canones, quoad novae dioecesis regimen et administrationem necnon, sede vacante, administratoris dioecesani electionem, fidelium iura et onera et alia id genus. Denique edicimus ut, dioecesi constituta, sacerdotes Ecclesiae illi habeantur adscripti, in cuius territorio ecclesiasticum habeant officium; ceteri vero clerici et seminarii alumni, illi Ecclesiae incardinati maneant vel incardinentur, in cuius territorio habeant domicilium; et instrumenta quae constitutae dioecesis omnia contigunt, ad eandem Curia Cabanatuanensis mittat. Haec omnia perficienda committimus Venerabili Fratri Brunoni Torpigliani, debitis ei factis facultatibus etiam delegando quemlibet virum in ecclesiastica dignitate constitutum, onere imposito, re acta, documenta sinceris exemplis ad Sacram Congregationem pro Episcopis mittendi. Contrariis quibuslibet non obstantibus. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die sexto decimo mensis Februarii, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo octogesimo quarto, Pontificatus Nostri sexto.

Augustinus Card. Casaroli
a Publicis Eccl. negotiis

José Bagumbayan, Bartolomé Lingon and Magdalena Iling from Taytay Calamianes

Towards the second half of the 16th century, a need to bring about a stricter observance of the Rule and Constitutions and a more faithful adherence to the ideals of the Religious life was deeply felt within the Augustinian Order. It was started in Italy with a measure of success. Years later, Father Tomé de Jesus tried to implant it in Portugal, although unsuccessfully due to unsurmountable obstacles. Eventually, the movement spread to Spain, under the initiative of an Augustinian surnamed Aguilar, who obtained from Philip II the appointment of a commission in order to lay down the groundwork for the reform. The project was approved by the Chapter held in the province of Castile in 1588. Souls eager for a more prayerful and austere life joined it and, under their impulse, the reform soon flourished in Spain and spread to other European nations. In 1622, these Augustinian reformists were authorized by Gregory XV to form a Congregation independent of the Augustinians and to live under a Vicar of their own.

It is a well known fact that in 1606 the Recollects arrived in the Philippines where they founded the Religious Province of St. Nicholas of Tolentino, and in 1622, they accepted the ministration of northeastern Mindanao, together with Palawan and Calamianes.

Many of the 17th century Recollects excelled for their sanctity. No wonder then that their heroic virtues, especially love of prayers and intense asceticism, were reflected by some natives under their spiritual care, as we shall see in the following pages.

— o O o —

“... I shall limit my account to three natives, who have died in the town of Taytay, leaving behind a reputation of eminent sanctity.

"The first that comes to my mind is one named *José Bagumbayan*, who having been in a very special way a disciple of our Religious from his boyhood, before we relinquished those ministries, gave in the town of Taytay through the years of a long life proofs of heroic sanctity.

"It is the practice of the Religious Orders in the Philippines to take charge of the sons of the native chiefs in the towns they administer in order to instruct them from their childhood in good manners, and instil into them those good qualities which are considered indispensable for them, to be able to govern with success their respective towns, for we must not forget that in the administration of justice services of such natives are always utilized.

These native boys live in the convents (i.e. rectories), entrusted to the care of the elderly Fathers, whom the former call 'master'. These Fathers act as tutors or teachers. It must be clearly understood then that when say that our Religious in the Philippines have "servant boys" what is meant is that in addition to the gigantic task that weighs over the shoulders of our Brethren, they willingly undertake this one (rather painful) duty of rearing a group of boys who oftentimes put their patience to the test.

"In this manner was José Bagumbayan brought up in the convent of Taytay, when he assimilated so well the instructions he received that from his earliest years, the admirable workings of the Spirit could be noticed in him. He was humble, truthful, devout, inclined to do good and inimical to every evil behavior. The naughtiness proper to his age was not apparent in him, but, on the contrary, he gave brilliant proofs of the most admirable circumspection. Never or seldom, was it deemed necessary to apply to him any punishment because he barely ever was at the brink of falling into the slightest transgression." (Taken from: *Historia General de los Religiosos descalzos de la Orden de los Hermitaños del Gran Padre y Doctor de la Iglesia San Agustin, de la Congregacion de España y de las Indias*, tomo Cuarto, por el P. Fr. Pedro de San Francisco de Asis, Cronista General, pp. 404-408).

"He, in one word, behaved during his boyhood in such a way as to beget high hopes that once grown in years, he would become a mirror of virtues so as to be a model for Christian perfection. Those who thought in this way were not disappointed, since the good tendencies that he had shown in his childhood

were always present in his adolescence and old age, and, therefore, they had to be acknowledged as an effect of the grace of God.

"He, as a result, gave such proofs of this virtue and of all its effects in such an amazing way, that he showed himself a beautiful plant, bearing much, excelling among the best arrayed plants in a Religious cloister.

"He used to fast three days a week, and scourge himself with great vigor every other three days, wishing to imitate in this way the Religious, who, as he well knew, did practise these austerities. He did not omit the two hours of mental prayer scheduled in our barefooted Congregation, and it is a known fact that therein he received many favors from God. In addition to this, he prayed the whole Rosary on his knees, and did not omit to hear as many Masses as were said in the Church.

"He ate little, even when he was not fasting, and it is an established fact that he did not even drink enough water as to satisfy himself; and mortified his flesh with rather rough hair-shirts.

"In this manner, he trailed the paths of the cleanest chastity, since it was never heard of him that either in action or in words did he ever blemish this angelic virtue. He avoided idle conversations and refrained from going to and fro (roaming around), being always busy about some occupation either of the body or of the spirit.

"Not far from the town, he had ricefield which he tilled with his own hands, and harvesting from it a large amount of edibles which were the food of the natives; he consumed at home the smaller portion, and whatever was left, was given to the helpless poor or those who in some way found themselves in need.

"José longed very ardently to wear our habit, either in the state of Oblate (*Donado*) or as a tertiary (*mantelato*). Being a native, he could not aspire to anything higher than that. However, he encountered insurmountable obstacles for both states that he had to settle for the Confraternity of the Cincture. He was later admitted as a spiritual brother of the Augustinian Recollect and as such he did as much as he could to help the Religious from some of their duties. He often visited the sick, helped them as much as he could, and when they were at the

hour of death, he exhorted them with words in their dialect by means of which he strove to move them to sorrow for their sins, and to lead them along the road to Eternal bliss.

"He also kept himself busy in stopping litigations and in settling quarrels among his fellow natives, thus keeping them always at peace. He went up to the hills many times, braving all kinds of dangers, persuading many runaways (*cimarrones*), and even heathens, to go back to civilized life or to give their names to the Catholic truths.

"For many years he exercised the important job of a school teacher, doing his task with extreme vigilance and careful diligence. He taught them not only how to read, write and count but also music with the accompaniment of the organ. Above all, he taught them how to behave properly as good Christians. In fine, he was a most zealous assistant to the Fathers, and in the fulfilment of these duties he was overtaken by death, which — as it is being told — was such as his life had been; and being granted then the habit as shroud, he was buried in our church in the midst of the acclamations of all.

"Another native named *Bartolomé Lingon* also flourished in the same town, with the renown of a holy man. As a child, he grew up in the school and under the guidance of José Bagumbayan.

At the age of fifteen, he was taken under the care of Father Alonso de San Agustin (otherwise called Garcias), a most holy Religious who had arrived in the Philippines in the year 1684, and who at once was assigned to the ministry of Taytay to become the apostle of Calamianes and to illumine these islands with his preaching and virtues.

"With Father Alonso as his teacher, he perfected himself in all good practices of virtue that he saw the latter doing, and it was ascertained that he lived up to it accordingly. It was amazing to see him so tenacious in fasting, so constant in the performance of virtuous exercises and so devout in the undertakings worthy of a devout Christian. He stayed for long hours in the choirloft on his knees, immersed in prayer. He was likewise very mindful of doing everything which might be for him a source of merit. He showed enthusiasm in his daily chores, and took pleasure in serving others. Indeed, he did not look like a neophyte born in the midst of the superstitions of heathenism but as an ecstatic man deeply rooted in the maxims of the Faith.

"Having been for some years living together with Father Alonso, he took a wife, although with great reluctance. He got married, therefore, to a native woman named Magdalena Iling who was very similar to him in her behavior, as we shall soon see in her eulogy; and so they made such a good couple that they became examples to the natives.

"Bartolomé settled as main sacristan of our church, a job that, in the ministries of the Philippines, is entrusted always to a native living a good Christian life. And then, as it was his duty to be about the things of the temple, he rapidly advanced in the things pertaining to the spirit. He kept the ornaments and sacred vessels; looked after the neatness and decoration of the altars with great diligence; attended the Masses and the Divine Offices with a most devout composure; and accompanied the Religious Pastors in the administration of the sacraments with an edifying modesty. After having fulfilled these and other obligations, he would kneel before the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. Thus, if he could not be found in the sacristy or at home, he would certainly be kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament.

"After the death of his wife, he dedicated himself to the welfare of the souls with a redoubled zeal; and it is held for sure that he reached such a high degree of perfection that he might be a model of sanctity not only for the natives but also for the most observant Religious.

"He had outlived his wife three years and about thirteen months. His death came after a lingering illness. He bore the sickness for some time with an invincible patience; and one day, when almost everybody thought that he has greatly improved, he asked insistently Fr. Alonso to administer quickly to him the Sacraments. Fr. Alonso, however, refused, thinking that he was not in a proximate danger. Yet, Bartolomé replied to him, "Here are my Master and my wife, full of glory, and they have come to accompany me to heaven, and to assure me that today they will bring my labours to an end." Fr. Alonso then agreed to accede to his request and gave him the Sacraments. He gave up his Spirit to the Lord immediately after that in January of 1696.

"His corpse (clothed in our holy habit as he had ordered in his last will) lay in state in the church for almost two days. The natives venerated him during his wake.

"Let us speak now of Magdalena Iling, wife of the said Bartolomé, who died also in Taytay with a great reputation of virtue.

"This good native woman was born in Laguna de Paragua, where her parents resided. From her earliest childhood, she was brought up in Taytay, in the house of her auntie who lived as a virtuous Christian. In this house Magdalena began to see things in the light of reason, and under her auntie's guidance, she finally committed herself to the spiritual direction of the Augustinian Recollects. Her conscience was guided almost without interruption by the said Father Alonso, who, finding in Magdalena a soul endowed with all the qualities that can be desired for the life of virtue, gradually developed her to become a worthy throne of God by grace.

"In a short time therefore, she became a holy woman.

She would have most willingly consecrated herself to Christ in perpetual virginity, but out of obedience to her parents and spiritual director, she consented to become the wife of Bartolomé.

As a married woman, she became an example to married women, just as before she had been so to the unmarried.

"As a teacher of girls, an occupation that was for her a source of suffering, but also resulted into the greater good of the people, she trained many girls to become acquainted with the government of their family, and with following their conscience. She performed this job without a salary, since she saw how much good she could accomplish through it, and as far as she herself was concerned, she greatly benefited from it. In addition to this, she kept herself busy, overflowing with charity in assisting sick women, helping the poor ones in their needs, and facilitating for the dying a happy death.

"Magdalena was a beautiful woman, and because of this, many men tried in vain to lead her to sin. I shall report here only one incident when her virtue was tested.

"There was in Taytay an *Alcalde Mayor* who was indulging in all sorts of vices, specially as regards lasciviousness. He fell in love with Magdalena and tried all means to seduce her. She, however, constantly rejected his advances. The *Alcalde*, furthermore, offered her husband a well paid job, which would demand of Magdalena and Bartolomé to dwell in the *Alcalde's* castle.

The Alcalde thought that if Magdalena stayed in his quarters, he could conquer her himself more easily. However, when the couple realized this ruse, Bartolomé did not accept the job.

"One day, when the Alcalde lost his cool, he went to the house of Magdalena. Upon knowing that she had been left there alone, he firmly determined to carry out his wish by all means. But when she saw him so determined, and that she could not help herself by shouting nor by fleeing, she made use of a well-thought strategy in order to emerge victorious. With loving words, she told him to allow her three-days' time to get well from a current painful illness and afterwards, he could do what he liked. Courteously agreeing to the request, he left. And God, hearing the prayers of His handmaid, who asked Him for help in such a risky venture, punished the Alcalde with an illness that brought him close to death. With such warning, he became aware of his sin and, venerating Magdalena a saintly woman, he absolutely gave up his evil intention.

"A short time after, God was pleased to give her a chance to grow more in merits through sickness in order to further purify her. She was assailed by a malady in the breast that caused her unspeakable pains for many months. Yet, in the midst of her anguish, she excelled for her patience, conforming herself in everything with the divine will. At the point of death, she asked Father Alonso to strengthen her with the sacraments. She received them with fervor, edifying all those who were present, among whom was a good number of natives and Spaniards. After receiving the Unction of the sick, her eyes grew resplendent like two blazing lights. She gave up her spirit on December 8, 1692.

"It was common knowledge that she had known and foretold the day and the hour of her passing. And it was a source of no small wonder that, in spite of her sickness and the resulting gangrene of which she died, her corpse exuded until burial a heavenly fragrance. Due to this, and to her heroic virtues as well, she was given a most honourable burial in the chapel of our church, while all were acclaiming her a most holy woman."

FR. PABLO FERNÁNDEZ, O.P.

LITURGY

The Saturday Evening Mass according to the New Canon Law

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

Back in 1964 the Vatican radio surprised its listeners with the news that the Sacred Congregation of the Council had granted to some local Ordinaries the faculty to provide that the faithful may fulfill the obligation to attend Mass also by assisting at its celebration on Saturday evening. The conditions were that Mass could be celebrated after Saturday's first vespers; the designation of the hours, places and churches for the application of this faculty was left to the discretion of the local Ordinaries; the liturgical texts of the following day had to be used; there had to be a homily and the prayer of the faithful (universal prayer). The newscast added the warning that the faithful should be instructed so that they retain the idea that Sunday is and remains to be the original Christian feast day, a day set apart for the Lord.

The reasons for granting this faculty were the shortage of priests and the heavy travel of people on weekends for the sake of recreation and sports events.

In 1967 the Instruction "Eucharisticum Mysterium" granted the same faculty generally to local Ordinaries. Now they no longer had to apply to the Sacred Congregation of the Council. Bishops could act on their own. The Instruction gave a warning that pastors must "carefully teach the faithful the meaning of this favor and take steps to prevent its lessening in any way the sense of what Sunday is. This concession is meant to enable the faithful in today's conditions to celebrate more easily the day of the Lord's resurrection. All concessions and contrary customs notwithstanding, this Mass may be celebrated only on Saturday evening, at hours to be determined by the local Ordinary" (n. 28).

These regulations remained unchanged until 1983. With the publication of the new Canon Law we enter into a new discipline concerning the Saturday evening Mass. On the first

Sunday of Advent 1983 canon 1248,1 comes into force. It states that "the precept to take part in the Mass is fulfilled if one assists the Mass wherever it is celebrated according to the Catholic rite, either on the feast day itself or on the evening of the preceding day."

What does this mean for the religious practice of the faithful? Until now it depended on the concession of the local Ordinary whether Saturday evening Masses could be held, and where they could be held. Canon 1248,1 does no longer mention the local Ordinary in this matter. Consequently, it depends now on the local pastor to decide whether he offers his parishioners this opportunity to celebrate the Sunday Mass on the evening of the preceding day. The lawgiver is now of the opinion that the need for this concession is universal. Therefore, he has taken the indult from the judgment of the local Ordinary, and handed it over as a universal law to the local pastor.

Another consequence of canon 1248,1 is that no one may in the future prescribe that the faithful can fulfill their Sunday obligation only on Sundays. Anyone attending Mass during the Saturday evening hours *ipso facto* has fulfilled the precept to take part in the Sunday Mass.

The general rule for the Calendar, which formerly only applied to the Liturgy of the Hours, is now in force also for the celebration and attendance of Mass: "The observance of Sunday and solemnities begins with the evening of the preceding day" (General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, n. 3).

Consequently, any Saturday evening Mass, also when celebrated outside the parish church, and without special permission from the local Ordinary, can be used by the faithful to fulfill their Sunday obligation. There is no longer any need for local Ordinaries to designate churches (usually parish churches) and groups of persons to whom the former indult was applied. Here we have no longer an indult, but a new general law of the Church.

HOMILETICAL NOTES

By

Fr. Ramon Perez, O.P.

November 4, 1984 — THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY

Readings:

Mal. 1:4-2:10

I Thess. 2:7-9, 13

Mt. 23:1-12

First Reading. It is addressed to the priests of the Old Testament and thus it presents a difficulty in applying it to a Sunday congregation. God laments that the old covenant between Him and the priestly tribe (Levi) has been disregarded or heavily mutilated by later priests. God threatens them severely and reminds them of the supreme vocation and honor entrusted to a Minister of God: "the lips of the priest ought to safeguard knowledge; his mouth is where instruction should be sought, since he is a messenger of Yahweh Sabaoth." Tremendous words that must necessarily urge all priests to meditate for life on their call, lest the terrible judgment be applied to us too: "But you, you have strayed from the way; you have caused many to stumble by your teaching."

Many of our parishioners are rather lukewarm too when it comes to the *teaching* aspect of a priest's vocation. We are greatly in demand to "say Mass" at every opportunity and everywhere. But our homilies and catechesis, in whatever form, are not that popular. Today might be the right occasion to explain that the priest is, before all else, a teacher of the Faith: that his talks, sermons, seminars, etc. are not just decorations but extremely vital; that the Lord will exact from him a strict account of his teaching mission. (But, *inter nos*, let us also constantly improve our methods to bring the Lord's message more effectively and convincingly).

Second Reading. Paul appears as the model of all preachers, loving the flock "like a mother" and teaching it "as a father".

Giving God's message implies readiness to offer "our lives" too. Paul also commends the Thessalonians because they accepted his teaching as God's message, not as a purely human word.

God's word possesses power of its own: supposing the good will of the listeners and the sincerity of the teacher, it *always* moves the heart. Our listeners, therefore, must be motivated properly. Once this is accomplished the word itself will do the rest. We know whether the word of God has moved our heart by the results. Paul highly praises the Thessalonians because God's teachings "are a *living power* among you..." The word of God is indeed proclaimed every day through a hundred media, yet people are not converted, justice not done, love not practiced. Why so when that divine word is so powerful? Because of two possible reasons: 1) the teacher does not live sufficiently well what he teaches. 2) the listener has not been attuned properly.

Gospel Reading. Jesus guides his listeners in solving the problem posed by the leaders who teach but do not practice. The case was particularly evident among the Scribes and Pharisees, who overburdened the conscience of the people but, being "lawyers" they found ways of exempting themselves from such burden. They worked hard at impressing the people with an "official sanctity" which inside was totally devoid of meaning. The phylactery was a small case containing some biblical texts about the Law. It could be attached to the arm or to the forehead, taking literally, for example, Ex. 13:9 and 16. Jesus does not mean to condemn the use of phylacteries or of tassels but the vanity with which the Pharisees wore them, especially when their lives did not match at all the meaning of those signs.

Confronted with this situation Jesus provides a clear-cut answer: listen to and practice *what they teach*, but avoid *what they do*. Easier said than done, indeed, but the injunction will have the assistance of his grace. Our Lord disapproves as well the use of the words *Teacher* and *Father* for vanity's sake. When he says we have only one Teacher (Jesus) and only one Father (God) he does not mean to deny that our teachers in the Faith and parents are not to be honored with those names, but that teachers and parents are so only in so far as they participate of God's fatherhood and wisdom. Jesus concludes projecting the true image of a teacher, or of anyone in authority in that matter: the great among you must be at the service of all. Authority, then, equals service, not power. External signs of authority merely underline that same fact.

It follows then that teaching the word of God is a great mission, a great privilege and a great responsibility to be taken seriously and humbly. By the same token *listening* to that divine Word is an equally great privilege and responsibility. Both preacher and listener must *do* what the word says.

**November 11, 1984 — THIRTY SECOND SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME**

Readings:

Wisdom 6:12-16

I Thess. 4:13-18

Mt. 25:1-13

First Reading. The book of Wisdom was written some time in the first century B.C. By this time the Jews (at least those in the Dispora) were greatly attracted by the Greek culture, with its popular systems of Philosophy, its advanced sciences, etc. The book tries to enlighten the Jews by its presentation of the divine Wisdom, which surpasses anything human beings will ever achieve. The paragraph chosen for today emphasizes the easy availability of wisdom to those who sincerely desire it. The fundamental principle of this divine wisdom is, of course, the ever deeper knowledge of God and of His will. Knowing God and living by that knowledge will lead us to salvation. In the words of St. John of the Cross, "he who achieves salvation knows everything; he who does not, knows nothing." Yet people seem concerned mostly about the transitory values of human progress, often very questionable.

Second Reading. It would seem that some Thessalonians were worried about the lot of their dead at the time of the Lord's second coming to judge the world. Paul puts them at ease through a very tender and consoling sentence: "do not grieve about those who have died, as if you did not have hope." According to this *sure* hope we know that those who died in *Jesus* will live with him. Indeed the only reliable consolation we will ever find at the death of our loved ones is given to us exclusively by the certainty of our Faith. Paul also answers the question of the time of the Parousia. Although we cannot know when it will come one thing is sure (from the Lord's own teaching): when it does come, those who *died* in the Lord and those who still *live* in the Lord will both be taken up to heaven to enjoy the glorious company of God for all eternity. The reading ends again with another appealing and comforting word: "with such

thoughts, do console one another." The important thing, therefore, is not to live long or "well" (materially speaking) but to have the wisdom of living according to His will, as the only basis of our Faith and hope.

Gospel Reading. Vigilance is the theme stressed in the parable of the ten bridesmaids. The set-up of the parable is taken from a wedding celebration. However, the details describing the wedding are probably imaginary, not real. Our Lord deliberately "creates" certain details precisely to emphasize his point: vigilance. The ten girls have been invited to honor the bridegroom (no mention is made of the bride!). But not all proved prudent and careful. All should have been prepared for the possibility of a delay, but half of them took no such precaution. The bridesmaids are we, called to the "wedding" of our eternal salvation. The prudent virgins are those who take their Christian life seriously. The foolish ones are those who take it easy, do not respond to God's call and graces and, instead, frustrate them through a sinful life. The bridegroom is, of course, our Lord, who at the end of our life will come — unexpectedly and unannounced. If we are ready he will surely take us to the banquet of heaven. If not . . . The warning is clear: we cannot afford to wait until the last moment. We must get ready now and remain so always. So let us take stock of our conscience: is it clear? Is it doubtful? Is our life a constant service of love to God and neighbor? Are we disturbed by questionable deals, or evil deeds against God or neighbor — in politics, in business, in family duties and family sanctity? How can we go to bed every night unconcerned, if our life is an insult to the Lord's commandments? Unfortunately this is the attitude of many who say that "God will understand," or "later on, not now; I am very busy . . ." If we refuse to repent and orient our life as Christ wants us, it is quite probable that we will be caught unprepared and without time to make a change. We might, like the foolish bridesmaids, call on the Lord to "open the door for us", only to hear the terrible words: "you were given a whole life to serve and love your only Creator, Saviour and Friend and you deliberately missed chance after chance . . . I do not know you . . ."

The preacher, like a true prophet must not cover up or water down the parts of the gospel that "people of today might not like to hear", as, for example, the message of today. Yet, if we are faithful to the word of God, we must proclaim it as is, for it is always timely and valid.

November 18th — 33rd SUNDAY

Readings:

Prov. 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31

I Thess. 5:1-6

Mt. 25:14-30

First Reading. This reading actually is composed of excerpts from the last chapter of the book of proverbs. Reading the whole chapter will help get a complete picture of the ideal wife, truly the heart of the family. Proverbs exalts her highly to project her image and thus draw imitation. The writer assumes that such perfect wife is not easy to find: she is "far beyond pearls". Three things are found in the ideal wife: 1) she is a real inspiration for her husband, 2) she works hard at home, without avoiding outside "business" (she buys a vineyard and deals with merchants); but, obviously, her center is the home. 3) She is extremely generous with the poor and needy. A perfect wife grows in wisdom and from it she derives the strength of her vocation as a wife and mother. But she must not be taken for granted: she is entitled to a share of her produce and work, she must be respected and loved, precisely because she is an admirable image of God's goodness.

In this days of marital infidelity, degradation of a woman in the mass media and in the entertainment world, where she becomes agent and victim of human brutality, the words of the holy Scripture do sound encouraging. A perfect woman (just like a perfect man) is still possible because whatever obstacles may have existed before our Lord came, should no longer exist after Christianity. Where they still exist they are a strong indictment of our brand of Christianity. It is said that even civilization depends on women. As long as they hold to their true image, civilization can be saved. But when women become corrupted or systematically abused, the end of a civilization is just around the corner.

Second Reading. St. Paul continues where he left off last Sunday regarding the Parousia, or Day of Judgment. Having in mind Matthew 24:36-44, he insists that the last day cannot be known as to its coming: it will arrive like a thief. Therefore

the center of attention must be shifted to the readiness and vigilance needed for that day. Even if we knew its date, still we would be required to be prepared for it; otherwise our Christian life would be meaningless. Therefore it should be totally irrelevant whether we know the last day or not, for people who truly love God are always ready and will not be caught by surprise. Wisely then Paul reminds the Thessalonians to live as children of the light.

It will not be out of place to explain to our congregation that our worry should be centered not on the end of the world but on our personal last day on earth, a day which most often we cannot even guess. To prepare for that day should be our constant preoccupation, through an honorable, clean and just life.

Gospel Reading. A natural consequence of the vigilance we should always have is the good use of God's graces. He entrusts to us immensely valuable gifts, both natural and supernatural, and expects us to invest them wisely, thus making them produce even more. God distributes his graces and talents unequally, but in any case quite abundantly. Even the one talent of today's Gospel amounts to a small fortune. Faithfulness to God's graces produces two consequences: 1) the original grace is increased in proportion to that faithfulness; and 2) God also invites us to participate in "his joy", also in proportion to our efforts on earth. These talents (graces) are not actually ours; we merely receive them in trust with the obligation of letting them grow abundantly. Therefore abandoning these graces will not mean just denial of reward but positive punishment, like the lazy servant who hid his talent. Some concrete applications: the rich have received wealth (often without working for it) as administrators who know how to share it with those in need. That wealth in the hands of the ignorant would indeed be lost, but the intelligent who possess it are not absolute owners... Those elected into public office hold indeed much power, but it must be used for the common good, not just for one's friends or relatives... A priest has received ordination not for his own "future" but for the service of the community. God, the giver of our talents and privileges, will surely demand from us an *exact* account of how we used them. While his divine mercy will surely be there, so will be his justice. It is mentioned at times that nowadays we emphasize only God's love and goodness but ignore his justice. The Gospel of today, properly explained, does present a balanced perspective of God's attributes.

November 25, 1984 — CHRIST THE KING FEAST

Readings:

Ez. 34:11-12, 15-17

I Cor. 15:20-26, 28

Mt. 25:31-46

First Reading. The prophet Ezequiel gives us a hint as to the kind of "King" the Messiah will be: rather than a military or powerful sovereign he will appear more like a humble shepherd. The comparison is taken, of course, from a normal occurrence around the Mediterranean basin: the shepherd-sheep link. Unlike other watchers of animals, the shepherd had (and still has) something like a special relationship with his sheep. He is at all times with them, gives each one a name, protects them from wild beasts and personally brings them to the fold at the end of the day. Not only the prophets but Our Lord as well found the shepherd's life an excellent description of his mission. He is then a king of hearts, who attracts them exclusively by his love and humility, not by coercion or force. A hint also for all of his disciples who must learn to bring the "bad" to the truth through the same technique. This reading sounds particularly loving and appealing, but it will be meaningless if read without feeling. Perhaps the celebrant should see the lay reader ahead of time and together agree on the best way to proclaim this beautiful piece from Ezequiel. Only the personal devotion of reader and celebrant can bring out the full force of these marvelous and tender lines.

Second Reading. The topic of these verses is not primarily the kingship of Jesus but the resurrection of the dead on the day of the Parousia. But it will be on that day when the whole creation will be fulfilled and manifested in all its glory the fact that our Lord has been handed overall authority and sovereignty. It will be only then that death itself will be defeated. Paul wrote these lines to give courage to his readers and to strengthen their faith in this vital dogma of the Christian faith. True we must not just lean on falsely "angelic" attitude, living in the illusion that this world does not matter. But at the same time we must also look forward to the reality and certainty of the Lord's coming as the King of all hearts he has conquered through his redemption and grace.

Gospel. After presenting the kingdom through a series of parables, Matthew focuses his attention on the coming of the King

himself at the end of the world to pass the final judgment on all "nations", thus expressing the universality of this judgment. Admission to or elimination from the kingdom of God will depend on whether we were "sheep" or "goats". Again the sheep as the image of the just is emphasized but this time in contrast with the goats as a symbol of the wicked. The choice of this comparison is based on the simplicity and sense of "obedience" to the shepherd by the sheep as opposed to the "stubbornness" of goats. The basis of the King's sentence will be justice and love. This is actually the strong part of the message. Helping — and doing justice — to the oppressed and the needy will constitute the reward of the King, not because these works of mercy were done but because they were done "for him". The King identifies himself with the poor and the abandoned, the lonely and the sick. In these days of so much agitation in favor of the poor and the oppressed, it will be very important to remember the *motive* that should guide our social action programs: the person as an image and child of God.

The consequences of the judgment are but most serious: eternal life or eternal punishment. Are these words of the Lord not clear enough?

December 2 — FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Readings:

Is. 63:16-17; 64:1-8

I Cor. 1:3-9

Mk. 13:33-37

First Reading. This moving appeal to God for mercy was made after the destruction of Jerusalem's temple. The prophet acknowledges the sins of his people that brought about destruction, misery and exile. But he also expresses faith and hope in God, who still remains Israel's true Father: "We the clay, you the potter..." Briefly Isaias describes, in his own inimitable poetic style the cycle of our own lives: fall and rise; the humiliation of sin but the ever present possibility of conversion, thanks exclusively to the generosity of God's grace, that "tears the heavens open..." How great the mercy of God, our Father, who in the face of repeated offenses, still forgives and loves us.

Second Reading. These short verses as part of the letter's greetings to the Corinthians seem to be intended to cheer them up

before Paul will severely call their attention to divisions and to totally unacceptable moral deviations that were taking place in Corinth, like incest and lawsuits before pagan judges. Paul admits that their Christian community had received a number of charismatic gifts, which he enumerates later in chapter 12: preaching, faith, healing, miracles, etc. Teachers and preachers of the Faith are specially singled out for praise. The existence of these graces should have been one more reason to present to the pagan society of their time a clean witnessing of Christian life. As Christians we too have received countless proofs of the Lord's love for us, which we undermine or fail to share with others through a faithful and loyal practice of our faith. How true it is that only a "restless" Christian is a genuine one.

Gospel. The theme is the same as that of the thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary time (which in 1984 fell on November 11): vigilance. The reader is kindly referred to the homily of that day. It may be added that this Sunday the Church focuses its attention on the historical coming of our Lord on Christmas not as final but as the sign of his eschatological one. In spite of all its intense attraction, to stop at the Christmas celebration would defeat the purpose of Advent and of the Nativity. Christ "will come again" and that will be the final coming. His birth into human history has the sole purpose of leading us to the final encounter.

December 8 — FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Readings:

Genesis 3:9-15, 20

Eph. 1:3-6, 11-12

Luk. 1:26-38

The First Reading introduces us to mankind's great tragedy: sin. But it also announces the consoling promise of our salvation and of the fact that we can always overcome and even prevent serious sin. The second reading explains how that salvation works out: through the entirely gratuitous gift of the Father who sent His only Son to "claim" us for Him. The gospel insinuates the first fruit of the Lord's redemption: Mary, who is greeted with the unusual expression "full of grace", unknown until then in Biblical literature. Tradition explains that Mary could not really be "full of grace" if she had been stained

by original sin, the sole source of our weakness and tendency towards evil. Being free from original sin from the very first instance of her existence would also free her entirely even from the capacity to sin. As a consequence of her immaculate conception, Mary could not commit even the slightest venial sin, nor in any way say *no* to what she knew was the will of God. And all this exclusively because of the gracious kindness of God, not because of any merit on her part.

Yet Mary lived in the most natural and human way, in great humility and simplicity. Why was our Blessed Mother so privileged? Why was she redeemed "in advance" so to speak? Just because of her future motherhood. All her privileges converged on the fact that she was God's Mother. Whatever happened before that blessed day, it prepared her for it. Whatever followed was a consequence of her maternity. We may be tempted to just admire Mary's incredible privileges and purity and stop there. Yet Mary's exceptional case is God's "hint" for all of us. It is a fact that we take His grace for granted; that we abuse His patience and goodness; that we do not give much importance to the idea of perfection. How terribly far is this attitude from that of Mary! Really how much does God expect from us? How do we become really worthy of Him? How do we please Him best? Observing how He prepared our Blessed Mother to receive Him we get a fairly good idea. To make her worthy of Him He made of her the most perfect garden of virtue, purity and love. Let us not take God for granted and let us see in what He made of Mary, a model whom we should strive to imitate.

December 9 — SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Readings:

Is. 40:1-5, 9-11

2 Peter 3:8-14

Mk. 1:1-8

First Reading. Chapter 40 of Isaiah (actually the "Second Isaiah") provides us with one of the most beautiful pieces in the Scriptures, both in form and in substance. It is the beginning of the "Book of Consolation", that ends with chapter 55. The people of God are now suffering exile in Babylon while their nation is ravaged. The prophet announces the end of their trials because Jerusalem's sin "has been atoned for". The strength

of prophecy lies on the fact that it is the Lord God who makes it; it is his solemn word that cannot fail. So He asks that the *straight way* worthy of God be made to receive Him, coming in all His glory to save His people. It was the unusual thing in ancient times to "make straight" the road through which an emperor or king would pass. This would entail at times enormous work and expenses, but people, wisely or not, thought the dignity of their leader demanded it. Surely the return of God to His people did not ask for that kind of straightening, but for the flattening in man of the mountains of his arrogance and pride. Only that would enable him to see his God coming, not as emperor but "as a shepherd gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast..."

Second Reading. Connecting with the theme of readiness presented by the first reading, St. Peter tells us not to take for granted the delay of the Lord's coming. He has promised us "new heavens and new earth", free from injustice and sin; but to deserve that reward we must take full advantage of God's patience and time to "live holy and saintly lives... without spot or stain so that *he will find you at peace*. Constant preparedness must then be the aim of our lives. If this is necessary for all, a special call must be made to those who, as a matter of habit, live separated from the Lord by a situation of injustice, using power and politics as a vehicle for it; or immorality, like adultery or prostitution, and a thousand others. To be credible and effective though, aside of the strength of an impeccable life, our denunciation of evil must make no exception and the presentation of the Lord's message be complete.

Gospel. In the first reading Isaiah speaks of a messenger sent by God to prepare His way. The voice of the messenger cries in the wilderness. Now St. Mark "officially" identifies the messenger as John the Baptist. His announcement to mankind is one of penance, that is, total conversion. Only that conversion can be adequate to deserve the real object of John's preaching: Jesus. All Christians must be a reproduction of John in proclaiming the coming of the Lord, but we too must live like him if we want to be credible: with total detachment from wealth and power — all kinds of power. The purpose of a proclamation is to touch the heart of the listener, not to pressure him by force. The "sinner" who is "changed" because of pressure will not remain changed for long. In this regard it might be useful to ask ourselves: who has been more effective in proclaiming the gospel, Mother Teresa in her powerless and feeble voice or other angry and loud individuals or groups? Who

has moved more hearts? Apparently it is not enough to be right or zealous or even poor. Ironically, a messenger must also be a *nobody*, like John, so that God's powerful message may come forward, not our own.

December 16 — THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Readings:

Is. 61:1-2, 10:11

I Thess. 5:16-24

Jn. 1:6-8, 19-28

First Reading. In the present context of our own country the words of Isaiah should produce a hopeful echo. The same God who sent Isaiah to "bring good news to the poor, to bind up broken hearts, to proclaim liberty to captives" (in whatever form!) is the same God who sends other "anointed" to do exactly the same in our time, for God does not love us any less than He loved ancient Israel. They too had the same miseries, sins and sorrows we now have. But to let that visitation of God become operative in us we too must be ready to accept a condition: integrity, that is justice, so as to appear before the Lord clothed as a bride. This sense of integrity is needed by all: the rich who amasses wealth and the hospitality girl who sells herself; the politician who abuses his power and the jeepney driver who cuts trips; the military who "salvages" and the dissident who does the same thing, etc. It is a serious error to single out some sins and some people as our targets and forget or excuse others who, just the same, fail somewhere else. All human beings, including the "consecrated", need constant reform and search for integrity as the only possible way of finding "joy in Yahweh".

Second Reading. Paul beautifully and in four words presents the major characteristics of a Christian: love, joy, prayer and thanksgiving. From the negative side he warns the Thessalonians to avoid every form of evil, keeping themselves blameless in heart and body. What for? For the coming of our Lord. This last sentence provides the advent motive for its use at this time.

Gospel. The theme of today's Gospel is the same as that of last Sunday: the presentation of St. John the Baptist as the Precursor of our Lord, but this time it is the version of St. John.

By now John has become very famous not just because he baptizes but because he changes people from sinners into decent persons, thus preparing the way for the Gospel message of our Lord. John is aware of his importance but his humility will not let him capitalize on it and take all the honors. On the contrary he insists he is merely a "voice" for Someone coming after him. The latter's is the honor and for His sake he preaches to the crowds. That is his mission, not self glorification.

The attitude of John provides an excellent example for priests and laymen alike. In the apostolate we are merely a "voice", or instruments of the Lord, a voice He uses to call our brothers and sisters to a Christian and holy life. If we pretend to make ourselves not the instrument but the real thing, then our ministry and apostolate will necessarily fail. Our whole honor is in obeying *His* plans, clearly shown by the Church, not ours. When meditated upon a little bit, we will find the personality of John an extremely attractive model for a fruitful apostolate.

December 23 — FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Readings:

2 Sam. 7:1-5; 8-12, 14-16

Rom. 16:25-27

Lk. 1:26-38

First Reading. David has obtained national peace and he thinks of building a temple to honor God. But the plans of God are different. He tells his servant through the prophet Nathan that his mission is not the temple but the foundation and strengthening of the house of David, as the Messianic symbol of God's kingdom, a kingdom that ultimately will be established by the appearance of Jesus in the world. The reading, then, is highly technical but what is important for us is to see in it the human and historical roots of Our Blessed Lord; that is, his becoming one like us. He wanted to have "ancestors" like ours (some of them not exactly holy) precisely to encourage us to approach Him with total trust. His assuming of human nature lifts also our dignity to its highest possible level. That great was His love for us. That great too should our response be.

Second Reading. The text of this doxology has been disputed, specially as to its location. But that is not important to us now.

The message is: the mystery of the Messiah hidden for centuries has now been revealed in Jesus Christ. What had been a promise to David, now has bloomed into full reality, way beyond what David could have ever dreamed of. "So clear" is the revelation that even pagans can see it. And here we, formerly pagans, come in. How wonderful, how unbelievable that God should share His divine secrets with us, sinful and stubborn mortals! What more can we possibly ask for? And what is, again, our response to His loving revelation?

Gospel. Christmas is by now around the corner. The narration of the Lord's conception increases the sense of expectation in men of goodwill. The cycle of Advent is about to end and humanity relives again the inexhaustible mystery of Christmas. But the homilist must clearly emphasize that we are witnessing not merely the birth of a child, albeit extraordinary, but the incarnation of God's Son in Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the real gift celebrated at Christmas. The materialistic approach to the birth of our Lord has brought sadness, loneliness and, for some, even sins because of its stress on the commercial aspect. Many people will feel bored on Christmas eve because they have too much; many others will be lonely and hungry because they have nothing. All because of our distortion of the real meaning of Christmas which is not a spending spree, but the celebration of God's supreme gift to mankind in the person of His Son. The materialistic abuses of Christmas are so deeply rooted now that people will not change just because the priest says so. Nevertheless, we must unceasingly project to our parishioners the genuine face of Christmas to help them see its real beauty and move their hearts to the gift of themselves to others, just as our Lord gave Himself to us.

December 30 — FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Readings:

Sir. 3:3-7; 14-17

Col. 3:12-21

Lk. 2:22-40

We may run the risk of speaking in beautiful but very general words about the family in today's homily. That the family is the nicest and most important institution is not new to anyone. But what Christians need to know today is the

"how" to become an ideal family. The Church possesses an immense wealth of divine wisdom as well as of merely human experience to assist the family most effectively. Unfortunately that wealth does not filter into actual situations as much or as often as needed. On this most precious feast the homilist should present strongly the mind of the Church on the family and challenge the congregation to take a clear stand on it. The family is losing ground at an alarming speed and we have every reason to believe that soon very little of it will be left. *Unless* the christian community reacts sharply and fast. What has been done so far is indeed commendable but insufficient.

Three major aspects in the family apostolate need reinforcement as "Familiaris Consortio" indicates: 1) the remote preparation which begins with the initial catechetical formation of the child. 2) the immediate preparation before the wedding, which should last long enough. 3) the growth afterwards through regular sharings, seminars, etc. and, of course, through intense family prayer. Every Catholic family should find time for any of the several family organizations existing in our parishes. The art of preparing young people for marriage is an exacting one and few parents are gifted with it. In turn, unprepared parents will bring up unprepared children and the cycle will never be broken. Can the Church, that is those sufficiently formed for it, do something to dispel the wrong impression that capacity for procreation equals maturity for marriage? Priests need the cooperation of parents in expecting from couples three basic things: 1) good adult understanding of the Faith and of family duties. 2) a minimum of psychological and mental maturity for the responsibilities of marriage. 3) solidarity with the poor by eliminating once and for all from our Churches the scandalous weddings "en grande", which drive away from the sacrament thousands who cannot afford "beautiful weddings".

The Church has a golden opportunity before the wedding to prepare a couple. But it is her *only chance*; if she misses it she misses everything. For this reason the gentle pressure of the Church demanding sufficient time for counselling should be easily accepted. Rush marriages are never a help and always a death sentence on genuine family life; a death sentence that is almost always carried out mercilessly. When it comes to rush weddings parents are often the culprit because instead of preventing them they become their major accomplices. They too

permit their children to live together to the profound scandal of other children and neighbors. Parents act this way because they were never trained in the true values of the Gospel.

The broken-family epidemic is another area that needs urgent and strong action not only from the Church but also from the government itself. The Church should use its voice and its moral authority to press the government to effectively protect the many thousands of innocent children cruelly abandoned by their parents. Society cannot tolerate this enormous injustice. A lot of pressure is being exerted to defend the rights of the poor and the oppressed and the effects are often impressive. How about using that same formidable weapon to prevent evil parents from denying support to their families while joining immoral unions? Such "parents" are not only a threat to the institution of the family: they are an actual destructive force of the whole society since the family is the first cell in that society.

We all wish to have in our midst the ideal family of Nazareth. But to achieve that dream, Christians from all sectors must work very hard on the one hand to prepare at length those who have received the vocation for parenthood, and on the other by preventing the obviously unfit from entering into such a sacred institution. The need is extreme; the efforts exerted so far not nearly enough. Let us imitate the holy Father, Pope John Paul, who so valiantly and tirelessly fights for the rights of the family everywhere he goes.

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REPLIES TO QUERIES . . .

(Continued from 726)

Summus Pontifex Ioannes Paulus II in Audientia die 11 m. iulii a. 1984 infrascripto concessa, de supradictis decisionibus certior factus eas publicari iussit.

The Supreme Pontiff John Paul II, in an audience granted to the undersigned on 11 July 1984, was informed of the foregoing decisions and he ordered their publication.

✠ ROSALIO CASTILLO LARA
Titular Archbishop of Praecausa, *Pro-President*

INDEX FOR VOLUME LX

DOCUMENTS

ACTS OF JOHN PAUL

- * Establishment of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ozamis, p. 63 — January-February.
- * The New Diocese of Antipolo, p. 255 — March-April.
- * Establishment of the New Diocese of San Jose, p. 131 — November-December.

THE POPE SPEAKS

- * Vocation and Seminary Preparation are Proofs of the Church's Vitality, p. 577 — September-October.
- * Renewed Commitment of Collegiality for Evangelization and Catechesis, p. 580 — September-October.
- * To the Priesthood, God's Gift for Man, the Priest Responds with the Gift of Himself, p. 584 — September-October.
- * Search for Justice and Brotherhood More Valuable than Technological Progress — Pope Says to Workers, p. 588 — September-October.
- * Flowering of the Church in Korea the Fruit of the Heroism of the Martyrs, p. 592 — September-October.
- * Celebrations of the Centenary of Arrival of the Missionaries, p. 597 — September-October.
- * Church's Maturity in the Young Nations Marked by Priestly and Religious Vocations, p. 599 — September-October.
- * John Paul II's Apostolic Journey to the Far East — Concluded, p. 604 — September-October.
- * Pope Expresses Thanks for Apostolic Ministry to the Far East and Oceania, p. 608 — September-October.
- * Brief Resumé of the Lives of 103 Korean Martyrs, p. 612 — September-October.
- * Redemption Donum, p. 564 — November-December.
- * Work and Dignity of the Person in the Light of the Church's Social Teachings, p. 682 — November-December.

APPOINTMENT LETTERS

- * Most Rev. Teodoro Buhain, p. 65 — January-February.
- * Most Rev. Francisco San Diego, p. 60 — January-February.
- * Most Rev. Protacio Gungon, p. 257 — March-April.
- * Most Rev. Paciano Aniceto, p. 373 — May-June.
- * Most Rev. Diosdado Talamayan, p. 374 — May-June.
- * Most Rev. Raul Martires, p. 494 — July-August.
- * Most Rev. Leonardo Legaspi, p. 495 — July-August.
- * Most Rev. Teodoro Bacani, p. 730 — November-December.

ARZOBISPADO DE MANILA

- * Catholic Teaching on Marriage, p. 258 — March-April.
- * Re: Guest Priests, p. 259 — March-April.

CASAROLI, AUGUSTINUS (Cardinal)

- * Ecclesiastical Province of Ozamis, p. 63 — January-February.
- * Establishment of the New Diocese of San Jose, p. 731 — November-December.

CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES (CBCP)

- * The 1984 Plebiscite and Election, p. 252 — March-April.
- * Let There Be Life, p. 625 — September-October.

CONFALONIERI, CAROLUS (Cardinal)

- * The New Diocese of Antipolo, p. 255 — March-April.

LARA, ROSALIO CASTILLO (D.D.)

- * Replies to Queries on the Code of Canon Law, p. 725 — November-December.

LEGASPI, LEONARDO (D.D.)

- * Circular, p. 633 — September-October.

760 BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS

MABUTAS, ANTONIO (D.D.)

- * The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines:
A Report, p. 242 — March-April.
- * Reconciliation Today, p. 248 — March-April.
- * National Appellate Matrimonial Tribunal, p. 727 — November-December.

SACRED CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

- * Instruction on Liturgical Formation in Seminaries, p. 37 — January-February.

SACR. CONG. PRO DOCTRINA FIDEI

- * Responsa ad Proposita Dubia, p. 67 — January-February.

SACRED CONGREGATION FOR THE SACRAMENT
AND DIVINE WORSHIP

- * Official Communications, p. 497 — July-August.

TUMBOCON, CICERON (D.D.)

- * Pastoral Letter on the Jubilee Year of Redemption, p. 237 — March-April.

AUTHORS

ALONSO, BERNABE (OP)

- * The Power of the Diocesan Bishops to Dispense from Ecclesiastical Laws, p. 204 — March-April.

BERNACER, JOSE LUIS (SDB)

- * Sanctions in the Church, p. 338 — May-June.

BELITA, JIMMY (CM)

- * A Reflection: Jubilee and Eucharist, p. 151 — March-April.

CAJILIG, VICENTE (OP)

- * Our Lady of Fatima in Manila, p. 280 — May-June.
- * The Pope and the Asians, p. 544 — September-October.
- * The Love that Makes Saints, p. 652 — November-December.

CASAROLI, AUGUSTINUS (Cardinal)

- * Ecclesiastical Province of Ozamis, p. 63 — January-Feb.
- * Appointment of Msgr. Teodoro Buhain, p. 65 — January-February.
- * Appointment of Msgr. Francisco San Diego, p. 66 — January-February.
- * The Holy See and Peace, p. 281 — May-June.
- * Appointment of Msgr. Paciano Aniceto, p. 373 — May-June.
- * Appointment of Msgr. Diosdado Talamayan, p. 374 — May-June.
- * Appointment of Msgr. Raul Martires, p. 494 — July-Aug.
- * Appointment of Msgr. Leonardo Legaspi, p. 495 — July-August.
- * Appointment of Msgr. Teodoro Bacani, p. 730 — November-December.
- * Establishment of the New Diocese of San Jose, p. 731 — November-December.

CASTILLO, NORBERTO (OP)

- * A Little Dose of Creativtiy will not Spoil Philosophy, p. 549 — September-October.

CBCP (CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES)

- * The 1984 Plebiscite and Election, p. 252 — March-April.
- * Let There Be Life, p. 625 — September-October.

CAVANNA, JESUS Ma. (CM)

- * The Church Wants Minor Seminaries Today, p. 31 — Jan.-February.

COLLANTES, DOMINGO (OP)

- * Mother Francisca del Espiritu Santo, p. 488 — July-Aug.

762 BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS

CONFALONIERI, CAROLUS (Cardinal)

- * The New Diocese of Antipolo, p. 255 — March-April.
- * Appointment of Msgr. Protacio Gungon, p. 257 — March-April.

FERNANDEZ, PABLO (OP)

- * Sebastian de Santa Maria, p. 78 — January-February.
- * Dominican Towns in Pangasinan, p. 86 — January-Feb.
- * Dominican Towns in Pangasinan: Dagupan, p. 221 — March-April.
- * Two Models of Christian Life: Maria Dolong and Catalina Lumai, p. 230 — March-April.
- * Dominican Towns of Pangasinan, p. 375 — May-June.
- * The Holy Missionary in Ivana, p. 383 — May-June.
- * Dominican Towns in Pangasinan, p. 477 — July-August.
- * Towns in Pangasinan; Malasiqui, p. 616 — September-October.
- * José Bagumbayan, Bartolomé Lingon and Magdalena Iling of Taytay, p. 733 — November-December.

GARCIA, EXCELSO (OP)

- * A Perplexed Marriage Case, p. 75 — January-February.
- * The State of Sanctifying Grace for Communion, p. 219 — March-April.
- * Mass "Pro-Populo", p. 368 — May-June.
- * Civil and Canonical Marriage, p. 370 — May-June.
- * The Schedule of Parochial Activities, p. 427 — July-August.
- * Blessings to be Imparted by a Deacon, p. 429 — July-Aug.
- * The Guide for Lay Catholic Faithful, p. 431 — July-Aug.
- * Is Binated Mass in Concelebration Allowed?, p. 545 — September-October.
- * A Deacon's Blessing, p. 547 — September-October.
- * A Chaplain's Faculties, p. 720 — November-December.
- * Concelebration with a Stipend, p. 723 — November-Dec.

GEISE, NICOLAUSE (OFM, D.D.)

- * On Christian — Muslim Dialogue, p. 469 — July-Aug.

GOMEZ, FAUSTO (OP)

- * Theological Formation in Context: Pastoral and Spiritual Dimensions, p. 687 — November-December.

GRAF, HERMAN (SVD)

- * Sa Pamamagitan ni Hesukristo Kasama ng Espiritu Santo, p. 363 — May-June.
- * The Saturday Evening Mass According to the New Canon Law, p. 740 — November-December.

HAMER, JEROME (OP, Archbishop)

- * The Code and the Council, p. 73 — January-February.

HENDRICKX, HERMAN (CICM)

- * Homiletical Notes for Sundays (July to August), p. 499 — July-August.

HOLY SEE

- * Charter of the Rights of the Family, p. 185 — March-April.

LARA, ROSALIO CASTILLO (D.D.)

- * Replies to Queries on the Code of Canon Law, p. 725 — November-December.

LE FROIS, BERNARD (SVD)

- * Homiletical Notes for Sundays (April), p. 266 — March-April.

LEGASPI, LEONARDO (D.D.)

- * Circular, p. 633 — September-October.

MABUTAS, ANTONIO (D.D.)

- * Pastoral Approaches in the Ministry of Reconciliation, p. 27 — January-February.

MUELLER, HERMAN (SVD)

- * Homiletical Notes for Sundays (June), p. 389 — May June.

764 BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS

NACORDA, ROGELIO

- * The Case of Tax Incentives for Educational Institutions in the Philippines, p. 10 — January-February.

OLAYBAL, MARCELO

- * A Comment on Communion: Rectified, p. 439 — July-Aug.

PADILLA, SABINO

- * Policies and Operations of Non-profit Private Universities and Colleges, p. 5 — January-February.
- * Real Estate Taxes on Parochial Schools, p. 148 — March-April.

PAGUIO, WILFREDO

- * Homiletical Notes for Sundays (Sept.), p. 634 — Sept.-October.

PEREZ, RAMON (OP)

- * Homiletical Notes for Sundays (Oct.), p. 634 — Sept.-October.
- * Homiletical Notes for Sundays (Nov.-Dec.), p. 742 — November-December.

POPE JOHN PAUL II

- * Convince Men at Arms to Welcome the Plea for Peace, p. 298 — May-June.
- * Codex Iuris Canonici, p. 473 — July-August.
- * Vocation and Seminary Preparation are Proofs of the Church's Vitality, p. 577 — September-October.
- * Renewed Commitment of Collegiality for Evangelization and Catechesis, p. 580 — September-October.
- * To the Priesthood, God's Gift for Man, the Priest Responds with the Gift of Himself, p. 584 — Sept.-Oct.
- * Search for Justice and Brotherhood More Valuable than Technological Progress — Pope Says to Workers, p. 588 — September-October.
- * Flowering of the Church in Korea the Fruit of the Heroism of the Martyrs, p. 592 — September-October.
- * Celebration of the Centenary of Arrival of the Missionaries, p. 597 — September-October.

- * Church's Maturity in the Young Nations Marked by the Priestly and Religious Vocations, 599 — Sept.-Oct.
- * John Paul II's Apostolic Journey to the Far East — Concluded, p. 604 — September-October.
- * Pope Expresses Thanks for the Apostolic Ministry to the Far East and Oceania, p. 608 — September-October.
- * Brief Resumé of the Lives of 103 Korean Martyrs, p. 612 — September-October.
- * Redemptionis Donum, p. 654 — November-December.
- * Work and Dignity of the Person in the Light of the Church's Social Teachings, p. 682 — November-December.

ROSA, ROLANDO DE LA (OP)

- * Homiletical Notes for Sundays (May), p. 389 — May-June.

SACR. CONG. PRO DOCTRINA FIDEI

- * Responsa ad Proposita Dubia, p. 67 — January-February.

SACRED CONGREGATION

- * Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on certain Questions Concerning the Minister of the Eucharist, p. 165 — March-April.

SACRED CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

- * Instruction on Liturgical Formation in Seminaries, p. 37 — January-February.
- * Educational Guidance in Human Love: Outlines for Sex Education, (Part I), p. 442 — July-August.
- * Educational Guidance in Human Love: Outlines for Sex Education, (Part II), p. 559 — September-October.

SACRED CONGREGATION FOR THE SACRAMENT AND DIVINE WORSHIP

- * Official Communications, p. 497 — July-August.

SIN, JAIME (Cardinal)

- * Our Ministry of Reconciliation, p. 173 — March-April.
- * Catholic Teaching on Marriage, p. 258 — March-April.
- * Re: Guest Priests, p. 259 — March-April.
- * Golden Jubilee of Bacolod, p. 260 — March-April.

766 BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS

SYNOD OF BISHOPS

- * Message on Reconciliation and Penance in the Mission of the Church, p. 14 — January-February.
- * Interventions of Asian Bishops in the 1983 Synod, p. 17 — January-February.

TALAMAYAN, DIOSDADO (D.D.)

- * Hail to our Alma Mater, p. 145 — March-April.

TEJON, GUILLERMO (OP)

- * Mary of All Christians, p. 300 — May-June.

TESTERA, FLORENCIO (OP)

- * Church's Latest Declaration on Masonry, p. 455 — July-August.

TINOKO, JOSE MA. (OP)

- * The Fundamental Rights and Obligations of the Faithful, p. 697 — November-December.

TORPIGLIANI, BRUNO (D.D.)

- * Extraordinary Meeting of CBCP on the New Code of Canon Law, p. 70 — January-February.
- * The Seminary Should Be a House of Study, of Discipline and of Prayer, p. 329 — May-June.
- * Jubilee Celebrations for Religious, p. 334 — May-June.
- * Filipino "Popular Religion" and the Future: Our Pastoral Concern, p. 459 — July-August.
- * Papal Nuncio in UST Central Seminary, p. 555 — Sept.-October.

TORRE, JOSEPH DE

- * Radical Solutions to Social Evils, p. 197 — March-April.

TUMBOCON, CICERON (D.D.)

- * Pastoral Letter on the Jubilee Year of Redemption, p. 237 — March-April.

VARGAS, BENITO (OP)

- * Homiletical Notes for Sundays (Jan.-March), p. 96 — January-February.

VERDZEKOV, PAUL (D.D.)

- * Frequent Confession: What Exactly Does the Church Say?, p. 433 — July-August.

ZWAENEPOL, PAUL (CICM)

- * Socio-Economic Crisis: Its Impact on Catholic Education, p. 1 — January-February.

TOPICAL INDEX

BIBLICAL NOTES AND OUTLINES FOR HOMILIES

- * Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, p. 97; Epiphany or Feast of the Three Kings, p. 99; Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, p. 103; Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, p. 107; Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, p. 110; Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, p. 116; Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, p. 120; Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, p. 123; Eighth Sunday of the Year, p. 126; Ninth Sunday of the Year, p. 130; First Sunday of Lent, p. 132; Second Sunday of Lent, p. 137; Third Sunday of Lent, p. 139 — Jan.-February.
- * Fourth Sunday of Lent, p. 266; Fifth Sunday of Lent, p. 268; Palm Sunday, p. 269; Easter Sunday, p. 274; Second Sunday of Easter, p. 276; — March-April.
- * Third Sunday of Easter, p. 389; Fourth Sunday of Easter, p. 392; Fifth Sunday of Easter, p. 393; Sixth Sunday of Easter, p. 395; Ascension of our Lord, p. 398; Pentecost Sunday, p. 401; Trinity Sunday, p. 410; Corpus Christi, p. 416 — May-June.
- * Thirteenth Sunday, p. 499; Fourteenth Sunday, p. 504; Fifteenth Sunday, p. 508; Sixteenth Sunday, p. 514; Seventeenth Sunday, p. 518; Eighteenth Sunday, p. 523; Nineteenth Sunday, p. 528; Twentieth Sunday, p. 532; Twenty-First Sunday, p. 537 — July-August.

- * 22nd Sunday, p. 634; 23rd Sunday, p. 635; 24th Sunday, p. 636; 25th Sunday, p. 637; 26th Sunday, p. 638; 27th Sunday, p. 639; 28th Sunday, p. 641; 29th Sunday, 644; 30th Sunday, p. 645 — September-October.
- * 31st Sunday, p. 92; 32nd Sunday, p. 94; 33rd Sunday, p. 96; Feast of Christ the King, p. 98; First Sunday of Advent, p. 99; Feast of the Immaculate Conception, p. 100; Second Sunday of Advent, p. 101; Third Sunday of Advent, p. 103; Fourth Sunday of Advent, p. 104; Feast of the Holy Family, p. 105 — November-December.

CANON LAW

- * The Extraordinary Meeting of CBCP on the New Code of Canon Law p. 70 — January-February.
- * The Code and the Council, p. 73 — January-February.
- * The Power of the Diocesan Bishops to Dispense from Ecclesiastical Laws, p. 204 — March-April.
- * Sanctions in the Church, p. 338 — May-June.
- * Codex Iuris Canonici, p. 473 — July-August.
- * The Fundamental Rights and Obligations of the Faithful, p. 697 — November-December.

CASES AND INQUIRIES

- * A Perplexed Marriage Case, p. 75 — January-February.
- * The State of Sanctifying Grace for Communion, p. 219 — March-April.
- * Mass "Pro-populo", p. 368 — May-June.
- * Civil and Canonical Marriage, p. 370 — May-June.
- * The Schedule of Parochial Activities, p. 427 — July-Aug.
- * The Blessings to be Imparted by a Deacon, p. 429 — July-August.
- * The Guide for Lay Catholic Faithful, p. 431 — July-Aug.
- * Is Binated Mass in Concelebration Allowed?, p. 545 — September-October.
- * A Deacon's Blessings, p. 547 — September-October.
- * A Chaplain's Faculties, p. 720 — November-December.
- * Concelebration with a Stipend, p. 723 — November-Dec.

CHRISTIAN SEX EDUCATION

- * Educational Guidance in Human Love: Outline for Sex Education (Part I), p. 442 — July-October.
- * Educational Guidance in Human Love: Outline for Sex Education Part II), p. 559 — September-October.

COMMUNION

- * A Reflection: Jubilee and Eucharist, p. 151 — March-Apr.
- * The State of Sanctifying Grace for Communion, p. 219 — March-April.
- * A Comment on Communion: Rectified, p. 439 — July-Aug.

CONFESSION

- * Frequent Confession: What Exactly Does the Church Say?, p. 433 — July-August.

DIALOGUE

- * On Christian — Muslim Dialogue, p. 469 — July-August.

HISTORY

- * Dominican Towns in Pangasinan, p. 78 — January-Feb.
- * Dominican Towns in Pangasinan, Dagupan, p. 221 — March-April.
- * Dominican Towns in Pangasinan, p. 375 — May-June.
- * Dominican Towns in Pangasinan, p. 477 — July August.
- * Towns in Pangasinan: Malasiqui, p. 616 — Sept-Oct.

LAY FAITHFUL

- * The Guide for Lay Faithful, p. 431 — July-August.
- * Fundamental Rights and Obligations of the Faithful, p. 697 — November-December.

770 BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS

LITURGY

- * Sa Pamamagitan ni Hesukristo Kasama ng Espiritu Santo, p. 363 — May-June.
- * The Saturday Evening Mass According to the New Canon Law, p. 740 — November-December.

MARY

- * Our Lady of Fatima in Manila, p. 280 — May-June.
- * Mary of All Christians, p. 300 — May June.

MASONRY

- * Church's Latest Declaration on Masonry, p. 455 — July-August.

PEACE

- * The Holy See and Peace, p. 281 — May-June.
- * Convince Men at Arms to Welcome the Plea for Peace, p. 298 — May-June.

POPULAR RELIGION

- * Filipino "Popular Religion" and the Future: Our Pastoral Concern, p. 459 — July-August.

RECONCILIATION

- * Message on Reconciliation and Penance in the Mission of the Church, p. 14 — January-February.
- * Pastoral Approaches in the Ministry of Reconciliation, p. 27 — January-February.
- * Our Ministry of Reconciliation, p. 173 — March April.

RIGHTS OF THE FAMILY

- * Charter of the Rights of the Family, p. 197 — March-April.

SANCTITY IN THE PHILIPPINES

- * Sebastiana de Santa Maria, p. 78 — January-February.
- * Two Models of Christian Life: Maria Dolong and Catalina Lumai, p. 230 — March-April.
- * The Holy Missionary in Ivana, p. 383 — May-June.
- * Mother Francisca del Espiritu Santo, p. 488 — July-Aug.
- * José Bagumbayan, Bartolomé Lingon and Magdalena Iling of Taytay, p. 733 — November-December.

SEMINARY

- * The Seminary Should Be a House of Study, of Discipline and of Prayer, p. 329 — May-June.
- * The Church Wants Minor Seminaries Today, p. 31 — January-February.

THEOLOGICAL FORMATION

- * Theological Formation in Context: Pastoral and Spiritual Dimensions, p. 687 — November-December.

WORK AND DIGNITY OF PERSON

- * Work and Dignity of the Person in the Light of the Church's Social Teachings, p. 682 — November-December.

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