

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

THE OFFICIAL INTERDIOCESAN BULLETIN

NON-VIOLENCE, A COMMITMENT
TO THE TRUTH

Frederick Fermin, 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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EDITORIAL

non-violence, a commitment to the truth

For Gandhi, non-cooperation and civil disobedience were two distinct forms of peaceful, non-violent resistance to evil. Non-violence itself he understood as an option for, and a total dedication to, the truth. Truth he considered another name for God, even the most appropriate name. The search for truth was for him the very purpose of life, and non-violence the true way of life.

No one committed to the truth can be indifferent to wrong, least of all to the wrong of injustice. Non-violence is a commitment to resist injustice. The resistance must be active but peaceful, for violence is "the law of the brute".

Non-violence is a philosophy of love. But a love that seeks the triumph of truth. It does not aim at the destruction of one's opponent, but at his "conversion". In order that one may persuade one's opponent of the truth, one should bear him no ill-will.

The practitioner of non-violence must be a believer, a believer in truth, and in non-violence as a commitment to the truth; he must adhere to justice as the only valid motive for non-violent action; he must be willing to accept the suffering which may be inflicted on him; and, finally, he must be free from rancour. To succeed, he must also be detached, free from self-seeking, and courageous.

The adherence to justice implies a rejection of injustice in all its forms and at all levels, including the level of government. "If a government does a grave injustice", Gandhi writes, "the subject must withdraw cooperation wholly or partially, sufficiently to wean the ruler from his wickedness".

Failure to act would be a betrayal of truth.

FREDERICK FERMIN, O.P.

the eucharist: call to ministry

“do this, in remembrance of me”

By Jaime L. Cardinal Sin, D.D.*

Introduction

The Eucharist: A Call to Ministry

[1] The town of Marikina lies in a valley just across the boundary-line of the Archdiocese of Manila. It is one of the most densely-populated towns in the Philippines, one of the most industrious and progressive. The town fills the entire valley, with a broad river running across its southern edge, with its streets, its barrios and subdivisions, its multitude of houses and buildings, and its remaining farms stretching upwards to the foothills of the Sierra Madre mountains to the East — this range of hills and peaks which forms a massive rampart facing the great waters of the Pacific Ocean. The town is like a miniature, in so many ways, of our country and our people. — Now, there is a School of Theology which sits on a height overlooking the town and facing those sentinel-mountains. And the architect who designed the school-buildings raised an imposing tower-like buttress, in the shape of a giant monstrance, raising the eucharistic host over town and valley, facing the peaks and the distant ocean — the eucharistic Christ blessing earth and sea, valley and hill, blessing our beloved people, our beloved land.

[2] The Eucharistic Congress of Nairobi, if you will allow me to make the comparison, is like that monstrance. The Catholic people of this great nation of Kenya, — you who are here present, YOU hold up the monstrance so that the eucharistic Lord can bless this great African continent, so vast, so varied,

* For the 43rd International Eucharistic Congress, 11-18 August 1985, Nairobi, Kenya, Conference by Cardinal Jaime L. Sin, Archbishop of Manila, Philippines.

so rich in humanity and diverse traditions, histories and cultures, so filled with promise and hope, and yet so torn by uncertainties and struggles, — the birthpangs of the future which is coming to be in its midst.

Allow me to begin this conference by laying my humble tribute before your great people, and in a special way before the Church in this land, — **YOU, BELOVED PEOPLE OF THE CHURCH IN KENYA**, — who have for so many months prepared this Congress which is now being realized so wonderfully, so movingly during these days of grace.

Allow me to bring the praise and honor of my people, our more than 50 million Catholics, above all, your brothers and sisters in the Faith, in faraway Asia. Allow me to embody for you the warm embrace of their friendship, their affection towards you, dearly beloved brothers and sisters.

During this week your hands hold aloft the eucharistic Christ: Jesus the hope of all the world, Jesus the Bread of Life for all mankind. Your hands hold the Lord before the world of so much sorrow and yet so much expectation, and your voice proclaims your Faith, Hope and Love. — Held up by your hearts, the Lord stands before the world, drawing all mankind unto himself. "If I be lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all unto me."¹ Blessed are you, you who have been chosen, to be like Mary the Mother of the Lord, and to show the Lord today to waiting hearts throughout the earth.

[3] The theme that has been assigned to me is, "The Eucharist: A Call to Ministry." A vast theme, which even in the time given to me I cannot adequately cover. I shall not try to do so. Let me simply share a few reflections, to nourish your own thought and prayer, and hopefully to find fruitfulness in your good hearts and in your Christian lives.

I. The Narrative of Institution (in *The Eucharistic Prayer*)

[4] Let us begin our reflection on the Eucharist by recalling the Scriptural texts of institution, as we read them each day in our Eucharistic prayer.²

¹ Jo. 8, 28; 3, 14; 12, 32.

² Cf. 1 Cor. 11, 23-26; Lk. 22, 19-20, 27-30; Mk. 14, 22-25; Mt. 26, 26-29. Eucharistic prayers from the Roman Missal.

The day before he suffered,
 he took bread in his sacred hands,
 and looking up to heaven to you, his almighty Father,
 he gave you thanks and praise,
 he broke the bread, he gave it to his disciples and said,
 "Take this all of you and eat it,
 this is my body which will be given up for you."

It might be useful for me to repeat the last words: "This is my body which will be given up for you." Not just, "this is my body." He gives the body *which will be handed over for us*. It is the self, in the mode of self-giving, in the mode of dying for us.

The same is true of the cup.

When supper was ended, he took the cup,
 again he gave you thanks and praise,
 gave the cup to his disciples and said,

"Take this, all of you, and drink from it,
 this is the cup of my blood,
 the blood of the new and everlasting covenant.

It will be shed for you and for all,
 so that sins may be forgiven."

The cup is given, the cup of blood which will be poured out for all. Not just, "this is the cup of my blood." No, once again, the mode is self-gift. Self is handed over, life is handed over, "for all, so that sins may be forgiven."

"Do this in memory of me."

[5] The bread is broken, so it may be shared. In the Jewish way of thinking, the self is given, so that it may somehow go into a hundred lives, a thousand lives. So that it may be spent in a hundred, a thousand deeds: deeds of serving others, *diakonia*.

The wine is poured out, just as blood is shed, so that it may be drunk by a hundred, by a thousand people and be life — his life — entering into their lives, becoming part of their living and doing.

Christ as food, feeding the world; Christ as drink, nourishing men, and women and children, over the earth. More, Christ

as body and blood *empowering* all to give themselves in turn, to pour out their lives, *pro mundi vita*, for the life of the world.

To come to the Eucharist is to touch God's commitment and self-outpouring in Christ. The Eucharist is not just food and drink for our own lives, it is about food for self-gift, drink for the sharing of life. The Eucharist is about loving the Father in obedience even unto death. The Eucharist is about loving our brothers and sisters even unto laying down our lives for them.

The exegetes tell us that the Supper was meant to be the revelation of what the Passion and Death of the Lord was all about. The Gospels say, if you want to understand his passion and dying, look at the Supper. There Jesus tells you, the meaning of the Cross and Easter.³

[6] It is with this "background," my dear brothers and sisters, that we can understand why the Eucharist is a call to ministry. The Eucharist is symbol and sacrament which reveals to us the *very meaning* of Christian life and ministry. More, it empowers us, enables us to infuse that meaning into our Christian existence, into our ministry as Christians. The Eucharist makes it possible for Christ's self-giving to become *our* commitment and self-gift. Or perhaps, more correctly, as Augustine already told us, our commitment and all our lives and deeds become, in and through our Eucharist, Christ's own.⁴ For whatever is holily ours, Christ makes his own; whatever is holily ours, he changes into his own presence and action upon the world. "You do not change me into yourself," St. Augustine has Jesus telling us. "No, I change you into myself."⁵ It is I who assume your thoughts and decisions and make them my own, your commitment I make my commitment, your deeds my deeds. In you and through you I make the world Eucharist... *blessing and thanksgiving*. When I say, DO THIS in memory of me, this is what I mean: in your own body and blood, do what I am doing. Make your own lives into Eucharist. Make

³ Cf. 1 Cor. 11, 26. Vid., J. Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, New York, Scribner's, 1966, 220-230; Regis Duffy, OFM, *Real Presence. Worship, Sacraments and Commitment*, Cambridge, Harper and Row, 1982, 138-148 and *The Symbolizing Community*, "Of Current and Final Feasts," #1361, Credence Cassettes, Kansas City, 198.(?)

⁴ Augustine, *serm.* 272.

⁵ Augustine, *In Ps. 122*; *In Joh.* 108, 109. The celebrated text in 1. 7, *Confess.*, c. 10, *Nec tu me mutabis in te, sicut cibum carnis tuae, sed tu mutaberis in me.*

the world into Eucharist. DO THIS, remembering me, patterning your lives after my life.

That is the call to ministry, which the Eucharist is to us. And now, perhaps we can try to realize what that means, for the Church, and for the world.

II. The Eucharist and Ministry in the Church

[7] The Eucharist is, first of all, a call to ministry *within the Church*. Ministry in the Church is a ministry which enables the Church to become truly a community of disciples, a community in faith, hope and love. How easily we say, that the Church is a community! True, we can quote so many texts from the Scriptures which tell us that the community of believers is indeed a community.

They met constantly to hear the Apostles teach, and to share the common life, to break bread, and to pray. A sense of awe was everywhere, and many marvels and signs were brought about through the Apostles. All those whose faith had drawn them together held everything in common; they would sell their property and possessions and make a general distribution as the need of each required. With one mind they kept up their daily attendance at the temple, and, breaking bread in private houses, shared their meals with unaffected joy, as they praised God and enjoyed the favor of the whole people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those whom he was saving (Acts 2, 42-47).⁶

[8] That idyllic existence described in the second chapter of *Acts* is meant to be the ideal of our communities. Perhaps, when the medieval scholastic theologians wrote that the RES SACRAMENTI, the ultimate reality brought into being by the sacrament of the Eucharist, is the *unitas Corporis Christi*,⁷ the oneness in love of the Body of Christ which is the Church, they were thinking of this text. For each day as we gather around the table of the Lord, the Lord tells us IN HIS EUCHARIST

⁶ Act Ap. 2, 42-47.

⁷ Cf. Henri de Lubac, chap. 4, "Le coeur de l'Eglise," in *Meditation sur l'Eglise*, Paris, Aubier, 1954, 107ff., St. Thomas, in 4 Sent., d. 8, q. 2, a. 1, S Th. q. 73, a. 6; q. 79, a. 5.

what we are meant to be, the community of his disciples, bound together in faith and love. "Be what you see, receive what you are, the Body of Christ!" (So St. Augustine would put it to us, centuries later.)⁸ If only we would understand this, and if only we could REAL-ize it!

[9] Our ministry towards one another in the Church is meant to create amongst us *communion* and *participation*. We are meant to share ourselves, our gifts, our responsibilities as brothers and sisters in the discipleship. In recent years, the meaning of that great Christian word, *koinonia*, has been rediscovered for us. *Koinonia*, *oneness* in Christ and his Spirit, fellowship, communion. We begin each eucharistic assembly with it: "May the *koinonia* of the Holy Spirit be with all of you!" May you give yourselves in gift to each other, in Christ's love. May you share your gifts, your responsibilities, your possessions, — nay, your very lives!⁹

[10] In 1982 the Asian Bishops dealt with the theme of community "the Church as a community of faith," in their plenary assembly in Bangkok.¹⁰ In a collective "examination of conscience" they set down, with simplicity and honesty, what they believed were the failings of their own Christian communities. Perhaps you will allow me to repeat some of the things they said, to indicate some of the "inadequacies and failings" they regretted. They confessed these "lacks" in their community lives:

— failing in "openness to one another in sharing, mutual concern and self-giving," in "attitudes of being *with* others and *for* others";

— sometimes in the exercise of authority "there still persists a spirit of domination, instead of the reality of Christlike servanthood; even in the priests' communities and religious houses often enough true co-responsibility is not manifest";

⁸ Augustine, *Serm.* 273.

⁹ The greeting at the beginning of the liturgy, in the Vatican II Missal. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you." (*koinonia*)

¹⁰ "The Church, a Community of Faith in Asia," 3rd Plenary Assembly, Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, in FOR ALL THE PEOPLES OF ASIA, Asian Bishops' Statements on Mission, Community and Ministry, Vol. I, IMC Publications, (P.O. Box 4082) Manila, Philippines, 1984, 89-102.

— “the structures of our ecclesial organizations . . . often image forth ‘institution’ in less attractive aspects, and not ‘community’; church groups not infrequently remain individualist in ethos and character;

—sometimes organs of lay participation and co-responsibility have not been established, or are left inactive and impeded . . . Often enough the gifts and charisms of the laity, both women and men, are not duly recognized, welcomed or activated in significant functions and tasks of ministry and apostolate . . . (Thus far the Asian bishops.)

[11] Today, our failure in *koinonia* is so often our failure to allow the gifts, especially of our laypeople, to find their proper place in the Church, to allow them their growth, their expression, their flowering. We know “the hour of the laypeople” has begun to come, but we are (it seems) not yet ready to hear the ringing of that hour. We are not ready to let the gifts of the laity become truly fruitful in our parishes and dioceses . . . and the loss is ours, for the Body of Christ that is the Church does not then “grow to mature manhood, measured by nothing less than the full stature of Christ”.¹¹

There are other points in our “common confession,” but these will suffice. There is the honest recognition that *koinonia*, communion, is *not* absent, but needs to be further implemented, further realized. So often we take the great words which describe the Church in the Scripture and Tradition, and we accept them as “already real.” Perhaps we forget that, as in all else in the Christian dispensation, what God gives us he gives both as a GIFT and at the same time a TASK. What he gives us is “empowerment” through the charisms and grace and the Spirit, but *we must actualize the gifts in our concrete everyday lives*. The gift must become embodied in the very realities of daily life, actual, palpable matter of the experience of faith. The Lord gives empowerment, but we must make use of that power so that each day we re-make and renew the community, to make it truly a sharing brotherhood, truly a “WE” in Christ. Each day the prayer of Jesus must become embodied in our lives, “that they may be one in us . . . that the world may believe, that you have sent me.”¹²

¹¹ Eph. 4, 7-16.

¹² Jo. 17, 20-23.

[12] Thus is the Eucharist the "empowerment" for the ministry within the Church. The Second Vatican Council told us that —

the liturgy... inspires the faithful to become "of one heart in love" when they have tasted to their full of the paschal mysteries. It prays that "they may *grasp by deed* what they hold by creed." The renewal in the Eucharist of the covenant between the Lord and man draws the faithful into the compelling love of Christ and sets them afire. From the liturgy... and *especially from the Eucharist*, as from a fountain, grace is channelled into us, and the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God, to which all other activities of the Church are directed as toward their goal, are most powerfully achieved.¹³

[13] In another text, the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, we find this parallel passage:

No Christian community... can be built up unless it has its basis and center in the celebration of the Most Holy Eucharist. Here, therefore, *all education in the spirit of community must originate*. If this celebration be sincere and thorough, it must lead to various works of charity and mutual help, as well as to missionary activity and to different forms of Christian witness.¹⁴

At this point I would like to say a word or two on the Eucharistic ministry of the ordained, the Eucharistic ministry of the presbyter especially. Many priests in today's Church all over the world, have not yet fully overcome the uneasiness, the malaise, regarding their priesthood, which came into the Church with the "invasion by the secularistic mentality" of the 1960s and early 1970s.

Today theology is still trying to define with sharpness, in terms meaningful for our age, what the presbyter is, in the Church. What energies (I believe) after so much controversy is that to understand the role of the priest in the Christian community, we must see two "poles" in the priest's identity: the FUNCTIONAL, and the SYMBOLIC or SACRAMENTAL poles.

¹³ Vatican II, *Sacrosanctum concilium* (on the liturgy), #10.

¹⁴ Vatican II, *Presbyterorum ordinis* (on Priests), #6.

The priest, by FUNCTION, is called to be the "leader" of the life of the Christian community, to be the MINISTER OF ITS UNITY in the common life of faith, hope, love. He is responsible for the many ways that unity is to be achieved. Above all, he is responsible for calling forth a true sharing of gifts, of tasks, of responsibilities within the community. He has been compared to an "orchestra conductor", one who gathers all the diverse gifts and contributions into patterns of collaboration, of mutual support, of harmony, and thus of service to those also outside the community. His task is thus a ministry of "enabling", or "empowerment", according to the passage in Ephesians, 4, 11-16, "*to equip God's people for work in his service, for the building up of the Body of Christ.*" That is his special ministry.

But precisely because his responsibility is to "enable" the KOINONIA to be real, within the community, he in his own person is given a SYMBOLIC task, fulfilled most deeply and fully in his role as leader of the community in its worship, as presider over *the community's celebration of the Eucharist*. There, as the Second Vatican Council says, there above all, he acts *in persona Christi*, a "standing in" *visibly* for the invisible Head, *Christus caput ecclesiae*. There in the Eucharistic moment he "makes present" — by a *visible* sacramental presence — the Lord who is truly present in the midst of his community, but invisibly present. If the presbyter "stands in" as visible "sacrament" of the invisible presence of the Lord in the Eucharistic assembly, he also is called to do this in the rest of his life as pastor, leader, minister of unity.

As in the Eucharistic assembly he must "embody", "proclaim" the death of the Lord until the Lord returns, so in the life of the community he must be the "embodiment", the living "proclamation" of the self-giving of the Lord. Not by cultural habit alone, but in theological "expectation", his people will ask him to be for them, "the living reminder of the person of the Crucified and Risen One who is truly in their midst" as one who serves, as one who lays down his life for his friends. We have tried, in the recent past, to downplay this SYMBOLIC/SACRAMENTAL pole in the priest's existence. But we realize again, more powerfully, that it is there, that it is at the heart of the role of bishop and priest.

How greatly the world today needs priests who are exactly that: men who embody for the community the "body given, the blood shed for others" which the Eucharist *proclaims*! How greatly Christians today — across all divisions — want to see

pastors as "embodiments" of the Christ giving himself wholly for others, out of self-forgetting devotion, out of self-sacrificing love!

For any priest who seriously patterns his life after the Eucharist, there is no identity crisis in life. Pope John Paul II said this in other words in his Letter to Priests in 1979. Again and again he pointed out that the identity of a priest comes most deeply from his lived experience of *being a priest* in the spirit of Christ's own sacrifice and priesthood.

It is not words mainly, that the priest learns his identity. The first apostles, Peter and his companions, had no clear theological definitions; they had their calling to this "special way of discipleship". They had no identities given them, only the call to utter fidelity to what the Lord asked of them. I doubt if they had nagging "identity crises". So a priest today learns his life-definition by living out, in terms of prayer and life and deeds, what the Lord's Eucharist teaches him. We think of St. Augustine's words, about the Eucharist: "Be what you see; become what you receive!" To us above all these words are spoken, "DO THIS, do the Eucharistic deed, thinking of me." And "be what you see; become what you receive." "Try it, try it and see!"

III. *The Eucharist and the Ministry of the Church IN THE WORLD*

[14] We have spoken of ministry in the Church, the ministry that must be "creative of communion and participation" in the Body of Christ. Now we must speak of the ministry *of the Church in the world*: the proclamation of the Good News, our witness to that Word, our service in the power of the Spirit, within the world. Here, too, we are bidden to MAKE THE WORLD INTO EUCHARIST: to make the Eucharist in some true sense "the form of the world," *forma huius saeculi*.

For although in a true sense, it was for the Church that the world was made, according to the vision in the Shepherd of Hermas,¹⁵ yet from another perspective, the perspective of mission, it is also true that the Church is *pro mundi vita*, that her whole purpose in being, is to be "given to the world." The

¹⁵ Shepherd of Hermas, second vision, IV, "The copying of the book," tr. Joseph Marique, The Apostolic Fathers, N.Y., CIMA, 1947, 239.

Church exists to "speak the Gospel" in the world;¹⁶ the Church exists to "realize the Eucharist in the world." If ministry *ad intra* is for COMM-UNION, ministry *ad extra* is for COM-MISSION: we are sent to work *with God* in his mission in the world.

[15] "DO THIS, in memory of me," Jesus said. "Do also my redeeming work, with me, keeping the memory of my life, of my passion and death and resurrection, alive in your hearts." Our ministry as Christians in the world is *the action, the ministry of Christ himself*, in us and through us made operative in the world.

For Christ, *now, today*, is saving the world, re-creating his world, by the power of his Spirit. And our Christian ministry is to enter into his ministry, participating in what he is doing. And the primary point at which he lays his participation on us is *that act* in which above all he is the doer, when he says to us, together, "DO THIS." The Kingdom and its foreshadowing do not, cannot come, into the world except insofar as Christ's action becomes ours. "For *the Christian action, which par excellence* mediates Christ's saving work in the world is, always and essentially, the action of Christ in his Body."¹⁷

This is what the Church, as the body of Christ, exists to do for the world. This is our "liturgy," the piece of "public work" laid upon us within this world as citizens of God's common wealth. The Eucharist is the gospel of the Kingdom in action, the proclaiming of the Lord's death till he comes. It is the manifesto, not only in word but in deed, of all Christ has done, is doing, and will do to change the world... the notice of the new order served upon the world.¹⁸

[16] Allow me to turn again to what the Asian Bishops said, in Bangkok, in 1982, as they spoke of the mission and

¹⁶ Vid. Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, esp. #15ff. Cf. these words of John A. T. Robinson: "What it involves to 'glorify God IN your body' — IN, rather than out of solidarities of this world order — is indeed the central question of Christian social ethics... It is in the Church that matter is redeemed, and above all at the point at which Christ still says over this sinful secular order of ours, represented in that of it which we will offer to him, 'THIS IS MY BODY' (*On Being the Church in the World*, SCM, London, 1960, 42).

¹⁷ Robinson, *op. cit.*, 61-62.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 62. It is in the spirit of the ongoing search for the unity among Christians across our divisions that I have cited this text from a theologian (later a Bishop) of the Church of England.

ministry of our local churches in Asia, as they labor to bring the Lord and his Gospel into Asian life and society. Once again it is the shortcomings of our communities which they speak of:¹⁹

— How often our communities . . . have failed to be “communities of dialogue.” Often they lack “ecumenical and dialogal” consciousness and orientation. Christians do not “reach out to their neighbors of other religions in their day-to-day relationships,” activating a true “dialogue of life.” And yet this “dialogue of life” is so valuable in building up the Christian community itself.

— How often our communities, especially among those more favored in life . . . remain little aware of situations of social injustice, of the violation of human dignity and human rights so massively present around them.

— How inadequate has been our proclamation — and our implementation — of the social teaching of the Church. How indifferent and hesitant has been our involvement in the concerns of human development and liberation, in issues where we must speak out or act against structures of injustice and exploitation, especially with regard to the poor, especially with regard to women.

— How hesitant our voice when confronted with oppressive militarization, with growing violence, with the proliferation of weapons of war.

— How insufficient our missionary consciousness and responsibility has been. And yet even the youngest Christian community must be missionary, if it is to be truly Christian.

[17] How, you might ask, — how are these concerns part of the summons to that ministry which the Eucharist faces us with? The tasks of mission: inculturation, dialogue with the religious, the struggle for true justice in our societies, how are they “eucharistic”?

¹⁹ FOR ALL THE PEOPLES OF ASIA, *vid.* footnote 10 above, 89-102. I do *not* here cite directly and exactly, but give the sense, and condense.

Has not the Second Vatican Council spoken of the Church as "sign and instrument of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind"²⁰ (*Lumen Gentium*, 1)? And did not Pope Paul VI, in his lucid message to us all in *Ecclesiam suam*, proclaim that dialogue is the privileged way to that oneness with God and with all mankind, the privileged way of making the Church, in fact, *lumen gentium*, the light of all peoples of mankind?²¹ The Eucharist, sacrament *par excellence* of his redemption, is like the great magnet "drawing all the lines of grace in all of creation and history to its flaming center."²² In the Eucharist, the presence and action of the Risen Lord draws "all things to himself" *today, in our world*. "Source and summit" of the ministry of the Church: Christ's redeeming action making our lives and deeds his own, making them instruments of his own ministry of forgiveness and unity in the midst of the great movements in the history of humanity.

Did not a prophetic Christian like Charles de Foucauld see in the eucharistic action, present (no matter how hiddenly and silently) in the midst of the world, the very heart of mission itself? Did not a visionary like Teilhard de Chardin see in the eucharist a "mass celebrated over the world," radiating the power of the Risen Christ and his Spirit, drawing the dynamisms of creation and history toward the purposes of God in Christ... toward the Risen Christ who bears all mankind and all creation to the Father?²³

[18] In the time we have, let me speak only of the Church's ministry as a "ministry of compassion" in the world. We know that Christian writers today speak increasingly of Jesus as "the compassion of God." Compassion, they tell us, is a "Jesus word";²⁴ the Gospels use that Greek word for compassion only about the Father (in the parables), and about Jesus. In his own way, Pope John Paul II, develops this same theme in *Dives*

²⁰ Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, 1.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Cf. Francis X. Lawlor, "The Mediation of the Church in Some Pontifical Documents," *Theological Studies*, XII (1951), 481-504, a valuable study of Papal teaching on the mediational role of the Church. See especially pp. 498-504.

²³ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, "The Mass on the World," and "Christ in the World of Matter," 13-37 and 42-55 of *HYMN OF THE UNIVERSE*, Harper and Row, N.Y., 1961. —Without endorsing *in toto* the vision or particular views of this well-known philosopher-scientist, the essays cited above can be read for poetic insights which are of great value.

²⁴ Compassion in Jesus: Mt. 9, 36; Mt. 14, 14; Mk. 8, 2; Mt. 9, 27; Mk. 1, 41; Lk. 7, 13; 2Cor. 5, 21, etc.

in misericordia, that moving encyclical on God's mercy in our world.²⁵

When the Gospels speak about Jesus' compassion as his "being moved to the entrails," they were expressing something very deep and mysterious. The compassion Jesus felt was obviously quite different from superficial or passing feelings of sorrow or sympathy. Rather, it extended to the most vulnerable part of his being. It is related to the Hebrew word for compassion, *rachamin*, which refers to the womb of Yahweh. Indeed, compassion is such a deep, central and powerful emotion in Jesus that it can only be described as a movement of the womb of God. There, all the divine tenderness and gentleness lies hidden. There, God is father and mother, brother and sister, son and daughter. There, all feelings, emotions and passions are one in divine love. When Jesus was moved to compassion, the source of all life trembled, the ground of all love burst open, and the abyss of God's immense, inexhaustible and unfathomable tenderness revealed itself.

[19] The ministry to which the Church is being called in the world can be spoken of as a ministry of compassion. "Compassion," in the biblical meaning, must be understood in a deeper sense than merely a feeling of pity. "The root cause of oppression [is] man's lack of compassion."²⁶ "Be compassionate, as your father in heaven is compassionate," Jesus is quoted in the Gospels as telling his listeners. In Jesus himself, "God has turned his full attention to man and the needs of man. He has come down from his throne... to be intimately close to men, women and children, who may now address him as *abba*, 'father' " ... Through Jesus, God reveals that he "feels with those who suffer, that he wants to live in fatherly solidarity with men and that he wants to use his power to serve them."²⁷ In Jesus, we see the compassion of the Father. "He who sees me," Jesus said, 'sees the Father also.'²⁸

[20] In so many places today, in so many places in my own country, the ministry of the Church must be a ministry of "com-

²⁵ Pope John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Dives in Misericordia*, Nov. 30, 1980. Criterion from Henri J. Nouwen et al., *Compassion, A Reflection on the Christian Life*, New York, Doubleday, 1982, 16-17.

²⁶ Albert Nolan, O.P., *Jesus Before Christianity*, Orbis, Maryknoll, New York, 1978, 95-96.

²⁷ Albert Nolan, O.P., *op. cit.*, 79-80.

²⁸ Jo 14, 7-14, and cf. the reflection on this text in Pope John Paul II, *Dives in misericordia*, e.g. in Chapter VII.

passion." The ministry of justice-bringing, the ministry of peace-making: these are other names for the Gospel ministry of compassion. Is it not a sign of the times that Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who is present amongst us today, has caught the attention, mind and heart of even "the secular world"? Is it not significant that today's Christian martyrs are today sacrificing their lives, not so much *directly* in defense of the rights of God (although that is going on too!) but in defense of the rights of human persons, made to the image and likeness of God? We think of Archbishop Oscar Romero, of Fr. Jerzy Popieluszko, of Fathers Tullio Favali, Godofredo Alingal, Alberto Romero, in my own country, and countless men and women all over the world. People who are slain because they have spoken or stood up in compassion for the little ones of the world, whose martyrdom is an act of "compassion," who lay their lives on the altar of God's compassion for the suffering of mankind?

[21] Thus *to proclaim the Gospel today*, with its message of the wonder that is God's self-giving to mankind in the incarnation and paschal mystery, is the ministry of compassion. It is the first task of the Church in the world, *kerygma*, to announce the Good News of God's love for the world, God's love unto death. *And to give witness to that Gospel* and its beatitudes today. One of the glories of our age is the richness of Christian witness, witness that God is indeed "rich in mercy," *dives in misericordia*. Our Holy Father has again and again²⁰ challenged all of us to live out in our lives the "preferential love for the poor and the suffering." The "priority of compassion," compassion that calls to solidarity and justice — compassion that comes from, and leads to, sharing and love. To serve selflessly the needs of mankind, beyond ideologies and *beyond* self-serving divisions, *diakonia*: once again this is the ministry which radiates from the Eucharist over all the world. "This is my body, which will be handed over for you. This is the cup of my blood, which shall be shed for all, so that sins may be forgiven." The Eucharist is there, the sacramental visibility of the self-giving of God in Christ, in the heart of the Church.

²⁰ Pope John Paul II on the "preferential option/love for the poor," cf. his address to the Papal Curia, 21 December 1984, and his homily at the Christmas morning Mass, 25 December 1984. The Holy Father frequently returns to this theme.

Conclusion

[22] Allow me, dear friends, to end this conference with a quotation from a Japanese theologian, not a Roman Catholic, but one who, with Asian *sensibility*, often speaks from the Asian mind and heart. He writes these moving lines:³⁰

On the side wall of Newman College chapel in Melbourne there is a bronze sculpture of Jesus on the Cross. The nails brutally pierce the palms of Jesus's hands. The weight of his body is painfully focused on those nails. He is in agony... He is neither like the... Buddha with webbed hands, attractive and merciful, nor like Lenin with his confident ideological fist. Jesus looks defenceless. He is beaten. He is defeated. "He was crucified in his weakness" (2 Cor. 13, 4). His hands are neither open nor closed.

As I pondered the bronze figure of the crucified Jesus, I gradually began to see that when the saving truth of the Gospel speaks it speaks through hands which are neither open nor closed, *the crucified hands*. God is not simply *emeth*. He is *hesed* (grace, loving-kindness) too. (Exodus 34, 5-7) He is *emeth* in his *hesed*.

The crucified hands — the hands unlike those of Buddha and Lenin — the painful hands (today!) neither open nor closed for our sake are the hands of extraordinary love and invitation. They are the hands of extraordinary YES. The YES in Jesus Christ is not an ordinary YES. It is a costly, self-giving YES. His extraordinary YES frees us and unites us. And OUR hands should be painful hands too, neither open nor closed, ... like the hands of the crucified.

[23] The ministry within the Church summons us to become truly ONE BODY, one community of faith and discipleship, IN CHRIST. To become HIS BODY in the world. Our oneness is that we may in fact be the eucharistic RES SACRAMENTI, the one true Body of Christ in the world.

And our ministry as Church is that, as the One Body of Christ we may be "lifted up from the earth," to draw all man-

³⁰ Kosuke Koyama, "The Crucified Lord, an Extraordinary YES," *One World*, Geneva, WCC Publications, June 1976, cited in *Loyola Papers* 7-8, *Faith, Ideologies and Christian Options*, 120-122. (Loyola Papers, P.O. Box 4082, Manila, Philippines) 1981.

kind to the Heart of Christ. Crucifix and host, for the Catholic mind and heart, image forth one thing: the love of the Father in Jesus Christ, a love that is "unto the uttermost limits," a love crucified: ministry of God's unbelievable YES to every man, woman and child in the long and uncertain history of our world.

"DO THIS, in remembrance of me." "Be what you see, become what you receive." Become the Body of Christ given for the life of the world. Make the world into Eucharist. Is this not the Christian vocation itself, to which the Eucharist calls us?

[24] This Eucharistic Congress which I feel so privileged to be part of brings me back to the image of the great monstrosity with which I began this conference. Paul, in Romans, speaks of the Cross as the means by which God shows forth, "placards" his faithful justice, his DIKAIOSUNE, before the world.³¹ Your great assembly "placards" God's faithful compassion before the world today. Nairobi holds up the eucharistic monstrosity before a troubled and torn humanity which needs that faithful justice, that compassion and reconciliation which is the Eucharist's gift to us. As I participate in your gatherings, I hear in my heart the great passage of Paul to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 5).³²

When anyone is united to Christ, there is a new world, the old order is gone, a new order has already begun.

From first to last, this has been the work of God. He has reconciled us men to himself through Christ, and he has enlisted us in this service of reconciliation... For God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, . . . and he has entrusted us with the message of reconciliation.

Sharing in God's work, we urge this appeal upon you: you have received the grace of God; do not let it go for nothing. . . (for) the hour of favour has now come; now, I say, has the day of deliverance dawned.

(Continued on page 182)

³¹ Romans 3, 25. (DIKAIOSUNE here I take as bringing together God's *hesed* and *emeth*, God's faithful loving-kindness: God's faithful loving-kindness: God's faithful compassion and compassionate fidelity.

³² 2 Corinthians, 5, 14-6, 2.

The Synod of Bishops '85

RELAUNCHING VATICAN II

1. INTRODUCTION

From November 24 to December 8, 1985, the second Extraordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was held at the Vatican to reflect upon the theme "The Church, obedient to the Word of God, celebrates the mysteries of Christ for the salvation of the world." It had been convoked ten months earlier by Pope John Paul II with the main purpose of commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council.

The Synod's full participants, with the right to vote, were 166 coming from 105 nations: among them, 103 were Presidents of Episcopal Conferences; 24, members of the Roman Curia; 21, directly nominated by the Holy Father; 14, Patriarchs; 3, religious, and 1 secretary. (Others who attended the Synod: 15 auditors, including lay and religious women; 10 observer-delegates from various Churches and Christian communities; 15 special guests, including cardinals and theologians; 12 more theologians.) The Philippine Church was represented by Cardinal Ricardo Vidal, Archbishop of Cebu and incoming President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP). Archbishop Antonio Mabutas, from Davao, and CBCP President, was not able to attend the Synod, because of sudden illness.

The Synod on Vatican II was opened on November 24 by Pope John Paul II with the liturgical celebration of Christ the King of the Universe. In his homily, the Pope said: "We begin the iter of the Synod with the same openness to what the Holy Spirit may say, the same love for the Church, the gratitude to Divine Providence which filled the Council Fathers twenty years ago." The Holy Father added:

During the next two weeks, all the members of the Synod, who include many who experienced the grace of the Council, will *set out together with the Council* in

order to relive the spiritual climate of that great ecclesial event and in order to promote, in the light of the fundamental documents that were then issued, and in the light of the experience which has matured in the course of the subsequent twenty years, the full blossoming of the seeds of the new life sown by the Holy Spirit in that worldwide assembly, for the greater glory of God and for the coming of his Kingdom.

Since the announcement of the celebration of the 8th Synod of Bishops by John Paul II on January 25, 1985, a great debate among some theologians and Catholic journalists has risen on the celebration and outcome of the Synod. A number of commentators spoke negatively of the then incoming Synod, basically because they evaluated it from certain events which really did not have direct connection with the Synod, particularly the controversial *Ratzinger Report* (the published long interview of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, with journalist Vittorio Messori. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1985). *Will the Extraordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops put a break on Vatican II?* All these "liberal" commentators answered, even before the celebration of the Synod, in the affirmative. (Some "conservative" writers and theologians, on the other hand, hoped for a "condemnatory" Synod-condemnatory of "Liberation theology" and other "post-Vatican" secular or political developments — which would reaffirm Ratzinger's negative comments on the Council, the theologies of praxis, the Episcopal Conferences, etc.)

Even after the celebration of the Synod, some of those theologians continue defending their pre-Synod forecasts. Journalist J. L. Martin Descalzo wrote cogently on December 21, 1985: "Ortega y Gasset said that 'men do not see with the eyes, but through them'. It is true: we see with our prejudices, our desires, our hopes. Because of this, perhaps, the evaluations I see on the Synod have so little to do with what really happened in Rome and so much with what all of us hoped for."

What was the Synod of Bishops '85? Which were its immediate fruits? Will this Synod have an impact on the Church of Christ? In the following pages we shall try to answer these questions as objectively as possible, letting the Synod and its Documents speak.

2. THE SECOND EXTRAORDINARY SYNOD: COMMEMORATING VATICAN II

The *Synod of Bishops* is an Assembly of Bishops, although not exclusively, from the different regions of the world, who gather together on certain occasions. What for? To promote the close union between the Pope and the Bishops and to help the Holy Father with their advice towards the integrity and improvement of faith and customs and the maintenance and strengthening of ecclesiastical discipline, and also to study those questions which refer to the action of the Church in the world (CIC, Ca. 312).

The Synod of Bishops, directly under the Roman Pontiff, can meet in general or in special assembly. *The general assembly can be an extraordinary or an ordinary one* (CIC, § a. 345). In the general assemblies, questions directly concerned with the welfare of the universal Church are considered. A creation of Vatican II, the Synod of Bishops has met eight times: six times in general Ordinary Assembly (in 1967, 1971, 1974, 1977, 1980, 1983), and the other two in Extraordinary Assembly, that is, in 1969 (to study the Relationship of the Episcopal Conferences with the Holy See and among themselves), and in 1985 (to celebrate, verify and promote the Second Vatican Council, 1962-1965).

The *particular objectives of the second Extraordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops* were spelled out by Pope Wojtyla when he announced, totally unexpectedly, its convocation on January 25, 1985, namely:

To relive in some way that extraordinary atmosphere which characterized the Ecumenical Council, through mutual participation in the suffering and the joys, the struggles and the hopes, that pertain to the body of Christ in the various regions of the world;

To exchange and examine experiences and information concerning the application of the Council, both of the universal and of the local level of the Church;

To promote the further study of ways of incorporating Vatican II into the life of the Church, and this in the light of new needs as well.

Compared with other Synods of Bishops, the preparation for the Synod on Vatican II was, perhaps, a little short. Much

shorter, of course, if compared with the event the Synod was going to commemorate, that is, Vatican II. This had a three year-and-a-half period of preparation, since its convocation by John XXIII. But, of course, the second Extraordinary Synod was not the Council, not even a mini Council. Neither was it an Ordinary Synod of Bishops!

Anyway, this Synod had no "working paper" — like what the Ordinary Synods usually have. In the place of that paper, a *questionnaire*, prepared by the General Secretariat of the Synod, was sent to the Bishops of the world, where they were asked: (1) What had been done to make the Council known and carried out in practice? (2) What were the benefits obtained? (3) What were the errors or abuses? (4) What are your suggestions towards the future action of the Church?

From a possible 136, 95 or a 69.85 per cent answered. Certainly, not a large number of answers, but a sufficient number to be representative. A summary of the responses from the local Churches throughout the world was presented to the Synod by its excellent Relator, Cardinal Godfried Danniels, from Belgium, on November 25, 1985. The overall *conclusion* of the summary report was the following: The Council has had a substantially *positive impact* on the local Churches. In particular there has been a general acceptance of liturgical renewal, spiritual renewal, a deeper understanding of the Church and of the relationship between the Church and the world. Other positive points underlined by Cardinal Danniels: Improvement in the relationship between Bishops and priests; a more profound understanding of consecrated religious life; new vigor in ecumenism; heightening of the missionary spirit. Therefore, the *post-conciliar Church is alive, and lives with intensity*, the Relator said.

Among the *negative points* drawn from the answers to the questionnaire were the following: The liturgical renewal has been often insufficiently prepared and superficially carried out; emphasis on the Word of God and de-emphasis on Tradition and the Magisterium of the Church ("the greatest problem seems to be in the area of the relationship between morals and the Magisterium of the Church," it was pointed out); the heart of the crisis is found in Ecclesiology, particularly the distinction between institutional Church and popular Church — Church as Mystery and Church as "People of God"; grave problems arising from the relationship between Church and world. How can we approach a solution to these problems? Cardinal Dan-

niels answered: *The Church's response must not be reduced to disciplinary and administrative measures.* And he added: "It is a question of lack of confidence in the Spirit, and thus fraternal dialogue and the patience proper to hope are required."

Above all, there was *fraternal dialogue* among the 166 participants of the Synod during their two weeks gathering. The Synod developed in two phases. During the first week, the participants gave brief speeches on their local Churches or on particular problems: a colorful and rich variety of situations and issues was presented. First World participants, highlighted secularism and materialism; Third World Synodal Fathers, poverty and oppression; in the Second, some members said, that there was lack of religious freedom and other human rights; in Asia and Africa, the problem and need of inculturation was underlined.

Cardinal Ricardo Vidal, the representative of the Philippines, stated that the Church's role in relation to the world is a subject of concern in the Philippines. There is a need, he added, to delineate clearly the role of the priests and that of lay persons: "Clear delimitation of their roles will avoid the clericalization of the Church's social action," the Cardinal Archbishop of Cebu concluded.

During the second week, the participants exchanged views in small workshops (nine language groups). The rich and enriching variety of the individual presentations was also echoed in the group dialogues. Meanwhile, the *Message to the People of God* began to take shape and, at the end of the week, the *Report of the Synod*.

3. THE SYNOD'S MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD

The immediate fruits of the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops 1985 were the two Documents it produced, namely, the *Message to the People of God* and the *Final Report*. The texts were made public after Pope John Paul II "consented" to it during his significant intervention in the 16th and final General Congregation of the Synod held on December 7, 1985.

The 16-page Final Report can surely be considered as the Document of the Synod of Bishops '85; it sums up the deliberations, resolutions and proposals of the Synod. Ordinarily, the Synods do not come out with a published Final Report. What

the Synods' participants do is to present to the Pope some propositions or conclusions at the end of their gathering. Afterwards, the Roman Pontiff will use those propositions or conclusions —totally or partially— and include them in his post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation.

That was the process followed in most Synods, which are "consultative" by nature. In 1975, Paul VI issued *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, one year after the Synod '74 on *Evangelization in the Contemporary World*. In 1979, John Paul II published *Catechesi Tradendae* as a result of the Synod '77, which delivered upon *Catechesis in Our World*. Again in 1981, the present Pope made public *Familiaris Consortio*, connected with the Synod of 1980 on *The Mission of the Christian Family in the Contemporary World*. Finally, the Synod '83 on *Reconciliation and Penance* provided some doctrinal and pastoral points which were included in John Paul II's Apostolic Exhortation *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* (1984).

The Synod '85 is not the first one, however, to issue its own Document. The well-known and prophetic document "Justice in the World" as the product of the Synod '71 which also published its document on the priesthood. Thus, with the consent and the authority of John Paul II the Final Report of the Synod on Vatican II was made official and public.

Hereafter, we are going to present briefly, but hopefully substantially, the contents of the synodal Documents. We recommend very strongly to our readers to read the two documents even before you read our summary —or any other! We are sure that at times you also wonder after reading different commentaries on a text, whether the commentators are really talking of the same text. Anyway, be cautious!

The Synod's 4-page, 1,500 words Message is truly hopeful and dynamic. Briefly, it speaks first of the Second Vatican Council as a gift of God (I); secondly, it considers the Church as Mystery and Communion (II); thirdly, evangelization is presented as the task of every Christian and every Christian community (III); and, finally, the synodal Fathers point out the great challenges of our world and the Church's response to them by working committedly for a civilization of love (IV).

As it was repeatedly reported in the newspapers, during the second week of the celebration of the Synod, the first draft of the Message to the People of God was really pessimistic and sad — even apocalyptic in tone. The final draft however, the

one unanimously approved by the Synod's members is truly hopeful, that is, optimistic but realistic. After all, the Fathers wrote, *Vatican II presents for our day the hope of the Gospel* (IV).

As it is to be expected, the point of departure and continued reference of the text is Vatican II. The Fathers are fully convinced that "the Second Vatican Council is a gift of God to the Church and to the world" (I), "the great grace of this century" (IV). The Bishops and the other Synod's participants ask all Christians to deepen their understanding of Vatican II and to put its teachings, in an ever more profound level, into practice (cf. III & IV).

The Church was, in a sense, the basic theme of the Second Vatican Council. Likewise it was the theme of the Synod of Bishops' 85: the *Church*, particularly, as *Mystery and Communion*. Making the Mystery of Christ present in humanity, the Church "cannot renew herself without rooting this spiritual note of Mystery more profoundly in the hearts of Christians" (II); the first characteristic element of the Mystery of the Church is the universal call to holiness. Furthermore, the Church is, in Christ, the Mystery of the love of God present in the history of mankind. Hence, all Christians, "members of the one Body of Christ in which the Holy Spirit abides and acts," are called, through faith and the sacraments, "to live fully in communion with God" (II). Truly, "the structures and relations within the Church must express this communion" (II). The Fathers underline, moreover, that the reality of the Church as Mystery and communion will avoid *false sociological or political interpretations of the nature of the Church* (II).

Each Christian and every Christian community are called to study "the exigencies of the mystery of the Church and of her communion," to proclaim "the Good News of salvation for man in Jesus Christ." Our world presents great challenges to the Church of Christ (cf. IV, § 1); a deeper understanding of the Council will help the Church respond to these challenges, particularly by walking the path which leads towards *a civilization of sharing, of solidarity and love*.

In the concluding part of the Message, the synodal Fathers encourage the People of God to travel that path together, in communion and co-responsibility, and ask them to direct their gaze towards the next Synod of Bishops, which will be held in 1987 and study the theme *The Vocation and Mission of the Laity in the Church and the World Twenty Years After Vatican II*.

The Message to the People of God ends with a prayer:

May the Spirit grant that in this century, with the intercession of Mary, "the Church be able to celebrate the mysteries of Christ for the salvation of the world."

4. THE SYNOD'S FINAL REPORT

The Report or "Relatio" is precisely entitled *The Church in the Word of God Celebrates the Mysteries of Christ for the Salvation of the World*. It is divided into two main sections: the first deals with the central theme of the Synod, that is, *Celebration, Verification and Promotion of the Second Vatican Council* (I). The second section develops the four main particular themes of the synodal gathering (II), namely, (A) The Mystery of the Church; (B) Sources of Life for the Church; (C) The Church as Communion, and (D) The Mission of the Church in the World. Consequently, in the Final Report, the Synod's participants analyze the major statements contained in the Message to the People of God.

The "Relatio" develops, in particular, the four constitutions of Vatican II, that is, *Lumen Gentium* (on the Church), *Dei Verbum* (on Divine Revelation), *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (on the Sacred Liturgy and *Gaudium et Spes* on the Church in the Modern World).

Like the Message, the Report is substantially positive, hopeful and dynamic. It re-affirms repeatedly the Second Vatican Council "as a grace of God and a gift of the Holy Spirit" (I, 1), in fact, "the greatest grace of the century" (II, D). Hence, the Vatican II Message remains the magna carta for the future (Ib.).

Certainly, Vatican II has produced "great fruits" in the Church, but there have been also, "deficiencies and difficulties in the acceptance of the Council; in the First World, in particular—the Synod states—a certain estrangement is manifested towards the Church (I, 3). What are the causes of those deficiencies and difficulties?

A principal external cause of the difficulties can be found in consumerism and the idolatry of material goods which can produce "a certain blindness to spiritual realities and values." Some of the internal causes mentioned are: a partial and selective reading of the Council; a superficial interpretation of its

doctrine in one sense or another; a unilateral presentation of the Church as a purely institutional structure devoid of her Mystery (I, 4-5).

In conclusion, the synodal Fathers are determined "to progress further along the path indicated to us by the Council." They add, programmatically:

There has been full consensus among us regarding the need to promote further the knowledge and application of the Council, both in its letter and in its spirit. In this way new progress will be achieved in the reception of the Council, that is, in its spiritual interiorization and practical application (I, 1).

THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH

A key theme throughout the celebration of the Synod was the *Church as Mystery*. Against secularism, which denies the dimension of the sacred, of mystery, of transcendence in human life (but, favoring correct secularization, or the legitimate autonomy of temporal realities), the synodal Fathers assert that "we must open the way to the dimension of the 'divine' or of mystery (II, A, 1). *A return to the sacred, moreover, is a sign of our times.* In one of the main paragraphs of their Report, the Synod participants state: "In order to favour this return to the sacred and to overcome secularism we must open the way to the dimension of the 'divine' or of mystery and offer the preambles of faith to mankind today" (cf. GS, 21). And they ask themselves: "Does not the spread of sects perhaps lead us to ask whether we have sometimes failed to manifest the sense of the sacred?"

The Second Vatican Council described the Church in various complementary ways, such as, the People of God, the body of Christ, the temple of the Holy Spirit, the family of God. These descriptions, which complement each other, "must be understood in the light of the Mystery of Christ or of the Church of Christ" (II, A, 3). This Church is not purely hierarchical nor sociological; she is also eschatological (cf. LG, 7) —and holy. But a holy Church, which has sinners in her midst and, therefore, must always be more and more purified. Hence, within the Church, there are the mystery of the Cross and the mystery of the resurrection.

The Church is truly a mystery (cf. LG, 1-8, 11) and consequently a sign and instrument of holiness; "she must preserve and energetically promote the sense of penance, prayer, adoration, sacrifice, self-giving, charity and justice" (II, A, 4). The Church has today a tremendous need of saints, and, therefore, she must promote the *spiritual life*, particularly in seminaries and religious houses, in apostolic movements and associations. She must also give an impulse to the spirituality of the laity and, in the first place, to conjugal spirituality, based upon the sacrament of marriage (II, A, 5). In this context, the Virgin Mary, "our Mother in the order of grace," continues to be for all Christians an example of holiness and of total response to God's call (LG, chap. 8).

The Church, as sacrament of universal salvation, is a sign and instrument of communion with God and of men with one another (cf. II, B, 2).

THE CHURCH AS COMMUNION

The Church as Communion appears as the central theme of the Synod, as it was of Vatican II. Communion, the Fathers acknowledge, is a complex word. It means basically, they tell us, "communion with God through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit," and "it is had in God's Word and sacraments," in a particular way in *baptism*, the door and foundation of communion in the Church, and the *Eucharist*, source and culmination of the whole Christian life. The ecclesiology of communion includes delicate problems connected with unity and pluriformity, collegiality, the Episcopal Conferences and authority in the Church, participation and co-responsibility in the Church, and ecumenical dialogue.

The messianic people (LG, 9) are united in faith, in the sacraments and also hierarchically. Thus, communion means *unity* (one God, one Mediator, Jesus Christ, one Spirit, one baptism and one Eucharist), and *pluriformity*: the one Spirit works numerous gifts and charisms (I Cor. 12:4 ff.); the one Eucharist is celebrated in different places. Hence, there is one universal Church, and there are many local Churches, which make present that one universal Church (LG, 32). (An original distinction of the Synod of Bishops: Pluriformity and Pluralism, While pluriformity is true richness, and, therefore, genuine

catholicity, pluralism, on the other hand, is not, for it implies "fundamentally opposed positions" leading to "dissolution, destruction and the loss of identity"; II, C, 2.)

Koinonia/communion is the foundation of *collegiality*. This implies also a juridical aspect; but, it goes beyond that. The Final Report distinguishes between collegial spirit and collegial action. *Collegial spirit*, the synodal Fathers say, "is the soul of the collaboration between the bishops on the regional, national and international levels," while *collegial action* implies strictly the activity of the whole College of Bishops with its head, the Roman Pontiff, over the whole Church. Besides this collegiality in the strict sense (exemplified best by the Ecumenical Council), there are also diverse partial realizations of collegiality, which are signs and instruments of the collegial spirit, namely, the Synod of Bishops, the Episcopal Conferences, the Roman Curia, etc. Although not all these partial —and diverse— collegial actualizations can be directly deduced from the theological principle of collegiality, they are regulated by the law of the Church. And they are all, in their way, greatly important for the life of the Church (cf. II, C, 4).

Given their special significance, the *Episcopal Conferences* are singled out in the Report — and innovatively highlighted. The synodal Fathers tell us that they are not only useful, in pastoral dimension, but even necessary in the present situation (cf. LG, 23; CIC ca. 447). Still the question raised by Cardinal Ratzinger before the Synod —and hotly debated by some sectors of the Christian press— remains substantially a valid one: Doctrinally, theologically what is the "status" of the Episcopal Conferences? The Fathers of the Synod in their Report as well as John Paul II in his synodal speech have suggested —and encouraged— the need of a study to answer that important question properly (cf. Report. II, C, 3).

The communion of the Church entails necessarily *participation and co-responsibility* between and among bishops, priests, religious and lay persons. The collaboration of the laity is acknowledged and praised while the cooperation of women in particular is underlined:

May the Church do its utmost so that women might be able to express, in the service of the Church, their own gifts, and to play a greater part in the various fields of the Church's apostolate (cf. AA 9). May pastors gratefully accept and promote the collaboration of women in ecclesial activity (II, C, 6).

Speaking of the Church as Mystery, the Synod's participants underlined the need to promote spirituality, and the positive task been done in this regard by apostolic associations and new movements of spirituality; they added, then, however, that these movements are "the bearers of great hope, if they properly remain in ecclesial communion" (II, A, 4). Reflecting on the Church as Communion, the Fathers commend *Basic Christian Communities*, but properly referring also here to those communities which "truly live in unity with the Church," for only then will they be "true expressions of communion and a means for the construction of a more profound communion," and, thus, as Paul VI said in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 58 (this Apostolic Exhortation is often cited in the Synod's Documents), "cause for great hope for the life of the Church" (cf. II, C, 6).

Communion of and in the Church implies also *ecumenical communion*. The Synod '85 recognizes joyfully that "ecumenism has inscribed itself deeply and indelibly in the consciousness of the Church." The Fathers are for the continuation and promotion of *ecumenical dialogue*, a dialogue which must be "spiritual and theological." Likewise, they are in favor of the ecumenical movement, which is particularly enhanced by mutual prayer. All Christians, therefore, are encouraged to collaborate in the task of building a fuller unity and communion between Catholics and other Christians (cf. II, C, 7).

To wrap up their profound and balanced reflection on the Church as Communion, the synodal Fathers present some concrete suggestions for action: (1) The Code of Canon Law for the Oriental Churches must be completed as soon as possible; (2) A deeper and explicit study must be made on the theological 'status' and doctrinal authority of the Episcopal Conferences; (3) A study should be added of the *principle of subsidiarity* (connected with sharing of authority and decentralization of the Church) and its application to the Church (cf. II, C, 8). (The first two suggestions were also considered "valuable" by John Paul II in his speech to the Synod on December 7, 1985.)

SOURCES OF LIFE FOR THE CHURCH: THE WORD OF GOD AND THE SACRED LITURGY

The mission of the Church is the proclamation of the Word of God (cf. DV, 1). Hence, the great importance of Vatican II's Constitution *Dei Verbum*. And yet, among the four con-

ciliar Constitutions, it has been "too neglected." Fortunately, Paul VI reposed its teaching "in a more profound and timely way" in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (cf. II, B, a, 1).

In the relaunching of Vatican II, which is really the basic objective of the Synod, the biblical constitution must be given the real importance it has. Its partial reading, however —the Fathers advise us— must be avoided, and, likewise, the false opposition between doctrinal and pastoral responsibilities. In particular, "the exegesis of the original meaning of Sacred Scripture cannot be separated from the living tradition of the Church" (Ib; cf. DV 10 § 12).

By her nature, the Church is missionary (cf. AG, 2) and, thus, evangelization is the first duty of bishops, priests, deacons, indeed, of all Christians. The Gospel values then, must be properly taught, and "a new effort in evangelization and in integral and systematic catechesis is required" (II, B, a, 2). Regrettably, and throughout the world, the transmission of faith and moral values to the young is in danger; furthermore, often the knowledge of faith and the acceptance of moral values stemming from the Gospel of Christ are reduced "to the minimum."

Evangelization is evangelization *ad gentes*, that is, of non-believers; but also the presupposed self-evangelization of the baptized, including deacons, priests and bishops as well. Evangelization, the Fathers point out relevantly, takes place *through witnesses*, who give testimony not only with words, but also with their lives. In this area, in particular, the old Churches can learn from the dynamism, life and testimony of the new Churches.

In the framework of the Word of God and of the mission of the Church, *theology* is needed; more concretely, "theology is specifically necessary to the life of the Church today" (II, B, a, 3). Theologians, in fact, have done much in the elaboration, interpretation and application of the Vatican II Documents; it is regrettable, however, that some theological discussions have occasioned confusion among the faithful. Consequently, and to solve these problems, the synodal Fathers admit, "communication and a reciprocal dialogue between the bishops and theologians are necessary for the building up of the faith and its deeper comprehension" (Ib).

To obviate, in a way, the doctrinal and theological "confusion" even in the implementation of Vatican II, the Synod recom-

mends—and so does John Paul II—the composition of a *catechism* or compendium of all Catholic doctrine, regarding both faith and morals. But, against a dangerous “monolithic” presentation of doctrine in various contexts, the Synod qualifies significantly that the universal catechism could be “a point of reference for the catechisms or compendiums that will be prepared in the various regions” (II, B, a, 4). Furthermore, the doctrinal presentation must be biblical and liturgical and of course, sound and relevant. (In this part, the Synod '85 recommends the serious consideration of *Optatam Totius*, no. 16 [on theological formation of candidates for the priesthood and others] and more in particular, good manuals of theology in seminary formation, that is, manuals which offer a scientific, pedagogical and ecclesial exposition of sound theology.)

After speaking of the Word of God as a Source of Life in the Church, the Synod deals briefly with the other source, that is, the *Sacred Liturgy*, of which Vatican II's *Sacrosanctum Concilium* spoke relevantly. The Synod states that “the liturgical renewal is the most visible fruit of the whole conciliar effort,” however, at times, it would seem, that the liturgical renewal has been limited to external renewal, that is, of ceremonies, rites, texts etc. What is really important is the *internal and spiritual participation* in the paschal mystery of Christ (cf. SC, 11). The liturgy, therefore, must favour the sense of the sacred, and must be permeated “by the spirit of reverence, adoration and the glory of God” (Ib). The synodal Fathers recommend here the use of *catecheses* as paths leading into liturgical life.

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD

The concluding part of the Final Report deals with the mission of the Church in relation to the world (II, D). The Church, as it is repeated in the Synod's Documents, is a sacrament for the salvation of the world — “for the integral salvation of the world” (II, D, 3). In the context of the mission of the Church in the world, Vatican II's *Gaudium et Spes*, the pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World continues to be very important, relevant and timely. Nevertheless, the synodal Fathers perceive different signs of the times, a distinct situation from that of twenty years ago when that pastoral Constitution was issued: different, meaning a worse situation! Although they do not want to be labeled as “pessimists,” the Synod participants believe that the situation of our world today is really

worse than two decades ago. They write: "Today, in fact, everywhere in the world we witness an increase in hunger, oppression, injustice, and war, sufferings, terrorism and other forms of violence of every sort" (II, D, 1; cf. Message to the People of God, IV).

Facing this situation of injustice, poverty and violence, the members of the Church are asked to *denounce* them prophetically, and to *defend* and *promote* everywhere "the fundamental and inalienable rights of the human person" (II, D, 6). Consequently, all true human values must not only be accepted, but also "energetically defended." These values include "the dignity of the human person, peace, freedom from oppression, poverty and injustice" (Ib, 3). In the framework of social commitment, the synodal Fathers unite themselves with all those who suffer persecution by reasons of their faith and/or for their promotion of justice.

Human promotion or temporal liberation (this word is not mentioned in the Synod's Documents although it was hotly discussed by some individual Fathers) *is part of integral salvation* — of the salvific mission of the Church. In this mission, therefore, there are two parts, one spiritual and another temporal, or two aspects, one supernatural and the other natural: both must be distinguished, but not separated. Moreover, the Synod stated, these two parts or aspects form a duality but not dualism. We read in the Final Report:

The salvific mission of the Church in relation to the world must be understood as an integral whole. Though it is spiritual, the mission of the Church involves human promotion even in its temporal aspects...

In this mission there is certainly a clear distinction—but not a separation—between the natural and the supernatural aspects. This duality is not a dualism. It is thus necessary to put aside the false and useless opposition between, for example, the Church's spiritual mission and "diaconia" for the world (II, D, 6).

In the fight against injustice, in the defense and promotion of human dignity and rights, the Synod '85, following the Second Vatican Council and Paul VI and the Episcopal Conferences throughout the world, makes a clear *preferential option for the poor*. Although the "poor" include here also "the spi-

ritually poor," they are mainly the "socially poor," that is, the materially poor and the marginalized of society. Thus, we feel, the radicality of the option for the poor — as explained theologically today — is underscored, especially when the Fathers put Christ as the example of this option: "Jesus Christ declared the poor blessed (Mt. 5:3; Lk. 6:30) and he himself wished to be poor for us (II Cor. 8:9)" (II, D, 6).

Cautioning us against any unreal optimism or, on the other hand, dark pessimism, based therefore on the realism of Christian hope, the Synod's participants appeal to *the theology of the cross*. In the present-day difficulties, "God wishes to teach us more deeply the value, the importance, and the centrality of the cross of Jesus Christ" (II, D, 2). Nevertheless, the Synod adds, the accent upon the theology of the cross does not exclude but presupposes the theology of the Incarnation and of Creation.

Concerning the mission of the Church in the world, the so-called "*aggiornamento*," renewal or up-dating is really important, since John XXIII convoked Vatican II. The true meaning of "*aggiornamento*" derives precisely from the perspective not only of the cross but also of resurrection. The true meaning excludes the secularization of the Church on one hand and her "immobile closing upon herself" on the other (II, D, 3).

From that same paschal perspective, *inculturation* appears important — and necessary in the mission of the Church. A merely external adaptation is not properly inculturation: real inculturation means "the intimate transformation of authentic cultural values through their integration in Christianity in the various human cultures" (II, D, 4). The Synod encourages, as necessary, efforts towards the evangelization of cultures (again it refers to EN, no. 20).

The mission of the Church in the world comprises also a real and genuine *dialogue with non-Christian religions and non-believers*. The synodal Fathers exhort all Catholics "to recognize, preserve and promote all the good values, spiritual and moral — as well as socio-cultural — that they find in their midst" (II, D, 5). Authentic dialogue, however, the Fathers point out, "must not be opposed to mission" — the mission to make of all peoples disciples of Christ (cf. Mt. 28:18) (Ib).

Among the suggestions that close this part on the mission of the Church in the world, the Synod mentions again, the importance and relevance of the theology of the cross in relation

to the paschal mystery for preaching, the sacraments and the life of the Church; the theory and practice of inculturation as well as of dialogue; the preferential option for the poor. It adds here the significance of the *social doctrine of the Church* "as it relates to human promotion in every new situations" (II, D, 7).

The "Relatio" of the Synod '85 on Vatican II ends with a prayerful appeal to the Holy Spirit, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary to conclude with the theme of the Synod and the Message and the Report. The synodal Fathers pray:

May the Spirit, through the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, ensure that, in these last days of our century, "the Church under the Word of God might celebrate the mysteries of Christ for the salvation of the world".

5. THE POST-SYNOD (OR THE REAL SYNOD) HAS BEGUN

The Synod '85, the second Extraordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was officially closed on December 8, 1985: exactly twenty years after the conclusion of the Second Ecumenical Vatican Council. At the closing Eucharistic celebration to commemorate the feast of the Immaculate Conception, during his Homily, John Paul II declared the Synod, a great success for the life of the Church: *The Synod has accomplished, the Holy Father said, the purposes for which it was convoked, that is, to celebrate, verify and promote the Council.*

While the attitude of some Christians, before the celebration of the Synod '85 was an attitude of fear aroused by a few so-called "liberal" and "conservative" theologians, the general feeling after the closing of the Extraordinary Synod was of joyful hope. The Editor of the Catholic weekly *America*, G. W. Hunt, spoke for many Christians when he evaluated the Synod thus:

The bishops of the Synod surprised almost everyone, and their sessions ended in a happy, conciliatory mood that was genuine. Vatican's II vision and spirit were reaffirmed, reservations and cautions were aired openly, new projects were proposed (*America*, December 21, 1985, p. 433).

The Editor of another well-known Catholic weekly *Vida Nueva*, P. M. Lamet expressed similar sentiments, while making a specific reference to the controversial *Ratzinger Report*, which unduly scared some "liberal" theologians and journalists:

The Synod was not the Synod of Ratzinger, neither the Synod of "the people of God." It was a Synod of deepening and balance, based on an undeniable theological return to the sacred; however, the Synod did not deny but promote the great intuitions of Vatican II (*Vida Nueva*, December 14, 1985, p. 37).

Most Christians never doubted —I believe— the positive outcome of the Synod '85, the 8th Synod of Bishops: they believed really in the Holy Spirit, who, in spite of our —and the Synod's participants's— shortcomings and failures (and often through them) continues to write straight with crooked lines.

The Synod '85 real success, however, depends upon its knowledge and implementation by the Church, by all her members — the bishops, the priests, the religious and the lay persons. We can truly affirm that, in this level, the Extraordinary Synod convoked to celebrate Vatican II has just begun. More precisely, it began on December 9, 1985, when its participants, auditors, and observers went back to their archdioceses and dioceses, their schools, families and socio-religious movements and associations. In this context, John Paul II asked, during his important speech on December 7, 1985:

How can we see to it that this Synod is applied to the concrete life of the Church? We are all called to dedicate ourselves to this application with great love and sense of duty, dedicating ourselves at the same time to prayer and penance, which are indispensable if we are to make true progress along the way of the spirit.

The Pope assigned the task of making known and of implementing the Synod's Message and Report and consequently of re-launching Vatican II to the bishops and their priests, in the first place. John Paul II said in the same speech:

It is the duty of the bishops, as pastors of souls, together with their priests, to instruct their people concerning the things which the Synod has considered good and to exhort them to draw with renewed fervor from the treasures of the Council the inspiration to live a Christian life in a manner which is ever closer to the principles of the faith.

We can rightly say, then, that for all Christians, the Synod '85 has just begun. The fervor, a Pentecostal climax is not yet perceivable; hopefully, with the help of all, particularly bishops, priests, religious and lay religious associations and movements the post-synodal movement will gather strength as we approach the third millenium.

What each Christian is asked by his faith right now —if he or she has not done it already— is to read and reflect personally on the Documents of Synod '85. And right afterwards —or simultaneously— to read those Documents and reflect upon them collectively, in community, within a framework of prayer and in an atmosphere of communion and dialogue. A longer range program should be to deepen individually and collectively the Documents of Vatican II, that is, its three *Declarations*, nine *Decrees* and, above all, the four *Constitutions*, which represent the backbone of the synodal deliberations, resolutions and proposals. The Synod's Documents are an expression of the teaching of the Church, truly of the successors of the Apostles. To these, and their successors, Jesus said: "He who hears you, hears me; and he who rejects you, rejects me" (Lk. 10:16).

The Synod, as we have seen, underlined the conception of the Church as Mystery and Communion, collegiality and co-responsibility, the Word of God (connected with Tradition and the Magisterium of the Church), with the liturgy as source of life, spiritual life, the theology of the cross, inculturation and dialogue, and the preferential option for the poor. The primary mission of the Church, the Mystical body of Christ and the People of God, is to preach and to witness to the good and joyful news of salvation (Report, II, A, 2) — of the integral salvation of the world which, according to the Synod, "is obtained only if human realities are purified and further elevated through grace and familiarity with God, through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit" (II, D, 3).

Against overemphasizing spirituality on one hand, or temporal liberation, on the other, the synodal Fathers attempted a synthesis: *the Church is Mystery but for the salvation of the world* (GS, 42). Still one can feel, following a key teaching of John Paul II, that *the primary is —must be— with the spiritual, and not with the temporal values*. After all, the Christian, every

(Continued on page 175.)

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN PAUL II

For the Celebration of the World Day of Peace

1 JANUARY 1986

PEACE IS A VALUE WITH NO FRONTIERS
NORTH-SOUTH, EAST-WEST: ONLY ONE PEACE

1. Peace as a universal value

At the beginning of the New Year, taking my inspiration from Christ, the Prince of Peace, I renew my commitment and that of the whole Catholic Church to the cause of peace. At the same time I extend to every individual and to all peoples of the earth my earnest greeting and my good wishes: Peace to all of you! Peace to all hearts! Peace is a value of such importance that it must be proclaimed anew and promoted by all. There is no human being who does not benefit from peace. There is no human heart that is not uplifted when peace prevails. All the nations of the world can fully realize their interlinked destinies only if, together, they pursue peace as a universal value.

On the occasion of this 19th World Day of Peace, in the International Year of Peace proclaimed by the United Nations Organization, I offer to everyone as a message of hope my profound conviction: "Peace is a value with no frontiers". It is *a value that responds to the hopes and aspirations of all people and all nations*, of young and old, and of all men and women of good will. This is what I proclaim to everyone, and especially to the leaders of the world.

The question of peace as a universal value needs to be faced with extreme intellectual honesty, sincerity of spirit and an acute sense of responsibility to oneself and to the nations of the

earth. I would ask those responsible for political decisions affecting the relationships between North and South, between East and West, to be convinced that there can be **ONLY ONE PEACE**. Those upon whom the future of the world depends, regardless of their political philosophy, economic system or religious commitment are all called to help construct a single peace on the basis of social justice and the dignity and rights of every human person.

This task requires a radical openness to all humanity and a conviction of the interrelatedness of all the nations of the world. This interrelatedness is expressed in an interdependence that can prove either profoundly advantageous or profoundly destructive. Hence, worldwide solidarity and cooperation constitute ethical imperatives that appeal to the consciences of individuals and to the responsibilities of all nations. And it is *in this context of ethical imperatives* that I address the whole world for 1 January 1986, proclaiming the universal value of peace.

2. *Threats to peace*

In putting forward this vision of peace at the dawn of a new year, we are deeply aware that in the present situation peace is also a value that rests on foundations that are very fragile. At first glance, our goal to make peace an absolute imperative may seem to be utopian, since our world gives such ample evidence of *excessive self-interest* in the context of opposed political, ideological and economic groups. Caught in the grip of these systems, leaders and various groups are led to pursue their particular aims and their ambitions of power, progress and wealth, without taking sufficiently into account the necessity and duty of international solidarity and cooperation for the benefit of the common good of all peoples who make up the human family.

In this situation *blocs* are formed and maintained which divide and oppose peoples, groups and individuals, making peace precarious and setting up grave obstacles to development. Positions harden and the excessive desire to maintain one's advantage or to increase one's share often becomes the overriding rationale for action. This leads to exploitation of others and the spiral grows towards a polarization that feeds on the fruits of self-interest and the increasing mistrust of others. In such a situation, *it is the small and the weak, the poor and the voiceless who suffer most*. This can happen directly when a poor and comparatively defenceless people is held in subjection by the force

of power. It can happen indirectly when economic power is used to disenfranchise people of their rightful share and to hold them in social and economic subjection, generating dissatisfaction and violence. The examples are sadly too numerous today.

The spectre of nuclear weapons, which has its origin precisely in the opposition of East and West, remains the most dramatic and compelling example of this. Nuclear weapons are so powerful in the destructive capacities, and nuclear strategies are so inclusive in their designs, that the popular imagination is often paralyzed by fear. This fear is not groundless. The only way to respond to this legitimate fear of the consequences of nuclear destruction is by *progress in negotiations* for the reduction of nuclear weapons and for mutually agreed upon measures that will lessen the likelihood of nuclear warfare. I would ask the nuclear powers once again to reflect on their very grave moral and political responsibility in this matter. It is an obligation that some have also juridically accepted in international agreements; for all it is an obligation by reason of a basic *co-responsibility for peace and development*.

But the threat of nuclear weapons is not the only way that conflict is made permanent and increased. *The increasing sale and purchase of arms* — conventional but very sophisticated — is causing dire results. While the major powers have avoided direct conflict, their rivalries have often been acted out in other parts of the world. Local problems and regional difference are aggravated and perpetuated through armaments supplied by wealthier countries and by the ideologizing of local conflicts by powers that seek regional advantage by exploiting the condition of the poor and defenceless.

Armed conflict is not the only way that the poor bear an unjust share of the burden of today's world. The developing countries must face formidable challenges even when free of such a scourge. In its many dimensions, *underdevelopment remains an ever growing threat to world peace*.

In fact, between the countries which form the "North bloc" and those of the "South bloc" there is a *social and economic abyss* that separates rich from poor. The statistics of recent years shows signs of improvement in a few countries but also evidence of a widening of the gap in too many others. Added to this is the *unpredictable and fluctuating financial situation* with its direct impact on countries with *large debts* struggling to achieve some positive development.

In this situation peace as a universal value is in great danger. Even if there is no actual armed conflict as such, where *injustice* exists, it is in fact a cause and potential factor of conflict. In any case a situation of peace in the full sense of its value cannot coexist with injustice. Peace cannot be reduced to the mere absence of conflict; it is the tranquillity and completeness of order. It is lost by the social and economic exploitation by special interest groups which operate internationally or function as elites within developing countries. It is lost by the social divisions that pit rich against poor between States or within States. It is lost when *the use of force* produces the bitter fruit of hatred and division. It is lost when economic exploitation and internal strains on the social fabric leave the people defenceless and disillusioned, a ready prey to the destructive forces of violence. As a value, peace is continually endangered by vested interests, by diverging and opposing interpretations, and even by clever manipulations for the service of ideologies and political systems that have domination as their ultimate aim.

3. *Overcoming the current situation*

There are those who claim that the present situation is natural and inevitable. Relations between individuals and between States are said to be characterized by permanent conflict. This doctrinal and political outlook is translated into a model of society and a system of international relations that are dominated by competition and antagonism, in which the strongest prevails. Peace born from such an outlook can only be an "arrangement", suggested by the principle of *Realpolitik*, and as an "arrangement" it seeks not so much to resolve tensions through justice and equity as to *manage differences and conflicts* in order to maintain a kind of balance that will preserve whatever is in the interests of the dominating party. It is clear that "peace" built and maintained on social injustices and ideological conflict will never become a true peace for the world. Such a "peace" cannot deal with the substantial causes of the world's tensions or give to the world *the kind of vision* and values which can resolve the divisions represented by the poles of North-South and East-West.

To those who think that blocs are inevitable we answer that it is possible, indeed necessary, to set up *new types of society and of international relations* which will ensure justice and peace on stable and universal foundations. Indeed, a healthy

realism suggests that such types cannot be simply imposed from above or from outside, or effected only by methods and techniques. This is because the deepest roots of the opposition and tensions that mutilate peace and development are to be found in the heart of man. It is above all the hearts and the attitudes of people that must be changed, and this needs a renewal, *a conversion of individuals*.

If we study the evolution of society in recent years we can see, not only deep wounds, but also signs of a determination on the part of many of our contemporaries and of peoples to overcome the present obstacles in order to bring into being a new international system. This is *the path that humanity must take* if it is to enter into an age of universal peace and integral development.

4. *The path of solidarity and dialogue*

Any new international system capable of overcoming the logic of blocs and opposing forces must be *based on the personal commitment of everyone to make the basic and primary needs of humanity the first imperative of international policy*. Today countless human beings in all parts of the world have acquired a vivid sense of their fundamental equality, their human dignity and their inalienable rights. At the same time there is a growing awareness that humanity has a profound unity of interests, vocation and destiny, and that all peoples, in the variety and richness of their different national characteristics, are called to form a single family. Added to this is the realization that resources are not unlimited and that needs are immense. Therefore, rather than waste resources or devote them to deadly weapons of destruction, it is necessary to use them above all to satisfy *the primary and basic needs of humanity*.

It is likewise important to note that an awareness is gaining ground of the fact that reconciliation, justice and peace between individuals and between nations — given the stage that humanity has reached and the very grave threats that hang over its future — are not merely a noble appeal meant for a few idealists but a condition for survival of life itself. Consequently, the establishment of an order based on justice and peace is vitally needed today, as a clear moral imperative valid for all people and regimes, above ideologies and systems. Together with and above the particular common good of a nation, the need to consider *the common good of the entire family of nations* is quite clearly an ethical and juridical duty.

The right path to a world community in which justice and peace will reign without frontiers among all peoples and on all continents is *the path of solidarity, dialogue and universal brotherhood*. This is the only path possible. Political, economic, social and cultural relations and systems must be imbued with the values of solidarity and dialogue which, in turn, require an *institutional dimension* in the form of special organisms of the world community that will watch over the common good of all peoples.

It is clear that, in order effectively to achieve a world community of this kind, mental outlooks and political views contaminated by the lust for power, by ideologies, by the defence of one's own privilege and wealth must be abandoned, and replaced by *an openness to sharing and collaboration with all in a spirit of mutual trust*.

That call to recognize the unity of the human family has very real repercussions for our life and for our commitment to peace. It means first of all that we reject the kind of thinking that divides and exploits. It means that we commit ourselves to *a new solidarity*, the solidarity of the human family. It means looking at the North-South tensions and replacing them with a *new relationship*, the *social solidarity of all*. This social solidarity faces up honestly to the abyss that exists today but it does not acquiesce in any kind of economic determinism. It recognizes all the complexities of a problem that has been allowed to get out of hand for too long, but which can still be rectified by men and women who see themselves in fraternal solidarity with everyone else on this earth. It is true that changes in economic growth patterns have affected all parts of the world and not just the poorest. But the person who sees peace as a universal value will want to use this opportunity *to reduce the differences between North and South* and foster the relationships that will bring them closer together. I am thinking of the prices of raw materials, of the need for technological expertise, of the training of the work force, of the potential productivity of the millions of unemployed, of the debts poor nations are carrying, and of a better and more responsible use of funds within developing countries. I am thinking of so many elements which individually have created tensions and which combined together have polarized North-South relations. *All this can and must be changed.*

If social justice is the means to move towards a peace for all peoples, then it means that we see peace as an indivisible

fruit of just and honest relations on every level — social, economic, cultural and ethical — of human life on this earth. This conversion to an attitude of social solidarity also serves to highlight the deficiencies in *the current East-West situation*. In my message to the Second Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament, I explored many of the elements that are needed to improve the situation between the two major power blocs of East and West. All of the measures recommended then and reaffirmed since that time rest on the solidarity of the human family travelling together *along the path of dialogue*. Dialogue can open many doors closed by the tensions that have marked East-West relations. Dialogue is a means by which people discover one another and discover the good hopes and peaceful aspirations that too often lie hidden in their hearts. True dialogue goes beyond ideologies, and people meet in the reality of their human lives. Dialogue breaks down preconceived notions and artificial barriers. Dialogue brings human beings into contact with one another as members of one human family, with all the richness of their various cultures and histories. A conversion of heart commits people to promoting universal brotherhood; dialogue helps to effect this goal.

Today this dialogue is more needed than ever. Left to themselves, weapons and weapons systems, military strategies and alliances become the instruments of intimidation, mutual recrimination and the consequent dread that affects so much of the human race today. Dialogue considers these instruments in their relationship to human life. I am thinking first of all of the various dialogues in Geneva that are seeking to negotiate reductions and limitations in armaments. But also there are the dialogues being conducted in the context of the multilateral process initiated with the Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, a process which will be reviewed once again next year in Vienna and continued. Concerning the dialogue and cooperation between North and South one can think of the important role entrusted to certain bodies such as UNCTAD, and of the Conventions of Lomé, to which the European Community is committed. I am thinking too of the kinds of dialogue that take place when borders are open and people can travel freely. I am thinking of the dialogue that takes place when one culture is enriched by contact with another culture, when scholars are free to communicate, when workers are free to assemble, when young people join forces for the future, when the elderly are reunited with their loved ones. The

path of dialogue is a path of discoveries, and the more we discover one another, the more we can replace the tensions of the past with bonds of peace.

5. *New relationship built on solidarity and dialogue*

In the spirit of solidarity and with the instruments of dialogue we will learn:

- respect for every human person;
- respect for the true values and cultures of others;
- respect for the legitimate autonomy and self-determination of others;
- to look beyond ourselves in order to understand and support the good of others;
- to contribute our own resources in social solidarity for the development and growth that come from equity and justice;
- to build the structures that will ensure that social solidarity and dialogue are permanent features of the world we live in.

The tension born of the two blocs will be successfully replaced by the interconnected relations of solidarity and dialogue when we learn to insist on *the primacy of the human person*. The dignity of the person and the defence of his or her human rights are in the balance, because they always suffer in one way or another from those tensions and distortions of the blocs which we have been examining. This can happen in countries where many individual liberties are guaranteed but where individualism and consumerism warp and distort the values of life. It happens in societies where the person is submerged into the collectivity. It can happen in young countries which are eager to take control of their own affairs but which are often forced into certain policies by the powerful, or seduced by the lure of immediate gain at the expense of the people themselves. In all this we must insist on the primacy of the person.

6. *The Christian vision and commitment*

My brothers and sisters in the Christian faith find in *Jesus Christ*, in the Gospel message and in the life of the Church lofty reasons and even more inspiring motives for striving to bring

about one single peace in today's world. The Christian faith has as its focus Jesus Christ, who stretches out his arms on the Cross in order to unite the children of God who were scattered (cf. *Jn.* 11:52), to break down the walls of division (cf. *Eph.* 2:14), and to reconcile the peoples in fraternity and peace. The Cross raised above the world symbolically embraces and has the power to reconcile North and South, East and West.

Christians, enlightened by faith, know that the *ultimate reason* why the world is the scene of divisions, tensions, rivalries, blocs and unjust inequalities, instead of being a place of genuine fraternity, *is sin*, that is to say human moral disorder. But Christians also know that the grace of Christ, which can transform this human condition, is continually being offered to the world, since "where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (*Rom.* 5:20). *The Church*, which carries on Christ's work and dispenses his redeeming grace, *has precisely as her purpose the reconciling of all individuals and peoples in unity, fraternity and peace.* "The promotion of unity", says the Second Vatican Council, "belongs to the innermost nature of the Church, since mental sign and an instrument of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 42). The Church, which is one and universal in the variety of the peoples that she brings together, "can form a very close unifying effect on the various communities of individuals and nations, provided they have trust in the Church and guarantee her true freedom to carry out her mission" (*ibid.*).

This vision and these demands which arise from the very heart of faith, should above all cause all Christians to become more aware of situations that are out of harmony with the Gospel, in order to purify and rectify them. At the same time Christians should recognize and value the positive signs attesting that efforts are being made to remedy these situations, efforts which they must effectively support, sustain and strengthen.

Animated by a lively hope, capable of hoping against hope (cf. *Rom.* 4:18), Christians must *go beyond the barriers of ideologies and systems*, in order to enter into dialogue with all people of good will, and create new relationships and new forms of solidarity. In this regard I would like to say a word of appreciation and praise to all those who are engaged in international volunteer work and other forms of activity aimed at creating links of sharing and fraternity at a level higher than the various blocs.

7. International Year of Peace and final appeal

Dear friends, brothers and sisters all: at the beginning of a new year I renew my appeal to all of you to put aside hostilities, to break the fetters of the tensions that exist in the world. I appeal to you to turn those tensions of North and South, East and West into new relationships of social solidarity and dialogue. The United Nations Organization has proclaimed 1986 the International Year of Peace. This noble effort deserves our encouragement and support. What better way could there be to further the aims of the Year of Peace than to make the relationships of North-South and East-West the basis of a peace that is universal!

To you, politicians and statesmen, I appeal: to give the leadership that will incite people to renewed effort in this direction.

To you, businessmen, to you who are responsible for financial and commercial organizations, I appeal: to examine anew your responsibilities towards all your brothers and sisters.

To you, military strategists, officers, scientists and technologists, I appeal: to use your expertise in ways that promote dialogue and understanding.

To you, the suffering, the handicapped, those who are physically limited, I appeal: to offer your prayers and your lives in order to break down the barriers that divide the world.

To all of you who believe in God I appeal that you live your lives in the awareness of being one family under the fatherhood of God.

To all of you and to each one of you, young and old, weak and powerful, I appeal: embrace peace as the great unifying value of your lives. Wherever you live on this planet I earnestly exhort you to pursue in solidarity and sincere dialogue:

Peace as a value with no frontiers:

North-South, East-West,
everywhere one people united in only one Peace.

From the Vatican, 8 December 1985.

JOANNES PAULUS PP. II

TO PHILIPPINE BISHOPS

Proclaim and Defend the Total Authentic Teaching of the Church*

Dear Brother Bishops,

I am very pleased to see you gathered here in the company of Cardinal Vidal.

After the private meetings which I have had with each one of you during these days of your "ad limina" visit, we now have the opportunity to come together in the name of him who appointed us and sent us to bear much fruit (cf. Jn 15:16), our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I greet you with great personal satisfaction, and through you I feel very close to the Filipino people. You are pastors of the regions of Mindanao and Visayas, and soon I will meet the bishops of the other regions of the Philippines. Your presence here is not only the fulfilment of a duty incumbent on all the bishops of the world; it is also the expression of the deeply-felt bonds of faith and loyalty that unite Filipino Catholics to the See of Peter.

I wish to assure you that the pains and sorrows, the joys and hopes of the entire nation are very much the subject of my concerns and prayers.

1. Our conversations and the reports which you have prepared for this visit show how deeply you feel the responsibility of the task entrusted to your episcopal ministry. At times you may feel weighed down by the mission and by the obstacles which confront your endeavours. But there is one thing of which you are certain and which inspires your trust and confidence. It is the response of Christ to the anxieties of the Apostle Paul: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9). In this conviction

*On Saturday, 12 October the Holy Father received in audience the bishops of the Philippine regions of Mindanao and Visayas at the end of their "ad limina" visits. Speaking to them in English in the Throne Room of the Apostolic Palace, the Holy Father delivered this address.

you will find the courage to place your whole lives at the service of the mystery of salvation being accomplished in the midst of your people.

It is fitting, in this context, that together we should raise our voices in joyful thanksgiving to God, our heavenly Father from whom all good things come, for the vitality and progress of the Church in the Philippines. Your communities are imbued with lifegiving energies, a dynamism which is evident from the numerous institutions, activities and initiatives that have ever marked the uninterrupted development of the Church. There is always room for improvement and correction, but *let us not forget the "great things" which the Lord has done and continues to do in the hearts of the Filipino people.* Like Mary, the whole Church in the Philippines can magnify the Lord for the abundance of his grace (cf. Lk 1:46-49).

Gospel serves the Paschal Mystery

2. Precisely because you are close to the daily life of the members of your local Churches, to their sufferings and aspirations, you have been concerned to offer guidance and leadership to your people in their search for a more dignified human condition and for greater participation in the important choices which affect the life of the nation. *The whole Church is grateful to you for the examples of compassion and solidarity with those in need* which you have given and for your encouraging participation in the development and progress of your people.

You are undoubtedly strengthened in your pastoral ministry by the mutual understanding, respect and support which mark the activities of your Bishops' Conference, especially when you gather to discuss the various questions that require the attention and collaboration of the whole episcopal body.

On these occasions you deal with the matters that affect your communities as *Pastors of the Church of God*: as bishops, whose principal task is to teach *the whole truth of the Gospel*, to teach the whole truth about man (cf. *Redemptor Hominis*, no. 12). The full truth about human life and human destiny is to be found in the revelation of the Gospel, in the person of the Incarnate Son of God and through the salvific event of his Death and Resurrection which is made present in every age and place through the mystery of the Church.

3. The community of those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is united by a profound bond of life and love. While endeavouring to serve this bond, one cannot place the Gospel message at the service of any objective other than the fullness of life and love emanating from the Paschal Mystery.

The love of which we are speaking is the eternal merciful love of God, which "has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (Rom. 5:5). *This love is incompatible with the use of division, opposition, hatred or violence as a programme of Christian life or as progress in justice.*

In this regard it is enlightening to reread certain pages of Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*. There he reminds us that any reduction of the whole message of salvation preached by the Church deprives her of her "originality" and exposes her "to monopolization and manipulation by ideological systems and political parties" (cf. No. 32).

In the face of the social, economic and ideological tensions which exist in some of your dioceses, you have to be wise and courageous in order to remain faithful to Christ, the Chief Shepherd of the flock (cf. 1 Pet 5:4). Time and again you have to proclaim that no merely temporal and imminent liberation can be the object of the Church's evangelizing mission. Does this mean that the Church has no message of liberation to proclaim to those who long for release from whatever forms of oppression or injustice that are diminishing their God-given dignity? Or that the Church in the Philippines has no concrete contribution to make to development, peace and progress?

Here again the words of *Evangelii Nuntiandi* are an authoritative statement of the Church's real participation in the cause of genuine liberation. They also indicate the means to be used if the end result is to be truly for the benefit of peoples and not to their detriment. In fact the Church "is providing... Christian 'liberators' with the inspiration of faith, the motivation of fraternal love, a social teaching which the true Christian cannot ignore and which he must make the foundation of his wisdom and of his experience in order to translate it concretely into forms of action, participation and commitment. All this must characterize the spirit of a committed Christian, without confusion with tactical attitudes or with the service of a political system. The Church strives always to insert the Christian struggle for liberation into the universal plan of salvation which she herself proclaims" (No. 38).

Church participates in genuine liberation

4. Sometimes a concept of a Church "of the people" is contrasted with the concept of the "institutional" Church, as if the latter had as it were failed in her mission and were now an enemy of human development and even of the Gospel message itself, while the former is expounded as the true source of hope and happiness.

The fallacy in such a presentation is evident. The Church is the sacrament of salvation only if she continues to be all that her divine Founder intended. In a very special way it is incumbent upon bishops, individually and collectively, to penetrate ever more fully the divine and human mystery of the Church. In this task we have the splendid teachings of the Second Vatican Council to guide us, in particular the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*.

As bishops we are entrusted with the task of *proclaiming and defending the whole of the Church's teaching in all its authenticity*. We must also be vigilant that others who preach and teach in the name of the Church should not be allowed to distort that teaching, to the consequent confusion and disturbance of the consciences of the faithful.

This matter will often be for you a source of suffering and trial. *You will sometimes be a sign of contradiction*. Your love in these cases, sometimes for your closest collaborators, will be a love marked by forgiveness, patience, forbearance and courage. Your love should not become a false compassion that ends by undermining the truth and destroying the very harmony that it claims to preserve. The pastoral love that you have for your communities sometimes demands that you should not hide the "hard sayings" (cf. Jn 6:60) which bridge the distance between sinful human nature and the moral requirements of life in the Spirit of Christ.

May the Lord Jesus send you the strengthening and comforting gifts of the Holy Spirit as you speak in his name and guide your local Churches along the path of life and love!

5. In many of your dioceses the Catholic faithful live side by side with members of the Muslim faith. Here and there certain tensions have arisen in the area of political aspirations. Yet, on the basis of the common bond of faith in the Most High God and out of respect for one of the world's great religious tra-

ditions, your local Churches are actively maintaining good relations with the Muslim community and are already offering a fruitful collaboration and service in educational and social activities. It is important to make further progress along this path of mutual understanding and harmony.

I would repeat to the Church in the Philippines what I said to a gathering of Muslim young people during my recent visit to Morocco: "Dialogue between Christians and Muslims is today more necessary than ever. . I believe that we, Christians and Muslims, must recognize with joy the religious values that we have in common, and give thanks to God for this fact... I believe that, today, God invites us to *change our old practices*. We must respect each other, and also we must stimulate each other in good works on the path of God" (cf. *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition, 16 September 1985, pp. 6-8).

They should pray and be seen to pray

6. You are well aware that the success of your ministry greatly depends on the faith and Christian life of your collaborators, especially your *priests, and the men and women religious and catechists* who work strenuously at your side in the task of evangelization. In this respect we cannot forget the generations of missionaries, men and women, who have served the Church in the Philippines with generous dedication. I wish to assure the missionary personnel who are working in your local Churches that their pastoral collaboration is necessary and appreciated.

Priests and religious in particular should be encouraged "to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him" (Col 1:10). They will pray and should also be seen to pray: thus they give primacy to the power of the grace of Christ and of the Holy Spirit in their pastoral activities. In this respect they will greatly benefit from *willing and attentive recitation of the Divine Office*, which is the prayer of Jesus himself, who joins the entire community of mankind to himself in this canticle of divine praise (cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 83). Then too, *the importance of the Sacrament of Penance* in their own personal quest for holiness of life cannot be overstated. In all of this you must assist them by your example and leadership.

The progress that the Church in the Philippines is making in providing new seminaries for the large numbers of vocations

with which you are blessed, and new centers of formation for all those who respond to Christ's invitation to work in his vineyard, heightens the need to ensure that priority be given in this formation to *genuine spirituality and fidelity to the teachings of the Church*. For this task you have a wealth of guidelines in the documents of the Second Vatican Council and in the relevant documents of the Holy See.

And you must present to your seminarians an image of the priesthood that truly corresponds to their future role in the Church, a role which follows from their configuration with Christ. They must be shown that the life they have chosen is not a mere profession or form of employment. They should be encouraged and trained to live their vocation with joy and in the liberating generosity of total abandonment to God. And a sense of justice in their regard tells us that from their first days in the seminary they should be instructed in the value of celibacy in the service of Christ and his Kingdom (cf. *Optatam Totius*, 10).

Likewise I wish to say to you that I am fully convinced that a bishop will be successful as the pastor and father of the flock entrusted to him only if he gives the greatest attention and energy to cultivating personal, friendly and frank contacts with his priests, with religious, and with the laity who make their own specific and irreplaceable contribution to the good of the local Church.

7. My brother bishops, there are many other matters which deserve our attention. Some of them I will touch upon when I have the pleasure of meeting the other members of your Conference, in the same fraternal manner in which I have sought to express my thoughts to you.

I know that the challenges which face you are not small. In this respect I wish to recall the tragic deaths of Father Tullio Favali of the P.I.M.E. Fathers, and of Father Alberto Romero. And I cannot but share with you my deep personal concern for the fate of the Redemptorist Father Rudy Romero who was kidnapped in Cebu on 11 July of this year.

But *your trust is in Christ*. You can be confident too of the intercession of Mary, Mother of the Church, who is so greatly loved and honoured by the Filipino people. This year you are celebrating a special Marian Year, a time of grace and devotion which manifests the very soul of your people and shows how deeply the faith of the Church has penetrated the temperament of the nation.

In my prayers, I commend to Mary's loving care the whole Church in the Philippines, and I ask her to gain for you and your people the gifts of peace and reconciliation.

Finally, I avail of this occasion to say a word of appreciation to Archbishop Mabutas, the President of your Conference, as he approaches the end of his term. I join with you all in giving recognition to the zeal and energy with which he has carried out the many burdens of that office. May the God of peace amply reward him!

From January Cardinal Vidal will be your next President, and I take this opportunity to wish him every success in that office. I know that you will give him your fullest cooperation and assistance.

And may grace and peace be multiplied to you all! (cf. 1 Pet 1:2).

RELAUNCHING VATICAN II...

(Continued from page 158.)

human being, is a pilgrim on his way to heaven, that is, to his home (Phil. 3:20) — to God!

The beautiful second-century anonymous *Letter to Diognetus* put it most relevantly:

Christians are indistinguishable from other men either by nationality, language or custom. They do not inhabit separate cities of their own, or speak a strange dialect, or follow some outlandish way of life....

And yet there is something extraordinary about their lives. They live in their own countries as though they were only passing through. They play their full role as citizens, but labor under all the dissabilities of aliens. Any country can be their homeland, but for them their homeland, wherever it may be, is a foreign country...

They pass their days upon earth, but they are citizens of heaven.

FAUSTO GOMEZ, O.P.

Share the Universal Vision of the Church*

My dear Cardinal Sin
and Brother Bishops,

I greet you, Pastors of the region of Luzon, with warm sentiments of fraternal esteem, which I express in the words of Saint Paul: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rm 1:7).

During these days of your *ad limina* visits you have represented the reality of your local Churches before the tomb of Saint Peter, the "rock" on which our Lord Jesus built his Church as the sacrament of salvation for all nations until he comes again. In this way the organic and stable unity of the local Churches with the universal Church is made manifest in a particularly eloquent and vital way.

I pray that you will return to your dioceses strengthened by the experience of the universal communion which is the Church, and that you will share that universal vision with your priests, men and women religious, and with the faithful, your brothers and sisters in discipleship. For although each of you has particular responsibility for that portion of God's people entrusted to his daily care, all of you, together with your brother bishops throughout the world, form a unique fraternity in which the burdens of one are the burdens of all in a communion of love and pastoral concern for the whole Church of God.

Reawaken and stimulate

1. The entire Church will shortly celebrate the Extraordinary Synod which marks the twentieth anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Council. I have called this Synod with the intention of re-awakening the authentic sense of the spiritual and pastoral achievements of that precious moment of ecclesial life. Recently, to the pilgrims gathered in Saint Peter's Square I said that "such an initiative has the purpose of sti-

* On 17 October John Paul received in audience the Philippine Bishops of the Central Luzon region on the occasion of their "ad limina" visit. The group was led by His Eminence, Jaime Cardinal Sin, Archbishop of Manila.

mulating all of the members of the People of God to an ever deepening awareness of the Council's teachings and to an ever more faithful application of the principles and directives which have issued from that impressive Assembly" (Angelus Message, 29 September 1985).

There is hardly any aspect of the Church's life which the Council has not touched and for which it did not offer doctrinal and pastoral motivations capable of producing a new upsurge of holiness and vitality, in the life of the whole body of the Church's membership. It is extremely important that we all share the conviction that the Council represented an extraordinary moment of the working of the grace of God in the Church and that moment was decisive for the reality and form of the Church's presence in the world today and in the future.

It is true that not all the potential life-giving energies which the Council fostered have come to fruition for the unambiguous benefit of the Church and the world. But precisely because the Council was "a kind of milestone... in the almost two thousand year history of the Church and... in the religious and cultural history of the world" (ibid.), we, "vicars and ambassadors of Christ" (*Lumen Gentium*, 27), must not cease to reflect on its content, nor fail to realize our grave responsibility before Christ, before the Church and the world, for its full and faithful implementation.

Together with you, I give thanks to our heavenly Father for the benefits which the Church in the Philippines has reaped from the teachings of the Council and from the pastoral insights and impulses which, as a consequence, the Holy Spirit—who "vivifies ecclesiastical institutions as a kind of soul" (*Ad Gentes*, 4)—has brought forth among your people.

2. In this respect I recall that one of the great lines of ecclesial renewal which emerged from the Council has been the better *definition of the role of the laity* in the Church's life and mission. In union with their pastors the laity are truly responsible in their own right for the Church's ministry of salvation: each one "according to the grace received" (1 Pet 4:10).

The bishops of the Philippines gratefully recognize that much progress has been made in this area. The faithful are, generally speaking, more aware of their specific role within

the community of faith, and they assume the various services and ministries proper to them with joy and generous dedication.

You and your priests realize too that this is not a mere organizational and functional necessity. Rather, as a result of their baptismal configuration with Christ the laity have—in the words of the Code of Canon Law—“*the obligation and the right to strive so that the divine message of salvation may more and more reach all people of all times and all places*” (Can. 211).

Crisis of moral values

There is a freshness and vigour in the Christian lives of many of your faithful, as a result of a more widespread “discovery” of *the word of God in the Bible*. Much more perhaps than before, individuals and groups find in the Scriptures the nourishment for their prayer and a support for their daily endeavours to live in holiness and justice before God and their neighbours.

The appearance too of “Basic Christian Communities” in your local Churches has, in many cases and notwithstanding certain deficiencies, given support to a greater sense of spiritual communion and human solidarity. As pastors you rejoice in these factors of renewal, and you hope that these and other positive aspects of the life of the Church in the Philippines will contribute to the consolidation of a truly Christian culture capable of imbuing the life of the nation with evangelical principles of conduct and public policy.

At the same time you are called to make every effort to offset the danger of fragmentation which a too personal interpretation of the revealed word or an excessive concern with specific local problems seen in the light of ideologies not inspired by the Gospel, might cause in your local Churches. As successors of the Apostles in the College of Bishops, we have a fundamental obligation to defend and strengthen *the unity of the one Church of Christ*. That unity cannot be achieved at any level except through the bonds of professed faith, of the sacraments, of pastoral government, and of communion (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 14). Christ's prayer “that they may be one (Jn 17:22) is applicable indeed to the Universal Church. It is also Christ's will for the particular realization of that Church which is the diocese, and, in their own way, the parish and

other local and regional groupings which constitute the richness of the Church's presence in each place.

3. In some of the statements and pastoral letters which you, the bishops of the Philippines, have issued on aspects of the present situation of your country, you have not failed to draw attention to the *serious crisis of moral values* affecting some sectors of the population.

Certainly, you do not overlook the reality and depth of goodness which characterizes your people, and which is clearly manifested in their love of justice, their respect for the dignity and rights of others, their attachment to truth, and their sense of brotherhood and solidarity, especially towards the poor and the needy.

Yet, as pastors you are troubled by a certain breakdown in public and private morality. This is undoubtedly a subject about which you reflect and pray.

In this context I would refer to one area of concern. As the fundamental cell of society and of the Church, *the family* is particularly affected by the economic, social and moral conditions of society. A major challenge facing the Church, and indeed humanity as a whole, is that of defending the family against those forces which increasingly undermine its stability and effectiveness in serving life and love.

In your country you are engaged in clarifying the doctrinal and pastoral lines of the Church's service to marriage and family life. What the Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* states in general has particular significance in the circumstances of the Philippines: "At a moment of history in which the family is the object of numerous forces that seek to destroy it or in some way deform it... the Church perceives in a more urgent and compelling way her mission of proclaiming the plan of God for marriage and the family, ensuring their full vitality and human and Christian development" (No. 3).

Society as a whole, and therefore Christians singly and collectively as responsible citizens of their country, and more so if they hold public office, has a grave duty to work for the solution of the many ills that beset the family today—as regards living conditions, health services, educational programmes, employment and working conditions, and assistance to the poor and the poorest. In this matter the Church as a community of faith has a specific role. Her task is to "*evangelize*" mar-

riage and family life, to proclaim God's plan and to help the faithful to share in the mystery of God's love through the love which is the heart of married and family life.

In relation to marriage the Code of Canon Law underlines the need for young couples to be properly prepared for receiving this sacrament, and the need for a fruitful liturgical celebration of the marriage itself (cf. Cans. 1063-1064). An abundant literature and many programmes of formation for priests and catechists show that this is indeed a pastoral priority among you.

Forces which in the past have worked against the *stability of family life* are compounded today by factors such as the high rate of unemployment, especially among the young, and by the fact that thousands of Filipinos are obliged to seek work abroad. Your people are also experiencing the influence of a culture that is marked by exaggerated individualism and a consumer mentality which leads to a practical materialism impatient of religious and ethical values. In fact, one of the matters frequently mentioned during these *ad limina* visits has been the widespread and growing *religious ignorance* which in turn leads to indifferentism and a weakening of moral response.

By defending the values of marriage and family life you are safeguarding *the cultural identity of the Filipino people*, which is particularly marked by the special love shown to children and by the place and role of women in private and public life. Unfortunately the traditional dignity of women is often contradicted today by forms of exploitation which, as well as degrading their victims, threaten the very fabric of social life, by their pervading accessibility.

As *Mater et Magistra*, Mother and Teacher of the faithful, the Church in the Philippines faces these problems with a sense of urgency and with a conviction that your people are hungry for the word of God and for the united voice of their pastors. Perhaps without realizing it, in their hearts your people repeat the words of Peter before Christ: "To whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (Jn 6:68). For this reason I have keen interest in your "Bible for Every Family" project.

In your parishes and educational institutions, in programmes of adult education, in movements of spiritual and apostolic life, in the "Basic Christian Communities" which have a clear ecclesial identity, you have the framework of a dynamic

and effective presentation of Christ's message. Among the priests, religious and laity you find excellent collaborators in the task of evangelization and catechesis, in which the Christian view of marriage is an essential element.

I can only encourage you in your endeavours to enlighten the consciences of the faithful and of the leaders of the nation to the dangers inherent in certain trends. In this respect you spoke eloquently about *respect for life* in your 1984 Pastoral Letter on this theme.

4. Two final considerations are close to my heart. The first is my desire to express my appreciation of the spirit of openness and generous hospitality with which you have welcomed large numbers of *refugees from South East Asia*. As the principal Catholic nation in Asia, you have not failed to give a clear example of human and evangelical love towards these brothers and sisters who bear in their bodies the testimony of much suffering and pain, who are the victims of a human tragedy beyond telling. In this you have again shown your sense of brotherhood with the great peoples of the Asian continent.

Nor can I forget the magnificent contribution given to the evangelization of Asia by *Radio Veritas Overseas Service*. By broadcasting the Christian Gospel in various languages, it reaches peoples and cultures hungry for this message and becomes a stimulus of authentic human values and an instrument of salvation in Christ our Lord.

I understand that difficulties of all kinds are not lacking, and I am grateful to all those who, according to the responsibility of each one, support the valid and effective utilization of this means of evangelization. They can be sure of my personal appreciation and of the gratitude of those who in the intimacy of their homes are enabled to receive the light of the Gospel. This is particularly so where *Radio Veritas* is the only voice of the Church which they may hear.

5. My brother bishops, I assure you that all of your pastoral concerns are reflected in my prayer and in the intentions of the apostolic ministry which the Lord, for his own purposes, has entrusted to me. My great wish is to stand by you and

confirm you as *living witnesses of Jesus Christ*. The Council reminds us: "In the bishops... our Lord Jesus Christ, the Supreme High Priest, is present in the midst of all those who believe" (*Lumen Gentium*, 21). May he who is our strength sustain you in this sublime but difficult mission. And may Mary, Mother of the Church, be with you as you continue the redemptive work of her Son!

WORK FOR THE GOOD OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

(Continued from page 188.)

the ecclesial and civil authorities concerned, the right of parents, as stated in the Code of Canon Law, "to make use of those aids to be furnished by civil society which they need in order to obtain Catholic education for their children" (Can. 793, 2), will be ensured.

8. In the course of the *ad limina* visits of the Philippine Episcopate we have touched upon many subjects of importance for the life of your Churches. The vastness of our pastoral duties is thus made evident. As we conclude this series of visits, I wish to assure you again that you and your people are truly close to my heart and very present in my prayer. Your joys and sorrows, and the aspirations and anxieties of of the Filipino people are my own. I commend you all to the motherly care of Mary, Mother of the Church, and to the intercession of the saintly men and women who have graced your homeland, especially Blessed Lorenzo Ruiz who was beatified during my visit to Manila in 1981.

"May the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways" (2 Thess 3:16).

THE EUCHARIST...

(Continued from page 139)

And we in this city say "Amen." And for my part I pray that from Nairobi the eucharistic Lord may "placard" that peace which is the work of his justice, that peace which is the crown of his own reconciliation, before all our peoples across all the earth.³³ And may these be his gifts to us, so that we may be empowered to make them our task, for his name's sake. *Cor Jesu eucharisticum, iustitia nostra, reconciliatio nostra, pax nostra!* AMEN.

³³ Pope John Paul II, *On Reconciliation and Penance* in the Mission of the Church Today, 2 December 1984, chapter 3, #s, 10/11.

Work for the good of the Local Church*

Dear Brother Bishops,

Today I have the pleasure of meeting you, the bishops of Northern Luzon and Bicol regions of the Philippines. I greet you with fraternal esteem and affection, in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. The underlying theme of the talks I have had with the groups of Philippine bishops making their *ad limina* visits has been — as is to be expected — *the bishop's pastoral mission to the Church entrusted to his care*. Perhaps one of the best syntheses of this mission is expressed in the words of the Council: "In exercising his office of father and pastor, a bishop should stand in the midst of his people as one who serves. Let him be a good shepherd... a true father... Let him so gather and mould the whole family of his flock that everyone, conscious of his own duties, may live and work in the communion of love" (*Christus Dominus*, 16).

In this way the Council laid before us bishops a programme of life and pastoral activity wholly centered on the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, the "great shepherd of the sheep" (Heb. 13:20). It is Jesus himself who is our model and the measure of our commitment and pastoral solicitude. Because of our sacramental configuration with him, he is our example in a close and *intimately personal way*. In the multiple actions of our ministry of teaching, sanctifying and governing God's people. Christ himself is present and operative. "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain" (Ps. 127:1). Indeed, through the ministry of the bishop, as the Council states, the Lord himself "directs and guides the people of the New Testament in their pilgrimage towards eternal happiness" (*Lumen Gentium*, 21).

* On Friday, 25 October, the Holy Father received in audience on their "ad limina" visit a group of bishops from Northern Luzon and Bicol regions of the Philippines.

SUCCESS IS NOT MEASURED

Such a consideration reminds us that the success of the apostolate cannot be gauged in terms of bureaucratic organization or statistical data. Rather, the ultimate criterion of the value of our ministry is the realization of what we petition in the Lord's prayer: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth" (Mt. 6:10).

The pastor's aim is to hasten the coming of God's kingdom by leading his people to "live and work in the communion of love" (*Christus Dominus*, 16). In the sharing of Christ's gifts to the Church and the world through the profession of faith, the sacramental economy and participation in the ordered life of the community under the leadership of the legitimate pastors, there arises that profound unity which necessarily characterizes "the whole assembly of charity" (cf. St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Romanos*, Praef.). In each local Church the realization of that communion of Christian love and unity is brought about primarily by the Holy Spirit "who is the principle of our coming together and remaining together in the teaching of the apostles and in fellowship, in the breaking of bread and of prayers" (*Lumen Gentium*, 13). For this reason, I wish to invite you and your brother bishops of the Philippines not to cease from ardent prayer for the Church in your country that it may be each day more truly a communion of love and unity, in the strength of the Holy Spirit and in the concrete witness of brotherhood and solidarity at every level.

2. A practical consequence of the nature of the Church as a communion of faith and love is the need to discover, foster and coordinate with pastoral effectiveness the various ministries and charisms which the Holy Spirit distributes among God's people. A fundamental support of this task of coordination and unity of purpose is the developed sense of collegial responsibility and teamwork which you, the bishops, exercise through the meetings and activities of your Episcopal Conference. In fact, when you speak with one voice in obedience to the Gospel and when *in its light* you read the "signs of the times" and are seen to sustain each other through effective forms of ecclesial cooperation, then society will receive the message of peace and reconciliation which the Church in the Philippines continues to proclaim notwithstanding difficulties and contrary impulses.

3. One aspect among others deserves consideration. I refer to the task of fostering and coordinating for the good of

the whole Church in the Philippines *the fruitful cooperation between the bishops and religious, both at the diocesan and national levels.*

The contribution of religious men and women to the life of the Church in your country constitutes a glorious history of enlightened service and dedicated evangelization. Today religious men and women play a very significant part in the overall life of the Church in the Philippines. Worthy of special merit are those who give themselves to God alone in the prayerful solitude and silence of contemplative life. They are "the glory of the Church and an overflowing fountain of heavenly graces" (*Perfectae Caritatis*, 7).

RELIGIOUS ENRICH THE CHURCH

Then again, the activities of Institutes engaged in the active apostolate respond to a specific mission which is theirs in the Church. In the words of the Council's Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life, "a sacred ministry and a special work of charity has been consigned to them by the Church and must be discharged in her name" (No. 8). As a result, religious, and similarly members of societies of apostolic life for their part, realize that their pastoral activities are inseparable from the Church's evangelizing and sanctifying mission. The special charism and character of each community enriches the life of the local Churches where they operate with a dynamism and organizational ability which permits the Church to respond to the challenges and needs of each place.

Fully conscious of the ecclesiological vision which the Council proposes, religious should always see their work as organically bound to the life and mission of the local Church in which *the bishop is "the visible principle and foundation of unity"* (*Lumen Gentium*, 23). Thus the relationship between the bishops and members of religious institutes and societies of apostolic life should be marked by cordial understanding, organic unity and a willingness to work together in a programmed way for the good of the entire community. The same Holy Spirit who sustains the Church on the foundation of the Apostles, brings forth in the body of the Church the charism of the evangelical counsels and missionary zeal to be a valid sign of the holiness to which God's people are called and a prophetic testimony of the values of the kingdom. As a result there cannot be a separation or contradictory parallelism between religious and bishops.

Rather, there should be a *complementarity* which is not a mere accommodation, but a living exemplification of what Saint Paul teaches about the parts of the body as applied to the Church: "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need for you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you'" (I Cor. 12:21). All must work together in obedience to the one Lord.

4. As bishops you will find essential guidelines for the fulfillment of your responsibilities towards the religious men and women present in your dioceses in the document *Mutuae Relationes*. There you will read that the bishop's specific office is "to defend consecrated life, to foster and animate the fidelity and authenticity of religious and to help them become part of the communion and of the evangelizing action of his Church according to their distinctive nature" (Ch. VII). All this requires contact between bishops and religious superiors in order to maintain a spirit of openness and understanding with regard to pastoral objectives. Men and women religious should be adequately represented in the various diocesan councils, especially pastoral councils. They can also usefully form associations of religious which will serve as "organisms for the discussion of *mixed problems* between bishops and superiors, as well as for coordinating the activities of religious families with the pastoral action of the diocese under the direction of the bishop" (ibid.). I know that you are already following this path and I encourage you to go forward with confidence and trust.

RESPECT DIVERSITY

On the national level too, the Church in the Philippines can only benefit from the consolidation of procedures of dialogue and collaboration between the bishops and major religious superiors. In this respect it is always important that the diversity of Institutes be respected both by the bishops and by the officials of such associations themselves. It is also important that regional and national associations of religious give proper weight to the inalienable responsibility of the bishop to oversee the development of pastoral activities in his diocese, as corresponds to the evangelical spirit of service which men and women religious seek to embody and exemplify.

5. One particular area of collaboration between bishops and religious which requires much spiritual discernment in the present circumstances, concerns the role of priests and of men and women religious in the process of social development. In this

respect I mention briefly two aspects of the Church's services of your people, a service which implies a preferential, though not exclusive or restrictive option for the least of Christ's brothers and sisters, the poor, the defenseless, the weak and those who are excluded from the benefits of progress, especially from education, employment and the full achievement of their human and civil rights.

Firstly, this service is a response to *the word of God*. In the poor and suffering the Church strives to serve Christ (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 8). She approaches each child, each man and woman with a vivid sense of the unique personal dignity of each one. Following the example of her Founder, she refuses to see any group of human beings — much less the poor — as a mere socio-political or economic category and factor in a theory of social development. The Church serves human beings as persons, in full respect of their dignity and in support of each individual's pursuit of his or her integral human and eternal destiny. This is the Church's mission, which cannot be subordinated or postponed in favour of other economic, social or political finalities.

BIRTH AND GROWTH IN GOSPEL

A second aspect to which I refer briefly concerns the *role of leadership of priests and religious* in development. It is clear that this role does not consist in espousing particular political programmes or ideologies. Priests and religious certainly proclaim the Gospel message of liberation and they accompany their people in the quest for dignity and justice; but they must be careful not to subvert the message by imposing on it a reductive interpretation, or by putting it at the service of a particular form of political involvement, or by taking part in activities that do not appear in consonance with their ecclesial status.

I take this opportunity to express my spiritual closeness to the Filipino priests and religious as well as to all missionary personnel who share the burdens of their people in poverty and simplicity, seeking justice and truth without violence, giving witness to Christ who "carried out the work of redemption in poverty and under oppression" (*Lumen Gentium*, 8).

6. I also wish to encourage you, dear brother bishops, in another matter, namely the *programmers of catechesis* and theological formation of the laity which are being undertaken according to the guidelines of your National Catechetical Directory.

Each local Church is born from the proclamation of the "Good News" of salvation in Christ Jesus, and grows and develops in the measure in which that message is welcomed with love and practised in effective works of holiness and justice and charity. The strength of each local Church is closely connected with the degree in which the faith is nourished and enlightened by an adequate programme of catechesis, the purpose of which is "to make disciples, to help people to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, so that believing they might have life in his name, and to educate and instruct them in this life and thus build up the Holy of Christ" (*Catechesi Tradendae*, 1).

VAST PASTORAL DUTIES

I simply wish to recall the importance of this task for the Christian life of your people. As you face the immense challenge of responding to the need and the thirst of your people for the word of God and for the teaching of the Church, I pray that you will continue with renewed energy and courage *to give priority to catechesis*. It is not exaggerated to say that the entire future of the Church in your country will depend on your success in the catechetical instruction of the faithful. May the Spirit of truth endow you and your collaborators with ever greater enthusiasm for this work!

7. Finally, in connection with the theme of catechesis, I mention the *enormous value of the apostolate of Catholic education* for the Church and for the Philippine nation. The sublime scope of Catholic education at all levels is to enable the faithful "to relate human affairs and activities with religious values in a single living synthesis" (*Sapientia Christiana*, I). Therefore I feel a great need to draw attention before you and the entire Church to the special merits of the bishops and priests, of the teachers, and in a very particular way of the men and women religious who have been and continue to be responsible for Catholic education in the Philippine in numerous schools of every level, including a large number of Catholic universities. Let no one doubt the relevance of this work. On the contrary, it should be promoted and further extended. The financial and personnel problems involved are certainly very serious, especially if we consider the need to extend Catholic schools to areas in which this has not yet been possible. But with God's help and with a sense of responsibility and collaboration on the part of

(Continued on page 182.)

LITURGY

A MISUNDERSTOOD SACRAMENT

Miguel A. Bernad S.J.

It used to be called Extreme Unction: which was a bad English translation for an equally bad medieval Latin term ("extrema unctio") that had gained currency in the late Middle Ages. The term was part of the jargon of medieval theologians.

Every science has its jargon. Scientists have their technical terms. So have carpenters and artists and even cooks — all have technical terms connected with their craft. So also the theologian, the canonist and the liturgist. The Latin term "Extrema Unctio" (literally, Last Anointing) was given to the sacrament of anointing the sick because it was the last in a series of liturgical anointings by which a Christian was consecrated to God or given a special blessing. The "first" anointing was at baptism, the "second" at confirmation, the "third" at a priest's ordination, the "fourth" at a bishop's consecration, the "fifth" at a king's coronation, and the "last" was when a person was gravely ill. It was the "last" in the series of liturgical anointings: *Extrema Unctio*.

But the term was open to misunderstanding. The term "last" and especially the word "extreme" gave the false impression that the sacrament was to be administered only when a person was in his last agony. Hence the reluctance of many people to call the priest until the patient was dying.

THE SACRAMENT DENIED

The remarkable thing is that even priests (who should have known better) were misled. People have died without the sacrament because the priest in attendance was afraid to anoint; afraid to "desecrate" the sacrament by administering it to someone who was not yet dying! The present writer has seen some instances (lamentable, to say the least) which today would seem incredible.

A man had suffered a stroke and was found unconscious on the floor. He was brought to a hospital where he recovered con-

sciousness. Three priests were present. As they were about to leave the sick room, one of the priests said, "Should we not anoint him?" The superior of the group said, "No. He is no longer in danger." So they left without anointing the patient, and half an hour later the patient had another attack and died.

Another priest was gravely ill and asked to be anointed. The provincial superior heard of the request and forbade the anointing. His reason: "He is critically ill but not *in extremis*." Apart from the bad doctrinal knowledge that the provincial's action displayed, it was also a violation of the principle: "*rationabiliter petentibus non denegatur sacramentum*" ("those who reasonably ask for a sacrament must not be denied it"). A little later, the provincial asked the attending physician whether or not the patient "could now be anointed": the doctor replied with some astonishment, "But of course he should be anointed!" This was a case where the doctor of medicine knew more about the sacrament than the doctor of theology.

If these good priests had only consulted their penny catechism, they would have found that a patient did not have to be "in extremis" to be anointed. The catechism — even the pre-Vatican ones — clearly stated that the sacrament should be administered to the faithful who were "in danger of death from sickness."

CAUSES AND EFFECTS

These instances which I cite were not isolated cases. There was widespread misunderstanding of the sacrament throughout the Church. To the ambiguity of the term "Extreme Unction" another factor contributed to the confusion: this was the almost universal practice of anointing only when death was certain and imminent. A canonist, commenting on the new Code of Canon Law, puts it this way:

The nature of the sacrament — a healing anointing of those seriously ill — had been compromised by the almost universal pastoral practice which treated it principally as the sacrament for the dying, principally or exclusively for those whose death was imminent or almost certain. — Frederick R. MacManus, "The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick", in *The Code of Canon Law, a Text and Commentary* (commissioned by the Canon Law Association of America, New York, Paulist Press, 1985) p. 702.

Throughout the Church, even among many priests, the idea had become current that the sacrament of Extreme Unction was only for the dying or those facing certain and imminent death.

That misunderstanding of the nature and purpose of Extreme Unction had another adverse effect: it brought about in turn, the "dilution" of the significance of another sacrament, namely Eucharistic Viaticum, which is the Church's sacrament specifically for the dying. (MacManus, *ibid.*)

And yet, a little reflection should have made the priests realize their error. A modern theologian (Charles Davis) had pointed out something which should have been obvious. If the sacrament of "Extreme Unction" were really intended for those facing imminent and certain death, why does the Church not allow it to be administered to those facing the firing squad, or those condemned to the electric chair? Why is it to be administered only to those who are seriously sick? Obviously, it is not a sacrament of death but of health; a sacrament of healing, intended for the sick, not precisely for the dying.

A CHANGE OF NAME

Happily, as a result of the Second Vatican Council we no longer speak of this sacrament as "Extreme Unction" or "Last Anointing" but as "the Anointing of the Sick." This change of name was suggested in the Constitution on the Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) promulgated by the Council on 4 December 1963: "Extreme Unction, *which may also and more fittingly be called 'The Anointing of the Sick'.*" (no. 73, emphasis added.)

That suggestion was subsequently implemented by the Church in the new Code of Canon Law promulgated by Pope John Paul II on 25 January 1983, which refers to this sacrament as simply "The Anointing of the Sick"; the term "Extreme Unction" has been definitely discarded.

"BEGINS" TO BE IN DANGER

In that same Constitution on the Liturgy the Council makes it clear that this sacrament is not exclusively for those at the point of death; rather it should be administered when a sick person (or an old person) *begins* to be in danger:

Extreme Unction, which may also and more fittingly be called the 'the Anointing of the Sick' is not a sacrament reserved only for those who are at the point of death. Hence, as soon as anyone of the faithful begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age, the most fitting time for him to receive the sacrament has, beyond all doubt, arrived. (no. 73).

This same language was later translated into the new Code of Canon Law; this sacrament "can be administered to any member of the faithful who, having reached the use of reason, *begins to be in danger of death* from illness or old age." (Can. 1004, sect. 1, emphasis added.)

NOT TO BE DENIED

The new Code of Canon Law reflects the desire of the Church that as many as possible of its sick members may avail themselves of this sacrament, and if at all possible, no one should be denied it. It may even be repeated, if necessary. It may be repeated in two instances: (a) "if the sick person, having recovered, again becomes seriously ill"; or (b) "if in the same illness, the danger becomes more serious." (Can. 1004, sect. 2)

If there is any doubt whatsoever as to whether the sacrament may or may not be administered, the doubt must be resolved in favor of the sick person. This seems to be the intent of Canon 1005: "If there is any doubt as to whether the sick person has reached the age of reason, or is dangerously ill, or is dead, the sacrament is to be administered."

If the person asks for the sacrament, even implicitly (obviously, more so if explicitly) he is not to be refused. This is not only in keeping with the general principle previously quoted ("*rationabiliter petentibus non denegatur sacramentum*") but is also the explicit provision of the new Code: "The sacrament is to be administered on the sick who, when they were in possession of their faculties, at least implicitly asked for it." (Can.

1006). Moreover, there is an obligation incumbent upon "pastors of souls and those who are close to the sick"; they are "to ensure that the sick are helped by this sacrament in good time." (Can. 1001)

The Code specifies one class of persons to whom the sacrament is not to be administered, namely "those who obstinately persist in manifestly grave sin" (Can. 1007). Those four modifiers are worth noting: the sin must be *grave*; it must be *manifestly* so; the patient *persists* in it; and does so *obstinately*.

Who would fall under this category? Those perhaps who make their money by running abortion clinics? Those who belong to forbidden societies and refuse to give up their membership? Those involved in concubinage and refuse to regularize their condition? Usurers and others who are publicly known to have defrauded others and refuse to make restitution? We leave the answers to these questions to the moralists.

But certainly, even here, if there is at all any doubt about the gravity of the sin or about the obstinacy of the patient, the doubt should be resolved in the patient's favor. *Sacramenta sunt propter homines*: the sacraments are for the benefit of people, to bring them the Lord's mercy.

For greater solemnity and to help arouse sentiments of devotion in both patients and bystanders, the Code allows (we might even say, encourages) the "communal celebration of the anointing of the sick." Such "communal celebrations" for a number of sick persons "who have been appropriately proposed and are rightly disposed" may be held in accordance with diocesan regulations (Can. 1002).

THE NEW RITUAL

The new Code of Canon Law (1983) prescribes that "the anointing of the sick... is conferred by anointing them with oil and pronouncing the words prescribed in the liturgical books" (Can. 998). That provision presupposes two changes in the old ritual of anointing: a change with regard to the "oil" and a change with regard to the words.

The old (pre-Vatican) legislation made the use of olive oil mandatory. The word "olive" is omitted in the new code. This change was explained by Pope Paul VI in the Apostolic Constitu-

tion (*Sacram unctionem infirmorum* of 30 November 1972) by which he promulgated the new ritual for this sacrament: as olive oil may be unobtainable in some regions, "another kind of oil may be used, provided it is derived from plants and is thus similar to olive oil."

The other change is in the words of the formula. Here, we note a shift of emphasis. In the ancient (pre-Vatican) formula, the emphasis had been on the forgiveness of sins, that is on spiritual healing, the healing of the soul: "Per istam sanctam, unctionem, ejusque piissimam misericordiam, indulgeat tibi Deus quidquid deliquisti" ("By this holy anointing and His great mercy, may God forgive you whatever sins you have committed") — specifying the particular sense-organ that was anointed (per visum, auditum, tactum, etc.) The new formula has a different emphasis. The forgiveness of sins is still mentioned but not in what the grammarians would call *in recto* but *in obliquo*. The new emphasis is on the grace of the Holy Spirit coming to the sick person and the consequences of that grace.

The reason for this change in the formula is also explained in the same Apostolic Constitution by which Paul VI promulgated the new ritual: "We have thought fit to change the sacramental form in such a way that by reflecting the words of James, it may better express the effects of this sacrament." The reference of course is to the well-known passage in the Epistle of James:

Is there anyone sick among you? He should ask for the presbyters of the Church. They in turn are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer uttered in faith will reclaim the one who is ill, and the Lord will restore him to health. If he has committed any sins, forgiveness will be his. — (James 5:14-15. New American Bible)

The new formula ("reflecting the words of James") provides *normally* (barring emergencies and difficulties) for two anointings, on the forehead and on the hand. In anointing the forehead the priest says:

Through this holy anointing
may the Lord in love and mercy
help you with the grace of the
Holy Spirit. — Amen.

In anointing the hand he says:

May the Lord, who frees you
from sin, save you and raise
you up. Amen.

"BE OF GOOD HEART"

The sacrament of anointing is the Church's way of bringing the sick person into contact with the Suffering Christ. This is expressed by Vatican II in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen gentium*):

By the sacred anointing of the sick and the prayer of the priests, the whole Church commends the sick to the suffering and glorified Lord, asking that He may lighten their suffering and save them. She exhorts them moreover to contribute to the welfare of the whole People of God by associating themselves freely with the passion and death of Christ. — *Lumen gentium*, no. 11.

That passage (echoed in the new Code of Canon Law) reflects several passages in the New Testament. For instance, from Romans: "we are heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so as to be glorified with him." (Rom. 5:17)

The sacrament of anointing also brings the sick person into contact with the healing power of Christ. In the Gospels we are told that Jesus associated the healing of the soul — by the forgiveness of sins — with the healing of the body. To the paralytic who had been lowered from the roof He said, "Be of good heart, son, your sins are forgiven." Later He said, "Take up your bed and walk." (Luke 5:17 ff.) To the man who had been sick for thirty-eight years, Jesus said, "Do you want to be healed?" He then told him to stand up and the man was cured. Later He told the man, "Go and sin no more." (John 5:1 ff.)

By the sacrament of anointing, the Church brings the sick person in contact with this double healing power of Jesus: healing of the soul, and frequently also, healing of the body. Many of those who have received this sacrament can testify to an extraordinary feeling of joy that it produces. The body might remain sick (though bodily cure is not infrequent), but the person who has been anointed has a feeling of peace, as if a burden has been lifted; as if the soul has been healed and is ready for the immediate vision of God. It is not precisely a sacrament for the *dying*; but the sick feel fortified to meet death bravely — even joyfully — when it comes.

The Diocesan Curia

The Diocesan Curia is governed by canons 469-494 — 26 canons in all — which constitute the whole Chapter II, under Title III (The Internal Ordering of Particular Churches) of Section II — Part II of the new Code of Canon Law.

The first canon, c. 469, tells us what the Diocesan Curia is composed of, and the purpose of its establishment or existence:

“The Diocesan Curia is composed of those institutes and persons who assist the Bishop in governing the entire diocese, especially in directing pastoral action, in providing for the administration of the diocese, and in exercising judicial power.”

We can distinguish two elements which constitute a diocesan Curia:

- a—the material element — which is the building where the business and legal offices of the diocesan curia are located. This is commonly called as the Diocesan Chancery.
- b—the formal element — which are the institutes and persons who in a stable way assist the Bishop in the exercise of his pastoral office in the diocese. The 1917 CIC mentioned only persons; the new CIC mentions *institutes* also and persons.

I — DIOCESAN CHANCERY

The First Plenary Council of the Philippines, Decree No. 117, has prescribed the establishment of the Diocesan Curia:

“In each and every diocese, there should be a well-established Diocesan Curia which should be distinguished for the cleanliness of the archive, for the orderly filing of the documents, for the dedication and diligence of the officials in the faithful discharge of their respective duties.”

For the establishment of the Diocesan Chancery, I propose the following suggestions:

1. The Diocesan Chancery, if possible, must be a separate building from the Bishop's Residence — In this way the office hours can be strictly enforced and better observed. It should be accessible by public transportation and it can be contacted by means of the Long Distance Telephone from places inside and outside the country.

2. If the building is not big enough and the business transaction is not much, especially in small dioceses or newly created dioceses, the Vicar General, Chancellor and Financial Administrator (Economus) share one room with a table for each.

3. The Bishop must have his own office — which is not too exposed to the public — to provide privacy and secrecy. If it is 2-storey building — his office must be in the second floor — with an intercom connecting to all the other offices and with his own private telephone.

4. The secretaries can be placed in one general office with different tables — one of them acting as receptionist at the same time.

In the Chancery, it is prescribed that a safe place be set aside for the diocesan archive. According to the new Code there are three kinds of archives:

- a) *General archive* — “where documents and writings concerning both the spiritual and the temporal affairs of the diocese are to be properly filed and carefully kept under lock and key (c. 486, 2). A catalogue of all these documents, with a short synopsis of each document must be made.
- b) *Secret archive* — in which documents which ought to be kept under secrecy shall be most carefully guarded (c. 489, 1). However, “each year documents of criminal cases concerning moral matters are to be destroyed whenever the guilty parties have died, or ten years have elapsed since a condemnatory sentence concluded the affair. A short summary of the facts is to be kept, together with the text of the definitive judgment” (c. 489, 2).

Concerning the secret archive, c. 490 prescribes:

- 1) Only the Bishop is to have the key to the secret archive.

- 2) When the see is vacant, it is not to be opened except in a case of real necessity, and then by the diocesan Administrator personally.
- 3) Documents are not to be removed from the secret archive
- c) *Historical archive* — in which documents of historical value are carefully kept and systematically filed (c. 491, 2).

In this archive, a copy of the inventory of the acts and documents of the archives of cathedral, collegiate, parochial and other churches in the diocese must be kept, the other copy is to remain in its own archive (c. 491, 1).

II — DIOCESAN CURIA PERSONNEL

According to the New Code, the following are the officials of the Diocesan Curia: Vicar General, Episcopal Vicar, Moderator Curiae, Chancellor, Notaries, Financial Administrator, Judicial Vicar and his staff. They must promise to fulfill their office faithfully and to observe secrecy (c. 471).

1 — *Vicar General* — who assists the Bishop in the governance of the whole diocese. There must be at least one Vicar General. If the size of the diocese, the number of inhabitants or other pastoral reasons so demand, (difference in dialects, for example), several Vicars General can be appointed. The Vicar General has ordinary power (c. 475) — executive, not legislative nor judicial — that is, he can perform all administrative acts, with the exception of those which the Bishop has reserved to himself, or which by law requires a special mandate (c. 479, 1).

If there is a Coadjutor or Auxiliary Bishop, he has to be appointed Vicar General (c. 406).

2 — *Episcopal Vicar* — one or more — who have the same ordinary power of the Vicar General — but limited only to a determined part of the diocese, or to a specific type of activity, or to the faithful of a particular rite or to certain groups of people, (c. 476). Matters which the Bishop reserves to himself or to the Vicar General, or which by law requires a special mandate of the Bishop, are excepted (c. 479, 2).

The Vicar General and the episcopal Vicar are freely appointed by the Bishop, and can be freely removed by him (c.

477). They constitute one person with the Bishop. So they are never to act against the will and mind of the Bishop and must give a report to him concerning more important matters (c. 480).

Within the limits of their competence, the Vicar General and the episcopal Vicar have also those habitual faculties granted to the Bishop by the Apostolic See. They may also execute rescripts, unless it is expressly provided otherwise, or unless the execution was entrusted to the Bishop on a personal basis (c. 480). The Vicar General and the Episcopal Vicar are Local Ordinaries (c. 134).

The power of the Vicar General or episcopal Vicar ceases when the period of their mandate expires, or by resignation, or when they are notified of their removal by the Bishop, or when the episcopal see falls vacant (c. 481).

The Vicar General and the episcopal Vicar are to be priests (ad validitatem) of not less than 30 years of age, with a doctorate or licentiate in Canon Law or Theology, or at least well versed in these disciplines. They are to be known for their sound doctrine, integrity, prudence and practical experience (c. 478, 1).

The office of Vicar General or episcopal Vicar may not be united with the office of canon penitentiary, nor may the office be given to blood relations of the Bishop up to the 4th degree (c. 478, 2).

The Episcopal Vicars should not fail to have frequent dialogue with the Vicar General and other co-workers of the Bishop according to the procedure determined by the Bishop in order to stabilize unity of discipline among the clergy and people and reap more abundant fruits in the diocese (*Ecclesiae Sanctae*, Normae 1, n. 14).

A request refused by the Vicar General or Episcopal Vicar, cannot be granted validly by another Vicar of the same Bishop, even when the reasons of the refusal have been considered.

A request refused by a Vicar General or Episcopal Vicar, but later granted by the Bishop, is invalid when no mention of the refusal has been made to the Bishop. But if the Bishop has refused a request although mention of it has been made, the request cannot be validly obtained from a Vicar General or Episcopal Vicar, without the consent of the Bishop (*Ecclesiae Sanctae* Normae 1, 14).

3 — *Moderator Curiae* — who has to be appointed by the Bishop, if useful, in order to coordinate under the Bishop's authority all the activities concerning administrative matters, and to ensure that the others who belong to the curia properly fulfill the offices entrusted to them. If possible, the Vicar General is to be appointed Moderator Curiae or, if there are several Vicars General, one of them (c. 473).

4 — *Chancellor* — who is appointed by the Bishop (c. 470). His principal office is to ensure that the acts of the Curia are drawn up and dispatched and that they are kept safe in the archive of the Curia. If it is considered necessary, the Chancellor may be given an assistant who is to be called the Vice-Chancellor. Both the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor are automatically notaries and secretaries of the Curia (c. 482). They can be freely removed by the Bishop (c. 485).

Other notaries, besides the Chancellor and/or Vice-Chancellor may be appointed by the Bishop if necessary. It is not necessary that the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and other notaries be priests; they may be lay person. A priest is necessary only in cases in which the reputation of another priest could be jeopardized. They be of good character and above reproach (c. 483).

Canon 474 prescribed: "Acts of the Curia which of their ment for validity, be signed by the Ordinary from whom they nature are designed to have a juridical effect must, as a require is bound to notify the Moderator Curiae about these acts." Curia or a notary (though not for validity). The Chancellor emanate. They must also be signed by the Chancellor of the

And according to c. 484, the office of notary involves:

- 1—writing acts and documents concerning decrees, arrangements, obligations, and other matters which require their intervention;
- 2—faithfully recording in writing what is done, and signing the document, with a note on the place, the day, the month and the year;
- 3—while observing all that must be observed, showing acts or documents from the archives to those who lawfully request them, and verifying that copies conform to the original.

Aside from the duties attached to the office of the Chancellor according to the New Code, the Bishop usually entrusts to him other functions, such as:

1. to write and issue Pastoral Letters and Circulars to the priests and people;

2. to answer the official letters of the Bishop;

3. to read national and local dailies and to gather clippings of news item and articles which have some importance in the pastoral life of the diocese;

4. to act as Diocesan Chroniclers to keep written record of important events in the diocese, ordinations to the priesthood or episcopacy, etc.

5. to keep record in a special book for this purpose of all letters and telegrams coming in and sent out from the Bishop's office.

6. If the diocese is small and there is a shortage of priests, the Bishop may appoint the Chancellor as his Vicar General and/or Financial Administrator, and even as his private secretary at the same time. Usually in this case, he lives in the Bishop's residence and has no parish assignment, although he may celebrate Mass in the parish churches.

III — DIOCESAN FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATOR

This office is a new creation of the new code of Canon Law; in the old 1917 Code, the Diocesan Economist (as it was usually called) was not an official of the Diocesan Curia. At present it is compulsory for each diocese, and its establishment, functions and term of office are clearly determined in c. 494:

1—"In each diocese, a financial administrator is to be appointed by the Bishop, after consulting the college of consultors and the Diocesan Finance Committee. The diocesan financial administrator is said to be expert in financial matters."

2—"The financial administrator is to be appointed for 5 years and may be re-appointed for further terms of 5 years." This is required to stabilize the financial administration.

3—It is the responsibility of the diocesan financial administrator, under the authority of the Bishop, to administer the goods

of the diocese in accordance with the plan of the Diocesan Finance Committee, and to make those payments legitimately authorized by the Bishop, and to make a yearly financial report of income and expenditure.

4—The diocesan financial administrator — also helps the Bishop to supervise the administration of all the goods which belong to public juridical persons in the diocese (c. 1276, 1), and to assume the management of public juridical persons that lack an administrator of their own (c. 1279, 2).

Aside from the general functions which have been mentioned above, the diocesan financial administrator has the following specific functions in the diocese:

1. As ex-officio-member of the Diocesan Finance Committee, to prepare the diocesan annual budget.

2. To receive, invest, disburse and account monies.

3. To make an inventory of church real properties in the diocese and in the parishes, and to see to it that they are duly registered and titled.

4. To make idle lands of the Church productive.

5. To make inventory of the movable goods of the church in diocese and in the parishes, and have them updated regularly.

6. To administer the diocesan pension plan, hospitalization plan and burial services plan of the Clergy — and to study if parish church workers and convento boys can be included.

7. To remind the priests to make their last wills and deposit them sealed in the Chancery.

8. To revise the diocesan arancel to make it responsive to the needs of the clergy and to present it for approval to the Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province (c. 952 & c. 1264).

9. To study if some amount to be taken from the general fund of the diocese, according to the Arancel, can be used to subsidize poor parishes every month.

10. To enter into binding contracts and obligations, the Diocesan Financial Administrator needs a specific power of attorney from the Roman Catholic Bishop, corporation sole — for the civil effects.

11. To review all contracts of lease of Church properties in the diocese, and in the parishes when they expire, before they can be renewed, in order to make the necessary rental adjustments.

12. To audit the finances of the different mandated organizations in the diocesan and parochial level yearly.

INSTITUTES IN THE DIOCESAN CURIA

Talking about the Diocesan Curia, canon 469 makes mention not only of persons but also of those institutes which assist the Bishop in governing the entire diocese.

These institutes which are also part of the Diocesan Curia are the following:

1. *Episcopal Council* (c. 473, 4) — composed of the Vicars General and Episcopal Vicars, to be established by the Bishop where he judges it useful for the better promotion of pastoral action in the diocese.

2. *The Diocesan Finance Committee* (cc. 492-493) — In order to assist the Bishop in the discharge of his duties concerning the administration of all ecclesiastical goods in his jurisdiction, canon 492 prescribes that he establishes a Finance Committee under his chairmanship consisting of at least three members, who are not necessarily priests but can be a layman or a laywoman, provided they are "expert in financial affairs and civil law, and of outstanding integrity." The Bishop himself is to appoint the members for a five-year term of office with the possibility of a reappointment for an equal period of time.

Among its varied functions mentioned in cc. 1254-1310, the Diocesan Finance Committee has:

1 — to prepare each year a budget of income and expenditure over the coming year for the governance of the whole diocese, in accordance with the direction of the Bishop.

2 — to approve the report of receipts and expenses at the end of the year (c. 493).

Canon 1277 enjoins on the Bishop to consult always the Diocesan Finance Committee concerning matters of administration which are of major importance, and to ask their consent concerning acts of extraordinary administration (i.e. when it

involves the amount of \$20,000 and above, or its peso equivalent as determined by the Catholic Bishop's Conference of the Philippines).

The CBCP has also determined in accordance with canon 1297 that the diocesan bishop shall consult the Diocesan Finance Committee in the lease of Church property whenever the term of lease is from 5 to 10 years and the value of the property is between \$10,000 and \$20,000 or its peso equivalent.

If the term of lease is 10 years and above and the value of the property is between \$20,000 and \$100,000, or its peso equivalent, the diocesan bishop needs the consent of the Diocesan Finance Committee.

If the period is less than 10 years and the value is more than \$20,000, the diocesan bishop shall need the consent of the Diocesan Finance Committee.

The drafting of the lease contract shall be entrusted to the lawyer of the diocese who shall see to it that, according to the prescriptions of civil law, the conditions of the contract will not be prejudicial to the Church.

3. *Council of the Priests* (cc. 495-501) — A mandatory body of priests who represent the presbyterium, as the Bishop's senate, in order to assist him in accordance with the law, in the governance of the diocese, so that the pastoral welfare of that portion of the people of God entrusted to the Bishop may be most effectively promoted (c. 495).

The Council of priests has only a consultative vote and can never act without the Bishop. It is the prerogative of the Bishop to approve its own statutes, to convene it, to preside over it, and to determine the matters to be discussed in it or to accept items proposed by the members (c. 500). He has to consult it in matters of more serious importance, such as:

- a — the advisability of a diocesan synod (c. 461, 1).
- b — the erection, modification, division and suppression of parishes (c. 515, 2).
- c — the determination of the use of offerings of the faithful made on the occasion of parish services and placed in a general parish fund (c. 531).

- d — the appropriateness of parish councils (c. 536, 1).
- e — the granting of permission to build a church (c. 1215, 2).
- f — the granting of permission for a church to be converted to secular purposes (c. 1222, 2).
- g — the imposition of a tax for diocesan needs on public juridic persons (c. 1263).

4. *College of Consultors* (c. 502) — A group of between 6 to 12 priests chosen by the Bishop for a 5-year term from among the members of the Council of Priests to exercise various functions prescribed by law.

The Bishop is to obtain their consent:

- a — to perform acts of extraordinary administration (c. 1277).
- b — to alienate diocesan property (c. 1292, 1).
- c — to authorize alienation within minimal and maximal sums in case of other juridic persons (c. 1293, 1).

5. *Diocesan Pastoral Council* (cc. 511-514) — This is to be established in so far as pastoral circumstances recommend, whose function, under the authority of the Bishop, is to study and weigh those matters which concern the pastoral works in the diocese, and to propose practical conclusions concerning them (c. 511). Its members are designated in the manner determined by the Bishop to see to it that the Pastoral Council truly reflects the entire portion of the people of God in the diocese, taking account of the different regions of the diocese, of social conditions and professions, and of the part played in the apostolate by the members, whether individually or in association with others. They must be outstanding in firm faith, high moral standards and prudence (c. 512).

According to the present practice, the officers of the Council of the Laity, Council of the Religious, Council of the Priests and the Directors of the Diocesan Commission on Worship, Education and Social Action or Service are ex-officio members of the Diocesan Pastoral Council. Other members are appointed by the Bishop. They have only a consultative vote, and are convened by the Bishop alone at least once a year (c. 514).

6. *Council of the Religious* — In a diocese where there are many Religious — men and women — usually there is an Association of Religious Men and another of Religious Women.

Since they live and work within the confines of the diocese, they do not consider themselves as outsiders, but rather as living members of the diocese, ready to be of the greatest help to the local Church. For this reason, the Bishop may avail of their help by means of establishing the Council of the Religious whose members may be the officers of both Associations of Religious — men and women. Through this Council of the Religious, the Bishop can promote mutual esteem, charity and the coordination of their special apostolic activities both among the various religious in Institutes and between them and the diocesan clergy and the other working groups in the diocese (*Christus Dominus*, 35, 5). Through this Council of the Religious, the Bishop can bring diocesan and religious priests together frequently so that they may become better acquainted, have greater esteem for one another, feel their priestly fraternity more deeply, and by joint effort exercise the Sacred Ministry more fruitfully; and in this the faithful will receive greater edification (*De Sacerdotio Ministeriali*, Part 2, II, 2). An Episcopal Vicar for the Religious may be appointed by the Bishop to this effect.

7. *Council of the Laity* — Since the laity constitute almost the entire diocese, the Bishop has to exert efforts to know the lay people — so that he may correctly and effectively extend his pastoral solicitude.

For this purpose, it is very useful that the Bishop establishes the Council of Laity. It can be composed by the Diocesan officers of the different religious organizations of the Lay Apostolate in the diocese. The Bishop can appoint other members. They have only a consultative vote.

Through the Council of the Laity, every layman can reveal openly his needs and desires with that freedom and confidence which befits a son of God and a brother of Christ. An individual layman, by reason of the knowledge, competence, or outstanding ability which he may enjoy, is permitted and sometimes even obliged to express his opinion on things which concern the good of the Church — in truth, in courage, and in prudence, with reverence and charity to the Bishop (*Lumen Gentium*, 37). An Episcopal Vicar for the Laity may be appointed by the Bishop to this effect.

Archbishop M. SALVADOR, D.D., J.C.D.

CASES AND INQUIRIES

1. MARRIAGE SOLEMNIZED BY DEACONS

It is a fact that deacons may now normally solemnize marriages in the Church. Are marriages solemnized by them recognized as valid by the State? In order words, will those marriages have the civil effects as the marriages solemnized by priests?

A Deacon

Let us start by making a clarification. If by *normally* is meant that deacons *delegated* according to the law may solemnize marriages in the Church, the affirmation of our consultant is correct. But if our consultant thinks that deacons may solemnize marriages in the Church *without any delegation*, his affirmation is not correct. Deacons, just like ordinary priests, need delegation from the local Ordinary or from the parish priest of the place where the marriage is celebrated in order to solemnize marriages validly.

The questions in the case are directed to find out whether valid marriages solemnized by deacons in the Church are also valid before the State with all the effects enjoyed by a valid civil marriage. The answer is quite simple. If the deacons concerned have the authorization of the State to solemnize marriages, the marriages solemnized by them in the Church are also valid before the State with all civil effects. This applies to all marriages celebrated in the Church, whether solemnized by a Bishop, a parish priest, any other priest or deacon. Whoever solemnizes a marriage in the Church should have the State's authorization to solemnize marriages; otherwise, those marriages will be *canonically* valid, *civilly* invalid.

Article 92 of the Civil Code of the Philippines states: "Every priest, or minister, or rabbi authorized by his denomination, church, sect, or religion to solemnize marriage shall send to the proper government office a sworn statement setting forth his full name and domicile, and that he is authorized by his denomination, church, sect, or religion to solemnize marriage, attach-

ing to said statement a certified copy of his appointment. The director of the proper government office, upon receiving such sworn statement containing the information required and being satisfied that the denomination, church, sect, or religion of the applicant operates in the Philippines, shall record the name of such priest or minister in a suitable register and issue to him an authorization to solemnize marriage."

2. UNIFORMITY IN LITURGICAL ACTIONS

I thank you for the solution given to my case on the uniformity to be observed in performing liturgical functions. May I bother you again by asking the following: Whenever the celebrant or concelebrants are requested to extend their hands, are they free to extend their hands in any way or is there any rule to follow? It is really amazing to observe these things when there are many concelebrants. Some extend their hands with their palm facing downwards while other stretch them with their palm facing each other, facing the people, or upwards. In other words, there is no uniformity. What does the liturgy say about this?

A Priest

It is a good thing that somebody pays attention to these details in the practice of public worship while performing the actions required by law. Obviously, it is necessary for us, priests, to review these things from time to time. Quite easily we forget them. As a result, the rubrics are accurately described in the liturgical books. What is needed is to keep our interest in putting them into practice. From a careful reading of the rubrics concerning this matter, we can clearly distinguish two different situations, namely: a) when the celebrant or concelebrants extend their hands over the offerings, imploring God's blessing; and, b) when they direct their prayers to God, glorifying Him and asking His help.

a) In the first case, the celebrant or concelebrants extend their hands over or towards the offerings; *manibus ad oblata extensis*. It seems that the palm of their hands should be downwards towards the offerings, since the purpose is to implore God's blessing *over the offerings*.

b) In the second situation, when the celebrant or concelebrants praise God and ask for his help, as in the case during the recitation of the Lord's Prayer, it seems more natural and proper to extend their hands with their palms upwards.

Of course, there is nothing expressly stated regarding this matter in the rubrics.

3. NOVENAS DURING THE MASS

May I ask from your Reverence whether the Church allows Novena prayers during the Holy Mass? I firmly believe that the insertion of the Novena prayers during the Mass only distracts the attention of the faithful and interrupts their moment of dedication and meditation. We must not pray at Mass but rather pray the Mass. I have no objections whatsoever against the praying of Novena devotions, but it should be done before or after the Mass, in the same day that we recite the Rosary before or after the Mass. I think the attention of the faithful (during the Mass) should be centered in the Holy Sacrifice taking place at the Mass. Would you kindly give us a short comment on the matter?

A Christian Faithful

At the outset, I want to state (straight forward) my complete agreement with the opinion of our consultant that "*We must not pray at Mass but rather pray the Mass.*" The desire of the Church is that during the Mass our devotion should be entirely centered to the Divine Victim sacrificed for our redemption. No other pious exercise, whatever, (it might be) should be performed during the Mass.

(To my mind) There is no expressed prohibition to recite the prayers of a Novena during Mass. Such prohibition is however, entirely unnecessary, considering the spirit of the liturgical reform and the Church's earnest desire that the Eucharist be the center of ecclesiastical worship. Pope Pius VI, commenting on the cult to be given to the Virgin Mary, said: "However, what is not free from error is done in some places, i.e. to recite the Marian Rosary a liturgical action is performed" (AAS, 62, 1974, pp. 113-168, n. 46). Even the choral recitation of the Divine Office is not allowed in the church while the Mass is going on (Inst. on the *Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery*, n.

17). How much more the praying of a Novena or any other devotion, (should be discarded from the Mass). The attention of the faithful is to be directed to the Holy Sacrifice only. Whatever could divert this attention should be avoided.

In the absence of an explicit prohibition (which is not needed), we offer the complete answer given in April 1968 by the Council in charge of the Implementation of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (cfr. *Notitiae*, April, 1968, pp. 133-134), to a similar case. The Council was asked: "May some prayers in honor of the Virgin Mary or of the Saints be allowed during the Exposition of the Holy Sacrament?" The answer in full statement is as follows:

"Up to now there has been in some communities or groups a custom of practising some devotions to the Blessed Virgin, as for examples the Rosary, or the recitation of the Litany of the Saints' before the Holy Sacrament is exposed. It has been asked whether such custom conforms to the *Instruction on the Worship to the Eucharistic Mystery*, n. 62?

On one hand, it is to be noted that there is no explicit prohibition in the text of the Instruction. But, on the other hand a restrictive meaning should be given to the words of n. 62 of the Instruction: "*During the Exposition everything should be ordained in such a way that the mind of the faithful, praying, should be fixed in Christ the Lord.*" It means: "should be fixed *exclusively in Christ the Lord.*"

The word *exclusively*, used by the commentators, although it is not used in the text of the Instruction, however, expresses clearly the spirit of the law. Truly, the purpose of worship before the Holy Sacrament exposed is achieved only when the mind and heart of the faithful are centered in the Eucharistic Mystery, to be attained through the sacred silence, readings carefully taken from the Holy Scriptures, songs and prayers.

Other pious exercises, although good and worthy of being commended, draw, however, the attention to

other objects; consequently, they should be done at other times, either before or after the adoration and benediction with the Holy Sacrament.

Even, the Marian Rosary should be considered as a prayer to the Virgin Mary, not directed to Christ. It cannot be denied that the mysteries of Christ are meditated upon, while the words of the angelic greetings are recited. In reality, the essential part of this devotion is the repeated prayer to the Blessed Virgin."

There is another document where from we can draw the same conclusion. It is the *Ritual of the Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharistic outside the Mass*, issued on June 21, 1973. In numbers 95 and 96 it is stated:

"During the Exposition, the prayers, songs and readings should be ordained in such a way that the faithful, praying, fix their attention to Christ the Lord.

In order to foster devout prayer there should be readings from the Holy Scripture with homilies and exhortations, that should lead to a greater esteem of the Eucharistic Mystery. It is convenient also that the faithful answers with songs to the Word of God. At appropriate moments, sacred silence should also be observed."

In view of the foregoing, our answer to the question whether (it is allowed by) the Church allows (to pray) any Novena Prayer during the Holy Mass, is that the practice of praying a novena during the Mass should not be allowed.

EXCELSO GARCIA, O.P.

DOCUMENTATION

1. ERECTION OF THE DIOCESE OF ALAMINOS

JOANNES PAULUS EPISCOPUS
SERVUS SERVORUM DEI

ad perpetuam rei memoriam

DE SUPERNA animarum utilitate sollicitus censuit Venerabilis Frater Fridericus G. Limon, Archiepiscopus Lingayensis-Dagupanensis, bene fieri si quibusdam ab ipsius Ecclesia detractis territoriis alia ibi constitueretur dioecesis. Cumque id ab Apostolica Sede petiisset, post nempe auditos Conferentia in Insulis Philippinis Episcopos, Nos, ex sententia sive Venerabilium Fratrum Nostrorum S.R.E. Cardinalium qui Congregationi pro Episcopis praesunt, sive Venerabilis Fratris Brunonis Torpigliani, Archiepiscopi titulo Mallianensi atque in Insulis Philippinis Apostolici Nuntii, sequentia decernimus. Ab archidioecesi Lingayensi-Dagupanensi separamus territorium paroeciarum quae sunt: Sanctae Catharinae Alexandrinae, Agno; Sancti Joseph Patriarchae, Aguilar; Sancti Joseph Patriarchae, Alaminos; Sancti Marci Evangelistae, Alos, Alaminos; Sancti Nicolai Tolentinatis, Anda; Immaculatae Conceptionis Mariae Virginis, Bani; Sancti Jacobi Maioris, Bolinao; Nostrae Dominae de Pillar, Zaragosa Bolinao; Sancti Andreae, Bugallon; Nostrae Dominae Lourdensis, Salasa Bagallon; Sancti Isidori operarii, Burgos; Sancti Vicentii Ferrer, Dasol; Sancti Raphael Archangeli, Eguia, Dasol; Sancti Joannis Apostoli et Evangelistae, Infanta; Sancti Isidori operarii, Labrador; Divini Infantis Jesu, Mabini; Sancti Raimundi de Peñafort, Mungatarem; Sancti Petri Martiris, Sual et territorium quasi paroeciae, cui nomen Sancti Jacobi Maioris, Santiago Bolinao, iisque dioecesim condimus ALAMINENSEM appellandam iisdemque finibus circumscribendam quibus paroeciae, ac quasi paroecia de quibus diximus terminantur. Huius dioecesis noviter erectae episcopalis cathedra erit in templo Deo in honorem Sancti Josephi Sponsi B.V.M. dicato, in urbe cui nomen Alaminos, quod proinde templum ad gradum et dignitatem ecclesiae cathedralis evehimus, cuique insignia, privilegia et honores tribuimus, quibus cathedrales ecclesiae omnes fruuntur in orbe catholico. Nova dioecesis suffraganea erit metropolitanae Ecclesiae Lingayensi-Dagupanensi eiusque pro tempore Episcopus metropolitano iuri

eiusdem Archiepiscopi, atque obnoxia erit iurisdictioni Congregationis pro Episcopis. Consultorum collegium ad normam iuris quam primum instituatur. Congruae ac dignae Praesulis sustentationi provideatur Curiae emolumentis, fidelium oblationibus et portione obveniente ex divisione bonorum quae hucusque pertinuerunt ad mensam archiepiscopalem Lingayensem-Dagupanensem, ad normam canonis 122 C.J.C. Pro institutione iuvenum in Ecclesiae spem succrescentium, iuris communis praescripta servantur, prae oculis habitis quae a Congregatione pro Institutione Catholica statuuntur; selecti tamen Seminarii alumni philosophicis ac theologicis disciplinis imbuendi nec non sacerdotes ad studia complenda, Romam mittantur, ad Pontificium Collegium Philippinum. Quod autem attinet ad novae dioecesis regimen et administrationem, atque administratoris dioecesani electionem, sede vacante, fidelium iura et onera aliaque id genus, ad amussim servantur quae canones praescribunt. Atque simul ac dioecesis erectio ad effectum deducta fuerit, sacerdotes Ecclesiae illi adscripti censeantur in cuius territorio ecclesiasticum officium detinent, ceteri vero sacerdotes, clerici seminarii adulescentes incardinati maneant vel incardinentur Ecclesiae in cuius territorium legitimum habent domicilium. Acta et documenta quae forte respiciant dioecesim noviter erectam eiusque fideles et bona temporalia, a Curia Lingayensi-Dagupanensi ad Curiam Alaminensem de more transmittantur, in condendo tabulario servanda. Haec, quae praescripsimus, ad effectum adducat Venerabilis Frater Bruno Torpigliani, Archiepiscopus titulo Mallianensis, vel ab eo delegatus sacerdos, atque perfecti negotii documenta sinceris exemplis ad Congregationem pro Episcopis mittat, rite signata sigilloque impressa. Has vero Litteras Apostolicas sive nunc sive in posterum ratas esse volumus, contrariis nihil obstantibus. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die decimo secundo mensis Januarii, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo octogesimo quinto, Pontificatus Nostri septimo.

Augustinus Card. Casaroli
a Publicis Ecclesiae negotiis

Bernardinus Card. Gantin
Praefectus Congreg. pro Episcopis

Marcellus Rossetti, Proton. Apost.
Angelus Louzoni, Proton. Apost.

2. ERECTION OF THE DIOCESE
OF URDANETAJOANNES PAULUS EPISCOPUS
SERVUS SERVORUM DEI

ad perpetuam rei memoriam

Non raro catholicorum utilitas postulat ut alicuius ecclesiasticae circumscriptionis fines mutantur et nova disponantur ratione; quod cum contingit, Nostrum est diligenti cura consulere ut omnia bene cedant. Qua re, quoniam Venerabilis Frater Fridericus G. Limon, Archiepiscopus Lingayensis-Dagupanensis, ob magnam fidelium copiam in sua archidioecesi degentium, audita Conferentia Episcopali in Insulis Philippinis, postulavit ut distracto ab eadem archidioecesi territorio, nova constitueretur dioecesis, Nos, cognita propensa sententia Venerabilis Fratris Brunonis Torpigliani, Archiepiscopi titularis Mallianensis, in Insulis Philippinis Apostolici Nuntii, et auditis Venerabilibus Fratribus Nostris S.R.E. Cardinalibus Sacrae Congregationis pro Episcopis negotiis agendis praepositis, aequae fieri censuimus si postulationi concederemus. Hinc, Nostra Apostolica auctoritate et potestate, haec quae sequuntur decernimus, quorum interest vel eorum qui sua interesse praesumunt suppleto consensu. Ab archidioecesi Lingayensi-Dagupanensi detrahimus territorium harum paroeciarum, quae hic recensentur; The Holy Cross — Alcala; St. Louis Bertrand — Asingan; St. Adolfus — Balungao; The Holy Child — Binalonan; Our Lady of the Nativity — Natividad; St. Jude Thaddeus — Pozorrubio; St. Anthony of Padua — Rosales; St. Bartholomew — San Miguel; Our Lady of the Pillar — Sta. Maria; St. Nicholas of Tolentino — San Nicolas; St. Paschal Baylon — San Quintin; St. Thomas Aquinas — Sto. Tomas; Our Lady of Mt. Carmel — Sison; St. Patrick — Tayug; Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception — Umingan; Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception — Urdaneta; St. Anthony, the Abbot — Villasis; Our Lady of Mt. Carmel — Carmen, Rosales; insuper territorium harum quasi-Urdaneta; Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal — Panganiban, Tayug; St. Vincent Ferrer — Bantug, Asingan; et ex ita deducto utroque territorio novam constituimus dioecesim URDANETENSEM iisdem circumscriptionibus finibus, quibus idem duplex territorium in praesens definitur, eiusque sedem episcopalem in urbe Urdaneta collocamus et templum paroeciale ibidem situm et Conceptioni Immaculatae Beatae Mariae Virginis dica-

tum ad gradum et dignitatem Ecclesiae Cathedralis evehimus, insignibus et privilegiis ornatum, quae eiusmodi Ecclesiarum sunt propria. Eandem dioecesim suffraganeam facimus archidioecesi Lingayensi-Dagupanensi, eiusque Episcopum pro tempore, cum ceteris Praesulibus locorum Ordinariis per omnia exaequatum, iuri metropolitico Archiepiscopi Lingayensis-Dagupanensis subicimus. Ut autem Pastor noviter institutae dioecesis sicut decet adiuvetur, praecipimus ut quam primum collegium consultorum pro iure eligatur, et ad eius dignam et congruam sustentationem providendam, statuimus ut hoc fiat Curiae emolumentis, fidelium oblationibus et portione ei obventura ex divisione, ad normam canonis 112 C.J.C. facienda, bonorum quae hucusque mensae episcopalis Lingayensis-Dagupanensis fuerunt. Quod ad seminarium condendum et ad candidatorum formationem attinet, praescripta iuris communis servari volumus normasque a Sacra Congregatione pro Institutione Catholica statutas, simul monentes ut selecti seminarii alumni in philosophicis et theologicis disciplinis erudiendi, atque sacerdotes studiis penitus excolendi, Romam mittantur ad Pontificium Collegium Philippinum. Item servari sacros canones volumus, quoad novae dioecesis regimen et administrationem necnon, sede vacante, administratoris dioecesani electionem, fidelium iura et onera et alia id genus. Denique decernimus ut, dioecesis constitutione perfecta, sacerdotes Ecclesiae illi habeantur ascripti, in cuius territorio ecclesiasticum habeant officium; ceteri vero sacerdotes, clerici et seminarii alumni, illi Ecclesiae incardinati maneant vel incardinentur, in cuius territorio legitimum habeant domicilium; et acta atque instrumenta, quae ad constitutam dioecesim, ad eius fideles et ad bona temporalia forte contingant, a Curia Lingayensi-Dagupanensi ad Curiam Urdanetensem mittantur, ut in tabulario serventur. Haec omnia perficienda committimus Venerabili Fratri Brunoni Torpigliani, necessariis et opportunis eidem factis facultatibus etiam delegandi, ad effectum de quo agitur, quemlibet virum in ecclesiastica dignitate constitutum, onere imposito, re acta, instrumentorum sincera exempla ad Sacram Congregationem pro Episcopis mittendi, rite signata et sigillo impressa. Quae statuimus, nunc et in posterum firma servari iubemus. Contrariis quibuslibet nihil obstantibus. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die duodecimo mensis Januarii, anno millesimo nongentesimo octogesimo quinto, Pontificatus Nostri septimo.

Augustinus Card. Casaroli
a publicis Eccl. negotiis

Bernardinus Card. Jantin
Praefectus Congr. pro Episcopis

Marcellus Rossetti, Protonot. Apost.

HISTORY

Dominican Towns in Pangasinan

by

Fr. Edilberto V. Santos

*Note on the Change in Authorship**

SUAL

Location and Boundaries

A manuscript dating back to 1869 describes the town of Sual as having the shape of a shell.¹ This image is not immediately evident in the most recent maps. The picture that appears in today's map shows not so much the curved lines of a shell as the straight lines of a triangular fan. If the westernmost angle of Sual is imagined as the point where the lady holds the fan, the hypotenuse (the part of the fan nearest the lady's cheek) can easily be visualized as a line, the upper half of which is also the boundary of a portion of Lingayen Gulf, while the lower half is also the boundary of Labrador town. Continuing the clockwise movement, one can see in today's map that Sual

* For reasons of health and the consequent need of almost continuous and complete rest, the Very Rev. Pablo Fernández, O.P., is now passing on to his former student, Rev. Edilberto V. Santos, the task of writing the remaining articles in this column, until the series is finally completed. The former has given to the latter photostatic copies of the necessary materials, all of them primary sources; almost all, if we include a couple or so of secondary, supplementary sources. Fr. Fernández will be periodically giving the junior author additional materials and instructions to guide him in his writing, thereby incidentally reactivating the professor-student relationship of the years 1957-1961 in the U.S.T. Central Seminary.

Aside from the Licentiate in Sacred Theology which he obtained here, the incoming writer also holds a Bachelor of Arts in English (1958) from San Beda College, and a Master of Arts in history (1977) from the Ateneo University, where he was also for some time a research assistant of Rev. John N. Schumacher, S.J. He is presently engaged in parish apostolate in the diocese of Tarlac.

¹ Raimundo Suárez, O.P., *Apuntes curiosos sobre los pueblos de Pangasinán*, MS in APSR, section "Pangasinán," vol. 7, doc. 15a, fol. 187v.

is also bounded by the town of Mabini (southernmost tip towards the northwest) and the town of Alaminos (westernmost point towards the northeast), then back to the gulf where the clockwise movement started.

These two last-mentioned Pangasinan towns west of Sual, however, are not mentioned in the descriptions of the latter's boundaries for the years 1848 and 1869 and even as late as 1898. The 1898-source tells us that its immediate neighbor in the west was "the Zambales town of Balingcaguin,"² while the 1869-manuscript says that it was that of "Salapsap, [also] in Zambales."³ This province is mentioned in 1848 as the closest neighbor (west and north) of Sual,⁴ and (in 1877) as having a common, albeit not clearly defined, boundary with the western side of this town and, therefore, of Pangasinan.⁵

The eastern boundary of Sual during the above-mentioned period must have been roughly the same as the present. Labrador is described by the 1848-source as lying in the south,⁶ and by the 1869-source as located in the southeast,⁷ of the town. Both of them, as well as those of 1898 and 1877, mention the gulf east of Sual.⁸ The last-mentioned document, for example, says:

"[This town] has a beautiful seaport which is so situated that it is best-suited for shipping. The gulf is deep enough, wide enough and regarding its entrance there is no problem. The high mountain ranges that surround the town keep it from [destructive] winds, except in the east, where Sual opens its mouth to the waters of the sea. But even here it is enclosed by the mountains of the province of La Union just across the gulf."⁹

² Hilario María Ocio, O.P., *Monumento Dominicano*, MS in APSR, section "Ministerios," vol. 1, pp. 79-80.

³ Suárez, *ibid.*

⁴ Juan Ferrando, O.P., *Estado de la provincia del Santísimo Rosario en 1848*, MS in AUST, section "Provincia," vol. 10, fol. 22v.

⁵ Salvador Millán, O.P., *Descripción del pueblo de Sual: su fundación, su importancia, usos y costumbres de sus habitantes, número de sus curas y mejoras convenientes en él*, [5 or 9 June 1877], MS in APSR, section "Pangasinán," vol. 7, doc. 26, fol. 234v. This document speaks of a proposal to create a town out of Laoac, grouping together barangays from Pangasinan and Zambales. It also suggests that the mountains of Sual be the juridical boundaries between the two provinces.

⁶ Ferrando, *ibid.*

⁷ Suárez, *ibid.*

⁸ Millán, *ibid.*, fol. 232; and Ocio, *ibid.*, p. 79.

⁹ Millán, *ibid.*

Going back to geographical imagery, a second look at the present map shows that Sual's northeastern boundary which touches a portion of Lingayen Gulf is not really straight, but wavy, which make it appear similar to a portion of the lips of a shell. Sual, therefore, as the above-mentioned 1868-document says, looks like a shell, after all.¹⁰

Foundations and Constructions

Even a casual look at the present-day map will show that, in land area, Sual is bigger than Labrador. And yet, Sual used to be just a part of Labrador. It was a *barrio* of the town, a *visita* of the parish.

It all began when some inhabitants of the mother town conceived the idea of establishing themselves for good in the vicinity of the port of Sual. To this end, they made representations with the governor-general of the Philippines, Don Rafael Ma. de Agilar, who then decided to act favorably on the petition. He issued a decree on 20 May 1805, declaring the new settlement an independent town. In the ecclesiastical forum, however, it remained within the jurisdiction of the parish of San Isidro Labrador, because the number of inhabitants was not yet large enough to support a pastor of their own.¹¹ Subsequently, on 10 July 1832, the provincial governor of Pangasinan, Don Félix de la Peña, formally applied for a stipend (*dotación*) to meet the needs of a parish priest exclusively for the new town,¹² and, in 1835, Sual was declared an independent parish, under the patronage of St. Peter the Martyr of Verona. The priest who was appointed to handle it was Fr. Gabriel Pérez, O.P., presumably because he was the one who worked for its creation. He had, up to then, been, for a few months, the parish priest of Labrador. And in 1837, the provincial chapter accepted Sual as a vicariate, he was also the one designated as its vicar.¹³

¹⁰ Suárez, *ibid.*

¹¹ Valentín Marín y Morales, O.P., *Ensayo de una síntesis de los trabajos realizados por las corporaciones religiosas de Filipinas* (Manila: Imprenta de Santo Tomás, 1901), vol. 2, p. 657; Ocio, *ibid.*, pp. 79-80; and Millán, *ibid.*

¹² It is, however, doubtful whether such stipend was given in due time. Millán (*ibid.*, fol. 232v), talking of the years 1835 to 1877, says that, in Sual "carece el cura párroco hasta de los recursos indispensables para su subsistencia."

¹³ Morales, *ibid.*; Ocio, *ibid.*; Millán, *ibid.*; and José Ma. González, O.P., *Labor Evangélica y Civilizadora de los Religiosos Dominicos en Pangasinán (1587-1898)* (Manila: U.S.T. Press, 1946), p. 100.

Here in Sual, Fr. Pérez began the construction of the first convent, which was completed by his immediate successor, Fr. Juan Gutiérrez, and of the church, which was brought to its completion in 1870, probably by Fr. Pedro Vilanova.¹⁴ The convent was made of what one chronicler described as "incorruptible wood."¹⁵ The church, like the convent, rested on strong wooden posts commonly known then as *harigues*,¹⁶ and it had that type of thin wall referred to at that time as "Pampangan" (*tabique pampango*). The latter is a quadrilateral, mat-like structure, made of thin, narrow strips of soft bamboo or of wood interlaced with each other and, at that time but not today, plastered with a coat of fine white lime.¹⁷

As already mentioned earlier in connection with Labrador, Fr. Pedro Casanova built an imposing bridge (in 1842 or 1843) on the road between this town and the town of Sual, in the place called Oyong. As late as 1898, this bridge could still be seen there, but in ruins.¹⁸ Fr. Eugenio Mínguez, for his part, had a sewerage system constructed in the town. He was also responsible for the opening of a new road going to Zambales and for the completion (in 1891) of a new church which had been started in 1883 by Fr. Félix Casas and which was described by a 1901-book as "the present church."¹⁹

¹⁴ Suárez, *ibid.*; and Ocio, *Compendio de la Reseña Biográfica de los Religiosos de la Provincia del Santísimo Rosario de Filipinas* (Manila: Establecimiento Tipográfico del Real Colegio de Sto. Tomás, 1895), p. 636.

¹⁵ Ocio, *Monumento Dominicana*, p. 79. The phrase "*modera incorruptible*" becomes easy to understand if one sees for himself the hard, massive wood of which old convents in the Philippines are made, such, for example, as those of Minalin and of Santa Ana, both in Pampanga.

¹⁶ Spanish version of the original Tagalog *haligi*.

¹⁷ Suárez, *ibid.* This type of wall was also used even in the far away Visayas during this period. The bishop of Cebu, Fray Romualdo Gimeno, in his report to Rome, dated 10 January 1858, says that, in his diocese, "most of the parishes have churches with *harigues* and *tabique pampango*." He then hastens to define the latter as something "*que consiste en ciertos listones o cañas entrelazadas con paletada de argamasa por ambos lados*." (Archivo Segreto Vaticano, "Nominis Jesu seu Caebuan.", n. 691 [unpaginated]). This document on microfilm is part of the collection of Rev. John N. Schumacher, S.J.

Approaching the above-quoted definition of *tabique pampango* are the three movable partition walls recently installed between the sacristy and the presbytery of the cathedral of Tarlac. This is the "wood" variety. The "bamboo" variety (my apologies to professors of logic) is found in what are called "*sawali* walls" of houses very common in the Philippines to this minute.

¹⁸ Ocio, *Compendio*, *ibid.*, p. 667.

¹⁹ Morales, *ibid.*

Lifestyle as of 1877

In a document dated 5 (or 9?) June 1877, Fr. Salvador Millán, then parish priest of Sual since 1875 or thereabouts, gives a "snapshot" of the town and of its inhabitants, beginning his report with a sort of an inventory. The public buildings here, according to him, are a run-down church,²⁰ a priest's convent in good condition, a municipal hall, and schoolhouses made of strong materials although lacking the necessary equipment like tables, inkstands, visual aids and the like. As regards the private buildings in the town proper, it is not worth talking about them, he says. It is not worth talking about the two or three stone houses, the few wooden houses, and the cluster of extremely poor nipa huts.²¹

The majority of the people live in the small valleys along the mountain ranges of Pangasinan close to Zambales. Their houses are far — very far — from one another. And where there is a cluster of houses here and there, the number is just 3 or 4 or 5, or a little more, but never reaching twelve. All in all, there are around 200 houses in the town proper, outside of which there are eleven barrios, each with a local chieftain...²² He then continues painting a picture of the people, and the portrait is not exactly very pleasing to the eyes. Here are his own words:

"Concerning the livelihood and way of life of its inhabitants, this town is among the most stagnant in the province. All what they do here is to cultivate just a little portion of the extensive arable land. They plant rice and an insignificant number of sugarcane...

"One clear sign that they lack interest in work is that, while they have the sea constantly splashing on their houses, there is not a single fisherman in the entire town, and they have to go to the next town to buy fish for their meals. Also, they don't lift a finger in the loading of ships. People from other towns have to come and do the work. Their forests are teeming with lumber, the best kind and the most abundant in the whole province, and yet only very few of them are occupied in timber-

²⁰ "... un camarín, o iglesia, de arigues y tabique de caña, que amenaza pronta ruina..." (Millán, *ibid.*, fol. 232). This was in 1877, and the church was presumably the one built by Fr. Pérez and Fr. Vilanova. From 1883 to 1891, as mentioned above, a new church was built by Fr. Casas and Fr. Mínguez.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, fol. 232-232v.

cutting and very seldom at that, due to the difficulty, little or of hauling. And so they are all living in misery and there is not a single one in the entire town who is not poor.

"The languages which the inhabitants of Sual speak are Pangasinan, which is the one common in the province, and also Ilocano, because the majority of them are migrants from the Ilocos...

"Some of them go to the lowlands to hear mass on holydays. During the principal feasts, almost all of them do.

"Their religious practices are far from satisfactory, because of their isolation and their distance from the church. Aside from those who live in the town proper and a few who go to the lowlands for the mass on holydays, these people do not have the opportunity to hear the voice of the priest, except when he does the difficult work of making rounds of the barrios or ministering to the sick. On such occasions, he talks to them.

"They are extremely superstitious. Their fake healers, including many of their old women, try to cure all illnesses, basing the process on superstitions of the rarest kind. Sometimes, they change the name of the sick person because, according to them, the saint whose name he received at baptism does not have the power or the willingness to bring back his health, and the new one which they give him will bring it back. At other times, they kill an animal, cook part of it, pronounce certain formulas and, afterwards, eat it. That way, the sick will supposedly get well. Sometimes also, especially in cases of difficult childbirth, they create noise under the house to scare away the *aniani* who, they say, is the carrier of diseases. They have many other superstitious which the zeal of the parish priest cannot uproot because those who practise these things do not go to the lowlands to hear mass, and, even if they do go down, they seldom report these practices to the priest because they do not like them to be corrected.

"Their principal pastimes are playing cards (like *monte panguingui*); lottery and cockfighting; *topa* and *calit*.²³ Their dress is the one common in the Philippines. Men generally go

²³ Native speakers of Pangasinan whom the present writer consulted could not recognize the words *topa* and *calit*. The two Tagalog words *monte* and *panguingui* are still in use today, but this present writer has had no time to go to gambling houses to do research on their precise meanings.

barefoot, but a few of them wear half-boots. They wear trousers, shirt and *salacot*.²⁴ Women, also generally barefoot, wear *saya* and *tapis*.²⁵ Ilocano women wear long *tapis*. In going to church, they cover their heads with an handkerchief, if they are single; with a veil, if they are married."²⁶

Fr. Millán then adds that it is physically very difficult for the priest to reach his people, most of whom, as he mentions above, are thinly scattered over a very wide area. The shortest distance between the convent and the boundary of Sual is two leagues. The terrain is mountainous. One time, when the priest sent his boy on horseback to visit a sick parishioner, it took the boy 24 hours to reach the place. Sometimes, when people fetch the priest to assist the dying, they come during the unholy hours of the day or of the night. When the rainy season comes, the problem of reaching the parishioners becomes more complicated.

Fr. Millán concludes with some suggestions, the most important of which was that of gathering the scattered people into more compact and larger groups for more effective evangelization.²⁷

Closing Note on Statistics

Although each of the previous articles included statistical data on the respective towns being discussed, this column will from here on drop that portion, reserving it for a later essay which will put together all available figures for the entire province of Pangasinan. It will be the last article in the series. It will be devoted to a comparative and interpretative study of the population and of the number of persons who received what sacrament in what Pangasinan town, and other informations like that.

²⁴ The *salacot* is a circular hat made of native leaves (like coconut or palm), with a pointed top and a piece of string for the chin of the wearer.

²⁵ The *saya* is an outer garment that extends from the waist down to the ground. The *tapis* is a piece of cloth, rectangular or triangular, that is worn over the *saya*.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, fol. 232v-233v.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 234.

HOMILETICAL NOTES

PALM SUNDAY

March 23, 1986

Readings:

Is. 50:4-7

Ph. 2:6-11

Lk. 22:14-23:56

THE KINGDOM OF GOD FOR JESUS CHRIST

The Passion and death of Jesus Christ, which is the proper liturgical gospel of the day does not allow any homily. It must speak by itself to the heart of every Christian. Dramatic or plain, the very reading should live the faith it recalls.

What is in need of a good explanatory homily is the section of the gospel assigned to the processional entrance. The concept of "kingdom" comes persistently in it and our generation is not rather familiarized with it.

The procession of Palm Sunday and the Solemn Entrance into the Temple of Jerusalem was an initiative of Jesus Himself. For three years He has been "going away into hiding" when the crowd was bent into proclaiming Him King (John VI 13-15). He was carefully avoiding popular over-enthusiasm on the occasion of His miracles and nowhere does He appear issuing any direction for the public administration. On one occasion He openly refused to take a step that could be given the character of a public official, as when he refused to be the intermediary in the hereditary dispute between two brothers (Luke XII 14). Even in liturgical and religious matters, He was very particular in keeping the constituted officials properly acknowledged (Luke XVII 14). Famous will remain for ever His stand in matters of political loyalties: "Give to Cesar what is Cesar's and to God what is God's" (Mat. XXII 21; Mark XII 17; Luke XX 23), He said while holding a minted coin of Cesar's.

He has been preaching about the innermost, heart-to-heart mastery that our Heavenly Father must have of ourselves in everything that is ours. He has even formulated it as the sum total of our aspirations (Mat. V 46; cf. Mat. VI). Now, He organizes a very simple, popular procession of entrance into Jerusalem as into the capital city of a kingdom. He sees and lets the people's enthusiasm go. He is now following the plan God has followed all along the Old Testament. In Abraham and the Patriarchs it was a Family and a Tribe; in Jacob a People, which was organized under Moses into the Nation that was established in the Holy Land, and there had for centuries the proper providential and historical development. Jesus all along His ministry has taken time to establish that the kingdom meant by God is "not of this world"; but Jesus stresses now that God was right.

Perhaps we have to point out for our present generation living in a democratic setting, what might be in the nature of a kingdom that induced God in His divine Revelation to use it to make His people understand the manner of life He wanted to establish for them. In a kingdom, the form of political organization most common in the ancient days, there is the well-knitted administration of the people's welfare aimed at and directed by the king, center of authority and of initiative. When the king is honorable and his officials loyal, as by God's mercy the Messianic kingdom will be, people's bliss is certain. Besides, in a kingdom there is an emotional value: The king is loved as the personification of whatever a fatherland and its welfare means for the subjects.

We read the prophecies of the Old Testament about the King Messiah and His kingdom that love, as a gadget of divine welfare in the true service of God by all nations of the world and till the end of time, is the point stressed.

The crowds that came in the procession of Palm Sunday believed in the Messianic Kingdom; believed that Jesus was the King Messiah; and acclaimed Him as such. The title of Son of David means it.

HOSANNA, is a popular pronunciation of the proper HOSHIA'-NAH, meaning "Please, save Him", that is equivalent to our "Long live the King".

Yes, in the procession of Palm Sunday we are professing that Jesus Christ is our real and beloved King Messiah, who

taught us the ways of God and happiness both temporal and eternal, who redeemed us in the Cross, who will always be coming to each one of us in His sacraments and continuous presence, who will reign forever, and who will come to judge the living and the dead and who will bring His faithful disciples into heavenly and eternal life.

Let us raise up our whole heart in acclaiming our King, Jesus Christ.

HOLY THURSDAY

March 27, 1986

FOOD FOR GOD'S LIFE IN US

John XIII 1-15.

It is wonderful that Jesus might start the institution of the Eucharist by washing the feet of His disciples. There must be a proper and deep connection between them both.

The washing of someone's feet before the person is made at ease and at home for a meal was a customary practice (Luke VII 44), very welcome indeed to men who have walking as their way of travelling, and along the roads that were hard and dusty, as the case was in the Land of Jesus. Surely it was the task of servants or slaves; but it was a delicate service exhibited to the guest and aiming at his pleasure. A great, almost unheard of honor must have been when the lord of the house and host took to himself to perform in person that preliminary.

Jesus did it for His disciples. Humanly speaking, Peter was right when he refused to be so treated by the one friend and teacher of his, whom he confessed to be the Messiah, the Son of God. But Jesus stopped his refusal with the observation: "If I do not wash your feet, you will not have anything to do with Me". Peter understood. The washing of the feet was a manifestation of exquisite love and care, and that care and that love could not be rejected by a true friend. Hence the impetuous reply of Peter: "Then, Lord, not only the feet, but the hands and the head as well".

Here we have the key for understanding the link between the institution of the Holy Eucharist and the washing of the feet. The dealings between God and man are expression of divine love. Out of love God created man; the reparation of the fallen man, and the whole history of his salvation, were messages of love; when God sent His Only Begotten Son to be "God with us", His life, ministry, works of power and mercy, the very plainness of the life He took for Himself, were just proofs of a love divine, struggling to become closer and dearer to man. Well, the Holy Eucharist, in which the infinite power of God makes the Real Presence of Jesus be in the consecrated bread and wine, is the most ineffable design of the love of God, bringing man to be one with Him in the sharing of His life. The realization of the love divine, that is in the washing of the feet done by our "Master and Lord", is the preparation needed to share fully the life in the love of God we are to enjoy in the Holy Eucharist.

Jesus, the Son of God Incarnated, who was going to die crucified on the altar of Mount Calvary, the Victim for the redemption of the sins of the whole world and for obtaining for all men the divine life, that is the grace of Our Father in Heaven, instituted the renewal of His Sacrifice. He ordered His priests to do the same thing He has done in "commemoration" of Himself.

We must heed the invitation of Our Lord and Master as we approach to celebrate or to partake of the Eucharist. Yes, we must approach the mystery of our union with God very conscious of His love for us and bring to Him all the vital problems we are confronted with. But we must, as well, come to the holy Eucharist conscious of sharing the mystery of mysteries, which has been given to us within the mystical Body of Christ, that is the Church in which the whole humanity comes to be the Kingdom of God on Earth.

The setting aside of the differences we might have with our brothers, as Jesus prescribed (Mat. V.23 ss.), would be a first step; but the real "washing of each other's feet", would be to bring them and their needs to God together with ours; and furthermore, to bring ourselves to a greater dedication to their service in their way towards God.

EASTER SUNDAY**March 30, 1986****Readings:**

Acts 10:34, 37-43

Col. 3:1-4

Jn. 20:1-9

LIVING THE MYSTERY OF RESURRECTION**I. Jn. 20:1-9.**

The Church in her liturgy, so rich and articulated from the Vigil till the evening masses, tries to articulate the presentation of the mystery of our faith, that is the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the realization of the same in the life of the Christians.

The reading of the gospel chosen for the mass of the day is the most simple, and honest report of the event, as lived by the first eyewitnesses: Mary of Magdala, who upon seeing from afar that the sepulchre is open, jumps to the conclusion that the body has been stolen; Peter and John, who upon being alerted rush to the tomb to verify the report; the observation of Peter on the cloths lying over the floor, as simply left behind, and on the sudarium, or big handkerchief used to cover the head tightly, folded carefully and placed in a special corner; then the other disciple comes in, sees the same position of cloths and sudarium, realizes the announcements of His Master and His continuous references to the Resurrection of the Messiah written in the Scriptures, and believes. Does he observe, besides, any peculiar touch of the Master in the way the sudarium is folded, that reveals to him Jesus as the one untying and folding it?

The mystery of Jesus Christ's resurrection must be well understood, as it is, together with the faith in God and the faith in the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Divine Trinity, the main object of Christian belief (I Cor. XV). Jesus, being God, the creator of life, the creator of man, and man's soul and body, brought together His soul and His body to live again a renewed existence. The expression that appears cons-

tantly in the Holy Scriptures and in the language of the Church, that God resurrected Jesus Christ, must be understood to mean that the divine power exercised by Jesus, the Son of the Father, did it.

The manner of Jesus' resurrection, never to die anymore, with a transformed body that is not affected by the presence of the wounds, that is not hindered by material obstacles, that is brought to project the inner glory of the soul, is for us a promise (John XI 21-27), already realized in the one who is "the First Born" of all dead (Apoc. I 5; Colos. I 18). We too are going to be resurrected like Jesus.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is our faith; it is being preached to us now, while we are living and serving God in our way heavenwards, and is for us a message and call to bring our lives to a heavenly form, a continuation and reflection of the glorified Christ (Colos. III 1-17). The Resurrection is in that way something, not just for the future, but for today.

II Col. 3:1-4.

The Church selects to be read the small introductory section to the beautiful plan of renewed life of a Christian, that St. Paul sketches in Colos. III 1-17, in order to enter our attention on the thought that "your life is hid with Christ in God".

Without taking away any splendour of godliness from the performance of the works of righteousness, or of mercy inspired by the love and the example of Jesus, we must always have in mind that the necessary and constant force at work in all our activities is to make true the command of Jesus: "Abide in Me..., abide in my love" (John XV 4-9).

Yes, that conscious and constant dialogue of love with Jesus who is really living in His Church, as a body and in every individual, is the key to understanding the fecundity and success of the works of the Saints. The uselessness of hard work, even though God-aimed, yet destituted of such love, is strongly described by St. Paul (I Cor. XIII).

III. Acts 10:34, 37-43.

The statement of St. Peter: "And God raised Him on the third day and make Him manifest; not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank

with Him after He rose from the dead", might sound a queer statement, especially to some now-a-days; but it is the very exact formulation of the non-dramatic way God proceeded in establishing in the Church and in the World the salvific faith of Jesus' Resurrection.

It indicates the paramount value of the ministry "chosen by God" in the entire life of the Church. For the establishment of the Kingdom of God, it was the Messiah who was chosen; from among the crowd of His disciples, Jesus chose and commissioned only the twelve; and even from among these, only one, Peter, was segregated to be the continuation of the "Good Shepherd" instructed to feed His sheep.

Faith, Hope and Love are the living expressions of attachment to God in every man who is saved; but to administer the faith and the means of sanctification, belongs to those who have been chosen by Him for the purpose (John XV 16).

JESUS MA. MERINO, O.P.

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 6, 1986

Readings:

Acts 5:12-16

Rev. 1:9-11, 12, 13, 17-19; Rev. 1:9-13, 17-19

Jn. 20:19-31

I. Acts 5:12-16.

After the tragic case of Ananias and Sapphira (5:1-11), the prestige of Peter and the other Apostles increased in the Church. Many miracles were performed by them and the number of believers grew. There were those who were called "outside of the group." Perhaps these were those in the high strata of society who were afraid of the Sanhedrin and who dared not join them.

The meeting were held during these first days in the Portico of Solomon inside the Temple precincts where St. Peter performed his first miracle by curing the lame man (Acts 3:1-10).

II. Rev. 1:9-13, 17-19.

We have in this passage the inaugural vision of John. He was commanded to write this vision which he saw while he was in exile at the island of Patmos, an island of the Dodecanese group about 65 kms. southwest of Ephesus.

Christ appeared to him dressed as a high priest and his titles in verses 17 and 18. These titles pertain to the three stages in Christ's life: his pre-existence, his death, and his eternal life.

John must write "the things he sees," "the things that are now" "and the things that will happen afterwards"; in other words, the past, the present, and the future. This makes his writings prophetic which in substance is the nature of apocalyptic writings, only expressed in symbols.

III. John 20:19-31.

The two appearances to the disciples mentioned here: the first, that very Sunday evening of the resurrection itself in which Thomas called the Twin was absent and the other one, one week later now with the presence of Thomas, conclude the Gospel of St. John.

Chapter 21 according to literary analysis was a later addition either by St. John himself, something of a post-script, or by his disciples. The latter theory seems to be the most probable. In verses 30-31 of this present passage, St. John already gave an ending to his Gospel giving the purpose of his work: "that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and through your faith in him you may have life."

HOMILY

**WE DO NOT SEE AND YET BELIEVE.
WE ARE BLESSED SAYS THE LORD**

Our Lord spoke of us when he said to Thomas: "blessed are those who have not seen and yet believed." We have not seen him as a babe in swaddling clothes like the shepherds and the wise men; we have not seen him walk the path from Nazareth to Bethlehem; we have not seen him like the people

of Nazareth in the carpentry shop of St. Joseph; we have not seen him like John the Baptist being baptized in the Jordan; we have not seen him preaching and making miracles in Galilee and in Jerusalem; we were not there when he was crucified, died, and was buried; we did not see him when he appeared to the Apostles after the resurrection; we have not seen him when he ascended to heaven. Yet we believe. More blessed are we, according to our Lord, for we have not seen and yet we believe.

We see a piece of bread and a chalice of wine, yet we believe he is truly present after the consecration, and we can truly exclaim like St. Thomas, "my Lord and my God." We see water being poured over the head of an infant while the minister pronounces the formula of baptism and we believe that original sin is taken away from the soul of that infant and Christ is there transforming the soul with his grace, and the most sublime Trinity coming down and making their abode in the soul. We see the hands of a bishop imposed on the heads of those to be confirmed and we believe that the Holy Spirit is there pouring his gifts and charisms to strengthen the Christian to maturity in his spiritual life.

That belief has not changed throughout the centuries. It is as if the life of Christ was only a few years ago, nay, even present to us today.

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 13, 1986

Readings:

Acts 5:27-32, 40-41

Rev. 5:11-14

Jn. 21:1-19

I. Acts 5:27-32, 40-41.

This is the second persecution of the Apostles mentioned in the Acts. The first happened after the miraculous curing of the lame man by Peter (Acts 4).

To the prohibition of the High Priest and the Sanhedrin that they should not preach in Jerusalem, the Apostles replied

that "they must obey God, not men." This periscope prepares for the narrative of the martyrdom of St. Stephen in chapters 6-8.

As usual the spokesman of the Apostles was Peter who always appears as the head of the apostolic groups (cf. 1:15; 2:14; 3:12; 4:6; 5:3.15).

II. Rev. 5:11-14.

After the hymn of the four living creatures and the 24 elders before the Lamb (vv. 9-10), myriads of angels sang in a loud voice a second hymn. There are seven words in the hymn expressing the Lamb's fulness of power and glory. The first four: power, wealth, wisdom and strength express the Lamb's dominion; the last three express the adoration given by the angels: honor, glory, and praise.

A parallel text is found in 4:11 and like this verse the whole hymn ends with the response of the whole community.

III. John 21:1-19.

This passage from chapter 21 of St. John narrating the post-resurrection appearance of Jesus by the shore of Lake Galilee is considered by exegetes today as an addition or a post-script, since St. John has already concluded his Gospel in chapter 20:31.

The text is divided into three parts: the first is the miraculous catch of fish (1-14) which has a parallel in Mark (8:4-10) but on a different context. The second is the threefold confession of Peter's love offsetting his threefold denial during the passion (15-17); the third is the prediction of Peter's manner of death (18-19).

HOMILY

HISTORY WITNESSES HOW PETER FEEDS HIS MASTER'S SHEEP

Many thoughts come our way upon reading this appearance of our Lord by the shore of Lake Galilee after his resurrection. His Apostles were fishing but before his appearance

they have caught nothing after a hard night's labor. When he appeared, he commanded them to lower their net again and this time they caught so many, 153 fishes in all.

Human labor's without the Lord run the risk of being fruitless. His presence and his help brings much fruit.

It was then, during this occasion that our Lord asked Peter the threefold question: "Peter, do you love me than these?" It has been remarked that this threefold question cancelled once and for all the trauma of the threefold denial of Peter on the night of the passion and charged him with the greatest responsibility of his pastoral office, to feed the lamb and sheep of the Lord. Jesus insists that the lamb and the sheep are his. Peter is not Jesus' successor on earth. He is only his Vicar. Peter has successors on earth, other Peters, our Holy Father in Rome.

We can refer to history as our witness, how Peter and his successors fulfilled this mandate of our Lord to feed his lambs and his sheep. Modern times and the facility of travel have made possible the visit of the Holy Father to many countries in the world. He has come twice to our country and we are sure there will be more visits in the future, if not in our lifetime, in future years to come as long as there are sheep and lamb to be fed.

Finally, as a reward, Peter would suffer the same fate as his Master. He would be bound and led to the place where he would be crucified upside down. Near the place of his crucifixion at the Vatican Hill there rise today on top of his tomb the most magnificent basilica in the whole of Christendom and the whole world, the Basilica of St. Peter.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 20, 1986

Readings:

Acts 13:14, 43-52

Rev. 7:9, 14-17

Jn. 10:27-30

1. Acts 13:14, 43-52.

The episode in this passage of the Acts happened during St. Paul's missionary journey when he and Barnabas reached Antioch in Pisidia and as usual, according to their custom

preached in the synagogue. The first reaction was favorable and they were invited to return the following Sabbath. Because of the enthusiastic response of the crowds the Jewish leaders then became jealous of them. At this point there was no mention as yet of the Judaizers or Judaizants who became bitter enemies of Paul.

At the instigation of the Jewish leaders Paul and Barnabas were persecuted which prompted them to turn their backs to the Jews and go instead to the Gentiles. In principle, then, St. Paul first preaches to the Jews since he was of their own flesh and blood. Only when the Jews reject the Good News that St. Paul turns towards the Gentiles who received him with open arms.

II. Rev. 7:9, 14-17.

The somber atmosphere of the Apocalypse which speaks of persecutions and calamities is now broken with the victorious appearance of the multitude of Christians in the glory of heaven.

It is not necessary to view in this passage only the martyrs who died violent death during the time of persecutions. All the members of the Church who remained faithful, that means, who lived their faith and persevered, without necessarily dying for their faith, are included.

The "white robes" are not given during their entry to heaven but already theirs at the moment of becoming a Christian. It is in fact a prerequisite of their entry to heaven (22:14). This robe can be lost, it can be soiled. To wash it in the "blood of the lamb" symbolizes the effective participation in the death of Christ and its salvific value.

The elect in heaven are here shown celebrating the heavenly liturgy without ceasing around the throne of God.

III. Jn. 10:27-30.

From chapter 7 to 10:21 St. John developed episodes and discourses in the life of Jesus in the context of the celebration of the feast of Tabernacles, an autumn feast celebrated during

the month of September or October. It is in this chronological frame that he spoke to the people about the Good Shepherd (John 10:1-18).

From 10:22 onwards a new time frame was introduced, the feast of the Dedication of the Temple which Judas Maccabaeus did in 165 B.C. (cf. 1 Maccabees 4:36-59; 2 Maccabees 1-18). This is also known as the "Feast of Lights" characterized by the lighting of the *Menorah* (seven branch candle-stick) at the courtyard of the Temple. This feast is held during winter time. Another series of discourses was developed by the Evangelist in the context of this festival and the theme of the Good Shepherd was repeated which is the passage in today's Gospel reading.

HOMILY

ARE WE THE SHEEP OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD?

Are we the sheep of the Good Shepherd? If we are his sheep, do we listen to his voice? Let us not deceive ourselves in this, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ, to say that we are the sheep of Christ and yet do not heed his voice.

But which is the voice of Christ? Read St. John chapter 21 which was the Gospel last Sunday and he will tell us that it is the voice of Peter, the Vicar of Christ on earth, to whom Christ gave the charge to feed his sheep. To listen to the voice of Peter, then, is to listen to the voice of Christ. Sometimes we may not understand where he leads us, but one thing is sure, he always leads us to verdant pastures where we will be well nourished and contented. Still to that unknown verdant meadow we begin to waver, we fumble and fall. Then we try to go astray as if we know a better way to go to that verdant pasture. But instead we lose our way. We become lost sheep.

Then the Good Shepherd starts looking for us even leaving the ninety nine to find the stray sheep. If we keep on hiding, not uttering a cry, he would not know where to find us although he would keep calling us. And so we should cry, we should groan and lament and he will hear us.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER**April 27, 1986****Readings:**

Acts 14:20-26

Rev. 21:1-5

Jn. 13:31-35

The liturgy of the 5th Sunday after Easter speaks of the spread of the Church through the apostolic work of Paul and Barnabas (first reading); John's vision of the new heavens and the new earth in the book of Revelation (second reading); and the parting words of Jesus during the last supper (Gospel reading). This Sunday, like the other Sundays after Easter, prepares for the feast of the Ascension.

I. Acts 14:20-26.

The ending of the first apostolic travel of Paul and Barnabas is recounted in this passage of the Acts. We find them this time at Derbe, leaving Lystra after Paul was stoned there at the instigation of some Jews. Derbe is about 65 kms. south-east of Lystra which during the time of St. Paul belonged to the Roman Province of Galatia. There is in fact some commentators of the Bible who think that St. Paul wrote his letter to the Galatians to these communities of Iconium, Lystra and Derbe and not to the native Galatians of the north.

There was no mention at Derbe of the hardship which the apostles encountered while they were at Iconium and Lystra. The response of the people to their preaching there of the Good News was very encouraging. After their stay at Derbe, they went back through the same route from which they came to strengthen these newly founded churches of Lystra, Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia, noting that the hardships they experienced were necessary for the spread of the Kingdom of God.

They afterwards appointed elders (presbyters), perhaps in imitation of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 11:30) to administer these churches. This was done in a liturgical service, "with prayer and fasting." There was no mention of imposition of hands but based on previous practices like Acts 6:6;

13:3; 1 Tim. 4:14; 5:22; 2 Tim. 1:6; Heb. 6:2, we may infer that this was done. These elders or presbyters, also known as overseers (*episkopoi*) in Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7, were the predecessors of our priests and bishops which, during the time of St. Paul, were not yet clearly distinguished. It was only about fifty years later in the letters of St. Ignatius of Antioch (Ephesians 6:1; Magnesians 2; 6:1; Trallians 1:1; Philadelphians 4.) that clear distinctions were made between *Episkopos* (presiding elder, our present bishop) and *Presbyteroi* (elders under the *episkopos*, our present priests).

II. Rev. 21:1-5.

The Apocalypse or the Book of Revelation has often been considered as a book of disasters, cataclysms, catastrophic events and other horrifying experiences. That is why in many languages "apocalyptic" became synonymous to "disasters," "cataclysms," or "calamities." This, however, is a popular misconception. *Apokalypsis* in Greek simply means "revelation" and this book does, indeed, contain both tragic and happy revelations. It is in fact a prophetic book and many expressions in the Apocalypse can only be understood by studying the Prophets. In our present text alone, the second reading in today's Mass, already 5 passages from the prophetic books are cited: Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; Ezekiel 37:27; Isaiah 8:8; 25:8. As most prophetic books end with a consoling note, so also the Apocalypse has a happy ending.

Chapter 21 portrays to us the new heavens and the new earth at the end of time. The disappearance of the sea indicates the peace and tranquility of this new order. The sea or the ocean had been linked by the ancients to the chaotic order because it is never calm and oftentimes violently disturbed because of its big waves. The sea was thought of to be the abode of monster named Rahab or Leviathan in Sacred Scripture, or Tiamat in Babylonian myths. God killed these monsters to bring order to creation (Isaiah 51:9; Psalm 74:13).

John saw the holy city coming down from heaven. It has then a divine origin. The letter to the Hebrews (11:10) "looks forward to a city founded, designed and built by God."

In a figurative sense, Zion is said in the Bible to be the bride of Yahweh (Isaiah 62:4), adorned in her bridal gown

for the wedding (Isaiah 49:18; 61:10; Jeremiah 2:32). In the New Testament, the Church is the Bride and Christ is the Bridegroom (John 3:29; Apocalypse 22:17, aside from the present text).

Verse 5 is the only passage in the whole book of Revelation where God himself speaks. The time will come when all creation will become new.

III. Jn. 13:13-35.

After the departure of Judas, the lengthy discourse of the Last Supper which will end in 17:26 begins. The first sentences of the discourse reminisce the two previous episodes: the departure of Judas of which Jesus will speak of his glorification and the washing of the feet of which he will speak of the new commandment.

Unwittingly, Judas would be realizing the plan of God leading Christ to his death which would be the prelude to his glory. The tense used of the verb "to glorify" is very noticeable. *Edoxasthe* is in the aorist passive and rightly translated as "has been glorified." This may be considered a "prophetic anticipation" by which a future fact or event which is certain and proximate is expressed. When Judas left to betray him his passion in fact started whose fulfillment until the resurrection is already seen here.

"God will in turn glorify him in himself": the aorist of v. 31 is now in the future, *doxasei*. Some manuscripts have *en auto*, "in him", which could mean that God will glorify the Son in his humanity. "In himself" (*en eauto*) means, according to the Jerusalem Bible, that the Father will take the Son of Man to himself in glory seated at his right hand. "Very soon," that is to say, in his resurrection and ascension to heaven.

Jesus calls his disciples "little children" (*teknia*), a term which is only found in this v. 33 of St. John's Gospel, but found 7 times in his first Letter. It is an endearing and affectionate term. He would be leaving them and as he told the Jews (7:33-34; 8:21), where he was going they cannot come. But later in v. 36, he told Peter: "Where I am going you cannot follow me now; you will follow me later." This means that the separation will only be temporary.

Then Jesus gave them a new commandment. The absence of the article means that there was no precedent commandment like this before. In 15:12 it has already the article referring to this new commandment. In Greek, here are two terms for new: *néos* which expresses what is recent, and *kainós* which could also have the meaning of "excellent," "sublime," "perfect." This commandment is new since the model and motivation is new: "as I have loved you." The love of Christ, then, for us is the standard of this new commandment of love. The former standard is to love one another as oneself.

In 1 John 3:14, our love for our brothers is the sign that "we have passed out of death and into life," and the sign of being true disciples of Christ. Tertullian testifies (*Apologia* 39) that pagans took notice and admired this fraternal love among Christians: "*Vide, inquit, ut invicem se diligant,*" "Observe, they (pagans) say, how they love one another."

HOMILY

THE NEW COMMANDMENT

The test for true discipleship of Christ is the love, Christians have for each other motivated by the love of Christ for us. This is, indeed, a new commandment. New in the sense that the standard and the motive is new. New in the sense that it is the most excellent kind of love, taking the Greek *kaine* with the specific meaning. The old measure of love was the love of oneself. It states: "love your neighbor as *yourself*. The new commandment affirms: "love one another as I have loved you." It is a new love, a most excellent love.

This new measure of love is the love Christ has for us. "A love than this no man has than to give his life for his friends." The measure of Christian love is to love without measure. It is a sacrificial love, to give one's life for the beloved. If we cannot give life in one offering as the martyrs did, we can give it piece by piece even in the daily hum-drum of our earthly existence.

A mother gives it to her child offering precious sleepless nights; a wife gives it to her husband understanding his moods; a husband gives it to his wife spending his time in the office and not in beerhouses; children give it to their parents by their obedience; parents give it to their children by spending more time with them. These daily offerings of one's life is Christian love. It does not anymore say: "I love you as I love myself," but "I love you as Christ loves you."

If I love you as I love myself, I risk of having a selfish love, a one-way love, a jealous love. Many times I do not even know what this love of myself means. Does loving myself means to pamper myself with everything I desire and, therefore, to love according to this measure would be to pamper you with everything you desire? Or do I love myself when I assure for myself eternal happiness in God's kingdom whatever be the cost and, therefore, to love according to this measure would be to guide and lead you towards the eternal happiness whatever be the price?

But if I love you as Christ loves me, my standard of love becomes very clear. He died on the cross because of this love, he forgave his executioners because of this love, he has prepared for us a place in his kingdom because of this love.

The standard has been set. It is up for us now to meet the standard.

FR. REGINO CORTES, O.P.

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CORRECTION:

Fr. Herman Mleller, S.V.D. wrote the Homilies of January 1 to February 2, 1986 (BEF Volume LXII, Nos. 674-675).