

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

THE OFFICIAL INTERDIOCESAN BULLETIN

**MARIAN YEAR 1985: A PILGRIMAGE
OF HOPE WITH OUR BLESSED MOTHER**

CBCP Pastoral Letter

FOR OUR LAND, TO OUR LADY

Jaime Card. Sin

**CLERICAL AND LITURGICAL
VESTMENTS**

Albert Meersschaert, CICM

THE MYSTIC OF LIPA

Pablo Fernandez, O.P.

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EDITOR	VICENTE G. CAJILIG, O.P.
ASSOCIATE EDITOR	JOSE MA. B. TINOKO, O.P.
EDITORIAL CONSULTANTS	JESUS MA. MERINO, O.P. PABLO FERNANDEZ, O.P. BONIFACIO SOLIS, O.P.
BUSINESS MANAGER	FLORENCIO TESTERA, O.P.

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Fathers' Residence
University of Santo Tomas
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	482 TOWARDS CONTEXTUALIZED MARIOLOGY?
FEATURES	
• Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines	483 MARIAN YEAR 1985: A PILGRIMAGE OF HOPE WITH OUR BLESSED MOTHER
• Jaime Card. Sin	493 PHILIPPINE MADONNAS' PILGRIMAGE TO THE UNITED STATES
	501 FOR OUR LAND, TO OUR LADY
• Joseph de Torre	508 MARY'S MEDIATION OF SOLIDARITY
• John Paul II	517 MESSAGE FOR WORLD MISSION DAY 1985
• Paul Zwaenepoel, CICM	523 THE MISSION OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
CANON LAW	
• Jeffrey Garcia	540 HOMOSEXUALITY: A GROUND FOR MARRIAGE NULLITY?
CASES AND INQUIRIES	
• Excelso Garcia, O.P.	544 TRANSFER OF A RELIGIOUS FROM ONE INSTITUTE TO ANOTHER
	546 PARALITURGICAL CELEBRATION
LITURGY	
• Albert Meersschaert, CICM	548 CLERICAL AND LITURGICAL VESTMENTS
PASTORAL SECTION	
• Wilfredo Paguio	558 SPECIAL MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION
MEDITATIONS FOR PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS	
• Guillermo Tejon, O.P.	562 "LORD, TEACH US PRAY"
SANCTITY IN THE PHILIPPINES	
• Pablo Fernandez, O.P.	569 THE MYSTIC OF LIPA
HOMILETICS	
• Jesus Merino, O.P.	577 HOMILETICAL NOTES
DOCUMENTATION	
• Marcellus Rossetti	602 APPOINTMENT OF MSGR. JESUS TUQUIB
	603 APPOINTMENT OF MSGR. EMILIO MARQUEZ

EDITORIAL

Towards Contextualized Mariology?

One who visits the shrine of the Annunciation in Nazareth is surprised to see an image of Mary: she is clad not in the ordinary Jewish woman style; rather she is in her Chinese look — in hair, facial appearance and clothes. The image is called *Queen of China*.

One who visits the Marian shrines in the country finds out that many images of Mary are in foreign look. However, there is one that looks specially native, i.e., the image of the *Barangay Sang Virgen* in her *kimono* and striped *patadyong*.

Now, one asks: Is Mary offended by the artists' way of depicting her not in her historical make-up, but in the way people perceive her?

Not at all! For one can believe that Mary would allow her artists to depict her in one way or another, if that helps foment devotion toward her.

But what kind of mariological initiation do our people have?

During this Marian year, our local theologians must exert effort to discover the Filipino face of Mary, a kind of contextualized Mariology (as there is a Christological study on the Filipino face of Jesus). However, in developing this indigenous mariological science scholars should see to it that they do not offend the fundamental biblical truths about Mary.

The CBCP document entitled *Ang Mahal na Birhen* published ten years ago, and the pastoral letter *Marian Year 1985: A Pilgrimage of Hope with Our Blessed Mother*, can well-serve as the starting point for any attempt to build up a contextualized Mariology.

VICENTE CAJILIG, O.P.

FEATURES

marian year 1985: a pilgrimage of hope with our blessed mother CBCP PASTORAL LETTER*

To all the faithful People of God in the Philippines, and in a special way to our Priests, their associates in diocesan and parish ministry, to Religious Men and Women, and to members of all Marian organizations, on the Marian Year in the Philippines, 8 December 1984 to 8 December 1985.¹

I. Introduction

1. Responding to the call of our Holy Father Pope John Paul II, that we honor the Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of the Lord, in a special way during the year 1985, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines has declared this year a nationwide Marian Year for Catholics in our country.² In the year 2000 all Christians will mark the second millenium of the birth of the Savior. The present year we fittingly set aside to honor the second millenium of Our Blessed Mother's birth. We do not of course know the exact year Mary of Nazareth was born, but

* In connection with the celebration of the Marian Year (8 December 1984 — 8 December 1985), this pastoral letter was issued by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' calling the entire Filipino nation for Conversion, Offering of life and Reparations.

¹ This pastoral exhortation is addressed in a special way to Priests and religious teachers. Constraints of time and space do not allow us to develop in any detail the points touched on in this text, to give concrete examples, etc. It is our hope that they will take time in homilies and instructions to explain more fully what can only be indicated here. This year can provide us with special opportunities to give the Marian catechesis in line with Vatican II teaching which *Ang Mahal na Birhen* urges so insistently — an insistence which we renew at this time.

² Cf. *Boletin Ecclesiastico*, January-February 1985, page 87, "Proclamation of a Marian Year for the Philippines," signed by Archbishop Antonio Mabutas, President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 8 September 1984.

The reference to Pope John Paul II is to his homily at the Mass celebrated at the grotto of Lourdes, 15 August 1983, "Marie, premiere figure de la Redemption," *Documentation Catholique*, September 4-18, 1983, at page 829 (section 6 of the homily).

1985 provides a convenient peg for the commemoration of that gracious event in the history of mankind's salvation.

2. With this letter, which is more of a pastoral exhortation than a doctrinal statement, we wish to encourage all our Catholic faithful to make this Marian Year a time of authentic renewal in our Christian faith and commitment, life and action. We also wish to invite our other Christian brothers and sisters to honor Mary in ways which are in keeping with their own understanding of her role in the history of salvation. And our fellow-Filipinos of other faiths, especially our Muslim brothers and sisters, in whose sacred writings and traditions Our Lady has a special place, we invite too, to pray with us this year for true reconciliation and peace.

3. As our Pastoral Letter of 2 February 1975, *'Ang Mahal na Birhen: Mary in Philippine Life Today'*,³ a text firmly rooted in the Marian doctrine of the Second Vatican Council and in Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Exhortation, *Marialis Cultus*,⁴ retains its validity and relevance to this way, we will not enter in any length or detail into the doctrinal and theological bases of Marian devotion, nor repeat the useful and still very timely pastoral reflections to be found in its pages. We recommend *Ang Mahal na Birhen* be read or re-read by all who can do so, and we urge this especially on our priests and their associates in ministry, teachers and catechists, and all who devote themselves to instructing others in Catholic faith and practice.

4. Here we simply wish to urge our Catholic people to observe the new Marian Year with an earnestness and devotion called for by the seriousness of the present crisis which our nation is undergoing.

II. 1985: Marian Year in the Philippines

5. Perhaps not since the period of the Second World War have our people faced a year of such bleak prospects as they faced with the ending of 1984. For those socially and econo-

³ *Ang Mahal na Birhen: Mary in Philippine Life Today*, a Pastoral Letter on the Blessed Virgin Mary, from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, 2 February 1975.

⁴ Paul VI, *Marialis cultus*, on the devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, 11 February 1974, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. 46, 113-169. English translation, London, Catholic Truth Society, 1974.

The Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, Chapter VIII, Our Lady (21 November 1964). In Austin Flannery, O.P., *Vatican II. The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, Dublin, Dominican Publications, 1975, 413-423.

mically disadvantaged — that is, the majority of our people — 1985 seems to promise perhaps even more privation, more widespread unemployment, increased inflation, greater hardships, with no end of the tunnel in sight. For so many who are suffering from difficulties and uncertainties, burdened by injustice and crushed by violations of human rights, the foreseeable future seems to bring little prospect of relief. In sum, the present year is hardly a year for facile optimism or bright hope.

6. It is in this context of hardship and uncertainty, or conflict and near-loss of hope that, we believe providentially, the Marian Year opens for us. Our Filipino people has always turned to our Blessed Mother in times of difficulty, of crisis, even of seeming hopelessness. Always we have asked her, *groaning, weeping in this valley of tears, to turn her eyes of mercy upon us*. And always she has been, as the countless shrines and altars dedicated to her throughout our land attest, *for us our life, our sweetness and our hope*. And so we turn to her again with a trust which we know will not be confounded.

7. Our present Holy Father has not infrequently used, in our Blessed Mother's regard, the title given to her by the great Marian doctors of the Church, *omnipotentia supplex*. Mary's intercession is "all powerful".⁵ Pope John Paul II, echoing his predecessor Pope Pius XII and other Roman Pontiffs, has said that "Mary is always at the center of our prayer and petition to the Lord, toward conversion, toward renewal in private and public life, toward justice and reconciliation, brotherhood and peace in our troubled land".⁶

⁵ Cf. B. H. Merkelbach, O.P., *Mariologia*, Paris, Desclee de Brouwer, 1939, 191, "Hinc Beata Virgo vocata fuit omnipotentia supplex." References to patristic writers (John Damascene, Anselm, Bernard, etc.), Merkelbach speaks of an "omnipotentia quaedam relativa, ministerialis et moralis in impetrando..." Cf. also Gregorio Alastruey, *The Blessed Virgin Mary*, II, St. Louis, Herder, 1964, "... Mary's power of intercession... is rightly called an omnipotent supplication" (pp. 165-168). An interesting citation, from Edward Schillebeeckx, O.P. *Mary, Mother of the Redemption*, trans. N. D. Smith, Sheed and Ward, New York 1964: "Mary's superabundance of grace... is and subjectively redeemed. It represents the peak of her participation in Christ's divine life... Her superabundance of grace, then, is the high tide of her state of being redeemed. Viewed in this light, the title *Suppliant Omnipotence* which Pius XII bestowed on Mary, may be said to comprise the entire mystery of Mary, in that she was, and still is, both suppliant and omnipotent." (*op. cit.*, pp. 98-99.)

⁶ Pope John Paul II at Pompei, Homily of 21. X. 1979. Cf. Kevin McNamara (now Archbishop of Dublin), *Mary the Mother of God*, the Marian Doctrine of Pope John Paul II, London, Catholic Truth Society,

III. Objectives of the Marian Year: Conversion, Life-Offering, Reparation (C-O-R)

8. Of course we know that "just praying," no matter how indispensable and urgent it is, is not all that the Lord expects of us. Our age, more strongly than other ages, rejects incarnate spirituality as alienation and aberration. "*Sa Dios ang awa, sa tao ang gawa*," is patient of a truly Christian interpretation of the necessary complementarity of prayer and action in our lives. We must pray, we must never cease praying, but we must also never forget that "here on earth, God's work must truly be our own."

9. Thus the theme endorsed for us for the Marian Year is summed up in the acronym C-O-R: *conversion, life-offering, reparation*.⁷ The three imperatives, rightly understood, make up an appropriate program for our "journey with the Blessed Mother." These three demands are not only present in the message of Our Lady of Fatima; they also constitute a fitting response which our national situation at this moment of history calls forth from us as Filipino Christians.

10. C-O-R: conversion, life-offering and reparation, both personal and societal, in conviction and responsibility, within our Christian community and beyond its boundaries (*ad intra* and *ad extra*) — this is the program we urge for the Marian Year in our country, this year of the Lord 1985.

11. The recent Apostolic Exhortation of our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, on Reconciliation and Penance (*Reconciliatio et Paenitentia*, R/P), links together the three themes on our agenda.⁸

12. The Holy Father, speaking of conversion (*metanoia*) as a component dimension of penance, says, "Penance is a conversion that passes from heart to deeds, and then to the Christian's

1982, "Mother of the Church," 10-11. For earlier papal texts, cf. *Our Lady: Papal Teachings*, selected and arranged by the Monks of Solesmes, St. Paul Editions, Boston, 1961 (from Benedict XIV to John XXIII).

⁷ *Banquet for Mary*, an orientation document prepared by the Marian Year committee and endorsed by Jaime Cardinal Sin, Archbishop of Manila, 8 pp., Marian Year Committee (Msgr. Josefino Ramirez, chairman; Mr. Howard Q. Dee, vice-chairman), Manila, 1985.

⁸ Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia*, John Paul II to the Bishops, Clergy and Faithful Today, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 2 December 1984. Hence forth referred to as R/P, with sections numbered as in the official text.

whole life." These are thus the elements included in the spirit and practice of authentic penance: (cf. R/P, 4, 26)

- The inmost change of heart*, under the power of the word of God, in the perspective of the Kingdom;
- Changing one's life* in harmony with the change of heart, so that doing penance is completed by bringing forth fruits worthy of penance, a continual striving for what is better;
- translating conversion penance into *deeds and acts of penitence*, that is, the *concrete daily effort of a person*, supported by God's grace, to lose his life for Christ, as the only means of gaining it.

"In each of these senses" *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* goes on to add, "Penance is closely connected with reconciliation, for reconciliation with God, with oneself and with others, implies overcoming that radical break which is sin. And that is achieved through the interior transformation which bears fruit in a person's life through acts of penance" (R/P, 4).

13. *Conversion*. We can link up these thoughts from R/P with our three-fold theme for the Marian Year renewal. In each one's life and in the life of every community, we are urged to beg from the Lord and, with his help, work for *the inmost change of heart which is conversion*, a turning away from sin and the idolatries sin sets up in our lives. We examine our conscience by the light that the Holy Spirit gives us, to discover our *personal sins* and see our own sinfulness, our "exclusion of God, rupture with God, disobedience to God," which is sin in its fundamental and most proper sense (R/P, 14-16).

14. Our examination of conscience needs also to train its light on what contemporary theological writings call "*social sin*": sin in as much as it harms our brothers and sisters, or attacks their rights and legitimate freedoms, injures their honor and dignity as children of God; sin in as much as it militates against justice in interpersonal relationships, or in relationships between human groups; sin in as much as, by accumulation or concentration, it creates situations of evil in society and builds up collective attitudes and behavior, which project egoism and injustice into social structures and institutions. (We might think of what corruption does to our climate of social morality, or the sexual exploitation of women and children, or the escalating violence in our midst). We must thus examine "social sin" in our society and our own participation in it, always keeping in

mind that social situations will be changed in vain, if there is no accompanying inner conversion, by God's grace, of those who foster these evils, as well as of those who today struggle against them (R/P, 16, 22).⁹

15. *Offering.* Next, conversion must be translated into deeds worthy of penance. Repentance must turn us toward a *life offered to God in Christ*. Such a life, if it can be offered, must be patterned after the principles, demands and values of the Gospel. It must be a life which seeks to incarnate the Gospel. It seeks to incarnate the Gospel Beatitudes — a life for God in Christ, a life increasingly spent in the service of others, especially those in greater need. We cannot bring as offerings to the altar, lives of self-seeking and indifference to the needs and sufferings of others.

16. *Reparation.* This daily dedication of one's life to Christ, this consecration of our deeds by him, this "daily dying to self that others may live," is effectively the effort of true *reparation*. Reparation means to repair, to mend, to heal: to undo the wrong done; to reform what was deformed; to bring justice where there was or is injustice; to renew broken relationships; to overcome conflicts and divisions, and thus to bring about reconciliation and peace (Cf. R/P, 4, 26). Reconciliation and reparation are closely bound together; the spirit of reparation is a key to authentic reconciliation, for deeds of amendment and atonement must follow after inner contrition and repentance.

IV. With the Blessed Mother

17. C-O-R sums up the objectives of the Marian Year, but the understanding and interiorization, the realization and practice of the program it lays down for us must be *linked with the Blessed Mother in an explicit way*. Her prayer and intercession must accompany our efforts. Her profound influence and the power of her example must constantly guide us, as we try to implement this agenda for renewal. Her spirit of truly profound faith, her readiness to give herself in obedience to the

⁹ Pope John Paul II devotes an entire chapter to "The Mystery of Sin" in R/P. Within this chapter, he develops the various meanings of "social sin" (16). We recommend an attentive reading of this section. The notion of "social sin" as explained in the chapter referred to, can be fruitfully made as the theme for catechesis in our classrooms and in parish assemblies of various kinds. It is a valuable theological lesson on a matter of great interest and importance.

Lord's will — cost what it might — must become our own inner spirit. Her *Magnificat* must, in prayer and in deeds, shape our attitudes and our own way of living.¹⁰

18. Those who are moved by the Lord's grace to do this, will see that the Marian Year agenda can be linked also, explicitly and appropriately, with the message of Fatima which, for so many Catholics in our country today, speaks with renewed power and relevance.¹¹

The message of Our Lady in the revelations to the children of Fatima expressly asks for all the elements which are included in our objectives:

- conversion and amendment of life;
- prayer and reparation, especially Eucharistic reparation;
- the offering and sanctification of our daily lives in a spirit of penitence and self-denial;
- the daily recitation of the Rosary;
- the practice of “the five First Saturdays of the month”;
- and consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.^{11/bis}

19. At this point we must add a *practical note*. This enumeration of objectives for the Marian Year necessarily remains

¹⁰ We might be allowed to cite this text on Our Lady's *Magnificat*: The *Magnificat* mirrors the soul of Mary... It is the opening proclamation of Christ's new Gospel, the prelude to the Sermon on the Mount. There Mary reveals herself to us as one utterly empty of self, who has placed all her confidence in the Father's mercifulness.

In the *Magnificat* she presents herself as the model for all those described by Pope John Paul II: “Those who do not passively accept the adverse circumstances of personal and social life, and who are not victims of *alienation*, as the expression goes today, but who instead join with her in proclaiming that God is the “avenger of the lowly” and will, if need be, depose ‘the mighty from their thrones’...” (Homily at Zapopan, Mexico, 30 January 1979, Pope John Paul II), par. 297 of The Third General Conference of Latin American Bishops, *CELAM III, Puebla, Mexico*, Conclusions, NCCB Washington, D.C., 1979, at p. 77.

¹¹ Cf., for instance, the celebrations surrounding the Philippine visit of the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima, 9-10 April 1984, and the consecration of our people and nation by the Bishops of the Philippines to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as requested by Pope John Paul II, on 25 March 1984.

^{11/bis} Vid Joaquin Maria Alonso and Abilio, Pina Ribeiro, *Claretians, Fatima: Message and Consecration*, Published in Manila by Claretian Publications, Quezon City, 1984 (U.P. P.O. Box 3004, Quezon City) and Francis Johnston, *Fatima: the Great Sign*, TAN Books and Publishers, Rockford, Illinois 61105 (2980), published in the Philippines by Marian Foundation, 470 San Andres, Malate, Manila (Philippine edition, 1984).

rather generic. In all probability each of our dioceses will determine how these purposes can be pursued in actual practice, for each parish and community. Under the guidance of our pastors, let each community spell out the concrete ways this agenda can be realized, discern *what must be done* by every person and every group. What *conversion* is required of us? How may we effectively *offer our daily lives* in a spirit of consecration to the Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, so that we bring forth fruits of repentance? In what concrete ways can we make *reparation* of our sins and the sins of others? There is a challenge here, which the Marian Year objectives pose to us, as individuals and communities.

20. In sum, then, we ask our Catholic faithful to bend every effort on making this year "a pilgrimage of hope with our Blessed Mother" — a pilgrimage of prayer and penance, as well as of commitment to those deeds which shall promote justice, reconciliation and peace among our people. This pilgrimage in heart and spirit will also be accompanied, we trust, by pilgrimages to and gatherings at the places in our dioceses or provinces where Our Lady is especially honored. The "journey of heart and spirit" with the Mother of the Lord through the days and months of 1985, will be the most important one, for sure, but our assemblies in our churches and shrines can be valuable outward expressions, too, of our praying together as a community of faith, of our sharing as one in our common hope and commitment to service.¹² It will be, even in the midst of our present sea of troubles, a rejoicing together, because our confidence in our Blessed Mother's intercession is as sure as it is strong.

V. Renewal in Our Marian Devotion

21. Our dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we trust that the Marian Year will mark an authentic renewal in our people's ages-long devotion to the Mother of the Savior.

22. In *Ang Mahal na Birhen*, we spoke of the need for reform in practices and attitudes in our Marian devotion, of the need of updating and adapting many of our devotional customs, of the urgency of including in our popular Marian piety a new understanding of women's role in society, and an overcoming of

¹² Vid. *Ang Mahal na Birhen* (cf. footnote 3 above), in Section III, Pastoral Reflections.

a merely devout individualism unrelated to the demands for justice in our society.¹³ These remain valid demands today in our practice of the devotion to the Blessed Virgin. We need to note this, because these are the tasks of renewal which we must continue to work at. We must also bring special attention to the imperative the Holy Father and the entire Church call us to, in our time: the *preferential love for the poor* which is an authentic sign of Christian commitment.

23. Renewal means above all a renewal of conviction, a renewal in faith and hope of our Filipino people's love for our Blessed Mother — a love which has been so strongly and so unwaveringly present in our hearts from the beginnings of Christianity in this country. The words in our eucharistic hymn, *pueblo amante de Maria*, are at once a proud statement of fact, a cry of joy from our hearts, a promise and hope for the future.

24. We turn to Our Lady because in the Mystery of Mary we once again meet and recognize the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ as a loving Father who is truly with us, concerned for us, accompanying us every step of the way, that is, in our pilgrimage toward His Kingdom. A distinguished contemporary theologian has said that the mystery of Our Lord's birth from the Virgin Mary's womb is not merely —

25. an idyllic nook of devotion, a tiny private chapel . . . an optional extra. The question of God is at stake: Is God a depth of being somewhere which, as it were, nourishes the deep roots of all things in a way beyond our imagining, — or is he the one who acts with power, he who knows and loves his creation, is present to it, and effectively works in it from first to last, even today?

26. The affirmation of Jesus' birth from the Virgin Mary intends to state these two truths: *first*, God really acts, and *second*, "the earth produces its fruit" precisely *because* God acts. *Natus ex Maria Virgine*, born of the Virgin Mary, is in its very core a strictly *theological* affirmation that bears witness to the God who has not let creation slip out of his hands. On this are based the hope, the freedom, the assurance and the responsibility of the Christian.¹⁴

¹³ Cf. John Paul II, "Message of Mary's Maternal Love," homily at the Eucharistic Celebration, Shrine of Our Lady at Fatima, 13 May 1982. *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 17 May 1983, page 1, on the special presence of the Blessed Mother in the Marian sanctuaries.

¹⁴ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Daughter Zion, Meditations on the Church's Marian Belief*, trans. John M. McDermott, Ignatius Press, San

27. In the Mystery of Mary we thus find a new foundation of "the hope, the freedom, the assurance and the responsibility" of our lives as Christians in our country.

28. Our devotion to the Mother of the Lord derives from, and returns to, our belief and unshakable trust in a loving Father, the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It is an affirmation of our hope that if, relying on God, we shall try to do "the things that are to our peace," . . . if rooted in faith, we make, here on earth, our nation: that God will never abandon us, but that he will deliver us from evil. For *God is our Father*, the Father above all of the poor and the powerless among us. The Mystery of Mary leads us to a deeper understanding of the Fatherhood of God and the mercy and compassion of the Savior.

29. We thus turn to Mary, Mother of Jesus and our Mother, sure of her unwearying love and concern for us and our lives. We turn to her who is Mother of the Poor, of the "poor of Yahweh," and the poor and suffering in our midst.¹⁵ In a time of crisis we go to her, imploring her help, seeking her intercession, trusting in the compassion of her Immaculate Heart. We know she will not leave us unaided, that she will second all our strivings. She will not despise our petitions, but in her mercy, hear and answer them.

VI. Conclusion

30. Dearly beloved brothers and sisters: it is with this sense of confidence in the intercession of the Mother of the Lord that we invite all of you to make this Marian Year a truly extraordinary year of *conversion, offering and reparation* in our lives as a Christian people. 1985 began as a time of crisis and foreboding, let us — trusting in Our Lady's "omnipotent supplication" before her Son — through our prayer and penance, through persevering deeds of justice and faith, through our responsibility and courage, try to make it a time of renewed hope. Let us journey together on "A PILGRIMAGE OF HOPE WITH OUR BLESSED MOTHER," she who is *mater misericordiae, vita, dulcedo et spes nostra*, mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope.

Francisco, 1983 (original German Text, 1977). Citations from pp. 60-61 of English translation.

¹⁵ Cf. Barnabas Mary Ahern, C.P., *Mary, Queen of the Poor*, St. Louis, Mo., Pio Decimo Press (no date given). Also, *Puebla*, Third General Conference of Latin American Bishops, on "Evangelization, Present and Future, in Latin America." NCCB Washington, D.C., 1979, Cf. especially paragraphs 282-303, pp. 75-78.

Philippine Madonnas' Pilgrimage to the United States*

By Jaime L. Cardinal Sin

Searching for a suitable Bible passage that would describe this pilgrimage of Philippine Madonnas to your country, I came upon St. Luke's account of Our Blessed Lady's Visitation to her cousin St. Elizabeth. "In those days," the Evangelist recounts, "Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country to a town of Judah." Tradition has preserved for us the name of the town where Zachary and Elizabeth had their home — Ain Karim.

From the lowland that is my humble, poor, debt-ridden and bankrupt country, the Philippines, Mary arose and has come into hill country, namely to the high, superrich, supermighty nation that is the United States of America, to the city of Washington.

Mary went to Alin Karim to bring Jesus to John, and to his parents Elizabeth and Zachary; to fill the unborn child and his parents with the Holy Spirit, and thus to transform them into powerful witnesses of the Messiah who was presently to make his appearance in human history.

Mary found in Ain Karim a saintly and holy family. She left it even saintlier and holier, filled with a greater abundance of grace and of the Holy Spirit.

If Mary were to visit today with any average or typical 20th century family, would she find a family righteous and blameless before God? Would she find a family that could be called Christian without doing violence to the name?

A family that deserves to be called Christian can be identified by the three blessings of which God made it a repository, namely: PROLES, FIDES, SACRAMENTUM. If we apply these three criteria, how many families will be found to be Christian in nothing but name alone?

* Address delivered on 28 May 1985 in Washington, D.C.

PROLES — FRUITFULNESS. The fruitfulness of the family does not consist in the actual having of children. The family's essential fruitfulness consists in its openness and readiness to the begetting of life. To quote the Second Vatican Council: "The true practice of conjugal love and the whole meaning of the family life which results from it have this aim: that the couple be ready with stout hearts to cooperate with the love of the Creator and the Savior, who through them will enlarge and enrich his own family day by day." (GS, 50)

Where children are "unwanted accidents" because they happen contrary to the wishes of husband and wife and in spite of the precautions taken to avoid having them, there fruitfulness exists only in a purely biological and material sense: but there is no fruitfulness in a formally human, conjugal, moral and Christian sense.

Let us rewrite the scene of Annunciation in a contemporary setting. The young lady is in her boudoir. At prayer? Certainly not. She is seated at her vanity table applying shadow to her eyes. An angel appears and says: "Good evening, Miss. I bring you good news. You will conceive and bear a child."

"What kind of a joke is that?" the lady replies.

"It's no joke. It's the truth."

"Don't be ridiculous," the young woman snaps. "How can that be? I've been taking my pills religiously. Me with child? Impossible!"

"Nonetheless, you're going to be a mother," the apparition insists.

"Damned nuisance. But Dr. So-and-So is very well equipped to take care of ~~it~~."

The easy availability of contraceptives — I've heard it said that contraceptive pills are standard items in any modern woman's handbag — and the spreading acceptability of abortion on demand underscore the depths of inhumanity to which the modern family has sunk. Beasts defend their offspring with their own lives. Modern human parents defend their pleasures and comforts with the lives of their babies. In the days of Christ there was only one Herod. Today, who can count the Herods?

FIDES — FAITHFULNESS. I have been told that virginity is a disappearing commodity among high school teeners. If that is true, I do not think that it is an American monopoly. The same would be true of any modern country. Virginity today is prized, not as a virtue, but either as something brand-new or as an old-fashioned rarity, as a rare antique.

The unfaithful husband has always been a commonplace; the faithful husband, an odd rarity. Conversely, the faithless wife was the exception, the faithful wife, the rule. But the trend among modern women has been reversed. The faithless wife is as commonplace as the faithless husband, and the faithful wife is as much of a rarity as the virgin teenager.

Net result: purity and chastity, like virginity, remain as words in the English dictionary, but have disappeared from the list of virtues of our modern world. To modern years the Christian virtue of conjugal chastity is a contradiction in terms. Perhaps that is the reason why so many people, Christians and Catholics too, were so sorely scandalized when our Holy Father hinted at the possibility of committing adultery with one's own spouse.

Of course, the most telling evidence of the repudiation of conjugal faithfulness is divorce. If we stop to consider how the "plague of divorce" has spread with such alarming rapidity, not sparing even such traditionally Catholic nations as Italy and Spain, can one resist the conclusion that, in this respect, the modern family is no better than a transitory alliance cloaked with legal respectability? Perhaps the ritual marriage formula could be updated as follows: "With this ring I thee wed and take thee as my legal bedmate for better not for worse, for richer not for poorer, in health not in sickness, until divorce do us part."

Does that sound like low-brow comedy? Only because modern peoples have turned the fundamental institution of marriage into a monumental farce.

SACRAMENTUM — SACRAMENT. The Christian family reflects the relationship between our Lord Jesus Christ and his Church. Treating of this aspect of the family, St. Paul admonishes wives to be subjects to their husbands as to the Lord: and husbands to love their wives as Christ loved his Church and delivered Himself up for her. (Cf. Eph. 5:21 ff.)

To be sure, a thoughtful, loving and considerate husband is a great help in securing respect and obedience from the wife. But the root motivation of wifely respect and obedience should be seeing the Lord Jesus Christ in the husband. Likewise, a young, pretty and devoted wife is a great help in securing tender and cherishing love from the husband. But the fountainhead of the husband's love and tenderness should be seeing the Church in the wife.

The wife's obedience, then, is ransomed from servility because it is obedience to the Lord; and the headship of the husband is redeemed from despotism because it is premised on the sacrifice of self for his wife. Thus the unity and harmony of the family become proof against any contingencies because the supernatural root and motivation remain when all natural motivations crumble. The churlish husband is, in God's own good time, sanctified, that is, redeemed by the obedience of the wife nailed to the cross of his churlishness; and the shrewish wife is, again in the Lord's good time, sanctified by the devotion of the husband nailed to the cross of her shrewishness.

But many modern people misread the Apostle. They love their spouses not *as* their own flesh, but *for* their own flesh, that is, for their own sexual enjoyment and other comforts. Husbands see in their wives a sex object, cook, washing woman, domestic servant — all practically for free. All this, of course, practically invites rebellion. And rebellion has come with a vengeance in the form of women's liberation: liberation not only from abusive and tyrannical husbands, but liberation from matrimony itself, which as regarded as a form of exploitation of women; and liberation from the home, which is perceived as no better than a prison.

To the modern family Mary comes bringing, in the first place, her faith. If the Annunciation ended with Mary's Fiat, it began with Mary's faith. "*Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.*" Be it done to me in accordance to thy word. Mary's Fiat was premised on the word spoken to her. There would have been no Fiat, had there not been a previous acceptance in faith of the message delivered to her in the name of the Almighty.

Elizabeth's greeting to Mary ended with these words: "Blessed is she that has believed because all the things promised to her by the Lord shall be accomplished." Many years later, a woman, listening to the preaching of the Lord, exclaimed: "Blessed is the womb that carried You and blessed the breasts that suckled You!" Jesus replied: Still more blessed are they

that hear the word and keep it." Commenting on these words which seemingly remark: "Even the close relationship of motherhood would have profited Mary nothing if she had not more blessedly, through faith, conceived Christ in her heart than in her flesh."

If to a struggling young modern couple an angel were to appear and say: "Congratulations! You will have a baby who will be the President of the United States, or who will make more money than the Rothschilds," do you think that this couple will refuse to have babies?

What is being the President of the United States compared to being a child of God? What is being wealthier than the Rothschilds compared to inheriting the riches of the kingdom of heaven? The family will regain its fruitfulness when it regains faith in the true nature of human love as a reflection of the fruitfulness of the love of the Eternal Father. The family will regain its fruitfulness when it regains faith in the truth about every baby: that it is a child of God and an heir to an everlasting kingdom. The family will regain its fruitfulness when it begins again firmly to believe that the Father, who provides for the flowers of the field and the birds of the air, will more certainly provide for those who "cooperate with the love of the Creator and the Savior, who through them enlarges and enriches his family day by day." (GS, 50)

Next, Mary brings to the modern family her FIAT, her selfless and generous surrender to the will of God. Fiat is faith expressed in another dimension, the dynamic dimension of action.

When Mary pronounced her Fiat, she was saying Yes not only to the glory of being the Mother of God; she was saying Yes also to all the pain, all the suffering, all the agony of being the Mother of the Savior and the co-Redemptrix of the human race.

In the life of Our Divine Savior there are two distinct phases: one is his hidden or private life in Nazareth; the other is his public ministry. No such distinction exists in the life of Mary. To be sure, Mary's mission as co-Redemptrix of humankind is not a private but a public role. But in Mary's case, the public role was not carried out by means of "public" activities. The New Testament makes no mention of any preaching, healing or working of miracles by Mary. She accomplished her public role in a hidden manner, through the sort of activities

than would be classifiable as "private" activities, the kind of work that any ordinary housewife and mother engages in the privacy of her home and family. There was nothing uncommon or extraordinary in the things Mary did. What was uncommonly extraordinary was the manner in which these ordinary activities were done: in unreserved submission, in total obedience, in steadfast adherence to the will of God.

There is no need to go outside the family in order to fulfill Our Blessed Mother's request at Fatima for more reparation, for more sacrifices to save the world from impending catastrophe. God calls us to serve Him and to save the world in and from the ordinary, material and secular activities of human life. God waits for us every day in all the immense panorama of human work and activity: in the office, in the factory, in the school, in the fields, but above all in the home. For we can retire from the school, and the office, and the factory, and the fields, but we cannot retire from, but rather we retire *to* the home.

Understand this very well. For those who say FIAT with Mary, the home, family life is a rich mine for countless opportunities for mortification and self-denial. There is something holy, precious and divine hidden in the most ordinary family situations that can be offered up everyday in a spirit of reparation to the Divine Majesty. It is up to each one of us to discover these hidden pearls; it is up to us to make full use of these opportunities to grow in holiness unto the full measure of Christ's manhood and complete in our own bodies what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ for the building up of his Church and the salvation of the world.

They say that the darkest time is that which immediately precedes the dawn of day. This might not be true in the physical order of nature; but it is true in the supernatural order of grace. Our Lord told us that when we should experience earthquakes, tidal waves, the darkening of the sun and the moon, and the shaking of the very pillars of heaven, then ought we to lift up our heads because our redemption is at hand.

When the mob came to arrest the Lord in Gethsemane, Jesus remarked that this was their hour and the power of darkness. Satan has his hour; God has his day. Darkness was at its darkest when the Light of the World was blotted out on Good Friday. But that was the time when Satan's hour had all but run out. Darkness was completely routed when the Sun of Justice rose on Easter Sunday.

Satan knows his hour is running short. In the old days conquering armies sowed salt to make the enemy's soil sterile. In his desperate frenzy, Satan is sowing sugar everywhere to render the souls of men barren. For the human spirit is tested, purified and strengthened by the salt of tribulation. It is rendered weak, spineless and barren by the sweetness of pleasure.

Consider the immorality flooding the world. It comes under many names: fun, a good time, the good life, doing your thing, expressing your personality, permissiveness, liberation, freedom of artistic creativity, adult shows, the right to one's own body, personal privacy... The list of euphemisms is interminable. But they all have one common denominator: pleasure uncensored and uncontrolled.

The extent of our moral degradation should not be cause for a sense of futility and defeat. The very blackness of the hour would seem to indicate that Satan's hour is almost out and dawn is at hand. Mary is the dawn. Have you realized that never, as in our times, has Our Blessed Mother come down so often to our earth? Lourdes, La Salette, Fatima, Garabandal, Flushing, Czechoslovakia (the name of the place eludes me now) ...

Mary comes with her MAGNIFICAT to remind us where lies the cause of our miseries and where the hope of our deliverance. We are fallen low because we have foolishly attempted to lift ourselves by our bootstraps. Nothing is so foolish, on the level of the spirit, as the human pride, conceit and delusions foisted by science, technology, military power, financial strength, progress.

We have forgotten that "our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the Principalities and Powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness on high." (Eph. 6:2) Against the Powers of Darkness neither science, nor technology, nor nuclear missiles, nor space stations, nor dollars or rubles are of any avail. We have prided ourselves in these weapons of our own invention and, in consequence, have experienced the truth of the Magnificat: "He has scattered the proud in the conceit of their hearts. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and the rich he has sent away empty."

But Our Lord chastises in mercy, so we may learn to empty ourselves of ourselves and He may fill us up with Himself and

his power. The fear of the Lord is the seed of wisdom, but the soil in which the wisdom that is expressed in Faith and Fiat, takes root and grows in, and is nourished by, humility. "Take heed to yourselves," Jesus admonishes, "lest your hearts be overburdened with self-indulgence and drunkenness and the cares of this life." How are we to take heed? "Watch, then praying at all times, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things." (Luke 21:34-36)

Prayer is the acknowledgment of one's inability and of one's dependence on God. Thus, prayer is the fundamental expression of humility. St. Paul, after warning us that our struggle is with the Spirits of Darkness, reminds us that our weaponry consists in the armour of God, the girdle of truth, the breastplate of justice and the shield of faith. But he ends, as he had to end, with these words: "With all prayer and supplication pray at all times in the Spirit, and therein be vigilant in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints." (Eph. 6:18)

For all the saints, that is, for all men — for whose redemption and sanctification the Blood of Christ has been shed: for sinners, that they may become holy; for those who are holy that they may persevere and grow in holiness. Persevering prayer and supplication are the key to the peace and salvation of the world.

Those who, like Mary, humbly deposit their faith in God and, like Mary, humbly pray FIAT MIHI SECUNDUM VERBUM TUUM, will, also like Mary, raise their voices in triumph: "My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour. He has had regard for the lowliness of his servants and has filled our homes and our land with every blessing. He has displayed the might of his arm, lifted up the downtrodden and filled the destitute with all good things. His mercy endures from everlasting to everlasting upon all those that fear Him."

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country. She comes to bring Jesus to your families, to fill your families with the Holy Spirit and transform them into powerful witnesses of Christ to our times. She brings you her FAITH, she brings you her FIAT, she brings you her MAGNIFICAT. May these abide with you and with your families — always.

FOR OUR LAND, TO OUR LADY

INTRODUCTION

In us, and in the images of Our Lady, our people are present tonight in this shrine, to honor the Mother of the Lord.

Nothing more beautiful could have brought us together this evening than this event: this gathering of images of the Blessed Mother from the Philippines, from the homeland of so many of us here present. It is an evening in the month of May, and tonight in almost every town and barrio and parish in our country, our people will be walking in procession for the *santacruzan* or the *flores de Mayo*, and the night will be filled with the fragrance of *sampaguitas* and *ilang-ilang* blossoms, and candles will flicker like fireflies of summer, and voices, mostly the voices of children, singing *Dios te salve, Maria*, that beloved hymn which touched our childhood with beauty, which touches our hearts with magic and memory, even as we hear it in this great Cathedral tonight.

Dearly beloved friends, when we gather here tonight, to honor our Blessed Mother, we gather as representatives of our

Address of His Eminence, JAIME Cardinal SIN at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C., on 29 May 1985, in the evening, at the celebration

for the "PILGRIMAGE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE"

... with the gathering of the images of

Nuestra Señora de Guía

Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria

Nuestra Señora de Peñafrancia

Nuestra Señora de la Paz y Buen Viaje

Nuestra Señora de Namacpacan (La Purisima)

Nuestra Señora de Piat (del Rosario)

Nuestra Señora de Manaoag (del Rosario)

Our Lady, Ina ng Poong Bato, of Zambales

Our Lady of the Nativity of Samar

thus to "follow [our] path [toward peace], lighting lamps of joy and playing their brilliance and beauty on the hearts of men across the surface of the globe, leading them to recognize, across all frontiers, the faces of their brothers, the faces of their friends."

Allow me, dear friends, to draw out — in somewhat different words — what Pope Paul VI is saying here, in the passage we have cited:

1. We are asked, as Christians, to be "creators of development... creators of peace," each one according to his or her place in society, each one according to his or her talents and energies. And that development is bringing into being a "society of more perfect justice among men."

2. Peace is the work of justice. That was the great motto of Pope Pius XII: *opus justitiae pax*. Peace that is not built on justice will not last, because it will be built on force.

3. Peace, as the work of justice in our violent and unjust world, must, more deeply, be built on love. *On love for the poor*, a "more concerned, more active, more generous love for the poor." Our holy father, Pope John Paul II, likes to repeat the phrase, "*a preferential option for the poor*." The Church today, he tells us, sees this as her burning task, for the making of peace, a commitment, strong and unwavering, to the multitudes of the poor in the world.

4. This Christian, Christ-like love for the poor must derive from our profound respect for "the infinite value" of every man, woman and child, as a human person, with a dignity given by God, with rights given by God. Every man, woman and child must be in our eyes, our brother, our sister, our friend.

We are reminded of the moving song which our Filipino people love to sing at Mass, *Hesus na aking kapatid*, with which Pope John Paul II ended his address to the working people in Tondo:

Hesus na aking kapatid
sa lupa nami'y bumalik,
Iyong mukha'y ibang-iba,
hindi kita nakikilala.

people and of friends of our people here in America. Our nation is, in a true sense, here with us. Our land is here, in our memory and our love. Our people are here: their joys and sorrows, their present suffering and even agony, as well as their hopes and their dreams — they are here in our minds and hearts, in that deep center of our souls which holds all that is dearest to our lives.

PART ONE

THE TASKS OF DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

It is of our country and our people that we think when we address ourselves to the theme of our "pilgrimage for development and peace." A PILGRIMAGE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE. The joining of the two words, Development and Peace, surely recalls to us what Pope Paul VI said in his encyclical letter, *Populorum progressio*, on the development of peoples: "DEVELOPMENT IS THE NEW NAME FOR PEACE" (PP, II, 4, par. 76). Let me cite a few lines taken from that letter:

The condition of peoples in the process of development ought to be the object of our consideration. Or, better said, our love for the poor in the world — and there are infinite multitudes of them! — must become more concerned, more active, more generous.

To wage war on misery and to struggle against injustice [and its structures] is to promote, along with better conditions for living, the human and spiritual progress of all men and women, and therefore the common good of humanity.

Peace cannot be limited to a mere absence of war. Peace is not the mere result of an ever more precarious balance of forces. No, peace is something built up day after day, in the pursuit of an order intended by God, an order which implies a more perfect justice among men.

To create peace, the Holy Father says in the same document, we must labor "to bring not some people, but all peoples, to treat each other as brothers." And citing his predecessor Pope John XXIII, he urged all to be "creators of peace" and

Tulutan mo'ng aking mata
mamulat sa katotohanan,
Ikaw, Poon, makikilala
sa taong mapagkumbaba.

We are reminded too of that powerful passage in the Latin American bishops' Puebla document, where the bishops conjure up the faces of the poor and the suffering, and in every face they see the features of the crucified Christ: in the faces of the children, marked already by poverty; in the faces of the disoriented young people; of the deprived indigenous peoples of the peasants and laborers, the unemployed, the marginalized, the old... Everywhere, the face of Christ "in tens of thousands of faces"; but in each one of the ten thousand, the face of one human person, with a human heart and a human spirit, with dreams and despairs, made for knowing and for loving, made for community, made for everlasting life.

We hear again the words Pope John Paul II spoke at Malacañang, on 17 February 1981:

Even in exceptional situations that may at times arise, one can never justify any violation of the fundamental dignity of the human person or of the basic human rights that safeguard this dignity. . . . Social organization exists only for the service of man and for the protection of his dignity.

Always, the human person, the human face, especially the poor, the little ones (like Mary) "of low estate" is at the heart of the Christian understanding of development, the Christian concern for peace.

PART TWO

MARY, HER MAGNIFICAT, AND THE "CAUSE OF GOD'S KINGDOM"

You might ask, why do you speak of these things tonight when we gather to honor the Woman of Nazareth? How does Mary fit into all of this, and where does our devotion to her connect with these concerns?

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, do you remember the words which the Gospel of Luke places on the lips of Mary of Nazareth, as she was on her journey to her cousin Elizabeth?

My soul magnifies the Lord,
 my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
 for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden . . .

He has shown strength with his arm,
 he has scattered the proud in the conceit of their hearts.
 He has put down the mighty from their thrones,
 he has exalted those of low degree,
 he has filled the hungry with good things,
 and the rich he has sent away empty . . .

Tonight let us listen to these words again, words perhaps made "too tame" by constant repetition. We must hear their power again, we must hear their challenge.

Do not these words of Mary, couched in the language of the Old Testament, speak of sharing bread and working justice? Do they not proclaim the downfall of those whose hearts are hardened by their greed and arrogance of power? Do they not tell us of God's love — God's special love — for the poor and the lowly? And is not that love, that "preferential love," the root of the "infinite dignity" of every human person, no matter how little and insignificant by the world's measuring? Do they not challenge us to turn our eyes to the poor, as God does? Do they not challenge our faith to see, in each one who suffers, the face of a brother or sister, the face of a friend? Do they not tell us, "Hear the cry of those in need till it breaks your own heart"? And do they not teach us that we must let God use us as his own weapons of peace, working through us, renewing our lives, so that *in us* and *through us* he may renew our nation in the ways of justice and reconciliation?

Dear friends, tonight we cannot go more deeply into these matters. But as we gather here, in this "pilgrimage for development and peace," we must call them to mind, even if briefly. Development and peace are not "soft" words, "wishy-washy" words. They are "strong" words, which summon us to courage and sacrifice. — And our devotion to Mary cannot merely be pious devotion to a plaster image, but to MARY OF THE GOSPELS, the woman of Nazareth whom God called to the task of the Kingdom. The woman of the FIAT, "let it be done to me," spoken with the generosity of her whole heart, which would be pierced by a sword. Mary who gave her life to the "cause of God" which was to be the "cause of Jesus" her Son. The cause of building up God's reign by transforming human hearts, creat-

ing — at what cost to herself! — human brotherhood in the City of the Father. Honoring Mary is not just praying to her and asking favors from her. It is making our lives like hers. Imitating her, so that for us too the cause of God's kingdom becomes the passion of our lives: peace that is the work of justice, peace that is the work of love.

PART THREE

OUR PRAYER TONIGHT, TO OUR LADY OF PEACE AND SAFE JOURNEYING

Dearly beloved friends, tonight we join in spirit our beloved people on their journey across the turbulent seas, but with Our Lady journeying with us. Hundreds of years ago the "dark virgin" of Peace and Safe Journey accompanied our own (and Mexican and Spanish) seamen on galleons across the Pacific. Stories are told of how more than once those ships ran into tempests that could have wrecked and sunk them, but for the seamen praying to their fellow-pilgrim, *La Señora de la Paz y Buenviaje*, to keep them safe. (Accounts tell us too that where she was present, travellers knew concord and reconciliation among themselves.) An old *bas-relief* which hung in the shrine at Antipolo showed Our Lady ringed with light, appearing above the crow's nest in the midst of the raging storm, assuring the fearful seamen she would bring them home through the howling winds and surrounding darkness.

At this moment of history our people too are going through tempests and storms. This is one of the reasons why we, the Bishops of the Philippines, declared this year a Marian Year: a year of "conversion, of offering of life, of reparation" in honor of the Mother of the Lord. To beg for the coming of freedom and justice, the return of true peace to our much-afflicted nation. Sometimes it seems all we hear from her in response are the words Chesterton places on her lips:

I tell you naught for your comfort,
yea, naught for your desire,
save that the sky grows darker yet
and the sea rises higher.

But our people are her people, this *pueblo amante de Maria*. Each of the faces of our people, the children with innocent eyes, the fair *dalagas* and brown *binatillos* (even if now clad in *maong*

jeans), the sunburnt peasants and metro-aides, the lean workers in our crowded city, the soldier and even the NPA cadre, the broken victims of torture and "salvaging," the unemployed and the detainee . . . each one of them is Our Lady's son or daughter. Toward each of them she has a tender and powerful love, the love her own Son has for them. She will never abandon them.

Even as the seamen amid the storms of the great ocean did in ages past, we turn to her in supplication. O, we will clear the decks and batten down the hatches. We will furl our sails and turn around our hulls to run with the wind. But we know this will not be enough without her prayer for us and the people she loves — to her Son who is the Helper of the poor and the Sun of justice. He who can work the miracle of reconciliation and of lasting peace even when it seems impossible to men.

Tonight, in Antipolo, the "brown Virgin" of Peace will go forth from her shrine on the little hill, to walk among the humble and the poor — her people. In her dark yet gentle face, those curiously wide eyes will look outwards, across the sea of candles surrounding her, and over the heads of the throng of her devotees, to the city of Manila below her feet, and beyond it, over the far-flung seas across which she travelled centuries ago . . .

But I think that tonight she will turn toward us too, gathered here in this splendid shrine, so distant and yet so near in heart to her. Surely she will hear our *Dios te salve, Maria*, beloved from our childhood, and our *Salve Regina*, that lovely hymn of the monks of the Middle Ages, with which all Catholics the world over venerate her, in Shanghai and in Rome, in this great city of Washington, and my small city of New Washington as well. She will hear our voices, and she will listen to our hearts crying out to her, to be for our land and our people, in this dark and desperate hour, MATER MISERICORDIAE, merciful mother. Mary, mother of all mankind, mother of all "the little ones of the earth," be for us, as you have always been, VITA DULCEDO ET SPES NOSTRA — our life, our sweetness and our hope. Hear the prayers and tears which arise from our hearts tonight, for all our hope is in your love for us, and in the supplication you make before your Divine Son. Hear us, Mother of compassion, loving Mother. Hear us, oh sweet Virgin Mary! O CLEMENS, O PIA, O DULCIS VIRGO MARIA.

† JAIME CARD. SIN, D.D.

Mary's Mediation of Solidarity

By Joseph M. de Torre

Are there two mediations?

One of the Protestant charges against the Catholic faith is that the latter contradicts the biblical doctrine about the fact that Jesus Christ is the sole mediator between God and man: "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, bearing witness in his own time."¹

Protestants claim that the Catholic faith contradicts this doctrine by saying that Mary is also Mediatrix between us and Jesus. Not unlike other Protestant charges, this one is based on a misunderstanding which can be cleared up and thus show that Protestants and Catholics are not really in disagreement, and could take another ecumenical step towards that unity of all Christians so ardently desired by Jesus² and doubtless by his Blessed Mother as well.³

Let me put it this way. While Christ's mediation is one of *salvation*, Mary's is a mediation of *solidarity*; while the former is constitutive, the latter is consequential; while the former is vertical, the latter is horizontal. There is really no conflict between the two, but rather complementarity. "Christ alone" says St. Thomas Aquinas (S. Th. III, 26, 1) "is the perfect mediator between God and man, inasmuch as he reconciled mankind with God by his death... but there is nothing to prevent others in a certain way from being called mediators between God and man, insofar as they, by preparing or serving (*dispositive vel ministerialiter*), cooperate in uniting men to God."

Mary's mediation of solidarity is based on her cooperation in the Incarnation, her spiritual motherhood and her intimate

¹ 1 Tim. 2:5-6.

² Cf. Jn. 17:20-23.

³ Cf. Jn. 2:5. As for the Catholic Church, the present Pope has been consistently and solemnly declaring that she is irrevocably committed to this ecumenical goal of the union of all Christians, set by the Second Vatican Council.

participation in the work of her divine Son. As the Apostolic Constitution *Munificentissimus Deus* of 1 November 1950, proclaiming the dogma of the Assumption, stated (cf. Denz. 2331), Mary is "the sublime associate of our Redeemer."

This is how Vatican II puts it:

"We have but one Mediator, as we know from the words of the Apostle: 'For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all' (1 Tim. 2:5-6). The maternal duty of Mary toward men in no way obscures or diminishes this unique mediation of Christ, but rather shows its power. For all the saving influences of the Blessed Virgin on men originate, not from some inner necessity, but from the divine pleasure. They flow forth from the superabundance of the merits of Christ, rest on His mediation, depend entirely on it, and draw all their power from it. In no way do they impede the immediate union of the faithful with Christ. Rather, they foster this union."⁴

Christ's universal mediation of salvation

By the Bull *Ineffabilis Deus* of 8 December 1854, Pope Pius IX proclaimed the doctrine that the Blessed Virgin Mary, through the foreseen infinite merits of her divine Son, had been *preserved* from the stain of original sin at the moment of her conception in her mother's womb.⁵ She was therefore *saved* from sin by Christ like everybody else: Christ is the sole universal mediator of salvation by virtue of his divinity and through the instrumentality of his humanity. Mary herself attests to this: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior . . ."⁶

She was saved, however, in a unique manner, as required by her unique role of divine motherhood, namely by being "preserved" from sin. Thus she would provide for her divine Son a humanity entirely new and free from the guilt of sin.⁷ While the stain of original sin has affected all men, for in Adam we "all have sinned"⁸, and so we are saved through a radical cure of the wound inflicted which removes the stain. Mary was saved

⁴ Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, no. 60 (Abbot Edition).

⁵ Cf. Denz. 1641.

⁶ Lk. 1:46-47.

⁷ Cf. Jn. 8:46, 1 Pet. 2:22, Heb. 4:15, Lk. 23:41, etc.

⁸ Rom. 5:12.

by preventing that stain from touching her before she came into existence, so that her conception was immaculate, that is, without stain (*macula* = stain).

Thus she became the origin of a new humanity, as a new Eve, a humanity which now the Son of God took on himself and joined to his own divine Person. This is called the hypostatic union (*hypostasis* = person, as distinct from nature⁹). In Jesus Christ, divinity and humanity are united without confusion or blurring; but also distinguished without separation, for he is only one Person, as the Ecumenical Councils of Ephesus, in the year 431, and of Chalcedon, twenty years later, defined in crystal-clear terms.¹⁰

Our solidarity in sin has become a new solidarity in the new humanity redeemed by Christ, and Mary is the first-fruits of this universal redemption, and thus the Mediatrix between us and Christ: "It is she who, by virtue of the Holy Spirit, that is, of the Divine Love, by her divine motherhood makes Christ our brother; and, as she is the Mother of Christ in the flesh, so she is, by spiritual solidarity, the Mother of the Mystical Body of Christ, which we all are: she is the Mother of the Church."¹¹

Mary's mediation as Mother of the Church

It was also Vatican II that stated this doctrine:

"Redeemed in a specially sublime manner by reason of the merits of her Son, and united to Him by a close and indissoluble tie, she is endowed with the supreme office and dignity of being the Mother of the Son of God. As a result she is also the favorite daughter of the Father and the temple of the Holy Spirit. Because of this gift of sublime grace she far surpasses all other creatures, both in heaven and on earth.

"At the same time, however, because she belongs to the offspring of Adam she is one with all human beings in their need for salvation. Indeed she is 'clearly the mother of the members of Christ... since she cooperated out of love so that there might be born in the Church the faithful, who are mem-

⁹ It is a union of the two natures, divine and human, in the one divine Person, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, Son of God or Word God.

¹⁰ Cf. Denz. 111a and 148.

¹¹ John Paul II, At the Sanctuary of Divine Love, Rome, 1 May 1979.

bers of Christ their Head' (St. Augustine, *De sacra virginitate*, 6: PL 40, 399). Therefore she is also hailed as a pre-eminent and altogether singular member of the Church, and as the Church's model and excellent exemplar in faith and charity. Taught by the Holy Spirit, the Catholic Church honors her with filial affection and piety as a most beloved mother."¹² This statement of Vatican II's *Lumen Gentium* gave rise to the official bestowal on Mary of the title "Mother of the Church" by Pope Paul VI at the closing of the third session of the Council on 21 November 1964,¹³ a title which has since been incorporated into the Litany of the Holy Rosary: very significantly between the titles "Mother of Christ" and "Mother of Divine Grace".

The late Bishop Fulton J. Sheen expressed this our relationship with Mary like this: "Oh, yes! He is our Model, but He is also the Person of God! There ought to be, on the human level, Someone who would give humans hope, Someone who could lead us to Christ, *Someone who would mediate between us and Christ as He mediates between us and the Father*. One look at her, and we know that a human who is not good can become better; one prayer to her, and we know that, because she is without sin, we can become less sinful."¹⁴ Later in the same book, he goes on to say: "Christ is a Mediator between God and humanity; Mary is the Mediatrix between Christ and us. Our Lord is a Mediator between God and man. A Mediator is like a bridge which unites two opposite banks of a river, except that here the bridge is between Heaven and earth. As you cannot touch the ceiling without a stepladder acting as a mediator, so sinful man could not in justice reach God, except by One Who mediated, and was both God and Man. As Man, He could act in our name, take on our sins; as one of us, He redeems us on the Cross and gives us new life in His Resurrection. But as God, His Words, miracles, and death have an infinite value, and therefore He restores more than we lost. God became man without ceasing to be either God or man, and therefore is our Mediator, Our Savior, Our Divine Lord.

"As we study His Divine Life, seeing Him as the first refugee persecuted by a cruel government, working as a carpenter, teaching and redeeming, we know that it all began when He took on our human nature and became man. If He had never

¹² *Lumen Gentium*, no. 53.

¹³ This is also the official date of this Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, pivotal document of Vatican II.

¹⁴ *The World's First Love*, Image Book, Doubleday, New York, 1956, p. 16 (italics in text).

taken on our human flesh, we would never have heard His Sermon on the Mount, nor have seen Him forgive those who dug His Hands and Feet with nails on the Cross. But the Woman gave our Lord His human nature. He asked her to give Him a human life — to give Him hands with which to bless children, feet with which to go in search of stray sheep, eyes with which to weep over dead friends, and a body with which to suffer — that He might give us a rebirth in freedom and love.

"It was through her that He became the bridge between the Divine and the human. If we take her away, then either God does not become man, or He that is born of her is a man and not God. Without her we would no longer have Our Lord! If we have a box in which we keep our money, we know that one thing we must always give attention to is the key; we never think that the key is the money, but we know that without the key we cannot get our money. Our Blessed Mother is like the key. Without her we can never get to Our Lord, because He came through her. She is not to be compared to Our Lord, for she is a creature and He is the Creator. But if we lose her, we cannot get to Him. That is why we pay so much attention to her; without her we could never understand how that bridge was built between Heaven and earth."¹⁵

Mary Mediatrix of all graces

The above lines were written in the early fifties, well before Vatican II. In the same book, Bishop Sheen makes the following remarks: "One wonders if this could not be the last of the great Truths of Mary to be defined by the Church." (He has been talking about the two great dogmas about Mary defined by the Church solemnly in modern times: the Immaculate Conception on 8 December 1854, and her Assumption into Heaven body and soul, defined by Pope Pius XII on 1 November 1950.) "Anything else might seem to be an anticlimax after she is declared to be in heaven, body and soul. But actually there is one other truth left to be defined, and that is, that she is the Mediatrix, under her Son, of all graces. As St. Paul speaks of the Ascension of Our Lord as the prelude of His intercession for us, so we, fittingly, should speak of the Assumption of Our Lady as a prelude to her intercession for us. First, the place, heaven; then, the function, intercession. The nature of her role is not to call her Son's attention to some need, in an emergency

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

unnoticed by Him, nor is it to 'win' a difficult consent. Rather it is to unite herself to His compassionate Mercy and give a human voice to His Infinite Love. The main ministry of Mary is to incline men's hearts to obedience to the Will of her Divine Son. Her last recorded words at Cana are still her words in the Assumption: 'Whatsoever He shall say to you, that do ye.'¹⁶

This is how Vatican II expresses itself on this point:

"This maternity of Mary in the order of grace began with the consent which she gave in faith at the Annunciation and which she sustained without wavering beneath the cross. This maternity will last without interruption until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect. For, taken up to heaven, she did not lay aside this saving role, but by her manifold acts of intercession continues to win for us gifts of eternal salvation." (Here the Council refers to several Fathers and Doctors of the Church.) "By her maternal charity, Mary cares for the brethren of her Son who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties, until they are led to their happy fatherland. Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked by the Church under the titles of Advocate, Auxiliatrix, Adjutrix, and Mediatrix." (Here the Council refers to several papal documents.) "These, however," the Council insists, "are to be so understood that they neither take away from nor add anything to the dignity and efficacy of Christ the one Mediator (St. Ambrose, *Epist.*, 63: PL 16, 2118)."¹⁷

To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Bull *Ineffabilis Deus* of Pius IX defining the Immaculate Conception, Pope St. Pius X issued his second Encyclical *Ad diem illum*, a few months after his election, on 2 February 1904. This is one of the papal documents referred to by Vatican II in the previous quotation, and it contains the famous comparison of Mary to the neck of the Mystical Body of Christ, as link between Head and members. Let me quote the full text:

"We do not deny that the distribution of these gifts (salvation by redemption) belongs by strict and proper right to Christ. They are the fruit He alone acquired for us by His Death. He is in His own right the Mediator between God and man. However, that community of suffering and sorrow between the Mother and her Son (which we have already described) has

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

¹⁷ *Lumen Gentium*, no. 62.

merited the venerable Virgin to be 'with her Only-begotten Son the most powerful Mediatrix and Conciliatrix of the whole world' (Pius IX, Bull *Ineffabilis Deus*). Christ, therefore, is the source, 'and of his fullness we have all received' (Jn. 1:16). 'From him the whole body (being closely joined and knit together through every joint of the system ...) derives its increase to the building up of itself in love' (Eph. 4:16). Mary, however, as St. Bernard rightly observes, is 'the channel' (*Serm. de temp., in Nativ. B.M., De Aquaeductu*, n. 4) or the neck which unites the Body to the Head and through which the Head sends power and a strength into the Body. 'For she is the neck of our Head, through which all spiritual gifts are communicated to His Body.' (St. Bernardine of Siena, *Quadrag. De Evangelio aeterno*, *Serm.* 1, d. 3, c. 3) This should make it clear that we are certainly very far from attributing to the Virgin the power of producing supernatural grace. Only God can do that. However, she surpasses all creatures in holiness and in the degree of her union with Christ. She was chosen by Christ to be His associate in the work of human salvation. She has, therefore, merited for us congruously (*de congruo*), as they say, what Christ has merited for us in strict justice (*de condigno*). She is the principal Minister of the graces to be distributed. He has 'taken His seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high,' (Heb. 1:13) and Mary as Queen stands at His right hand. 'She is the safest refuge and the most trustworthy helper of all who are in danger. Under her guidance, patronage, kindness and protection nothing is to be feared or despaired.' (Pius IX, Bull *Ineffabilis Deus*)"¹⁸

Garrigou-Lagrange makes the following commentary:

"Mary, who merited the title of Co-redemptrix and that of universal Mediatrix, is the model of reparatory souls through her sufferings at the foot of the cross. By them she merited congruously for us, or by a merit of propriety based on charity, all that the Word made flesh merited for us in strict justice. His Holiness Pius X (Enc. *Ad diem illum*, 2 February 1904) approved this common teaching of theologians, and Pope Benedict XV ratified her title of Co-redemptrix (saying that 'Mary, in union with Christ, redeemed the human race' (AAS, X, 182, Letter of 22 March 1918). Thus Mary became the spiritual mother of all men."¹⁹

¹⁸ *My Words Will Not Pass Away*, Doctrinal Writings of St. Pius X, Sinag-tala, Manila, 1974, pp. 41-42.

¹⁹ R. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *The Three Ages of the Interior Life*, Vol. II, Herder, St. Louis & London, 1964, p. 497.

Mary's maternal mediation

It is from the late Msgr. Escriva, Founder of Opus Dei, that I learned many years ago to pray *Ad Beatam Virginem Mariam Mediatrixem*, to the Blessed Virgin Mary Mediatrix. In his well-known *The Way* he wrote: "To Jesus we always go, and to him we always return, through Mary." "If you wish, you will spread God's word, which is a thousand times blessed and can never fail. If you are generous, if you correspond, with your personal sanctification you can bring about the sanctification of others, the kingdom of Christ, the *Omnes cum Petro ad Iesum per Mariam* — 'All with Peter to Jesus through Mary'."²⁰ And in one of his Homilies: "Mary continually builds the Church and keeps it together. It is difficult to have devotion to our Lady and not feel closer to the other members of the mystical body and more united to its visible head, the Pope. That's why I like to repeat: *All with Peter to Jesus through Mary!* By seeing ourselves as part of the Church and united to our brothers in the faith, we understand more deeply that we are brothers of all mankind, for the Church has been sent to all the peoples of the earth (cf. Mt. 28:19) . . ." "Those who think that devotions to our Lady are a thing of the past seem to have lost sight of the deep christian meaning they contain. They seem to have forgotten the source from which they spring: faith in God the Father's saving will; love for God the Son who really became man and was born of a woman; trust in God the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us with his grace. It is God who has given us Mary, and we have no right to reject her. We should go to her with a son's love and joy . . . If we have this filial contact with Mary, we will not think only about ourselves and our problems. Selfish personal problems will find no place in our mind. Mary brings us to Jesus, and Jesus is 'the firstborn among many brothers' (Rom. 8:29). And so, if we know Jesus, we realize that we can live only by giving ourselves to the service of others. A Christian cannot be caught up in personal problems; he must be concerned about the universal Church and the salvation of all souls."²⁸ And in his *Holy Rosary*:

²⁰ *The Way*, nos. 495 and 833.

²¹ *Christ Is Passing By*, nos. 139, 142 and 145. (Italics in text.)

"The beginning of the way, at the end of which you will find yourself completely carried away by love for Jesus, is a trusting love for Mary."²²

I'd like to recall here also the jolly remarks of the late Msgr. Ronald Knox:

"We have all of us this instinct about our Blessed Lady, that she is not merely the Mother of all our fallen race, but the Mother of each of us individually; not *our* Mother, but *my* Mother. Protestants sometimes laugh at us because we address ourselves now to our Lady of Perpetual Succour, now to our Lady of Good Counsel, now to our Lady of Lourdes, and so on, as if they were so many different people. But the case is far worse than that, if they only knew; every individual Catholic has a separate 'our Lady' to pray to, his Mother, the one who seems to care for him individually, has won him so many favors, has stood by him in so many difficulties, as if she had no other thought or business in heaven but to watch over him."²³

In conclusion, let me quote again Vatican II:

"This Synod earnestly exhorts theologians and preachers of the divine word that in treating of the unique dignity of the Mother of God, they carefully and equally avoid the falsity of exaggeration on the one hand, and the excess of narrow-mindedness on the other. Pursuing the study of sacred Scripture, the holy Fathers, the doctors, and liturgies of the Church, and under the guidance of the Church's teaching authority, let them rightly explain the offices and privileges of the Blessed Virgin which are always related to Christ, the Source of all truth, sanctity and piety.

"Let them painstakingly guard against any word or deed which could lead separated brethren or anyone else into error regarding the true doctrine of the Church. Let the faithful remember moreover that true devotion consists neither in fruitless and passing emotion, nor in a certain vain credulity. Rather, it proceeds from true faith, by which we are led to know the

(Continued on page 539)

²² *Holy Rosary*, Preface. (Italics in text.)

²³ *Retreat for Priests*, Sheed & Ward, London, 1955, p. 175. (Italics in text.)

Message of Pope John Paul II for World Mission Day 1985

SUNDAY, 20 OCTOBER

Beloved Brothers and Sisters!

Each year, on the solemnity of Pentecost, the Church relives with ineffable joy the beginnings of her own existence and of the evangelizing work destined for all the peoples of the earth. Therefore, on this very significant day, I am pleased to present, as customary, my "Message for World Mission Day" which will be celebrated this coming month of October.

THE CHURCH IS BORN UNDER THE BREATH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST

1. The apostles, faithful to the command of Christ, gathered in the Cenacle to pray and to reflect, together with Mary. Those privileged men were filled with a sentiment of trepidation in the face of the mandate that the Master had confided to them: "Go . . . and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit . . ." (Mt. 28:19). Trepidation because of the recent threats of the Jews, because of the incomprehension of many of the Lord's affirmations, and above all because of the experience of their own insufficiency and of their own limits in corresponding with the divine mandate. Those first apostles, neither educated nor audacious, are gathered around her, whom they feel to be their own Mother and the fount of hope and of confidence.

And behold, suddenly, the "transformation" takes place, at the powerful breath of the Holy Spirit. A radical transformation of mind and of heart: the apostles now feel how their intellect expands, they are invaded by an irrepressible dynamic fervour; they are dominated by a single impulse: to announce, to communicate to others what they contemplate in a new, brilliant light. The Spirit recomposes in them, as in a marvelous mosaic, every word pronounced by Christ.

Thus the Church is born. It is born on the day of Pentecost. "It is born", as I recalled on 22 May 1983 in my homily at the

conclusion of the 20th National Eucharistic Congress of Milan, "under the powerful breath of the Holy Spirit, who orders the apostles to go out from the Cenacle and undertake their mission. They go out among men and begin to travel the roads of the world to teach all nations."

THE CHURCH, COMMUNITY IN A PERENNIAL STATE OF MISSION

2. Thus, the Church appears, since its very inception, as a community of disciples, whose reason for being is the actualization in time of the mission of Christ himself, the evangelization of the world (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 17 a; *Ad Gentes*, 2 a; of mission, she is missionary community, whose members are joined in one single body in order to be sent to the nations (cf. *Ad Gentes*, 36). If within this community there are diverse roles, functions and "charisms" (cf. 1 Cor 12:4 ff.), the missionary vocation is nevertheless common to all (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 17b; *Ad Gentes*, 35-36): to bishops, to priests, to religious men and women and to the laity.

All, without distinction, are called to realize, though within their own specific vocation and in their own conditions and possibilities, the mission of the Redeemer (cf. *Ad Gentes*, 28). All must feel themselves committed to the one missionary mandate: to disseminate in the world the Good News brought to us by Christ, so that the prophecy of the Psalmist be fulfilled: "Their voice goes out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world" (Ps 19:5).

Therefore, it is not only those who specifically work at the forefront of evangelization, the "missionaries" properly so called, who must feel themselves committed, but likewise, every priest or consecrated person, who in the sphere of his own activity must inculcate in the faithful the sense of missionary obligation.

To the laity, too, belongs the arduous task of evangelizing in depth the social and cultural fabric in which they live, both in the lands where the announcement of the Faith has not yet arrived, as well as in the countries where Christianity is in urgent need of being revitalized for re-acquiring a new and more incisive power of penetration.

YOUTH, HOPE OF EVANGELIZATION

3. If this commitment is, as I have said, common to all the components of the Church, it concerns young men and women in a particular way. Therefore, in this International Youth Year, I address my appeal to their energies, to their generosity, to their intelligent dedication, which never weakens when it is a question of supporting a just cause.

In the perspective of the approaching third millennium, and in this crucial moment of human history, in which an obscure threat of destruction and of annihilation seems to weigh upon our world, I call you, I exhort you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be announcers of the Gospel, with all your energies to diffuse the salvific Word, the Truth of God; and thus, may a witness of the eschatological kingdom of truth and of love be offered by your life, and be concretely exerted for the transformation of the whole of temporal reality according to the spirit of the Gospel (cf. *Letter to the Youth of the World*, no. 9), overcoming the temptation of discouragement which leads to retreat and to disengagement.

It is not the time to have fear, to delegate to others this task, difficult, yes, but sublime. Each one, as member of the Church, must assume his share of responsibility. Each of you must make those near to you in the family, in the school, in the world of culture, of work, understand that Christ is the Way, the Truth, the Life, that he alone can conquer the desperation and the alienation of the individual, giving meaning to the existence of man, a creature gifted with an exalted dignity because he is made to the image and likeness of God. It is necessary to proclaim and to make known the salvific Truth to every man, because it is not possible to remain indifferent in the face of the millions and millions of persons who do not yet know, or who know only inadequately the inestimable treasures of the Redemption.

Two thousand years have passed since the "*euntes docete*" of Christ: Well, this command seems to have suffered a setback in some places, while in others, it appears to be proceeding very slowly.

Therefore I call you, young people of the world, and I send you as Christ sent his apostles, with the power that comes from the word of Christ himself: the future of the Church depends on you, the evangelization of the earth in the coming decades depends on you!

Be Church! Make it young, keep the Church young, with your enthusiastic presence, imprinting it everywhere with vitality and prophetic vigour.

Christ has need of you to proclaim the truth, to bring the announcement of salvation into the highways of the world. He has need of your generous and ready heart in order to manifest to all men his infinite and merciful love. Animate, sensitize your contemporaries, your communities; enkindle the flame of faith everywhere: only thus can the demon of drugs be conquered, only thus can the scourge of violence, of secularism, of hedonism that confuses and deviates very precious youthful energies be definitively vanquished.

Only thus can the souls of many brethren belonging to diverse religions be opened to a fruitful and constructive dialogue. And in this exalting undertaking, like the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, always remain docile to the guidance of the Spirit, "principal agent of evangelization" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 75), who supports, illumines, comforts and perfects all things.

MISSIONARY COOPERATION: SERIOUS AND URGENT COMMITMENT OF THE ENTIRE PEOPLE OF GOD

4. All the faithful, therefore, are strongly exhorted to reflect with great attention on the considerations expressed above. In fact, all the faithful, all the members of the Church "missionary by her very nature" (*Ad Gentes*, 2 a), are among those "sent", are co-responsible for the spreading of the Kingdom of God.

For the rest, if the necessities of missionary activity and the alarming situation of such a great part of humanity to whom the evangelical announcement has not yet reached, pass rapidly in review, one cannot fail to experience, in the depths of one's own conscience, the peremptoriness of Christ's command; one cannot fail to notice the gravity of the obligation that devolves on each Christian to further the progress of evangelization.

In fact, as St. Paul says, "And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent?" (Rom 10:14-15).

As community, as Mystical Body of Christ, the Church accompanies and sustains the missionary commitment of its members, indicating the most opportune ways of cooperation by which the individual can offer his contribution.

These ways are multiple, the means innumerable; nevertheless, at the present recurrence of World Mission Day, I desire to recall the specific importance of some of these means, which experience has shown as very laudable, not exclusive, but privileged, inasmuch as they are closely joined to the See of Peter: the Pontifical Mission Aid Societies.

THE PONTIFICAL MISSION AID SOCIETIES, PRIVILEGED INSTRUMENT OF COOPERATION

5. The Pontifical Mission Aid Societies, as we read in their Statutes, are "the official and principal instrument of all the Churches for missionary cooperation" (*Statutes of the Pontifical Missionary Societies*, Rome, 1980, Chap. I, no. 2). And as the Council points out, "it is only right to give these societies pride of place, since they are the means of imbuing Catholics from their very infancy with a genuinely universal and missionary outlook. They are also the means for undertaking an effective collection of funds to subsidize all missions, each according to its means" (*Ad Gentes*, 38). Actually, they are the active, modern, dynamic instruments for sustaining, under all aspects the direct action of the missionaries who are in the front lines, and for assuring the indispensable support to the peoples confided to their pastoral care.

The Pontifical Missionary Societies are the instrument of the charity of the People of God, of the miracle of fraternal love which is renewed each year to the benefit of many, though unfortunately, they cannot reach everyone.

Among them, the *Missionary Union of Priests and Religious* is specifically that one of the four Societies which keeps alive in the faithful the awareness of the obligation of missionary cooperation, through the leaders of the People of God, opportunely formed and "educated" to "mission-mindedness", intrinsic to their vocation, through means of the constant work of animation done by this well-deserving Society.

It is for this reason that I want to repeat once again to all priests, religious and members of Secular Institutes, to those

The Mission of the Catholic School System

Rev. Fr. Paul P. Zwaenepoel, CICM

The mission of a Catholic school derives from its model—the school that Christ Himself founded in apostolic times. This mission seeks to impart Christian values, that pervade not only the individual's thoughts, but also his deeds as well. This mission takes into account the changing times and Catholic schools must adjust to these realities.

The mission of a Catholic school is something very special. In order to become aware of the goals of Catholic education we have to go back to the first Catholic school which Christ Himself founded many years ago in the midst of His apostles and disciples, for He Himself was the ideal teacher in that first Catholic school established in the Holy Land.

The First Catholic School Model

In the Gospel, we learn of the episode in Christ's life as a child when He got lost and was found in the temple. Getting lost and being found is not that important. But what the Gospel hopes to inculcate into our minds through this study is that Jesus was found discussing the ancient laws as a teacher among the Scribes in the temple. In this youthful encounter, Christ was already engaged in the delicate vocation of a teacher. But Christ was not only a teacher. In His early manhood, He founded His own school and administered it though this school was not recognized by the government at that time. He sought to teach with His apostles everywhere He went. These apostles did not even have a transcript of records or academic credentials to secure for them their position. What they were armed with were Divine grace and inspiration to guide the faithful. There were no salaries in the school which was operated by Christ. The apostles had no labor unions to defend their material interests. Christ's people had to be happy with five loaves of bread and two fishes. There were no textbooks nor tuition fees to be paid for and the curriculum adopted by Christ, put in a nutshell, was to love God above all and our neighbors as we love ourselves.

Christ's school was not located in a particular place. Christ's school was a perambulant school, operating along the lake of Genesareth, the hills of Judea and the other places of the Holy Land. Christ's school was a travelling school as it wanted to reach all God's creation. It was like a forerunner of non-formal education. The first school of Christ was commissioned to go and teach all people. Among Christ's faculty-members — the apostles, some were for His administration as Saint Peter and Saint John but others like Judas would even sell Christ, their administrator, for 30 pieces of silver. At the age of 33, Jesus Christ, a man without a college diploma and other trappings of formal education, but otherwise known as the best teacher the world has ever known, died on the cross between two criminals.

We cannot be enlightened about the goal-consciousness of a Catholic school or of a Catholic teacher unless we relate ourselves to that first little school which has conquered the world. In the same way that the apostles and disciples and, later on, the Christians have brought the message of Christ to the four corners of the world so many centuries ago, in the same way, we in the Catholic school system have to bring the message of Christ or Christ Himself in our own place and time. What then are the implementations of goal consciousness in a Catholic school on the part of the administrators, teachers and students?

Observations on the Implementation of the Mission of the Catholic School System

The mission of the Catholic School System is to bring Christ to all those involved in the school system as administrators, faculty members, students, parents of students, alumni and all those who belong to the patronage system of the Catholic school. It is to bring Christ to all and to pattern life according to the Christian concept of men, the ensuing values system and the practices which are inspired by the Gospel.

However, an observation has to be made that in many Catholic schools the recruitment policies for new teachers and reward system very often do not take the specific mission of the Catholic school into consideration.

When vacancies occur in the Catholic school, especially in major fields of concentration where supply is smaller than demand, the administrator feels happy if any applicant would

apply. The first question concerning the applicant would be whether he is qualified for the job, what college or university he graduated from, what grades he obtained and what work experience he had in the past. On the part of the applicant, the salary involved in the new position is a very decisive issue. In this way new teachers are sometimes recruited without touching on the issue of the specific mission of the Catholic School System.

In the reward system, which brings along salary increases, promotion in rank or vertical mobility in position as from faculty member to principal, too often reward depends on purely academic achievement rather than on an attempt to evaluate a teacher in terms of Catholic attitudes, behavior and value systems.

Students come into the school system and go out of the system through graduation. Though a Catholic atmosphere may be present in the school system, seldom do we call the attention of our students to the specific mission of our Catholic school system. They pass through the Catholic school system unconscious of the specific mission.

Among Catholic educators there is often an attitude of looking upon the school system as just a mere educational institution.

If the specific mission of the Catholic School System has to be carried out, then the recruitment and reward systems have to take this mission statement into consideration. It can not be accepted that students stay for four years in the Catholic School System without knowing the specificity of Catholic education. There should be an awareness and an attitude of looking upon the school system not only as an educational institution but as a real community of persons bound by the same ideas in Christ.

One major impediment to such a Christian community in our Catholic School System is the continued habit of the school personnel and faculty-members of looking upon the courses of religion as a separate and distinct activity, an other-worldly activity as compared to the other subjects in the school program and therefore the concern only of religion teachers, in the same way that physics is the concern only of physics teachers. Our printed catalogues often reinforce this idea in the same way in which units for religion are printed between parentheses while

the units of academic subjects are printed without parenthesis. Or, administrators delegate the task of religion education to a religion coordinator. In this manner, they never get themselves involved in the real issue.

It is therefore necessary to do away with the limited view of the religion programs in our school system. It is necessary that the entire faculty staff be made goal-conscious of the Catholic mission of the school so that everybody can assume the specific role and responsibility for the religious atmosphere which has to pervade the school system in a personal and institutional way.

As Imparter of Values and Value Systems

Any educational program whether formal or informal or non-formal has a triple function to fulfill its purpose with reference to the teaching-learning process. It has to impart *knowledge* which is the cognitive element, *values* which constitute the affective element and *skills* which develop the psychomotor elements of men. Applied to religious education, any religion should embrace such concepts as the concept of men redeemed by Christ and consequently depending upon these concepts, a Catholic value system which ultimately is manifested in the religious practices should emerge.

On the scale of the difficulty and the time involved, skills and knowledge are more easily imparted and introduced to pupils and students than are changes in values and attitudes. Attitudes and values are again more easily imparted in theory than in their applications when it comes to group behavior. On the other hand, when religious knowledge and concepts are lost in the course of time, the Christian value system and Christian culture still linger on in society for centuries, even though people, as is the case in some Western countries, are ignorant of the religious truths and concepts which uphold that Christian heritage. But the danger is that instead of a value system, sustained by the comprehensible truths and concepts of religion, a traditional folk religion and Christian culture come in, which fade away when religious conflicts arise.

In the context of the classroom setting, it would look very easy to teach values like honesty, justice, goodness, patriotism, bravery as single values, as far as the cognitive component is concerned, since all these values are taught independently from

each other. But life does not offer us a single choice of a particular value, for in life we have, for instance, to reconcile the value of goodness with the value of justice. Hence, it would seem that to build a value system or a value judgment within the minds of our students, in which different single values are in equilibrium or in balance, is more important than to build up single values separately taken, for a value system does not affect the cognitive component of the learner but the affective and behavioral component of the learner as well.

In many books on the sociology of education, the school is referred to as a "museum of values and virtues", a place where values are stored, dusted off until they become too idealistic for human consumption. Schools are "repositories of idealism." The world and society are pictured to the young as "a little more honest and virtuous than they are in reality." "Honesty is the best policy" is taught to our pupils and students, but perhaps their fathers secretly knew better than this slogan. Boys and girls may be learning something quite different in the school from what happens in the material world. But it does no harm to start with high assumptions. The school often teaches the students enough honesty to keep him out of jail all his life. And starting with high assumptions, the students can make amendments to these principles in his future life as he may deem necessary.

Catholic schools have a highly developed value system of idealism for the youth. Everything is done to keep the young unspoiled and unsullied. There are certain things about the world and human nature which are not being taught.

There are even facts of history which are left untouched in the classroom. There is often an idealized world to be handed down that is carried on in college teaching. Waller noted:¹

It is argued that character training must begin with the inculcation of an impossible virtue in order that the individual may have a surplus of virtues and values to trade upon.

The conventional belief is that the young people must be shielded from contact with the unpleasant and amoral aspects of the universe and that they must be

¹ Williard Waller, *The Sociology of Teaching* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1961).

kept in the conservative environment of the school. These ideals may be justified by the fact that they prevent demoralization of the young.

If the school is to prepare for life, then it has to give the student the reality of the world in a gradual way so that they may get ready to live in it. The better the congruence between the life of the school and the life of the world, the better will be the students' training for life. If a too idealistic world has been forced upon our students, the easier they will get disorganized later on in their value system and the more they will be lost by being in contact with a far from perfect world which they will find after the schooling period. Even during the years of schooling, other agencies as the family, the mass media, the peer group and others influence the build-up of a value system of our youngsters. Television shows often inculcate sex and crime which might be the opposite of what is taught in the school environment. Our Catholic schools should not be green houses of values which are impossible to reach, but they should indicate the dangers that lie ahead. We cannot make ideas safe for men but we must educate men to become safe for ideas. It should never be true that a dichotomy exists between the idealized world of the learner and the realistic one of the adult as institutionalized in the school system, though the reality of the world should be taught in a gradual way.

Pupils and students, educated in an idealized world, know too well in our days now, how mass media, shown in television programs, give the other side of the world where violence, gambling and other vices govern the picture tube.

Here again the contact with parents is of primary importance in building up the value systems of the students.

Education for Knowledge, Skills and Values

There is no doubt that academic programs in our school-system instill a lot of knowledge and skills which undergo evaluation during the different periodical tests. But these periodical tests or examinations often evaluate the mere intellectual content or the cognitive aspects of the subject matter. Values are ordinarily not tested in our Catholic school systems though they are more important than mere knowledge and skills. A student can easily be at the top of his class in religion subjects though it does not necessarily follow that he is a practising Catholic.

In teaching values, faculty members are essentially involved. And this teaching involves precept as well as example. The integration of a value system in our students is precisely at the core of the commitment of a Catholic school. But any value system has to be based on a precise concept of man. If the concept of man would be one of reincarnation as taught by Hinduism, then the consequent value system would be founded on such concept. In our Catholic religion the concept of man is the concept of man redeemed by Christ. Value systems have to be anchored on a sound knowledge of religion. This knowledge is fundamentally at hand in the religious education subjects. In this way, social action programs can hardly substitute for the religious programs which transmit to us the knowledge of religion. A recent survey of the knowledge of students in religion, conducted by the Association of Catholic Universities of the Philippines and published by the Episcopal Commission on Education and Religious Instruction in a document entitled "The Shape of Religious Education in the Philippines Today" reveals a lack of knowledge of religion among students in the Catholic School System.

Educating students in the light of our Catholic faith is not necessarily synonymous with Christianity. A Christian value system is not always to be equated with a Catholic value system as the concept of man in matters of family planning, divorce and the like, sharply differs in some Christian churches as compared to the Catholic church. On this topic, Msgr. Leonardo Legaspi, O.P., D.D. rightly stated:

If man is the object of education, the formation of man will differ according to the faith concept about man. Since there is a deep difference between christology and anthropology of the Catholic Church from that of the other Christian ecclesial communities, it follows that their religious value system will vary. Hence, for a Catholic School to be Catholic, it is not sufficient to provide students only a Christian value system, it must perform the Catholic value system.²

There is a trend observable nowadays among priests and religious who seem to leave the apostolate of Catholic education in favor of direct apostolate or social action among the poor

² Msgr. Leonardo Legaspi, O.P., speech during the Seminar Workshop for Educational Management students at De La Salle University, Manila, March 8, 1979.

whether it be among the slums of the urban depressed or among the underprivileged and marginals in the rural areas. From the viewpoint of the economic resources needed for the survival of a Catholic School System in the country, some have been inclined to shift the work from the Catholic School System to the non-Catholic School System in an effort to Christianize the non-sectarian and public school system instead of operating our own Catholic school system.

While, it is necessary to Christianize the moral dimension of all systems in the present-day society, it cannot be disputed that the climate of the apostolate of the church is nowhere more favorable than in our Catholic school claiming the full time of its students, and which has occasioned contact with the parents and the loyalty of its alumni. On this score Msgr. Torpigliani explained that:

The Catholic school can make accessible to students the participation in the liturgy and the sacraments, which are powerful forces for the development of personal sanctity and of the pedagogical and psychological environment for teaching christian faith. It opens a Catholic environment in which Catholic life can thrive and develop.³

Even the Sunday mass and the Sunday homilies do not offer similar occasions. First, the Sunday mass is not only directed to the youth but to all the faithful. Second, homilies do not have the systematic approach that is found in the school system approach. The youth expects more than sermons to build up the religious dimension of life. The Catholic school system, however, builds up period after period, in an integrated way the Christian mind, outlook and perspective of the youth based on Christ and the value system of the gospel. The view of going away from a Catholic school system in the Philippines would be dangerous illusion for it would fail to see the Catholic school, as a venue to ensure the perpetuity of the Catholic community much like the State prepares its citizens of tomorrow through its school-system.⁴

³ Msgr. Bruno Torpigliani (Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines), "The Catholic Schools in the Philippines — An Essential Service to the Church" (Message delivered to the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) Baguio City, July 1979).

⁴ Very Rev. Manuel Piñon, O.P., "The Catholic University in our National Context" (Address delivered on his investiture as second president of Aquinas University, Legaspi City, December 8, 1978).

Definition of Catholic Education

After these introductory remarks on Catholic education, there is no better definition of higher Catholic education than that which comprises five basic elements at the same time. A Catholic college or university must:

- a. produce scientific work of quality and possess sufficient material means;
- b. be a Christian inspiration, not only for the individual but also for the community as well;
- c. be a continuing reflection of Christian faith upon the growing treasure of human knowledge;
- d. show fidelity to the Christian message as it comes to us through the Church;
- e. have an institutional commitment to the service of Christian thought and education.

Let us analyze the different elements required to have Catholic education:

a. *A scientific work of quality and sufficient material means*

A Catholic institution or school must first be a school in the qualitative sense of the word. It has to strive towards academic excellence. It has first to be a college or university in the strictest sense of the word, with up-to-date standards acceptable to the world of universities in its teaching, research and community service oriented functions. An institution that does not come up to excellence with reference to other institutions, in fact, devalues the very notion of a Catholic institution. A Catholic institution, before it can be called catholic, has first to be an institution in the real sense of the word. Catholic education has therefore to acquire the means such as finances, library book holdings, laboratory equipment and the like which make academic excellence possible.

b. *A Christian inspiration, not only of the individual but also of the community as well*

The Christian inspiration, or better, the Catholic inspiration which should pervade a Catholic institution is the inspiration taken from the Gospel and from the Catholic tradition.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Catholic universities and colleges in developing countries placed heavy emphasis on the personal formation of the individual and the moral and religious education of the individual was held supreme. At that time in the Philippines many colleges of Arts and Sciences were established, which aimed at producing the Christian gentlemen while giving little attention to the needs of society. Catholic universities and colleges catered to the elite on the premise that if the elite is saved, the common people would easily follow. During the late sixties, Catholic universities and colleges became more conscious that the university should not only contribute to the improvement of the individuals but should take society into consideration as both have reciprocal relationship. This consciousness was brought about partially through the advancement of the social sciences, the directives of Rome and the clamor during student unrest that education was irrelevant and dysfunctional to society. Catholic universities and colleges in developing countries got engaged in literacy programs, cooperative workshops, development of middle level technology, community service and extension programs which in one way or another contributed as an institutional commitment to the needs of development of the society of which the Catholic university or Catholic college was the product.

While individual administrators and faculty members in a non-sectarian school or public school, as individuals may be inspired by the same value system based on the gospel and Catholic tradition, the definition of Catholic education is not merely contented with the individual expression of such value system. The definition adds that there has to be a communal expression of such inspiration in the college or university community which claims to call itself a Catholic institution.

c. A continuing reflection of Christian faith

A distinctive feature of the Declaration of the Vatican II Council on Education is the insistence upon the integration of Christian education into the whole pattern of human life in all its aspects.⁵ This mode of thinking is directly opposed to that of another age when it was considered best to keep Christians away from the world "lest they be contaminated thereby." It is this idea that traced the origin of the first Catholic univer-

⁵ Walter M. Abott, SJ, *The Documents of Vatican II* (Caloocan City, Phil.: Phil. Graphic Arts, Inc., 1966), p. 635.

sities which were established for the purpose of isolating the Catholic students in a closed environment to better protect them from the "injurious influence of the world."⁶ The cloistered and sequestered life which the first Catholic universities aspired to lead was ensured by a "carefully fertilized and immunized environment."⁷

But in the "Gravissimum Educationis," it is stated with utmost clarity that the Church has no desire to remain away from the world in a form of isolation but that Christian education is in the world, and in a sense, for the world, since man must always work out his salvation in the concrete situation in which God has placed him and must achieve this not by protection but by contributing to the whole human community of which he is an integral and inseparable part.⁸

The first Catholic universities sought a hermit's retreat from the world in the age of monasticism and medieval values which rendered them protected from the demands of the outside world. But the Catholic university has survived those dark years of social unconcern. It is now existing in a time far removed from that when it was first founded. The 20th century is an engaging time sensitive to man's accumulating needs and liberal to his perennially changing desires. And the Catholic university will find it imperative to live up to the spirit of the times, if it is to prove itself not an out-moded and anachronistic institution. It will have to relate itself to the milieu — to the social, cultural, economic, political and other educational institutions around it — comprising the environment where it thrives and breathes. It is precisely this need for harkening to the call of the milieu that the "Gravissimum Educationis" declared:

So it is that while the Catholic school fittingly adjusts itself to the circumstances of advancing times, it is educating its students to promote effectively the welfare of the earthly city, and preparing them to serve the advancement of the reign of God. The purpose in view is that by living an exemplary and apostolic life, the Catholic graduates can become, as it were, the saving leaven of the human family.⁹

⁶ Norbert A. Luyten, O.P., "Why a Catholic University" *The Catholic University, A Modern Appraisal*, ed. Neil G. McCluskey, S.J. (London University of Norte Dame Press, 1970), p. 32.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Abbott, *op. cit.*

⁹ Cf. Second Vatican Council, Declaration on Christian Education (Gravissimum Educationis), p. 8.

family? Not at all. The admission requirements of a Catholic school have to do with IQ and a battery of tests which, of course, do not measure the catholicity of the family.

Are our admission requirements in the Catholic schools really Catholic or much academic?

b. The economic situation has brought along the increase of student fees. Student fees and ability to pay the salaries of teachers are correlated. Especially in rural areas, fees have gone up tremendously so that Catholic education is no longer within the reach of some Catholic parents belonging to the low income class or the low middle income class. What then about canon law 793? Could we not place the ability of parents to pay the student fees under the admission requirements of Catholic schools? Are our admission requirements in the Catholic schools really Catholic or too financial?

c. Labor unions are the order of the day for faculty members. In a certain way faculty members have long been neglected in society. But will this shift not stress too much the material welfare? Do labor unions contribute to a "real community of persons whether administrators, faculty members and students, bound by the same ideas in Christ" or does it work in a divisive way, i.e., the employer versus the employee? If we stress too much material gain, is there still place to talk about what the Church terms as the "ministry of teaching or the apostolate of teaching or does teaching merely mean a form of employment?

To be a faculty member of a Catholic school is something different from being a faculty member in any other school. To be a faculty member in any given school might be an easy way of livelihood but in a Catholic school it is a vocation or a mission which is very close to the ministry of teaching as we know it in a Catholic church. To be a faculty member in a given school might be very useful, but to be a faculty member in a Catholic school will require above teaching by precept, the teaching by example. Teaching by example is not only necessary for faculty members who handle religion classes but is equally true for faculty members in science or mathematics, because Catholic teachers ought to identify themselves, constantly and persistently with the work and with the mission of the Catholic school.

d. Sometimes it is said that some non-sectarian schools are doing better from the Christian viewpoint than some Catholic schools. This possibility is not discounted. Are products or graduates of non-sectarian schools not sometimes better than graduates of Catholic schools? The possibility is not denied, but we should not forget that the Catholic school system as a human system also treads along a certain margin and risk of failure. After all there are many other formative agencies in the life of an individual as the family, the mass media, even the *barakada* which work on our young people nowadays and results of Catholic education ought to be viewed on a long range evaluation. And even assuming that Catholic education brings failure to some, should Catholic education be given up or should this stimulate us to do our jobs whether administrators or faculty members?

Catholic education cannot be evaluated by the same rationalistic criteria which apply to other professions. There are so many intangibles in education which cannot simply be measured in a quantitative way in the same way as examinations in a school system more often measure intellectual knowledge rather than attitudes. To continue our role as administrators or faculty members, we need hope and the conviction that the importance of Catholic school system rests on the veracity of the very important assumption that the administrators and faculty members truly perform the specific mission of the Catholic school system.

e. Do we not find in the public school system and in non-sectarian schools faculty members who are more committed to Christian faith and life than in the Catholic school system?

It may be true that in the non-Catholic school system and in the public school system, individual teachers may be found who are sometimes better committed to the mission of Christ than in the Catholic school system. The commitment that Christ is the foundation of the whole educational enterprise and that the principles of the gospel are the educational norms in the Catholic school system is not only an individual commitment of the members of the Catholic School System but above all an institutional commitment. This implies that administrators, faculty members, students, parents and alumni have to be involved as an institutional community in bringing Christ to each and everyone. This institutional implication compels us to help people live in a community in our educational efforts, for as God's children we have been reborn in baptism and became part of the larger community — the Christian commu-

nity — which should be present at the very premise of our Catholic school system. As a response to the teaching of the Catholic school community, our students should get aligned for instance to the bigger community of the parish. Religion teachers have therefore to take parents into consideration as instances occur where students are easily confused because what their religion teachers teach is at variance with what their parents say or practice. And the parents themselves who belong to the patronage system of the Catholic School System should also get involved in the mission of the Catholic school.

However, the institutional commitment of the Catholic school system brings along the moral task of building values as the task of all those working in the school system. Some faculty members, particularly, if their subjects like Mathematics or Physics have little direct affinity with value questions, may be tempted to consider themselves incompetent to assume the moral task of value formation or may altogether think themselves exempted from this task. They may even be resentful at being distracted by this task from their main academic work. But adherence to such principles indicates a lack in the institutional commitment of letting Christ pervade all dimensions of school life.

In matters of values, the silence of a teacher "makes sound". By doing little by precept or example, we teach that values and moral matters are not important or are purely private. No student, faculty member or administrator enjoys a right to be illiterate in values, in belief and ethical concern.

The Roman documents have stressed, time and again, that the Catholic School System has to give the synthesis of "faith and culture" and the "synthesis of faith and life". The Catholic perspective therefore or the moral value dimension has to pervade all aspects of human knowledge. Christian thought has to pervade the economic, cultural, political, social and technological aspects of life so that, in a certain way religion and its moral dimension, has to be integrated in all aspects of the curriculum. In this technological field of nursing and medicine, bioethics have to inform these sciences.

It is evident that a non-Catholic school cannot have an institutional commitment of bringing Christ to its constituents for this would automatically make it a Catholic school.

f. *Freedom of Education*

Are Catholic schools in the Philippines granted the guarantee of exercising freely their educational objectives and functions and, if yes, what norms support such a guarantee?

Catholic schools are granted the guarantee of exercising freely their educational objectives or functions though under the supervision and regulation of the State.

The following norms support guarantee from different viewpoints:

1. All educational institutions shall be under the supervision of, and subject to regulation by the State. (Art. XV, Section 8, Constitution of the Philippines)
2. All institutions of higher learning shall enjoy academic freedom. (Art. XV, Section 8, Constitution of the Philippines)
3. The state shall strengthen the family as a basic social institution. The natural right and duty of parents in the rearing of the youth for civic efficiency and the development of moral character shall receive the aid and support of the government. (Art. II, Section 4, Constitution of the Philippines)

The last question then would be whether there is freedom of education in the Philippines, whether parents are free to educate their children in the school of their choice.

The freedom to educate or what is called "legal freedom of education" is mandated by the Constitution. However, the material or practical freedom of education or the opportunity to exercise that legal freedom of education is absent due to the fact that Catholic schools are not subsidized by the government and, therefore, they derive all income from student fees to be paid by the parents of the students. Parents then pay, as citizens of the country, taxes by which the state educational system (public schools) is supported, and if they like to send their children to a Catholic school pay a second time for the student fees as required in the Catholic school.

Catholic parents belonging to the low income group or the low middle income group are unable, due to poverty, to pay a second time for the student fees of their children. Hence, due to financial restraint there is no practical freedom of education because the opportunity to exercise the legal freedom of education is absent due to lack of finances.

In summary one can say that to most Catholic schools the mission is clear, but the implementation poses problems — some surmountable others not. And as administrators and teachers in these schools, we must face them squarely and look back for guidance to our model — the school that Christ founded among His disciples.

MARY'S MEDIATION OF SOLIDARITY

(Continued from page 516)

excellence of the Mother of God, and are moved to a filial love toward our mother and to the imitation of her virtues."²⁴

So, our separated Protestant brethren need not be apprehensive about the Catholic understanding of Mary's mediation between us and Christ. I'm sure they share the Catholic belief deep in their filial hearts. We can pray together that we may realize that solidarity of which the present Pope has spoken of so many times, a brotherly solidarity of all the disciples of Christ, of the entire human race, of the entire universe created by the infinite Love of the Father in Heaven:

"May the Holy Spirit, through the intercession of the Most Holy Virgin, his Immaculate Temple, sustain our prayer so that through it the Kingdom of God may draw near to us and to all of creation!"²⁵

²⁴ *Lumen Gentium*, no. 67.

²⁵ John Paul II, Angelus Message, 22 July 1984: *L'Osservatore Romano*, English, 30 July 1984, p. 2.

HOMOSEXUALITY: A Ground For Marriage Nullity?

With the increasing incidence of marital breakdown due to the homosexual condition which either party in a conjugal relationship is afflicted with, some canonists in the past have been led to make a move for the establishment of homosexuality as an impediment to marriage. Supported by recent sociological and psychological findings that same-sex orientation is neither a psychopathological abnormality nor a disease but an existent condition which nevertheless affects seriously the person's capacity for acts which are per se apt for the engendering of heterosexual community of life, some reasoned as dubitable the prospect of a successful married life between persons one of whom is a homosexual. Because of this variant affectional inclination, then, some experts seriously doubted whether homosexuals can contract true marriage. John Cavanagh, for example, states: "the homo-heterosexual marriage is not a true marriage because the homosexual partner, due to his (or her) orientation sexually, is unable to establish a complete and lasting relationship with the heterosexual spouse."¹ In the light of the observed marital failures of homosexuals, therefore, plus the increasing confirmation of scientific data supporting its irreversibility, some canonists advocated for its inclusion among the impediments which by their very nature render marriage null and void.

The New Code of 1983, however, did not include homosexuality among the diriment impediments. Nevertheless, this does not mean that it rejects the current scientific data nor that it has arbitrarily shut its eyes on the experiences of the people whom the Church is called to serve. The revised canonical legislation on matrimonial consent shows that homosexuality has not been overlooked. Being a psychological phenomenon, it is included in canon 1095 which states thus:

The following are incapable of contracting marriage:

1. those who lack sufficient use of reason;

¹ John Cavanagh, "Latent Homosexuality as a Cause of Marital Discord." *Linacre Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (1976), p. 144.

2. those who suffer from a grave lack of discretionary judgment concerning the essential matrimonial rights and obligations to be mutually given and accepted;
3. those who, because of causes of a psychological nature, are unable to assume the essential obligations of marriage.

So, when confronted with cases of confirmed homosexuals, canonists can reflect on the *lack of necessary discretion* viewed from their failure to perceive the true dimension of marriage as adverse to their own basic make-up. Or, canonists can focus on the homosexuals' *lack of requisite competence* to fulfill and sustain the affectional and emotional needs demanded of heterosexual community of life. Obviously, even if same-sex orientation has not been explicitly and definitely designated as an impediment it was contemplated in the new code. It should be noted, however, that since the above law has just been promulgated, the extent of its impact on the adjudication of homosexual cases could not yet be determined at this point. Nevertheless, cognizant that revisions in law do not happen by accident or in isolation but rather is a fruit of long tradition, evolution and development, as reflected in jurisprudence, how the new law would be applied could be gleaned from the recent important rotal decisions. On this point, the succinct summary made by Paul Thomas² on the different decisions of the Roman Rota on homosexuality is particularly relevant:

1. *Charles Lefebvre*, in an affirmative Rotal decision, declared the homosexual partner incapable of valid marriage due to lack of sufficient discretion as well as lack of necessary competence to assume conjugal obligations.³

2. *Heinrich Ewers*, in another affirmative decision, placed homosexuality among the causes of personal inability to undertake heterosexual rights and responsibilities.⁴

3. *Lucien Anne*, affirmed that the marriages of homosexual persons can be invalid because of lack of essential object — the essential object understood (in the light of Vatican II) not only as "the right to the body" but also as "the right to a community of life."⁵

² Paul Thomas, "Marriage annulments for gay men and lesbian women: New canonical and psychological insights," *The Jurist*, Vol. 43, No. 2, 1983.

³ *Coram Lefebvre*, Dec. 2, 1967, S.R.R. Decisiones 59:798-807.

⁴ *Coram Ewers*, June 22, 1968, S.R.R. Decisiones 60: 476-485.

⁵ *Coram Anne*, Feb. 25, 1969, S.R.R. Decisiones 61:174-192.

4. *Nicola Ferraro*, when granting an affirmative decision, held that homosexuality rendered a marriage null because of lack of object, that is, lack of capacity to hand over and accept nuptial responsibilities.⁶

5. *Mario Pompedda*, in upholding Lefebvre's decision, based his opinion not on the lack of due discretion but on the lack of due competence to assume conjugal obligations as the essential object of marital consent.⁷

6. *Dorio-Marie Huot*, stated that homosexuality suppresses the object of matrimonial covenant, because the party lacks a radical competence to enter nuptial union and undertake its essential commitments.⁸

7. *Jose Serrano*, affirmed that homosexuality places under question the ability of the individual with regard to the inter-personal relations of marriage.⁹

Before proceeding, however, it stands to note, in order to preclude misconceptions about the decisions cited above, to clarify the nature of homosexuality as referred to by the rotal judges. "Those people are to be regarded as homosexuals who, either exclusively or prevalently desire sexual relations with a partner of the same sex because they feel a kind of aversion to the opposite sex."¹⁰ Pompedda, in another decision, describes the homosexual as "those persons who, by their nature (they were born with this anomaly) or by having contracted a firm and durable habit, are attracted irresistibly to the same sex."¹¹ From these descriptions, therefore, the conditions could be derived, whose presence could lead to establish the nature of homosexuality as sufficient ground to declare marriage null and void. They are:

1. irresistible attraction towards the same sex
2. predominant homosexual make-up
3. exclusive homosexual attraction
4. aversion towards the opposite sex

⁶ Coram Ferraro, March 14, 1969, S.R.R. Decisiones 61:267-282.

⁷ Coram Pompedda, Oct. 6, 1969, S.R.R. Decisiones 61:913-924.

⁸ Coram Huot, Jan. 28, 1974, reported in *Ephemerides Juris Canonici* 31 (1975) 340-343, and translated into English in *Canon Law Digest*, 8:672-676.

⁹ Coram Serrano, April 30, 1974, reported in *Ephemerides Juris Canonici* 31 (1975), 191-202.

¹⁰ Coram Lefebvre, Dec. 2, 1967, S.R.R. Decisiones 59:798-807.

¹¹ Coram Pompedda, Oct. 6, 1969, S.R.R. Decisiones 61:913-924.

Of themselves, though, these conditions do not cause nullity. Rather, their presence gives rise to a situation wherein, apropos of the different grounds for invalidation of marriage, the nature and degree of homosexuality is such that it renders the conjugal relationship void. These conditions, moreover, are not of the same value. And neither is it necessary for all to be present in order to declare a man as a confirmed homosexual.

Based on the above description then, it is important to note that not all homosexuals contract marriage invalidly. Only those persons in whom the conditions are confirmed, categorized by experts as *fixed* homosexuals, can homosexuality be advanced as a ground for nullity. All other cases, that is, situational or pseudo-homosexuality (heterosexuals who, in circumstances where opposite sex partners are not available turn to persons of the same sex for gratification, e.g. prisoners),¹² facultative homosexuality (persons who have erotic drives towards both sexes, although prevalently towards those of their own sex),¹³ and bisexuality (with predominantly homosexual erotic drives but more than incidentally heterosexual),¹⁴ are not included. This does not mean, nevertheless, that persons afflicted with these variant sexuality can not petition nullity of their marriage. They can, but on a different ground and not homosexuality *per se*.

Homosexuality, therefore, can be a ground for nullification of marriage provided that the necessary conditions are verified. Nonetheless, this verification does not automatically render marriage null and void. Further investigation is to be conducted whether the condition of fixed homosexuality leads to a situation wherein the continuance of marital relationship is made impossible or unbearable to the parties involved. The central issue revolves around the person's competence to fulfill and sustain the intimate heterosexual relationship of marriage, which is the object of matrimonial consent. If it is determined in an individual case that homosexuality interferes substantially with the functioning and fulfillment of those inherent responsibilities accruing from conjugal life, then, marriage should be sustained.

JEFFREY T. GARCIA

¹² Lawrence Wrenn, *Annulments*, 4th ed., Washington D.C.: Canon Law Society of America, 1983, p. 73.

¹³ William Tobin, *Homosexuality and Marriage*, Rome: Catholic Book Agency, 1964, pp. 92-93.

¹⁴ Lawrence Wrenn, *op. cit.*

b) he can ask for an indult for departure from the Supreme Moderator of the Institute (can. 688, § 2), and apply to enter in the Institute he wants. In the case of a religious of perpetual vows the procedure is more difficult, since only the Holy See can grant such indult (can. 691, § 2). That is why the new Codex has simplified his transfer by granting competence to both Institutes (can. 684), to act in the case, without any recourse to the Holy See.

The second question is: Why the vows of a perpetual professed remain during the period of trial, while his rights and obligations to the former Institute are suspended, being bound by the religious observances of the new Institute?

If a religious intends to transfer from one Institute to another, as in our case, his vows being perpetual must remain intact until he makes his profession in the new Institute. Such religious cannot be conceived without his perpetual vows, even for a moment. His rights and obligations, however, refer to two different Superiors and Institutes, whose rights and obligations are different. That is why the new Codex declares that his previous rights and obligations are suspended and imposes the duty to follow the religious observances of the new Institute during the period of his trial.

The third question is: why the vows, rights and obligations of the former Institute cease when the new profession is emitted in the second Institute?

We can answer this question in the following way. Substantially the vows are the same in the first and second Institute. Their practice, however, may differ in the sense that the vow of obedience, for instance, refers to new Superiors and to new constitutions; likewise, the practice of chastity and poverty may differ with regards to the means to observe them, prescribed in the constitutions of both Institutes. Thus, once the profession is emitted in the second Institute, the vows are to be observed in conformity with the particular law of the new Institute, to which the religious is now perpetually incorporated.

In this respect, canon 598, § 1 should be borne in mind: "Each Institute, keeping in mind its particular character and goals, should define in its Constitutions the manner in which the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience are to be observed for its way of living."

2. PARALITURGICAL CELEBRATION

The pastor of the neighboring parish passed away two months ago and the Bishop requested me to take care of the former's parish until the latter can appoint some other priest. Both parishes being quite big and their parishioners being practising Catholics, I cannot attend to both parishes properly. I usually spend the whole Saturday in the annexed parish and the whole Sunday in my own parish. Early on Saturday morning I go there and I spend the whole morning doing some family visitations, especially if there are sick persons. Likewise, I administer the sacrament of baptism and attend meetings of various religious associations. In the evening, after hearing confessions I have two masses. On Sunday morning the faithful of the parish who could not hear Mass the preceding day, go to the church and have some kind of para-liturgical celebration under the supervision of the old sacristan, who is a respectable and mature man. They have exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Rosary, lecture on the gospel of the day with a homily given by a very good and competent lady, who usually repeats what I have said in my two Masses the previous day, and Holy Communion. They close with the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and reposition.

May I ask:

- 1. Is this paraliturgical function according to the law?*
- 2. May the lady deliver the homily?*

A Parish Priest

1. In regards to the first question, we say that, since there is no Mass on Sundays in the annexed parish, the paraliturgical celebration mentioned by the consultant is in order. Through this celebration, the parishioners who were not able to hear Mass on the preceeding Saturday afternoon could hear the word of God, pray the Rosary and foster their devotion to the Holy Eucharist through the Holy Communion and the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

There is one thing, however, in the celebration which is not done according to the law. Of course, it is not said who distributes the Holy Communion and imparts the benediction

with the Blessed Sacrament, but since the old sacristan is the person supervising the celebration, we assume that he is the one who gives Holy Communion and the benediction. Anyhow, the Church's law states that "the ordinary minister of Holy Communion is a Bishop, a priest, or a deacon. The extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, in cases where the church's need requires it, is an acolyte or other faithful appointed in accord with canon 230, § 3" (can. 910: MFPP, n. 523). Likewise, canon 943 (cfr. MFPP, n. 550) reads: "The minister of the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and of eucharistic blessing is a priest or deacon; in special circumstances the minister of exposition and reposition only, but without benediction, is an acolyte, an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, or another person appointed by the local Ordinary, the prescriptions of the diocesan Bishop being observed".

The parish priest, therefore, should bear in mind two things: a) that the local Ordinary has to designate as extraordinary minister of Holy Communion a fit person who may distribute Holy Communion (can. 910: MFPP, n. 523), and b) that for the exposition and reposition of the Blessed Sacrament it is necessary that a person be also appointed by the local Ordinary (can. 943: MFPP, n. 550). The benediction, however, can be imparted only by a priest or a deacon. In our case, therefore, there should be no benediction, but only exposition and reposition.

2. To the question whether the lady is allowed or not to give the homily in the paraliturgical celebration, we answer in the affirmative. Canon 766 (MFPP, n. 380) states: "The laity may be allowed to preach in a church or oratory if in certain circumstances it is necessary, or in particular cases it would be advantageous, according to the provisions of the Episcopal Conference, and without prejudice to canon 767, § 1". The prohibition for lay people to deliver the homily contained in canon 767, § 1 (MFPP, n. 381) refers to the homily within the Eucharistic celebration. Since the lady mentioned above delivers the homily not within the Mass but in a paraliturgical celebration, such prohibition does not apply. The fact that it is a woman not a man who delivers it does not matter. Canon 766 uses the term "laici", i.e. laity, male or female.

LITURGY

CLERICAL AND LITURGICAL VESTMENTS

The history of dress and costume, the traditions of different countries, and the changes in fashion — the use of uniforms, all prove clearly that clothing is not only a matter of protecting the body, or a question of decency and hygiene. Our dress may also have a symbolic value, expressing outwardly what we feel or want to make of ourselves. In other words, vestments fall under the category of signs.

The Christian strives to imitate Christ. Christ is our divine model. Hence, the newly baptized wears a long white robe as a token of this regeneration of the whole being that baptism brings about. The whiteness is a symbol of our faith, and signifies the purity of heart. This old symbolic vestment we also find in the white dress of girls at their first communion and at their wedding.

During the early centuries of the Christian era there were no distinctive signs for the hierarchical degree or for the different functions some persons held in the Christian community or assembly. The only distinction came from the position occupied by someone in the assembly and the function he had in the liturgical celebration. So someone could be seated on a catheder — others stood near the altar, others had their places in the body of the Church. The place occupied was marking the distinction between the hierarchy and the ordinary faithful and also the different degrees of the hierarchy itself.

At the beginning of Christianity the priests used to wear the same clothes that the other citizens wore for every day use, nevertheless there existed already some kind of sacred vestment, distinct from the usual clothes. We know this from the fact that Pope Stephen I (+ 257) forbade the use of liturgical dress for workday purposes. What was distinct? We don't know; it might merely be the richness of the material and its reservation for the liturgy. In fact all actual clerical and liturgical vestments

and insignia were modelled on those of the civil Roman society of the last days of the Roman Empire (4th, 5th cent.).

After the barbaric invasions the laity gradually abandoned the traditional Roman and oriental dress in favor of the "short clothes" of the invaders. The fashion changed but the members of the clergy continued to wear the long wide robe (*tunica talaris*) in which the faithful were accustomed to see them. They wore it first as day to day (civil) dress, but later on, it became a liturgical dress as well. This robe is none other than the cassock, later on called also *soutana* — *sultanea* (neather robe) which clearly shows that it was intended to be worn underneath the sacred vestments. And so the cassock became the clerical dress, a distinctive mark of the clerics' social standing.

Cassocks of different colors were worn: red, violet, white, green and blue. St. Charles Borromeo ordered his clergy to wear a cassock of near black color. Since then, several provincial councils assigned black cassocks for priests and other clerics. This only affected the secular clergy. The monks kept the traditional colors of the late Middle Ages: white for the Cistercians, Dominicans, etc. and brown for the Carmelites, Franciscans, etc.

Actual legislation concerning clerical dress

The post Vatican II directives concern mainly, if not only, with the clerical dress of the Prelates and leave to the episcopal conferences to legislate for the lower clergy.

The Secretariat of State issued the following instruction "Ut sive sollicite" regarding the dress, titles and coats-of-arms of cardinals, bishops and prelates of lower rank.

This instruction distinguishes between the "ordinary" *clerical* dress for prelates and their clerical-choir dress. The members of the clergy, who, though not officiating but were present at religious ceremonies, took their places in the choir stalls and the seats allotted to them. They wore a special vestment in keeping with their rank in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. This was called the choir dress. And so the instruction mentions now that bishop uses the choir dress each time he publicly goes to or comes from the Church, where he attends a liturgical celebration *without presiding*, and some other occasions to be determined in the "Ceremonial of the Bishops". The new "Ceremonial Episcoporum" is just published by the Vatican. The

rochet of linen or like material continues to be used by the bishops. The rochet is a close fitting vestment with long sleeves and with decorated lace at the ends.

The distinctive clerical dress

- a) for cardinals: red cassock with sash, lining, stitching and buttons all of red silk. The mozetta is to be of the same material and color without the small hood. The black cassock with trimmings, lining, stitching, buttonholes and buttons of red silk, with red sash without tassels, remain in use — even the daily cassock may be without the red trim. A biretta of red watered silk may be used only with choir dress and not as the usual head covering.
- b) for bishops, also those from religious orders: purple cassock and mozetta without the small hood; and the black cassock with red piping, buttonholes, buttons and trimming. The black cassock with red piping and other decorations is no longer prescribed as ordinary dress. Further simplifications for shoes, hat, pectoral cross and cord are given for both cardinals and bishops.
- c) Supernumerary protonotaries apostolic and the honorary prelates of His Holiness “retain the purple cassock, the black cassock with red piping and other decorations but without the little cape, and the silk sash with fringes. If it need be, an unpleated *surplice* instead of the rochet will be worn over the purple cassock.”
- d) Chaplains of His Holiness “continue to use the black cassock with its piping and other decorations, as well as the purple silk sash. These must be worn at sacred ceremonies.”

Here in the Philippines when the Roman documents speak of black cassock, we may use the white one.

Vatican II focused new light on the dignity and office of bishops in the Church and brought out more openly the distinction which exists between them and the priests of the second rank and, therefore, decreed that the use of pontifical insignia be reserved to those ecclesiastical persons who have episcopal rank or some particular jurisdiction (N 130 of the Constitution). Hence the reservation to bishops of the rochet, miter, pectoral cross etc., which before Vatican II were sometimes allowed to lesser prelates, e.g., supernumerary, protonotaries apostolic, or canons, etc.

So the Sacred Congregation for the clergy issued an instruction "On Reform of choir dress" (1970) giving principles to the episcopal conferences to reduce the choir dress to a simpler form. All privileges, even those which are centennial and immemorial, are abolished for the "canons". No pontifical insignia are allowed to non-bishops.

e) *Clerical Dress in the Philippines for the lower clergy.*

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines issued a decree in 1967 that any priest or religious brother may use in the Philippines the new clerical attire, besides the traditional cassock and clergyman's suit, subject to the norms as follows:

1. For liturgical and sacred functions, only the cassock can be used.
2. For formal social functions, only the cassock or the clergyman's suit can be used.
3. The new clerical attire, whose description follows, may be used outside liturgical and formal social functions. (See full description in *Boletín Eclesiástico*, Vol. XLII, July, 1968, and circular for the Archdiocese of Manila of April 8, 1982).

The cassock in its different variations and decorations has been the common distinctive attire of the clergy — of the different ranks of hierarchy and, therefore, a sign of one's position in the Church's community — one's belonging to the clerus and hence the cassock was and is a clerical dress. Last October, 1983, John Paul II wrote a letter to Cardinal Poletti in defense of the ecclesiastical (clerical) and religious dress, in which he explained the significance of the dress. For the diocesan priest, the cassock has the character of a sign which distinguishes him from the secular environment in which he lives; and for the religious men and women, their habit expresses the character of consecration and makes evident the eschatological end of the religious life. Can. 284 of the New Code of Canon Law decrees: Clerics are to wear suitable *ecclesiastical* dress, in accordance with the norms established by the Episcopal Conference and legitimate local custom.

N.B.: Documents: On Dress, Titles and Coat of Arms from the Secretary of State (1969)

Pontifical Insignia: Revision of Use (Paul VI)

Instruction on Pontifical Insignia and Rites (Congr. of Rites)

(Bishop vesting in alb — no need of rochet anymore)

Reform of choir dress — Congr. for the Clergy (1970)

Actual legislation concerning Liturgical or Sacred Vestments.

The regulations concerning clerical dress fall under the Secretariat of State for the Prelates and under the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, or the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, while those concerning the liturgical or sacred vestments fall under the Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments and Divine Worship.

Liturgical and sacred vestments, are only used for and during the liturgical celebrations which are sacred by the mystery they are celebrating. The General Instruction on the Roman Missal in its paragraphs on the sacred vestments has the following:

297. "In the Church, which is the Body of Christ, not all the members have the same function. This diversity of ministries in sacred worship is exteriorly manifested by the diversity of sacred vestments, which should therefore signify the function proper to each minister. These same sacred vestments should also enhance the beauty of the sacred action itself."
298. "The sacred vestment common to all ministers of every rank is the alb, bound with a cincture around the waist, if necessary. If used, the amice, is placed around the neck before the alb is put on. A surplice may replace the alb, but not when the chasuble or the dalmatic is to be worn, or when a stole is used instead of a chasuble or a dalmatic."

The surplice should be ample and relatively long. Generally, it is better to use an alb. There is no where mentioning of the cassock as liturgical vestment, although the wearing of a surplice seems in some way to presuppose it.

To have a function or a ministry in the liturgical celebration has always been considered as something special — because it was a function in a sacred action. Were we not recognizing this when we were dressing our altar boys, sacristans, choir

members when they fulfilled their ministry in the sanctuary? They wore vestments or gowns of different colors with a surplice. There was no regulation nor prescription, but it was done to enhance the sacredness and the beauty of the action.

I. The liturgical vestments and insignia for the celebration of the Mass and other liturgical celebrations directly connected with it either before, within or just after the Mass, are as follows:

The priest vests himself first with the alb and if it need be, also amice and cincture. This is the common sacred vestment for all ministers. Then the *stole*, which is a long silken band worn around the neck and whose ends reach down in front. The stole is a distinctive mark, an insignia of the power of Holy Orders, and therefore worn by bishops, priests and deacons only.

Then follows the chasuble, originally the Greco-Roman *paenula*, used as an overcoat or raincoat and later as a mantle covering the whole of the body. Hence the name of *casula* (little house). In the course of time, it got different forms and was decorated with liturgical symbols. Changes took place in the material used of different colors, to return to the original bell-shaped form of chasuble.

In 1973, the Philippines obtained the approval of a priestly vestment for Mass, the chasuble — alb which is large and full in form and on top of which the stole is worn; and because it covers the whole body of the celebrant no alb is needed under it. Its use however is restricted by some conditions.

- a) for ordinary celebration of the Mass especially in sacred places, priests shall continue to wear the traditional liturgical vestments, namely, alb, stole and chasuble.
- b) it can be used for concelebrations, in Masses for special groups, celebrations outside a sacred place and for similar cases.
- c) as to the color to be used, only the stole should be in the color that fits the Mass.

Lately a new kind of "stole" has been introduced and worn on top of the chasuble — a large band hanging around the neck in front and on the back, often still with a high collar. This is not a stole and is to be considered as a mere decoration. In fact it is an *omophorion* of the oriental rite (parallel to the

pallium). This type of "stole" has not been approved as liturgical vestment and should never substitute for the stole. (cfr. Hom. Past. Rev., 1983 Feb.)

In August, 1969, on an inquiry of the Bishops of the Philippines, the sacred Congregation for Divine Worship answered that the cassock is not a liturgical vestment and hence not required for Mass, the proper vestment is the alb. However since the cassock is much similar to the alb, it may be used instead, *provided* it be clean and not worn for street dress during the day. Therefore, the white cassock then becomes a liturgical vestment and should only be used for liturgical celebrations.

There is thus a conflict. The cassock is at the same time here clerical dress and liturgical dress? No decision has been made by our bishops to solve the ambiguity.

The cope or pluviale is a semicircular, sleeveless garment always provided with an ornamental hood in the shape of a shield. This is a mere ceremonial garb without any special significance and according to the GIRM¹, the cope is worn by the priest in processions and other sacred functions, according to the rubrics prescribed for the various rites, e.g., funerals, benedictions, etc.

The sacred and specific vestment of the deacon is the *dalmatic* worn over the alb (300). As insignia he wears the stole from his left shoulder across his chest to the right side of his body, where it is fastened (302). The dalmatic may be omitted in case of necessity or lesser degree of solemnity (81 b). The deacon may assist at any form of celebration, either sung or without singing. He is also the helper of the bishop in all pontifical functions.

There are no more subdeacons, but the "officially installed acolyte (now a lay minister) is appointed to help the deacon and to minister to the priest in liturgical functions especially in the Mass ("Motu proprio: Ministeria quaedam"). And so he wears the alb while ministering and may use the tunic of the former subdeacon, although the tunic is not mentioned anymore in the new GIRM (General Instruction on the Roman Missal), because of the suppression of the subdiaconate.

¹ General Instruction on the Roman Missal. The numbers refer to this Instruction.

II. Liturgical vestments and insignia outside the Mass.

— *Holy Communion outside the Mass.*

A priest or deacon wears an alb or surplice and stole. Other ministers may follow local customs or wear any suitable dress approved by the Ordinary (N. 20 of the Rite of Holy Communion outside the Mass). During the Mass, they seem to fall under the general rules of the GIRM, that is the wearing of an alb.

— *Communion to the sick and viaticum.*

A priest or deacon bringing Holy Communion or Viaticum to the sick does it as prescribed by the Rite of Anointing and Pastoral Care. An acolyte or an extraordinary minister duly appointed follows the rite and prescriptions, as described in the Rite of Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist outside Mass." Therein N 56 says: "Wearing the appropriate vestments (see No. 20) the minister approaches the sick person and greets him..."

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

"The minister, if he is a priest or deacon, should vest in an alb or in a surplice over the cassock, and should wear a white stole. Other ministers should wear either the liturgical vestments which are usual in the region, or the vesture which is suitable for the ministry and which has been approved by the Ordinary. The priest or deacon should wear a white cope and humeral veil to give the blessing at the end of the adoration, when the exposition takes place with the monstrance, in the case of exposition in the ciborium, the humeral veil should be worn" (N 92).

From November 28, 1982 the following attire/insignia are prescribed for the Special Ministers of the Eucharist in the Archdiocese of Manila: "A long-sleeves Polo Barong with the insignia of the Archdiocesan Liturgical Commission."

What could be meant by local customs or appropriate vestments? The surplice and stole were formerly prescribed in the *Rituale Romanum*. But different conditions and circumstances

created local customs. In some places the "clergyman" suit became the clerical dress—Holy Communion and the "last Sacraments" were brought "privately" to the house of the sick. This gave way to different local customs, e.g., a small pyx was hung around the neck, and fastened on the breast or placed in an inner pocket of the cassock or of the "clergyman" suit and during the actual celebration at least the stole with or without surplice was retained.

Baptism

The celebrating priest or deacon is vested in alb or surplice, with a stole (with or without cope) of festive color. (N 35, 74, 107, 165).

When baptism is administered by a catechist when no priest or deacon is available, there is no mentioning of liturgical dress or insignia (Chapter IV).

Penance

The regulation laid down by the local Ordinaries for the use of liturgical vestments in the celebration of penance are to be observed (N 14). The CBCP (1975) decided that "the priest uses at least a stole for the celebration of penance, except in special circumstances which make it difficult to use the stole or advisable not to use it.

Anointing of the Sick

The priest should wear the appropriate vestments.

Marriage outside Mass

The priest is vested in surplice or alb, stole and cope (Phil. Rit.)

Funeral outside Mass

Alb or surplice and violet stole (32). The Tagalog Ritual does not make any distinction between a surplice and a rochet.

When we examine the different Liturgical Rites, we observe that the GIRM does nowhere speak of the cassock or clerical

dress. Only the rubrics of the Rite: "Holy Communion and Worship of the Holy Eucharist outside Mass", speaking about the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament mentions the alb or a surplice over the cassock. In the other Rites: surplice and stole is most commonly mentioned as the liturgical vestment. The commonly known form of surplice is rather the short one, which supposes the wearing of the cassock. If no cassock is worn, and when the rite prescribes the surplice, it should be replaced by the alb, the common liturgical vestment of all liturgical ministries.

All liturgical or sacred vestments are a reminder of the sacred action which is performed during the celebration. They are the same for each ministry and are not calling the attention to the individual person of the minister but to the sacred action he performs. Therefore the beauty and nobility of *any vestment* should not be sought in the abundance of ornaments that we add to it, but in the material used and its form. Ornaments should show figures, images or symbols which indicate the *sacred* use of the vestment, excluding such as are unworthy of sacred use (GIRM 306). The Bishops' Conferences in determining adaptations which correspond with the requirements and customs of their respective countries should see to it that they are in conformity with the dignity of the *sacred* action and person (N 304-305).

Let me conclude in a few words: Liturgical vestments are not for the clergy only, there are also for the lay ministers in the liturgy: acolytes, readers, choir members, special ministers of the Eucharist, etc. There are only liturgical vestments prescribed for the ministers of the Eucharist, the Acolytes and the special ministers of the Eucharist. Lectors and choir members during the liturgical functions may wear the alb or something similar. These vestments enhance the beauty and the sacredness of the liturgical action and should not be worn outside the liturgical celebration.

FR. ALBERT MEERSSCHAERT, CICM

PASTORAL SECTION

Special Ministers of Holy Communion

Another important group of co-workers with the pastor in a parish is the special ministers of Holy Communion. If we can only tap the potentials of these laymen, they can bring about a great amount of good to our parishes.

MINISTERS OF THE WORD — The new 1983 Code of Canon Law states that “where the needs of the Church require and ministers are not available, lay people, even though they are not lectors or acolytes, can supply certain of their functions, that is, exercise the ministry of the Word, preside over liturgical prayers, confer baptism and distribute holy communion, in accordance with the provisions of law” (c. 230, 3 and c. 759). Also, the Code says that “the laity may be allowed to preach in a church or oratory if in certain circumstances it is necessary, or in particular cases it would be advantageous, according to the provisions of the episcopal conference...” and provided the preaching does not serve as the homily at mass, which is reserved for a priest or deacon (cc. 766 and 767, 1).

Furthermore, according to the new Code, “if it is impossible to assist at a eucharistic celebration, either because no sacred minister is available or for some other grave reason, the faithful are strongly recommended to take part in a liturgy of the Word, if there be such in the parish church or some other sacred place, which is celebrated in accordance with the provisions laid down by the diocesan bishop... (c. 1248, 2).

We see therefore that laymen today can indeed be ministers of the Word. They can preside over the liturgy of the Word which is but an exercise of the ministry of the Word, lead in liturgical prayers and preach.

MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION — On the 25th of January 1973, we remember that the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship issued *Immensae Caritatis* which is an Instruc-

tion on Facilitating Sacramental Eucharistic Communion in Particular Circumstances. This document sought to make Holy Communion better known and its saving power more fully shared so that the faithful might have greater access to it, and in order that it may effect a more readily open dedication to God, Church and people. It expressed its awareness of the lack of sufficient number of ministers of Holy Communion during mass when there is a large number of communicants, and outside of the mass when the sacrament should be brought to far distances, or to a great number of people especially the sick and the aged.

Hence, this document established the office of special ministers of Holy Communion for laypersons. It empowered these ministers to administer the sacrament of Holy Communion to themselves and to other faithful.

And in confirmation of this, the new Code of Canon Law states that "the special minister of Holy Communion is an acolyte, or another of Christ's faithful deputed..." according to law (c. 910, 2).

SUNDAY OBLIGATION — In a country like ours, where there is still a great lack of priests, these ministers of the Word and of Holy Communion can be a big help. When the pastor can only say masses at the parish church, these ministers can go to the different barangays already with consecrated hosts. There, they can gather the people and preside over the liturgy of the Word and the communion rite. They can even be given permission to preach after the gospel reading. Or, the pastor can prepare a written homily for them to read to the faithful.

In this way, a great number of our people in the barrios who can otherwise not go to Sunday mass can fulfill their Sunday obligations right there at their barrios (c. 1248).

We know that there are already several parishes which do this. However, we also know that there are still many which do not. We invite them to give this a try.

One problem is how to call this service specially in the dialect. In English, there are those who call this *dry mass*. But this cannot easily be translated into Pilipino. It does not sound well. Some others call it *bible service*. But there are those who object that this does not include the communion rite. Still others call it *panalanging pampulong* (prayer meeting), which may be the best. It is complained however that this name is

too long. Some pastors just permit it to be called *misa*. But this can lead into doctrinal error because this is simply not a mass.

This leads us to another problem. Some parish priests prefer to call this *misa* because then the people give stipend, which further leads us to suggest that there should be a uniform ruling on this. At least in a diocese, the bishop has to decide whether there should be stipend for this service or not. The amount should also be specified.

MINISTRY FOR THE SICK AND AGED — Another important apostolate which the special ministers of Holy Communion can do is the ministry for the sick. This is actually one of the visions of *Immensae Caritatis*. We mention the aged because, although they are classified among the sick, we would precisely like to emphasize the fact that they are included in this apostolate.

In this materialistic age, we see even in our Philippine society how the sick and the aged can be neglected by relatives. If the parish eucharistic ministers will distribute communion to the sick and the aged, it will be at the same time a visit to them. This will serve not just as a spiritual consolation to these people but also as a moral imperative to the relatives of the sick and the aged to at least clean them. They will feel ashamed (*mahihiya*) to present the sick and the aged dirty to the ministers. The same can be true as regards those who are hospitalized and the administrators of the hospital.

What a parish priest can do is to assign his eucharistic ministers, two by two to every barangay of his parish. If he lacks personnel, he can assign two barangays to each partner. We suggest that they be given one barangay inside the town proper without a chapel, and one barangay outside the town proper with a chapel. Every Sunday, these ministers can preside over the liturgy of the Word and communion rite, at the chapel of the barangay assigned to them outside the town proper. After the service, they can distribute Holy Communion to the sick and the aged of the barangay where the chapel is. Later, they can go to the barangay inside the town proper, also assigned to them, to administer the sacrament to the sick and the aged there.

Through this system, all the sick and the aged in the parish can be given Holy Communion at least once a week. Confessions, of course, must be heard by the parish priest.

SPECIAL MINISTRIES — As we have mentioned above, the ordinary jobs of the parish eucharistic ministers are to preside at Sunday services in the barrios and to distribute Holy Communion to the sick and the aged. Moreover, the parish priest can give them some other special ministries. They can act as commentators during the masses on Sundays and even on weekdays. They can take care of the barrio chapels where they perform their services. Experience tells us that these chapels usually improve physically. Sound systems are acquired. Benches are completed and varnished. Even chandeliers are bought to grace the chapel. Above all, the barrio folks no longer fall prey to other sects.

In some parishes, carpenters, architects, businessmen, retired navy-men and others become eucharistic ministers. They can be given jobs according to their expertise. The architect and carpenter, for example, can design and build more barrio chapels. A teacher can take care of the altar boys. Another can be in charge of the youth.

We are reminded by the instruction, *Immensae Caritatis*, that the eucharistic ministers must be duly instructed. They should be examples of true Christian life, faith and morals. They should have enough piety to harbour in their hearts a deep reverence and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. In all these, of course, the example of the parish priest is of utmost importance.

Experience tells us that our people can regard this office with great respect. Eucharistic ministers who think that they have done something which makes them unworthy of the job simply back out by themselves. And when they think that they have repented and atoned enough, then they come back and begin again to help the other ministers. They love their work. So much so that those who are already old would not like to leave. They meet every month. And they report about their apostolates. They have to develop a good working relationship like brothers. They go on picnics. They sing. Those who have good singing voice make use of it specially during vigils for the dead. And, when they have to go abroad due to economic constraints, even there in Saudi Arabia, in Kuwait or in Nigeria, they become missionaries among their own confreres, ever zealous and ever brave.

FR. WILFREDO C. PAGUIO

MEDITATIONS FOR PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS

by Guillermo Tejon, O.P.

5. "LORD, TEACH US PRAY"

Now once he was in a certain place praying, and when he had finished, one of the disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples." He said to them, "Say this when you pray:

*'Father, may your name be held holy,
your kingdom come;
give us each day our daily bread,
and forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive each one who is in
debt to us.
And do not put us to the test.'*

(Lk 11:1-4)

A cursory glance at the Gospels will immediately convince us that Jesus prayed often. Alone in the desert or on the mountain, in the company of his disciples or surrounded by the crowds, he prayed under all circumstances and in all situations. And he offered all kinds of prayer.

Prayers of Petition, presenting his needs and those of his fellowmen to the Father: "Father, glorify me" (Jn 17:5); "I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail..." (Lk 22:32); "Father, forgive them, they do not know what they are doing" (Lk 23:34); and the great sacerdotal prayer for his disciples and for us as found in Jn 17.

Prayers of Thanksgiving: "Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer" (Jn 11:41).

Prayers of Praise: "I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children" (Mt 11:25).

Prayers in times of anguish: "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass me by" (Mt 26:39); "My God, my God, why have you deserted me?" (Mt 27:46).

Prayers of Abandonment: "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" (Lk 23:46).

Prayers of Acceptance: "Nevertheless, let it be as you, not I, would have it" (Mt 26:39).

Before making an important decision: In the desert before choosing his apostles and on the mountain of the Transfiguration before his passion.

Blessing Food: "Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks" ... (Jn 6:11); "Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing" ... (Lk 24:30); and, of course, the great eucharistic blessing at the Last Supper.

Praying the Liturgy of Nature: "Look at the birds in the sky" ... "Think of the flowers growing in the fields" ... (Mt 6:26, 28) and his many references to trees, clouds, the sun, etc.

Bodily Prayer: "Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said: 'Father, the hour has come'" ... (Jn 17:1); "And going on a little further he fell on his face and prayed" ... (Mt 26:39).

And many other form which one can easily discover if one reads the Gospel with 'prayer' in mind.

Evidently, Jesus prayed all the time and in all possible ways. He lived in constant spiritual communion with the Father. Prayer was his life, because to do the will of the Father was his food. The latter is not possible without the former.

Jesus not only prayed; he told his disciples to pray and taught them how to pray (Lk 11:1-4, 9-13; Mt 6:5-13).

One of the great and most welcome phenomena of our times is the keen interest shown by many people in prayer. In spite of the materialism that surrounds us, or perhaps because of it, Christians are trying to discover new meanings in prayer. Some of them even travel the world in search of new methods and techniques. At no other time in the history of the Church have so many books been written on the subject of prayer. The old classics of prayer (Christian and non-Christian) have been unearthed and offered to the public in popular editions. Prayer groups are found everywhere...

This is both an example and a challenge to us, priests and religious. Where are we, while all this is going on?

A priest, a religious, should not only pray; but also pray in many different ways.

Our prayer has to be, first of all, *communitarian*. We are part of the people of God, members of the Church, of a diocese, of a religious community. Moreover, our vocation imposes upon us the duty of being universal in outlook. Having, through our consecration, taken upon ourselves the burdens of sinful humanity, we should more than other Christians get used to praying in the plural form: "We" (the people of God, the poor, the suffering, the ignorant, the confused, sinners... with whom we identify) rather than the 'I', which is all right, and which frequently has to remain an 'I', but which, if over-emphasized, runs the danger of making our prayer individualistic and of cutting us off from the lifestream that is supposed to run through the Church as a result, among other things, of our ministry. Moreover, the communal aspect of our prayer has to manifest itself in our willingness and desire to pray with others: our community, the people of God. Giving reality in our lives to Jesus' words, "Where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them" (Mt 18:20) is one of the most beautiful experiences we can ever hope to encounter. As Anna Louise de Stael put it,

To pray together, in whatever tongue or ritual, is the most tender brotherhood of hope and sympathy that men can contract in this life.

Of course, this in no way means that our prayer should not be *private*. It has to be, and the reason is obvious: Christ came to save the world, and all the individual persons in it. I am an individual person, and his salvation has to be brought to *me*. He created me as a person, and redeemed me as a person, and he wants to establish a personal relationship with me. Moreover, I, like all other individual persons, have my own feelings, desires, hopes, needs, etc. All prayers, even communal prayers, have to be made *personal*, that is, have to be made *mine*, not only said but also *lived* by me. But since I cannot think of myself except in the context of the Church, of the people of God, of my community, the fact that my prayer is personal does not go against my obligation to pray in a communitarian way.

Actually, there is no need to worry about the relationship between communitarian and private prayer. In reality, one ema-

nates from the other. A man who prays earnestly with the community, feels the need to continue praying in private; and vice-versa. The link is established without any special effort. The secret lies in praying earnestly. Once this premise is assured, the rest follows.

All our prayers should also be *voluntary*, even those imposed upon us by our state of life, like the Liturgy of the Hours. I should say these prayers, not just because it is my duty as a priest or as religious, but because I love them, because I find meaning and life in them. And if, for whatever reason, I do not, then I should make the necessary effort to discover that meaning and that life in order to fall in love with them.

One of the most immediate results of all this is that our prayer becomes *apostolic*. We shall find it easier to identify ourselves and feel one with the world (in sorrow with those in sorrow, happy with those who are happy, poor with the poor...) and, in the imitation of Christ, walk with them in spirit, commend them to the Lord and offer whatever assistance we can. This is the kind of prayer that enables us to share in the victimhood of Christ, and to help people go through their 'hour' whenever it comes.

Another important aspect of our prayer is that it should be *free*. 'Free' here means, according to how the Spirit leads us. The Holy Spirit, who led Jesus through life, has been given to us to lead us, too. He knows our needs better than we do, and he guides us in our prayer. St. Paul says that we do not even know how we ought to pray (Rm 8:26) and our experience tells us that it is indeed so. Not only that: frequently, by insisting on praying in our own set and rigid ways, we block the action of the Spirit in us.

Freedom is necessary in prayer. This is especially true of private prayer; but even in communal prayer — including Mass and the Divine Office — there is ample room for initiative, for variety, for different ways and approaches. Like institutional food, prayer can lose much of its flavour if it is always done in exactly the same way. The best dish, if served every day, ends up unappreciated and even abhorred. Even Mass and Communion can end up taken for granted, a daily routine. Our moods, feelings, emotions, needs, change, and prayer have somehow to adjust to them. The *Imitation of Christ* expresses this idea when it says:

According to the diversity of times, diverse exercises are more pleasing; for some are relished better on feast days, others on common days. We stand in need of one kind in time of temptation, and of another in time of peace and rest. Some we willingly think of when we are sad, others when we are joyful in the Lord.

"I shall not call you servants any more... I call you friends" (Jn 15:15). "The spirit you received is not the spirit of slaves bringing fear into your lives again; it is the spirit of sons, and it makes us cry out, 'Abba, Father!'" (Rm. 8:15). If we are no longer slaves, but friends, sons and daughters of God, should we not feel at ease in his presence and pray, not in fear, but in freedom?

Of course, freedom does not mean lack of seriousness, instability, capriciousness. It means that, like Jesus, we should allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit, being always attentive to his promptings. It means that, like Jesus, we should endeavor to turn everything into an occasion for prayer; and that, therefore, also like him, we should be imaginative in our approach to prayer.

Prayer of petition, of praise, of thanksgiving; vocal, mental, contemplative prayer; meditative reading, biblical reflection; modern as well as old, western as well as eastern methods of prayer; body prayer, the liturgy of nature... All these forms of prayer should be familiar to us.

To practise always the same kind of prayer might be a special vocation from above, for who can know and who can judge God's ways? However, it can also betray a narrow mentality, a spirit of unnecessary rigidity, or simply a set mind and an unwarranted fear of change. To pray as the Spirit moves us is a sign of surrender to God and of spiritual maturity. In this context, one cannot but admire the freedom that shines, for instance, in St. Dominic's famous *Nine Ways of Prayer*, a freedom that is obviously enjoyed by many contemporary Christians.

Do we feel at ease in prayer, enjoying the freedom of the Spirit? Is our spirit strained, in tension, rigid? Do we worry too much about little things, like this or that rubric, the number of candles on the altar, the way the person next to us sits... to the detriment of the essence of prayer and of our presence in it? When we are at prayer, are we rearing up to

go into action, thinking — without daring to admit it — that only in action is the Gospel fulfilled? And if, when engrossed in action, we are reminded (by the Spirit or by the bell) of prayer-time, do we consider it — again without daring to say so in so many words — 'bad news'? When we are out there, in the active apostolate, do we feel the need to go back to contemplation; and when we contemplate, do we realize that contemplation, to be genuine, has somehow to flow into action? Are we convinced that action and contemplation are inseparable, and from contemplation returning to action, and so on, in a never-ending cycle?... The answers to these questions could be an important tell-tale with regard to our spiritual life.

Actually, the aim should not be to say many prayers, but to lead a life of prayer; not simply to set aside time for prayer and time for work (although we have to do that) but to live in a spirit of prayer and to do everything in a prayerful way. In other words, to pray always: at all times, in all ways, by all means!

If the will of God is to become our spiritual food, if it is impossible to do anything without Christ, and if we cannot bear fruit unless united to and grafted into Christ, it follows that our spirit, our mind, our heart must somehow be always tuned in to him. Only in this way will our prayer become connatural to us, be the real breath of our spirit and of the Spirit of God in us; only in this way can we fulfill the command of praying constantly, without ever losing heart (Lk 18:1-8; Th 5:17).

In Spiritual Theology and in our formation days we were taught different methods, and even schools, of prayer. Lately, we have come across — and perhaps practised — other methods borrowed from Eastern Orthodoxy and Oriental cultures and religions. Perhaps we are at this moment searching for new ways.

The methods practised and taught by the great mystics of the past are good; but they are not absolute and exclusive. They are the expression of the personal experience of souls who reached the heights of holiness. As such they are valuable aids to prayer; and without any doubt, from them we can learn much. However, let us keep in mind that the real Master, the real Teacher is Christ the Lord, is the Spirit sent to the disciples, and to us, to be our inspiration and guide. This divine Master and Teacher who taught the saints and inspired appropriate methods of prayer to them, is always ready to teach and to inspire us.

How about asking for the Lord's help every time we pray? An excellent way to start our prayer would be to say something like this: "Lord, you have called me to prayer at this time. You know what circumstances and situations I am going to find myself in later on. Lord, teach me to pray *now*." I believe that if we pray to him in expectant faith, and then in complete trust wait for his answer, the Lord will not disappoint us. He will put a thought on our mind, suggest a reading, lead us to contemplation, tell us to just be there . . . , speak a word of faith, of hope, of courage, quell an impertinent temptation . . . In other words, give us what we need at that particular moment.

However, we cannot leave everything to the Spirit. It would be utopic to think that we shall be able to acquire a spirit of prayer without any effort on our part. In prayer, as in everything else in the spiritual life, we have to cooperate with the Spirit. Perhaps we can recall the Spanish proverb *A Dios rogando y con el mazo dando* (praying to God while hammering away) or as the Russians put it, *Pray to God, but row to the shore*.

We must provide the setting for the Spirit to work in us, and for him to lead us to a real life of prayer. How? Personally I favor what we can call "the three-square-meal method." We consider it a necessity in life and a basic human right to have three solid (square) meals a day: breakfast, lunch and dinner. Then, to link them up and to stay our stomach, we usually add a couple of snacks in between: the morning and afternoon *meriendas*.

How about applying the same principle to our spiritual nourishment? Three basic times for more formal, more serious, deeper prayer: in the morning, at the start of the day; early in the afternoon, before resuming our work; and at night, at the end of the day and the start of the night . . . And then some snacks (short prayers, visit, rosary, some reading, spiritual thoughts . . .) throughout the day?

Prayer should be the key of the morning and the lock of the night.

If we show willingness to cooperate with the Spirit and offer him the necessary facilities to carry out his sanctifying work in us, he will no doubt take it from there and slowly and effectively lead us along the path of prayer, which is the path of perfection.

Lord, teach us to pray!

SANCTITY IN THE PHILIPPINES

THE MYSTIC OF LIPA*

Lipa is fortunate not only for its natural richness but also for having been the cradle of great men. The religious commitment of the people is likewise very noticeable, the seeds of which were sown years back by holy men and women. Thanks to saintly people like Vicenta Bautista who zealously preached the Good News by words and example, inspiring people to walk on the road of righteousness and reminding both the young and the old to remain faithful to God.

However, Lipa is not the birthplace of Vicenta. She was born in Lamayan Street, Sta. Ana, Manila in 1860. She and three others were born to Nicolas Bautista who was a Kapitan Kulas (a mayor) and Juana de Dios, a very pious woman.

Vicenta or Ka Ticang as the people loved to call her, was a Tertiary of the Dominican Order. Writers attribute her love for the Dominicans to her formation as a student. She studied at the Beaterio de Santa Catalina de Manila where she got acquainted with the Dominicans. Later, she used to go and see the Dominicans for her regular confession and counselling.

Ka Ticang spent her vacation in Lipa, staying in one of the houses of her friends. But certainly, vacation as far as she was concerned, was not purely for pleasure. While in Lipa, she would gather people in groups and teach them religion. In fact, in these on-and-off visits to Lipa, she was able to establish in the place religious organizations like the Hijas de Maria, the Apostleship of Prayer, the Association of Lourdes, Mes de Mayo and the Doce Estrellas. She also propagated the Third Order of St. Dominic among the women. However, her main apostolate in Lipa was her catechetical classes for the children. With all these encounters with the people she finally decided to stay in Lipa for good.

* Supernatural Communications of Our Lord to Vicenta Bautista of Lipa, a Dominican Tertiary, about the future of the Dominican Order in the Philippines. Translated by Johnny Zulueta, C.M. and Albert Bagood, O.P. under the supervision of Fr. Pablo Fernandez, O.P. From the Dominican Archives of the Province of Our Lady of the Rosary.

Vicenta was not only an apostle. She was also a mystic. Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Augustine and St. Dominic appeared to her frequently. When St. Dominic appeared to her, he showed his appreciation for her voluntary dedication to the Order.

People close to her were quick to say that her outstanding spiritual trait was her gift of prophecy. She prophesied that Lipa would become a diocese with a foreigner as the first bishop; that Lipa would be filled with religious orders and congregations; that many priests, religious and nuns will be persecuted and killed in many parts of the world. All of these prophecies happened in due time.

Such a person cannot be ignored. Hence, she was mourned by everybody when her death came at the age of 48. Almost all of Lipa filled the cemetery during her funeral. We thank God for giving such a jewel in the Church particularly in the Dominican Order.*

Vicenta's holiness of life and mystical experiences are enough to make one listen and reflect on what she said. During her mystical encounter with the Lord, a message was given to all Dominicans, a message that called for a good deal of attention and response.

MESSAGE OF THE LORD TO THE DOMINICANS:

While your handmaid was at prayer, I saw the Lord above suspended in the air with splendid clarity, dressed in white, his face looking at me, his right hand lifted as if he was preaching. The Lord told me to listen and write this message for the sons of Dominic. Thus the Lord of Hosts commands, "Be aware of these things and pay attention to this. I want that they be true sons of Dominic. Dominic does not want nor pretend only to have sons who are distinguished and well-known to the world. The holy founder wished that his order would give many saints to God and not many wise men to the world. For if virtue is wanting, knowledge becomes a disillusion and vain arrogance. They will be applauded and praised by the

* For a more detailed biography of Vicenta Bautista, read "Vicenta Bautista, T.O.P." by Fr. L. Z. Legaspi, O.P. in the Historical Section of *Boletin Eclesiastico de Filipinas*, Vol. XXXIX, No. 441, September 1965.

world, but before Me they will be considered lowly. I cannot surely praise them, nor will Dominic bless them. Dominic wants that his sons be faithful imitators of him; detached, mortified and humble, charitable, full of zeal and lovers of poverty, outstanding in self-denial and penance. He longs that they become living holocausts like the burning candles on the altar of sacrifice, fuming the place with the most fragrant odor of virtues, issuing the purest lights and illuminating the fatal obscurity of the world. Let them be purified from all uncleanness and let not the mud of this world touch them. Forbid them from concentrating in the acquisition of riches from this passing world because the Lord meant them to have life in eternity where they will be crowned. They must not be obsessed with the possession of ephemeral goods nor be carried off by the aura of the world. None of these things will give them happiness. Moreover, the favor of the wealthy will not conserve the Dominican Order. It is and will be sustained by the power on high.

"Dominic founded his order, having as its foundation not the fire from this world, nor the favor of anybody but the firm and elevated rock of God's Providence and Mercy. His sons are sustained with the Divine Word more than the ordinary bread that you eat. They are sheltered under the most spacious mantle of the Sovereign Queen, Directress of Dominic in his apostolate and to whose protection the Order owes its integrity in these islands. Under her powerful influence, the Order was preserved from those trophies of hell which infested so much these islands. The insolents were rampant, the same people who did not respect the most sacred, profaning my home until the stones of the building fell down greatly. From there, its confessed sovereignty started, raising its sacrilegious flag, inviting the people to unite themselves in its festivity, infamous for its victory acquired against the magnates of the Great King.

"Go, wake up those who are still asleep. Soften their hearts with efforts and tears, opening those padlocks of bronze by force of humble prayers until they fall to pieces. Do not be cowards. Announce the word of the Lord and proclaim with tears within the Dominican bosom the disgrace of his people. Tell them to make haste and rise up from the profound sleep of indifference. I am the powerful God. I am calling them to defend my people. I have chosen the Dominican Order, the sons of Dominic for this sacrifice. Let them listen to my supplications. I am giving them this crucial time to remedy those da-

ages for today is not tomorrow. Let them not be cowards nor vacillating but strong and docile. Listen! While this harm is not repaired, zeal will not be efficacious. The evil is inside and so exterior remedy will not conquer it. Let them bow their head under my powerful scepter that gives health and life. Let them take advantage of these times since the God of vengeance is offering them pardon. He governs with his mercy and hopes for the return of those who have gone astray.

"Sons of Dominic, enter into your inner selves and be clean vessels. Purify your hearts so that you may be led to the temple of the Lord. I do not accept dead offerings. I refuse "half-holocausts". The Saint of saints, the God of Sabaoth is asking to be adored in spirit and in truth. I repeat and I will repeat once more, "I have chosen the Dominican Order and I intend to crown the zeal of the first heroes who stepped on this soil. Let them return to the zeal of those happy times and have those vows of love be reborn. I want to give testimony of my predilection to the Spanish people and leave memorable deeds in these colonies of Spain. It is true that my daughter Spain will always be Spain, a Catholic daughter of Rome. It is equally true that the Philippines, daughter of the Spanish zeal will always be an heiress of the faith of Spain.

"Listen, simple daughter of the people who generously brings my torch. Do not cease to talk about these things while obedience does not suspend you. If they forbid you, obey because I am with you."

ORDERS OF GOD, SWORN WORDS OF THE MOST HIGH:

The Lord of the armies commanded me to write these words with all faithfulness to his orders. My servant Fr. C and you, Fr. Provincial, pay attention to this:

"I have counted my servants who are to help in this enterprise and I will see to it that not even one, upon whom my favor rests will be lost. Do not delay it. The time for the defense is already fixed ahead.

"The infernal enemy has been making disastrous noise, thinking that he has already lorded over the world. The ignorant has been unmindful of the fact that his fist has infected even the recesses of the convent. Ah, adventurous impostor! Flee and go to hell for the day of your defeat is near. I have never

forgotten my promises and my alliance is fixed. I will not fall short to my words though my fighters have gone astray and have missed the right means. Nevertheless, I have gotten right my objectives. I am God, worker of marvels, irreprehensible ordainer. My things have been put in order. Renew your strength then my servants. Like revitalized athletes, present yourselves to the battle of God-man. Observe his conduct which has been started in prayer."

The Lord once more ordered his maid-servant: "Write these things: 'I, the maid-servant of God was asking the Lord in prayer if he would accept recommendations or prayers of intercession for anybody,'" He answered, "Yes, if is an act of charity." And so I prayed for the Father Provincial. The Lord in turn asked, "Do you want also to sacrifice for the Dominican religious order?" "If it is your will," I muttered, "yes, but I am not worthy!" "No my daughter," He replied, "You ought to pray for them, for they are praying for you. You have already sacrificed for other Religious Orders, so how much more should you sacrifice for that to where you rightly belong by your profession? They are your brothers. You should be interested very much in their welfare." "If this is your will then here I am, have me as your servant."

Then the Lord continued: "Be humble and holy all of you and in particular have compassion on those servants of yours namely, V.R. and Fr. P., who are in need. Comply with your ministry in conformity with the spirit of my servant Dominic. If there is anything to which your will is opposed, remember it and put remedy to it. Yes, that thing which afflicts you will be remedied in due time. Nonetheless, it is unfortunate that some of the brethren are living and following the counsel of the world which no doubt is the beginning of a disastrous life of laxity and convenience. They have not followed faithfully the footsteps of their holy founder, whose zeal ought to be in their hearts.

"I love this country very much. It should produce many saints. Though this soil has not been watered with the blood of martyrs, nevertheless it has been watered with the apostolic sweat of my servants, and with tears blessed by my Mother and by God Himself. How I wish that all the Dominicans are faithful. Just think of how many saints they will produce if they remain good servants of mine. But you have to remember this.

My Father loves them as a chosen portion and as a portion loved by my mother, with the love she had for her servant Dominic, her son.

"Today good workers are lacking. Let his brothers remember what the Apostle said in his Epistle, 'A little leaven is sufficient in order to ferment the whole dough.' They are the leaven of the great mass of Christianity. If all the priests are good they can surely give many saints to the Church and to the Lord. That is why I am recommending to you this matter of praying for them. This ought to be the object of all the prayers of the faithful: To ask with insistence from the Father of families to send diligent workers, good cultivators of his vast land. Be reminded though that for this, all sacrifice is still insufficient.

"Sad to say, there is a reason to lament and those negligent servants are responsible for it. My vineyard does not yield as many grapes. The wheat-field gives very little wheat. The spacious country having been burnt by the sun, denies the sheep of pasture. My garden having been abandoned could hardly give seasoned fruits. The flowers have been trodden upon, crying for compassion, asking the Lord to visit his inheritance. Tell my servants to dedicate themselves well and be good confessors because good confessors are wanting nowadays."

This was the most cruel expedition by the formidable army of error commanded by the king of darkness masked in evil disguises. Never has Satan found a way so subtle and clever in order to get hold of souls. His victory was almost sure but God always remembers and will remember; He only allowed the impostor to make a step ahead so that the evil one will find himself in greater embarrassment and may not dare as much as he does today; secondly, God wants to admonish his people so that they may be more cautious and diligent.

The Lord clearly spoke of the persons consecrated to His Majesty who have provoked His wrath by their scandals. The most just Judge discharges his just indignation over his beloved people, making them feel the power of his arm, so that, upon reflection they may try to remedy their evil. His Holiness, the Pope has come to the knowledge of all these things. Only God can remedy such kind of persecution. It means thus: it will be necessary that the Almighty himself with his irresis-

tible force foster and use out of his bounty the influence of his sovereign omnipotence. He has done so many times, according to the testimony of the past. Here it is: when God wants to do one of those wonderful works, he takes his scepter, gives the first devastating blow to the head of the dragon: the pride of the world — making all understand that He pays no attention to the ways of the world. He makes use of instruments which at first may be of no value. He directs his eyes to where they have not looked, chooses his elect to embody a broken vessel that needs to be humiliated. He does not have to be incarnated again in the womb of a Woman, and He who is very contented with being with the poor.

Today God has demonstrated himself propitious. It treats about curing this calamity; the tempest is about to subside and goodness is surfacing. However, the true cure of these evils is the humble confession of our sins. Altogether, according to the order of the Most High, let us fill ourselves with sorrow and prostrate ourselves in his presence. Let us say: We have sinned, we have given motives to our enemies to insult us. We deserve this punishment.

In one occasion St. Dominic and St. Augustine spoke in this way: "Have in mind these things: Whenever the ministers become lax the Church suffers. This persecution going on today and for some years now was motivated for this reason. The ministers of the Lord have abused these Islands so much. They are unworthy of their name. They have not followed the footsteps of their predecessors . . . The Supreme Hierarchy of the Church regrets this damage. But even so, He is the best Way, if we repent. He is the only promoter of all good. — Believe me, all will be remedied." "Yes, have much confidence. That is why the Lord has told you: He will be your confidence even beyond the boundaries of the Universe. He will surpass even the beginning of the prophets. The Lord and His Mother have explained to you the reason why you have been chosen. Therefore, do not be afraid of repeating the same words given to you by the Lord."

"... I saw the Holy Patriarch of our Order. He called me his daughter, speaking in these terms: you are fortunate, my daughter, for having sacrificed yourself for my Order. I am grateful to you. I promise to attend to you in the presence of God. I will not abandon you. Continue manifesting to my sons

the things that I communicate to you. Bear whatever trials may come your way. God will reward you for your works . . ." "Father, I believe that your sons are doing fine in these Islands." "Yes, but not all are doing as I like them to. I want that they be true Dominicans, that they purify themselves. God has chosen my Order to be a sacrificial victim. This is to restore the primitive fervor, and revive the faith which was almost lost in these Islands through erroneous doctrines that have taken away the patrimony of peace — an inestimable loan of the ardent zeal of the first missionaries in this beloved country. God asks from the Order a sacrifice of expiation for their own carelessness and that of others. They have been truly negligent, they have not advised the people of this day of calamity which they ought to understand. While asleep, the impostor came, the thief of souls, the assassin whose coming brought about ruins and horrible catastrophes in Spain. He felt so confident seeing that the guards were in a deep slumber. Do you know the cause? Some of my sons have given themselves very much to what is temporal, at the expense of the interior life, which is the most important thing. They have abandoned their trust in God. Thus in order to purify them God promises this occasion, which will be opportune in order to guard His honor.

"My Father, Dominic, left me giving his blessings."

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HOMILETICAL NOTES

by

Fr. Jesus Ma. Merino Antolinez, O.P.

TWENTY SECOND SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

September 1, 1985

THE CLEAN HEART WANTED BY GOD

I. *Mark VII 1-8a, 14-15, 21-23.*

In some anecdotes Jesus was often depicted as a suspicious character. The present reading from the gospel of Mark brings to our consideration one such incidence. Pharisees and Scribes from Jerusalem had travelled to Galilee where He was preaching, and confronted Him with the question: "How is it that your disciples do not wash their hands before eating?" The question was incriminatory. It hinted that Jesus and His teachings did not observe the law, because the accepted piety required the washing that ought not to be neglected in the circle of followers of the Master, who in this would show Himself to be an "impious man".

Surely, God had prescribed in His divine Law that the priests, before officiating at His sacred altar should wash their feet and hands and head in preparation (Exod. XXIX 4); but ordinary meals were not a divine service, nor was every Israelite a priest (Exod. XXX 8-21). Besides, God had prescribed that His chosen people eat ritually clean and decent food (Lev. XI ff); and from that prescription pious men had derived the custom of washing their hands before meals lest some casual dirt, "impurity" in ritual terms, might befall. All in all it was a decent precaution motivated by extreme piety. The Pharisees enforced it as the mark of serving God in truth, the truth propounded by their own religious faction.

Jesus identified it properly as just an offshoot tradition from the ancients; then He went on to reject the hypocrisy of

scrupulously minding the skin-deep practices of religiosity while neglecting the gist of loyalty to the will of God; and He proceeded further to prescribe the kind of purity God wanted in man, the purity of his heart.

The dealings that God wants to have with man are dealings of a heart-to-heart intimacy. The infinite beauty and purity that are God's can be celebrated with absolute honesty of faith by way of acceptance or repentance. The thoughts, the feelings, the wishes, the deeds that contravene the loving plan of the Almighty for every man obscure and destroy the image of Himself imprinted in his soul. They stain the heart of man and render him unfit for a life of sinlessness and everlasting happiness in the bosom of his heavenly Father.

The willful yielding to and the penchant for self-gratification drags a man's heart to the quagmire of worldly cares that stain his soul with sin. The weakness or the perversity of yielding to them springs from within the heart of man. Jesus pinpoints them and identifies them as: fornication, theft, adultery, murder, wickedness, perversity, blasphemy, pride, stupidity. Such were the dirty issues in the time of Jesus, as much as they still are in our times.

The bitter tone in the Lord's present remarks tells of His very longing for that "cleanliness" that He extolled at the beginning of His preaching; "Blessed are the clean of heart, because they shall see God" (Mt. V 8); the same cleanliness or innocence He visualized by placing a little child in the midst of His apostles while telling them: "Unless you become like little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of God" (Mt. XVIII 3).

St. Paul describes what Jesus meant by that childlike dialogue between the Christian on pilgrimage in this world and his Lord and Father, when he writes: "We beseech you, brethren, rebuke the unquiet, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient towards all men. See that none render evil for evil to any man; but ever follow that which is good towards each other, and towards all men. Always rejoice. Pray without ceasing. In all things give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you all. Extinguish not the Spirit. Despise not prophecies. But prove all things; hold fast that which is good. From all appearance of evil refrain yourselves." (I Thes. V 14-22)

II. *James* I 17-18, 21b-22, 27.

St. James exhorts the Christians to always keep in mind that great gift from God which is His divine grace abiding within us.

As a consequence the Christian should do away with the exaggerated ways of imposing goodness around himself; but he must assimilate the divine word and the revelation granted to him and make of it a reality in his life.

The untarnished splendour of Christian care for the needy coupled with the avoidance of worldly crookedness, is the kind of innocence that God expects from His people.

III. *Deuteronomy* IV 1-2, 6-8.

Moses told the people of the Old Testament, the Israelites who were to enter the Promised Land, to remember their forefathers to whom the divine Law was given, to be for them a source of wisdom and honor among the nations.

It was the way that the Lord devised to keep their hearts close to Him. And it would be so forever. "Be holy because I, the Lord thy God, am holy" (Lev. XVII 26).

TWENTY THIRD SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

September 8, 1985

LIVING THE SACRAMENTS

I. *Mark* VII 31-37.

Jesus was not an actor performing a feat when He cured the deaf-mute. Neither was He in need of following any ritual or procedure to put at work the infinite divine powers that were His own. But He showed to have a purpose in visualizing His divine action on the sick man by His deliberate intent. And the crowd of disciples got the message upon seeing the result; "He has done all things well," they observed.

The whole-hearted Giver of the invisible, supernatural grace wants His beneficiaries to be whole-hearted receivers, be-

cause sanctification is life shared in an encounter. Jesus, when He visualized the functioning of His miracles, created in the minds of His disciples the idea and the concept of the human, integral encounter of man with his God, while being sanctified. He was preparing the institution of His sacraments.

The miracles requested from our Saviour during His ministry were remedies for bodily ailments and material needs, but His mission and ministry were for bringing into the innermost part of our souls the "Kingdom of God". The imparting and ministering of the life everlasting, the one we have as real children of God, was His work and the work He was to entrust to His Church. So, sending out the apostles to practice their future ministry, He gave them the power to cure the sick by "anointing them with oil" (Mk. VI 13); in this manner, He taught them the use of material things designated by the Almighty to work out His divine wonders. Simply said, He taught the Sacraments and their administration to His Apostles.

Jesus put His fingers into the ears of the deaf-mute, and some of His saliva on his tongue; then looked heavenwards and issued the command: EPHTAH, "be open!", as an audible formula. Such was exactly the ritual performance of a Sacrament.

It was a cure then, a remedy for a bodily ailment; now what the Church administers is the transformation of our natural and temporal life into the supernatural and divine life of the Holy Trinity abiding in us and sanctifying us. Jesus ordered the Sacraments: "Baptize them"; "Do this in commemoration of Me"; "Receive the Holy Spirit and whose sins you pardon..." The washing of priests and of victims was meant to make them fit for serving the Lord, and John the Baptist borrowed it to mean the voluntary adherence to God's expected Kingdom. Now, Jesus and the Church administer in Baptism the sanctifying grace that makes men children of God and heirs of heaven. The imposition of the hands in Confirmation brings to us the fullness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit that we need for work as members of God's kingdom. The Sacrament of Penance is the redress of our union with the Lord in purity, through the pardon of our sins effected in an open and verifiable way by His deputized ministers. The Sacrament of sacraments, the Eucharist, is our living union with Him. God made man in the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, through our feeding on Him made us truly one with Him through His omnipotent words, now given in His stead in the sacrifice by His priests.

Ordination is the divine endowment to dedicated and selected men with the task of perpetuating the salvific action of the Savior in us. Marriage is the divine vocation of men and women to collaborate with God in both bringing into the world a temporal humanity and modelling each offspring unto the perfect image of Jesus Christ, a perfection that shall be the foundation of his everlasting happiness with God in Heaven. All through our life, sickness, sometimes serious sickness, will be around. God and the Church provide for it in the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick through which grace from above is received to heal the body and clear the soul from the scars left behind by our sins and failures. The latter purpose might rather be important before we appear in the presence of our Judge after death, but we must avail ourselves of this sacrament of healing if needed all throughout life.

How beautiful and intimate our relationship with our Father in heaven will be all through life, if we were to live the Sacraments in full awareness of our sharing in them the sanctifying life of the divine Trinity abiding in us!

II. *James II*, 1-5.

St. James reminds his faithful, and us in our day, that in the Kingdom of God, material possessions and the human prestige derived from them do not count.

It would be an incongruity, not to say a desecration, to take earthly possessions or the lack of them as the determining factor in the realization of the service of God.

Our Heavenly Father has shown that faith and work to earn life everlasting are what count in His eyes and in many an occasion, He had oftentimes specifically chosen the poor and the destitute to realize His wonders. He is always a loving source of treasures for the poor.

III. *Isaiah XXXV*, 4-7a.

With hearts hardened by fear and insecurity, men, deprived of guiding light, of free movement, of spiritual strength, might think themselves lost in life's desert.

The living spring they long for is but found in their mind-ing that their God and Father is very near, always standing by them.

THE TWO THOUSANDTH BIRTHDAY OF BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

September 8, 1985

Today we celebrate the two thousandth birthday of Mary, the Mother of God and our Mother.

We put aside strict and dry mathematics and let scholars research and argue about absolute, probable or mistaken computations of early writers. Six or two years earlier might be the correct date, but the celebration is assigned for today. It is the celebration of our faith.

Mary is our mother, and in filial union with her, we recall her entrance to the world and history, as well as into the very core of the story of our salvation and the reality of our life with God.

The divine Trinity is life ineffable and infinite. The life existing in God's creatures is an eradication of divine strength, wisdom and love. Our Creator has established that creatures derive their living from other creatures. The wonder of universal parenthood is a loving mystery of God's wisdom. God has wanted, planned and created a mother for every living, intelligent life in our universe. A unique sun from our sky penetrates the vitality, the colours, the beauty and the fragrance of every flower that gives out a fruit. This image visualizes the wonder of universal motherhood.

God with us, the Emmanuel, the Word Incarnate, Jesus Christ, through Whom we receive grace and truth, in this world had a Mother. The Lord wanted it so. In Paradise He was introduced as "the seed of the Woman" (Gen. III 15-16); to the House of David He was announced as "the Child born to the Virgin" (Isa. VII 14-15); Jeremiah foretold that He would be "born of a Woman" (Jer. XXXI 22); He was, according to Micah, "the Lord born in Bethlehem of Juda from a mother" (Mich. V 2). It was the decision of God to have a Mother for the Messiah.

Jesus, the Almighty incarnate Word of God, our brother, also wants that we share His Mother, as we share His life. He said it to one of His disciples who stood by the foot of His cross. He said: "behold thy Mother!" (Jn. XIX 27). This legacy the Church of God always treasures. It is a pity that there are "super-minds" who fancy Jesus Christ as a trans-

cent being, so enrapt in His own splendor and glory that He had become insensible to the motherly devotion and care lavished on Him; unaware of and unfeeling towards tenderness; devoid of gratitude to and unmindful of the honor and respect for the father and mother, he has commanded as forceful law-giver himself. Jesus was not such a monster of a son.

Neither can we, redeemed and enliven by the body and blood He received from Mary, be such.

The two thousandth birthday of Mary is not an empty remembrance. It recalls and commemorates all over again for the two thousandth time the happiness of her numberless encounters with her children, be they the intimate personal encounters within the innermost recesses of our hearts, or the outwardly resplendent encounters in the unceasing glory of her sanctuaries of marvels. As our mother, Mary seems uneasy in her glory before God's throne all the time that we are not yet with her. And it is a vital event everytime that She is recalled and made present to draw the faithful crowd to come closer to Jesus, carried away as they seem to be in the warm embrace of the Mother. The monumental or intimate Christian arts are our poem of love for her. From the greatest saints and sages to the humblest destitute or sinner Mary has always been, the most intimate inspiration for living with God. She has inspired the monumental writings poems and various arts as expression of love for her.

We do thank God for having given Mary as a Mother to Jesus and to us. And we love Her so!

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

September 15, 1985

THE PLAN OF GOD FOR OUR LIVES

I. *Mark* VIII 27-35.

The Lord is aware of what the people around are thinking about Him. He asks His disciples in order to make them reflect upon the true significance of His presence among them and in the world.

Both the friendly and inimical in His audience are pre-occupied with their own expectations of a wonder-worker. They

have witnessed the miracles of Jesus and have identified Him with the hero of their dreams, or at least as some famous hero just resurrected. Miracle-mindedness then, as faithhealing and miracle-prayer sessions of our day, is superficial, because God, in His dealings with man, is in search of man's love and deeper understanding of Himself and not of his admiration.

The opinion of the Twelve is formulated by Peter: Jesus is the Messiah. All His miracles, all His teachings, and in fact, the whole trend of Jesus' life, point to His identity as King and Priest, the saviour and the redeemer that God has promised to send for the salvation of His chosen people.

Jesus goes on to reveal that the life and existence on earth of the Messiah are meant to be much more than just doing wonders and miracles. His life consists in the consecration of Himself to work, to suffer, to expiate and to die in bringing about the redemption of man. Glory, resurrection and the establishment of the Kingdom of God will come afterwards, and only as a reward.

This truth appears to have been very plain, down-to-earth acceptable and of good common sense to Peter. Jesus rejects his warnings and rebukes him as "Satan", the tempter who would try to change the ways of God who alone brings life through death, by diverting them into humanly efficient plans and triumphs.

The plan of the Eternal Father for the life of His Incarnate Son implies a mission of hard work, examples of holiness, the tragedy of the Cross and even His death. Similarly the plan of God for our lives implies that we do hard work to earn and merit our heaven by being holy, by keeping away from corruption and by assisting the children of our heavenly Father to be good and happy in their way towards Him.

We have our own crosses to carry, as Jesus carried His. The truth of being Christians demands it.

To "have a good time" may imply a refreshing rest; but when by it we designate the setting aside of duties, then conveniences and all good efforts to pass the fleeting moments of our existence in pampering ourselves with pleasures and entertainment make of the phrase a deceiving joke. The Master formulates it exactly as to think that we are "winning our life" when in reality we are wasting it foolishly away. The hard time of serious obeisance in the practice of God's will, and our persevering effort to succeed in becoming extensions of the

divine heart and hand, for the benefit of our fellowmen and ourselves, may look like tedious labor or even slavery; but it is the most gratifying endeavor as it brings about everlasting life, which is ours to gain.

Let us pray to God that we may understand the wisdom at work for our destiny to live in everlasting union with Him, who is our complete life and happiness.

II. *James* II 14-18.

Our attention is called to look around us and see to the needs of our fellowmen, as we all are children of God.

Such good deed is practicing our faith indeed.

III. *Isaiah* L 5-10.

The prophet, in presenting the future King-Messiah, and in announcing Him as a "man of sorrow", the object of persecutions and hatred by His adversaries, stresses the unflinching courage with which He will undertake the accomplishment of His mission.

The consciousness of being in service to the Father in Heaven, in doing what He has commanded Him, be it difficult or easy, bitter or enjoyable, is for our Saviour the very reason behind His heroic life and death.

We must bring about the same consciousness of the presence of God in and around us. This consciousness should be the constant inspirational force that would propel us towards success in our pilgrimage to our real Fatherland.

TWENTY FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR **September 22, 1985**

THE CHRISTIAN DIGNITY OF MAN

I. *Mark* IX 29-36.

We are invited to visualize one of the most touching scenes of Jesus' life. The Lord carries in His arms a little child who cozily clings close to His heart while He issues a sovereign proclamation of the dignity of man.

The Apostles have been selected from among a crowd of other disciples to carry on the work of salvation, the nature of which they are supposed to understand better. Yet, they are too earth-minded enough to insert their personal interests into the work of God. Jesus has told them that his future sufferings and death are to be the start of the Kingdom of God but His announcement only gives them other ideas. They must have viewed the establishment of the "kingdom" as a lifetime chance to promote themselves into ministers, governors, commanders, chiefs and revenue collectors of an established heavenly realm. By their argument they are vying for the best positions.

Questioned about it by the Divine Master, they kept silent. It would be shameful or embarrassing, to say the least, to expose their hidden ambitions or to bring into the open their blatant selfishness.

Jesus at first seems willing to overlook the misunderstanding, but proceeds to correct certain misconceptions, by an action more eloquent than a thousand sermons. He picked up a little child, for whom riches and power are nothing while tenderness and friendliness are a living need and joy; He presses the child to His heart and utters this revelation: "Unless you become like little children, you will not enter into the Kingdom of God."

A little child of God, conscious of having come from God, living in a faithful and loving embrace with God, looking forward to an unending bliss and sharing in the glory of God, ... such is our credentials as members of the Kingdom of God. This is, before Christ's eyes, our dignity.

In any kingdom, excellence, power and authority come from the king, and the royal ranks are evaluated on the level of sharing in the views, operations and influence of the king. God our Father, and Jesus Christ, our King, are intent in living out the dialogue of faithful love to end (Jn. XIII 1), no matter the cost; the authority and dignity consists in being a lover of God's children who bear His image and likeness. Jesus says, "The one who wants to be the first must be the least and the servant of all." Yes, he is the servant to all in catering to everyone's task of attaining personal salvation in the reign of God.

The rationale behind this declaration is every man's dignity of being, in the eyes of God, another Jesus Christ His Son and Heir of His Glory. In this manner it is true that, "He who takes care of anyone of these little children in my name takes

care of Me, and the one who takes care of Me, takes care of the One who sent Me," who is the Father of All. The divine sonship is our dignity.

Much has been said, and bragged about the dignity of man. We hear continually the talks on the protection of human rights, and yet our life seems to be wonderfully at stake; frequently most indifferent to man's plight. Yes, man is "voter" but he is just as well a simple "tax payer", "consumer", "labor hand", ... a mere number in a census, if not a surplus unit of the "population explosion". The Christian idea of man is not functional at all in our world. Our politicians, or bankers, industrialists, businessmen, employers, agents of public order or citizens do not think of themselves and others as "children of God"; as a consequence, clever and magnificent plans and projects end up in smoke or clouds of brilliant dust carried by the wind.

We Christians should know better; each of our fellowmen, from the highest sovereign to the lowest servant or destitute beggar is, as Jesus has revealed to us, a son of God, brother to Himself.

II. *James III 16-IV 3.*

The gratification of selfishness and ambition is not an accomplishment of man's dignity intended by God.

The one honest reason for our troubles in life today is our unfortunate misunderstanding of our own selves. We are given to pleasures, bent on power and riches which are held as our destiny, and we experience, besides lust and cruelty, disappointment and hatred.

Were we to look at the universe around us as a gift from our Heavenly Father, and meant to be received as a loving grant from Him and to be used under His blessing and shared generously and happily with our fellow-children of God, we would find out that living in a Christian community is a fore-taste of our Father's home.

III. *Wisdom II 17-20.*

The life in this visible world that is oriented towards an invisible, future world, and that is offered instance after ins-

tance to the honour of the invisible God in order to carry on with the service of others despite rebuff and ingratitude, is adjudged by worldly "wise men" as a folly or even affront.

The Christian should see himself as a divine offspring, growing toward spiritual maturity and the fruition of lasting glory.

TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

September 29, 1985

THE SENSE OF JESUS CHRIST

I. *Mark IX 37-42, 44, 46-47.*

We must be close and true followers of our Master, the Son of God; but we cannot bind the Lord to our understanding and to our ways. The Almighty must be known as entitled to freedom of action. He, who sees the hearts and the needs and the honesty, answers the queries of His children. He is the one who plants in the innermost of any soul the sense of Jesus Christ who must be invoked as Saviour and Redeemer.

Any man who invokes Jesus as much loves Him. Now, the love of Jesus is what counts in the heart of our heavenly Father. Consequently, that love makes our lives precious.

The most insignificant help, like a glass of cool water, offered and shared in the name of Christ is love for Him in action. This sense of Him inspiring, guiding and enlivening our lives is the "sense of Jesus Christ".

The "scandal", the stumbling block that spoils and renders void our existence, is the disregard of Jesus' teachings and love for us. This disregard is brought about by our own self-love; it is mainly things within us, our laziness, our longing for self gratification, and our rotten inclinations which bring our spiritual doom. When Jesus weighs the consequences, he is calling us to follow Him more closely.

The loss of the sense of Jesus Christ in daily life is the plague disintegrating our modern world. In press, teachings, entertainments, movies, dresses, politics, business transactions human relations, Jesus Christ and his divine doctrines are ignored. Our world struggles to mend itself.

In the Gospel, Jesus states clearly that the remedy is our own personal business and is within our reach. Whatever cuts us away from Him, from living a life patterned after His revelation, must be set aside no matter the cost. The evil eye, the evil foot, the evil hand, the evil mind, must go. Wholesome or mimed we must take hold of the kingdom which is ours by divine right and destination. That means the dirty movie might be colorful and attractive but we must not patronize it, be it allowed or censored or forbidden by board or no board.

Through our Baptism, we receive the sonship of God and His divine grace. We must keep it and honor it. By our sharing in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, by living the Sacraments He has given us through the ministry of His Church, by enjoying our piety and our devotions we must be constantly called to look heavenwards and to refresh the wisdom that is ours, the "Sense of Jesus Christ" (I Cor. II 16).

II. *James V 1-6.*

The bigger the cloud of dust is, the greater is the danger of becoming blinded.

Temporal wealth and the consequent easy and enjoyable life constitute a very slippery path. One forgets Jesus Christ and His ways.

St. James stresses the degradation into which the apparent splendor of an affluent existence might lead. It is his way of shaking the consciousness of the "sense of Jesus Christ" in the acquisition, retention, use and administration of material prosperity.

Were riches seen as gifts from God providentially entrusted to the wealthy owners in order to use them to bring about success and happiness to themselves and to their fellow children of God, they would serve as blessings.

The "sense of Jesus Christ" makes riches as heavenly gifts.

III. *Numbers XI 25-29.*

The prophetic spirit mentioned in the story from the book of Numbers was the divine gift enlightening some elected men to understand life as a plan of God for the welfare of His own people.

Moses' wish was that such wisdom be shared by as many as possible.

TWENTY SEVENTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

October 6, 1985

MARRIAGE AS WANTED BY GOD

I. *Mark* X 2-16.

The question put to Jesus was not an academic question. The tone of both the question and the insistence, as well as the remark advanced by one of the disciples: "In that case it would be better not to get married at all" indicates that an emotional and living situation was in view.

It appears that the misunderstanding between a husband and a wife, commonly called "incompatability" in our days is dealt with, whether based on reality or not, vividly experienced but obstinately persisting, "incompatability" has crept and split apart the union of hearts and life which once upon a time was a vision of bliss.

The "incompatability", or at least the mild form of it that is coolness and disgust, has to come. The freshness of beautiful shape and manners fades away as age increases and the bodies become heavier and sluggish; the worries and problems crowd upon to call for decisions very frequently contradictory; dreams and illusions fade into the vulgarity of a daily life; sickness, mistakes, perversities which are hurting become usual occurrences; the same of boredom for the routinary and the disgust for intimate and private failures heap up to demand strenuous self-denial and dedication. If, on top of all that, a handsome driver, a mindful and pretty secretary, a well-groomed and moneyed gentleman, an enterprising and available lady come across, the "incompatability" becomes real and overwhelming.

"Divorce", the separation of two human beings who consciously have lived one human life into its fulfilment for a period, has been admitted as a practice, normalized and legalized for ages in all regions and cultures, as a solution of the trouble that is the "incompatability". We must be frank and admit that "divorce" everywhere and always has been evaluated as a monstrous development and as an unsatisfactory remedy,

with the colour of a cowardish failure, a cruel abandonment of affections, and a blind disregard of tenderness and human values. The artificiality of the condonation, not to say glorification, our permissive society shows to "multimarried and divorced" stars, rings like a sarcastic disregard of honorability.

"Incompatability" and "divorce" loom when an honorable and sound human understanding is not present. Jesus places the question on its proper grounds when He asks: "What Moses commanded you?". Marriage is not a simple matter of personal feelings and dealings; it is an institution in which many a human person is engaged and therefore public and subjected to laws. When they answer that Moses ordered to give first a certificate of separation and then dismiss the wife, Jesus strikes at the heart of the problem: "Moses, in view of the hardness of your hearts, wrote for you such prescription." Hardness might be natural to the rocks, but it is not the natural and sound condition of a human being. Then He proceeds to bring the marriage to its proper foundation, its institution by the Creator of Man. "Male and female He made them... and they will be two in one flesh", such is the institutional divine establishment. Moses is but a poor legislator who has to cope with a difficult situation. Jesus' sentence is definitive: "What God has put together let no man put asunder".

The harping of the Lord on both the creation of marriage for man and the "hardness of the heart" at work in divorce conveys the solution to the vital problem of the "incompatabilities". The Creator provided the lonely Man with a "helper similar to himself", that could work, could think, could love, could create, enjoy, converse, feel, dream and sing and live fully his life. Furthermore, He delegated on them His divine prerogative of creating man, His own masterpiece in the material universe, by an act of intimate attachment and by a lifelong series of upbringing tender cares. The hardness of heart, that inhuman lack of sensibility to values, qualities, affection, emotions, ideas, sufferings, aspirations and memories, has no place within the heart of God or over His plans. Jesus calls to revert to see marriage in the beautiful and tender light of God's plans.

Jesus and His Church do not stand for perpetuating "the hell of a broken home". They afford the means and ways to destroy what is hellish in the situation. "Hardness of heart" melts when Christian charity functions at home; when the divine sacraments refresh the grace and the sense of God in the heart of the household; when prayer and piety sweeten the ac-

cidents and incidents of temper and life . . . Life in a truly Christian home is a fore-taste of our everlasting life at home with God.

A happy occurrence gave Jesus the opportunity of sealing the truth on the matter. Mothers were bringing in babies and little children to be blessed by Jesus: the apostles got annoyed and tried to scare them away; the Master reprimanded: "Let little children come to me, the kingdom of heaven is theirs. The one who does not accept the Kingdom of God as a child does will never reach it." And the Saviour embraced and blessed the children.

God planned the marriage to bring His children close to His Heart.

II. *Hebrew II 9-11.*

Jesus Christ in His glory, filling up heaven with an infinite multitude of brethren of His is a splendid picture of the plan of God for the creation and multiplication of man.

The institution of marriage is a sacred and blissful divine mission.

To mistake it as destined to a passionate, economic, utilitarian gratification will be tantamount to embark unto wreckage.

III. *Genesis II 18-24.*

This is the story of how God brought into existence the first woman for the first man.

God did it within a living lecture. All the animals are brought to Adam who gives them a name fitting the service for which they are destined, but he is made to realize that he remains alone in his peculiar greatness. Then apart of his own body is taken during his sleep and fashioned into the woman, who in this way is shown to be identical in dignity to her male counterpart.

It is unfortunate that humanity has forgotten so frequently the divine lecture.

And God proceeds further to establish and to proclaim the blessing that is love, and the glory of Motherhood.

HOMILY FOR THE FEAST OF MARY'S ROSARY***October 10, 1985***"And Mary kept all this words in her heart" (Luke II 51).*

It is astonishing to observe the insistence with which the Blessed Virgin Mary in Her certified appearance recommends the recitation of the Rosary, which is just one of many devotions honoring Her and bringing men's hearts to God through Her son Jesus Christ. At Lourdes and Fatima She went as far as to join in the recitation.

Equally persistent is the response of the faithful from the Vicar of Christ and the members of the Hierarchy to the bored beggar in a corner of a street.

A constant stream of official documents and directives enhance and guide the public and private practices in any form of performance and in every language and country where the Catholic Church lives.

What is in the Rosary that makes it so vital?

The prayers that compose it are surely the most true, most plain and most beautiful humanity will be able to use: a series of fifteen "Our Father", the Lord's Prayer, each of whom is followed by ten "Hail Mary", the angelic salutation, and "Holy Mary" the acclamation of the crowds at Ephesus and since then all over the world and the ages to the Virgin-Mother of God, and rounded up by another fifteen "Glory be to the Father", the confession of our knowledge and love for the eternal life of the Trinity. This insistence has in itself the beauty that Father Lacordaire pointed well when he remarked that "I love you" is a simple phrase that mothers, lovers, singers, and men in general say thousands of times without ever repeating once what they mean.

Each one of the fifteen "mysteries", as we call the individual series of one "Our Father", ten "Hail Mary" and "Holy Mary", and one "Glory", is dedicated to live again within our-

* Priests and faithful all over the Philippines will celebrate the Feast of the Rosary on any of the Sundays of October, some hints for a homily would be welcome.

selves an incident of the life of Jesus and of His Mother meaningful for our life and salvation. That is the heart and core of the Rosary, the "meditation" that it induces and guides with its insistent, easy prayers. And this communing with God in the memory, the understanding, the projecting into our life plainly joyful or tragically painful or gloriously thankful and expectant events of the existence in this world of the Emmanuel and His Mother, is what the faithful relishes. He might be the dumbest street sweeper or the brightest intellectual luminary but he will see himself effective in the Redeemer and His Mother. That hearty embrace with the deity is the refreshing force of the Rosary.

When Mary recites the Rosary, even while presently She enjoys the Heaven of Her glory as Queen of the Universe, She lives again the memories She cherished. This was Her earliest occupation and delight as She kept "all these things, pondering them in Her heart."

The reason why Mary is so insistent in begging all Her children to recite the Rosary is Her own experience of how upbringing towards God those "memories" are, of how enlivening and appealing the deeds and words of Her Jesus recalled and sensed become for uniting men and God; of how the Divine Trinity whose life is eternal love answers with an infinite outpouring of grace on all who try to transform themselves by meditation into the living images of Jesus Christ.

Surely we must pity some "scholars" incapable of seeing in the Rosary anything beyond the shining or roughness of the beads, the repetitious ringing of the sounds and the length of time their watches might mark.

The godly beauty and appeal of a home-like divine intervention in Nazareth, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, the lands of fields of Palestine; the godly comfort and the tragic call that Gethsemane, Pilate's floggings and the soldiers' thorns, and the road to Calvary, and the Cross excite; the vision and promise that the open Tomb, the bright sky over the Mount of Olives, the fire of the Spirit overflowing, the Heaven opening for receiving the Mother of Jesus and Ours as Queen join into a unexhaustible poem of sublime truth and love and beauty.

Really, there is no wonder why Mary and Her children love the Rosary.

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

October 13, 1985

1. *Mark X 17-30.*

Jesus' fondness for the young man who approached Him with promising aspirations ended in disappointment. The boy who has observed the Law since childhood and wanted to share in life everlasting was rich in earthly possessions. When Jesus invited him to a noble renunciation of them so as to be able to dedicate himself to be a fisherman of hearts in the company of the Master, he backed out. He had his heart for his riches.

All men are called to belong to and to live in accord with the Kingdom of God. Yet, there is in it a special call reserved to some selected men, who are entrusted with the peculiar mission of spreading and continuing the work of salvation peculiar to Jesus. "It is not you who have chosen Me; it is I who have chosen you and have sent you to bring forth much fruit" (Jn. XV 8). As the Father has sent His Son to be the Saviour of humanity, so the Son is sending and consecrating His ministers till the end of the world.

A consecrated life must have three conditions. The first one is full freedom of heart and mind to consecrate oneself to God; consequently, the renunciation of possessions is needed because they are a source of preoccupation. The second condition is to direct the heart towards the views and plans of God, which are all intent in the welfare of His children, be they poor to be provided for or sinners to be redeemed. The third and last one, yet supreme condition is to follow Jesus—that is, to assimilate His revelation, to understand His ways, and to identify their human hearts with His Heart, so that their consecration and ministerial action be consciously and effectively the extension of His own.

We men are in need of that consecrated and dedicated life. Surely God, the Creator and Sanctifier and Supreme End of man, can work by Himself within the innermost of the hearts of individual men, like the sun of the sky working within the heart of a tree to bring about its leaves and flowers and fruits. But we are intelligent, loving and free; and the first fruit of our salvation must come out in our human way of friendly acceptance.

The rich man, as long as he sticks to his earthly interest will never understand God's salvific purpose. As Jesus puts it:

"It would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God".

The good Lord who befriended so many rich men, and who accepted their hospitality and their banquets, the one who commanded His faithful to make friends out of the "mammon of iniquity" and who was supported in His ministry by the wealth of His followers (Lk. XVI 9 and VIII 3), is not sentencing riches and rich men to hell. Riches are gifts from God to be administered and shared with our fellow men because they and we are children of our Heavenly Father. He will not allow a cool glass of water given in His name pass out without due reward (Mt. X 42). He will crown the rich man according to His Fatherly Heart with heavenly glory.

Understanding the ways of our Redeemer for the "kingdom of God" and our collaboration to His plans demand that we help in the provision of men for carrying on the ministerial life of Jesus in our midst. Prayer, encouragement, assistance, inspiration extended to men and women who have heard in their hearts the voice of the Master inviting them to a consecrated life promote faith in the Saviour.

II. *Hebrew IV 12-13.*

Life of total and continued dedication to the supernatural aim of salvation might look something beyond human possibilities.

The Church, using the words of St. Paul, reminds us that in matters of divine vocation there is no limit to the possibilities.

The word of God which created the universe, which regulates and beautifies it, which sends forth all the life and light that any creature, from angel to worm is there at work in the innermost of the man.

III. *Wisdom VII 7-11.*

Men see through wisdom their own success and greatness.

The happiness of the Son of God (incarnated for the salvation of men) starts being theirs while they are on earth but on the way to heaven.

TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR

October 20, 1985

THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

I. *Mark* X 35-45.

Wanted by God and founded by Jesus Christ, the Church gathers the redeemed humanity into the strong unity of a well-knitted society. Grounded on the grace of God and the abiding inner presence of the Divine Trinity in each of the baptized member, she possesses a common action and administration of the means of salvation. There are in the Church ministers and roles that St. Paul delights in describing as those of Apostles, evangelists, doctors, members, etc. (I. Cor. XII) composing a body, the "Mystical Body" of Jesus Christ.

The powers in the Church are divine, and so are the gifts at work in her members; yet, men are the living members and in consequence human life with all its limitations and handicaps comes into function.

The devotion of the apostles James and John to their Master and His teachings was sincere; but they had ambitions of their own and their mother tendered bright expectations for them as well, and so they ganged up together to suggest to the Lord a plan of administration of the Kingdom that suited their interests. That picture of divine work smeared by earthly colours is lamentable yet understandable.

Jesus hears the request of the mother: "See to it that these two sons of mine sit at your right and at your left by your throne." "You do not know," He says, "what you are asking for." They view glory and perhaps a closer and more efficient contribution, but they overlook the very nature of authority in the Kingdom of God. It consists in the divine mission granted for the salvation of men. Jesus, the Son of God Incarnate, fully possesses it by supremacy. His is the throne. Men are just His collaborators in the place, the time and the degree assigned to them by the ineffable wisdom of the Almighty.

The designation of persons for the ministry and hierarchy in Church come along the providential lines of human history.

and conditions, but the power at work is totally divine. The Sacred Orders by which the ministers are constituted in the Church are not a simple consecration or proclamation of persons and titles; they are real constitutions into a mission assigned by the Heavenly Father.

The personal determination required from one who aspires for a position in the plan of salvation is the ready disposition of self-denial which but continues the self-dedication of Christ. "Are you willing to drink of the chalice I will be drinking, or be baptized with the baptism I am about to receive?" Jesus accepts their courageous and noble answer of affirmation, and grants them to be His followers; after all, heroism is a grace from God, but He maintains the exclusiveness of the divine mission to Himself.

As understandable as the ambition of the brothers James and John is the anger of the other apostles, they too are only human. The Master takes the opportunity to bring home to their minds and hearts the understanding of the full nature and reality of divine authority that is at work within His Church: "The ones who rule among the Gentiles lord it over them... But it is not so among you, whosoever will be greater shall be your ministers; and whosoever will be first, shall be the servant of all." And the Lord advances the reason: "For the Son of Man also has not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give up His life for the redemption for many."

The authority that derives power directly from God is sacred; such is the authority that extends to each one of us the benefits of the personal action of Jesus Christ, the authority that is established and made functional through the self-denial and sacrifice of the Son of God who died for us. This authority is lived out by us in detachment from the loves and self-seeking interests of our own. This authority conferred by Christ in the Catholic Church deserves our appreciation, love and gratitude and requires from us our brotherly cooperation.

II. *Hebrew IV 14-16.*

The Priesthood in the Church is but the continuation of the sovereign Priesthood of Jesus Christ.

"The Throne of Mercy" mentioned here was the golden plank covering the Ark of Covenant of the Old Testament, upon

which God manifested His divine presence within the Tabernacle and in the Holy of Holies of the Temple. Only the High Priest was allowed to enter and stand before it to intercede for the People of Israel. That ceremonial and visible disposition has a reality: the access of Jesus Christ, by nature our High Priest and Redeemer, to the real Presence of God in order to live forever interceding for us" (Heb. VII 25).

III. *Isaiah* LIII 10-11.

Jesus, the Messiah immolated for us, must be the supreme example of the glory and authority of His Priesthood. Jesus Crucified Priest and Victim!

In His footsteps and by His command, and Ordination, the Catholic Church provides at our service an uninterrupted line of consecrated men all at once sacrificing and being sacrificed for us. We must thank God for it.

THIRTIETH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR October 27, 1985

PRAYER AND FAITH

I. *Mark* X 46-52.

Jesus has cured the blind man in this beautiful scene recorded by Mark, and dismissed him with the command: "Go, your faith has cured you." Then the blind man recovered his sight.

We would like to know what kind of faith is accredited by Jesus with the performance of a miracle.

Certainly it is not the wistful thinking of Bartimeus for the power of seeing. Such a strong psychological impulse had been in him for years, but no miracle ever happened. A firm and courageous reaction of a man vis-a-vis his ailments can put him back on his feet and shake away infirmities, those specially caused by neurosis or all psychosomatic in origin, or simply caused by fear of an unavoidable evil. Doctors and their assistants would always rather see in their patients such a "cooperative" faith. But still science and loving care must also be present to bring about total healing.

The blind man of Jericho shouted aloud his faith: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me". This utterance showed acceptance, the recognition and the proclamation of the dignity of Jesus as Messiah, the "Son of David", scion and heir of the world. The blind man acknowledged Emmanuel, "God with us" and the Saviour of mankind. The affirmation and acceptance of the greatness of God and of Jesus were somehow contained in that faith.

"Lord, that I may see!" was the answer of Bartimeus to the question of Jesus: "What do you want that I do for you?". It means a complete surrender to the good graces of the Divinity. To give back the sight to the eyes long darkened belongs only to the Creator of the eye and the Giver of light. Bartimeus understood Jesus as such. He publicly professed Him to be the "Wonderful Counsel for the Mighty God, the Father of Eternity, the Prince of Peace" and of the prophecies (Is. IX 6); giving homage to His love; and puts all his hopes of happiness in Him.

Jesus accepted that vital trust to His Heart, and uses His divine power to restore a lost sight. The faith truly given and truly received was what has cured Bartimeus.

This is the faith functional in our prayers; a faith that recalls and acknowledges the the greatness of God, Our Father, and causes us to entrust ourselves to His wise and loving care. In prayer we must enter into a conscious dialogue with Him who is the origin, the guiding hand and the end of our life and all that happen in it. Miracles can happen; but astounding as they might be and important perhaps for our remedies, they are not that relevant to the Heart of God who rather longs more for us and our love.

The command of Jesus that we should pray continually is responding not only to our constant need of divine help, but it also conveys above all the longing of our Father in Heaven for us to entrust to Him our lives. True, the life around us and the world in which we live are full of adverse situations. The Father who cares for us more than for the flowers of the fields and the birds of the sky, the Father who runs to meet his returning prodigal son, the Father who sees in the innermost recesses of our hearts the pains and the silent needs that we do not even know how to formulate, the Father who, even when

we were sinners, gave up His Only Begotten Son to die for us, the same Father wants us to use every moment of our life as an effort to be with Him.

In thanksgiving or in repentance, our life, if lived in faith, becomes an everlasting prayer.

II. *Hebrew V 1-6.*

Perhaps we doubt ourselves and think that we do not know how to address God in prayer. The Church reminds us that we have a liturgical prayer continually going on from the Heart of a High Priest, who is worthy of all reverence and with one God in nature and sanctity, and one with us in our humanity.

The living Church, by the express command of our High Priest, perpetuates in her rituals and celebrations, and above all in the Sacrifice of the Mass, the everlasting prayer of Jesus Christ offering up His life on the Cross.

III. *Jeremiah XXXI 7-9.*

Prayer has a communitary value. God sees that our life can never be a solitary process, because we are men. All men are and have to live as true children of God.

Jesus had put it nicely: "Wherever there are two or three gathered in my name there I am in the midst of them" (Mt. XVIII 20).

DOCUMENTATION

1. APPOINTMENT OF MSGR. JESUS TUQUIB

Joannes Paulus Episcopus
Servus Servorum Dei

Venerabili Fratri JESU TUQUIB, hactenus Episcopo Pagadianensi nominato autem Episcopo Coadiutori Praesulis sacri Cagayani, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Diutius iam qui communitatem Catholicam Cagayanam in Philippinis Insulis sua pro sollertia diligentiaque repit, Venerabilis Frater Patricius N. Cronin, in posterum videlicet tempus longius prospiciens nuper a Nobis poposcit sibi ut Episcopus Coadiutor addatur, quo efficacius tum occurratur prementibus nunc eiusdem Archidioecesis necessitatibus, tum consulatur venturae etiam prosperitati cleri ac populi fidelis, quem singulari pastoris animo et amore prosequitur. Quandoquidem parro Nos ipsi aequas omnino perspeximus huius postulationis causas ac profluxuram inde utilitatem maiorem, libenter ideo censemus petentis Praesulis esse preces exaudiendas. Te vero, Venerabilis Frater, potissimum arbitramur idoneum esse et aptum ad omnia illius muneris sustinenda onera implendaque officia quippe qui decem iam annos laudabiliter gubernaveris et efficienter aedificaveris iuniorem dioecesim Pagadianensem. Suadente proin Venerabili Fratre Nostro, Sacrae Congregationis pro Episcopis Praefecto, ex potestatis apostolicae Nostrae plenitudine vinculis te universis absolvimus prioris ecclesias tuae Pagadianensis legitimeque constituimus Episcopum Coadiutorem Cagayanum, dum singula tibi tribuimus iura et obligationes pariter singulas imponimus quae secundum sacros canones cum eadem illa administratione sociantur. Licet haud tibi sit necesse nec professionem fidei repetere nec ius iurandum fidelitatis iterare erga Nos et Successores Nostros, volumus tamen clerus ac populus fidelis Archidioecesis Cagayanae rite certior fiat huius Nostrae destinationis ac nominationis, cum ibi tuum publice inibis Episcopi Coadiutoris opus. Quod vero superest, omni quo possumus animi adfectu in Domino hortamur ut totum te dedens muneribus novis apud gregem Cagayanum iam nunc consilia tecum consentanea capias de praesenti ipsius futuraque aedificatione, dum necessaria cotidie a Deo lumina roborata multiplicatis poscas tibi precibus. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die tricesimo primo mensis Martii, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo octogesimo quarto, Pontificatus Nostri Sexto.

Joannes Paulus II

Marcellus Rossetti, Prot. Apost.

2. APPOINTMENT OF MSGR. EMILIO MARQUEZ AS BISHOP OF THE NEW DIOCESE OF GUMACA

Joannes Paulus Episcopus
Servus Servorum Dei

dilecto Filio AEMILIO MARQUEZ, hactenus parochus in Philippina urbe — Lucenensi —, electo Episcopo Ecclesiae Gumacanae, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. De singulis etiam Ecclesiis particularibus necessariam et opportunam curam agentes tamquam de partibus universae Christi Ecclesiae, cui praesumus, mentem ad novam dioecesim nomine Gumacanam versamus, quam per Litteras Nostra, iure meritoque, haud ita pridem in Insulis Philippinis libenti animo constituimus, ubi primus adhuc sacrorum Antistes desideratur hominumque pastor. Quare ex sententia Venerabilium Fratrum Nostrorum S.R.E. Cardinalium Sacrae Congregationis pro Episcopis negotiis praepositorum, quam ratam habemus, summa potestate Nostra Apostolica Te, dilecte Fili, Episcopum diocesis GUMACANAE eligimus primumque ei pastorem praeficimus, iura Tibi facientes officiaque imponentes eiusmodi muneris propia. Tibi proinde, postquam ad statutum ius professionem fidei nuncupaveris necnon in Nos Nostrosque in Successores fidelitatem iuraveris, liberum tunc erit ordinationem episcopalem, servatis servandis, rite suscipere. Tuumque deinde erit, quas ad utraque iura iuranda adhibueris formulas, eas translaticio more subnotatas impressoque sigillo obsignatas ad memoratam Sacram Congregationem prompte transmittere. Commonefacimus autem ut, antequam gravioris actionis pastoralis initium facias, canonicam possessionem capias certioresque de collato Tibi munere reddas clerum populumque tuum quos interea rogamus ut Te patrem, magistrum et ducem audiant suaque etiam opera adiuvent in dioecesanis inceptis excitandis, quae praetermitti non possunt. Te denique, dilecte Fili, vehementer hortamur ut quam maxime sollicitus sis de Evangelio nuntiando deque Ecclesia Tibi commissa provehenda. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die decimo quinto mensis Decembris, anno Domini millesimo nonagesimo octogesimo quarto, Pontificatus Nostri septimo.

Joannes Paulus II

Laurus Governatori, Prot. Apost.