

# BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

THE OFFICIAL INTERDIOCESAN BULLETIN

MORALITY AND THE DYING

Bonifacio Garcia, O.P.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE STREET  
CORNERS: FILIPINO PROPHETISM

Braulio Peña, O.P.

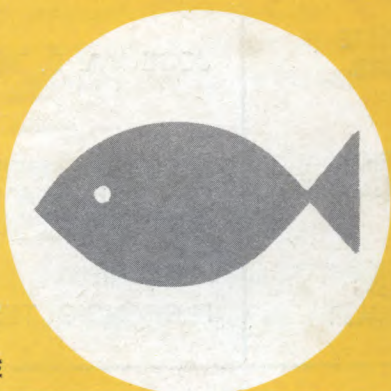
HOLINESS OF LIFE OF CLERICS

Cirilo Almario, D.D.

EXTRAORDINARY FORM OF MARRIAGE

Excelso Garcia, O.P.

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## THE PHILIPPINE ECCLESIASTICAL REVIEW

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## EDITORIAL

### **PROTECT HUMAN LIFE BY GUARDING ECOLOGICAL BALANCE**

In some of its documents the Catholic Church upholds the preciousness of human life from its very beginning. And so we have read and heard very often about the continual debates on abortion. And we have also been witnesses to the unrelenting stand of the Church on this case: that life in foetus has the right to continue.

In those documents the Church underlines the direct protection of human life most especially in the papal encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*.

Just as there are provisions in these documents on the direct protection of human life, so are there numerous indirect exhortations on its preservation. Hence more ecclesiastics and laymen have joined protest rallies against the opening of the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant; there are also numerous movements against the denudation of forests, against the shooting of birds, the hunting of wild animals, the dynamiting of fish, the pollution of air, etc.

Although it is true that, by and large, man is dependent on man, we cannot escape from another truth, plain and clear, that man is likewise dependent on his environment, on nature and on beasts. Therefore, a preservation of our environment also means a preservation of human life. So that we should see to it that nothing should disrupt our ecological balance, and exert special effort in stopping the pollution of air, water, and to help in making this earth more blossoming and nourishing.

FR. VICENTE CAJILIG, O.P.



## FEATURES

# morality and the dying

## I. Human Life

### 1. OVERVIEW

1.1. *Human Life as a Gift from God.* Christianity believes that human life is a gift from God. This belief is based on the revelation found in Genesis (1:26 ff.; 2:7). Because it is given to him as a gift from God, man is only a steward of his life whose administration of this life is conditioned by the Will of its Giver: God. Therefore, neither he nor another has an absolute right over this life. The inviolability of human life springs from the very source of life itself.

From this flows another principle which says that all men are fundamentally equal because all proceed from the same principle or source. This equality is not only in relation to the source, but also to the end and dignity of the human person. All men are given the promise of eternal life and to live with dignity. This leads us to consider seriously the spiritual dignity of man and the eschatological orientation of his acts.

Therefore, in evaluating every moral action, we depend on the explicit Will of God, either as explicitly revealed in the Scriptures or as pronounced by the Church or as manifested by human reason which cannot betray that inner human inclination to act ethically. Christian morality cannot prescind from this norm in evaluating issues about or related to human life. No moral judgment can be passed without considering this norm.

1.2. *Human Life and the Sciences.* In the process of living human life, no one can deny that all experience and are subject to joy and sorrow, health and sickness and the like. The sciences, specifically the medical sciences, aim to alleviate man from his subjection to sufferings and illness. Nothing should keep the sciences from keeping progress as they strive to cure illnesses and sufferings. To diminish or to overcome sufferings and illnesses is not wrong, for even Jesus Himself as related in the Gospels cured all kinds of maladies. Nevertheless, the progress of human sciences must not overstep the dignity of

human life which they strive to assist. The same norms which guide every moral action should govern their progress and their application to human life.

It must be noted, however, that it belongs to the nature of life to live and to die. We have to concede to the fact that no science or no scientific discovery has ever prevented man from dying or has kept man totally away from suffering. Whereas all sufferings have no value from the human and natural point of view, they acquire their value when we consider the supernatural orientation of human life and man's actions. In the end, man's attitude toward pains and sufferings must acquire a supernatural dimension which is only proper to the spiritual and supernatural aspect of his life.

1.3. *Human Life and Society.* As Aristotle said: "Man is a political animal." Man is not an isolated individual. It is a property of his nature and necessary for his total development to live with others in society. In this respect, man's social conditions, which include his interdependence with others, affect our wholistic conception of human life or the human person. Any human action has a special dimension or projection. Hence, in giving a wholistic evaluation of any moral action, the implications of such an act to society must also be taken into consideration.

## 2. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND NORMS

From the foregoing consideration of human life and its relation to others in the society, the following principles apply:

2.1. A social structure should not be contrary to the principles of human life as willed by God, the Giver of life. To have a society which violates and destroys life is not possible.

2.2. The right to live a life in conformity with the dignity of a person is a fundamental principle that must govern the pursuance of the common goal or goals of the society. A true human society does not destroy, but it protects and strengthens this dignity.

2.3. God is the owner of human life. Man is only its steward. Consequently, only God has the right to give it or take it. Because life is entrusted to him, man has the obligation to develop, protect and preserve it as long as it is humanly

and naturally possible. Man is free to use his life in a way that he develops his potentials attendant to life. But he is not free to dispose it or take it. Because he is free to live it, he is also accountable for such an administration of his own life. Because God wills that this life must return to Him, man must live his life in accordance with the imperatives of the moral norms set by the Giver. It is always the master who sets the conditions, and not the servant.

2.4. No person is entitled to mutilate or manipulate his life except when it is for the totality of the person. Man's power over life ends where Divine Revelation or the natural moral law as manifested by reason or issued by the teaching authority of the Church set the limits.

2.5. Further, the rights of the human person is relative to the rights of others in the society and to the common good which the society imposes upon him. Rights and duties are interrelated. One's rights are conditioned by the rights of others and by the rights of the society as a whole. One's duties are demanded by the rights of others and by the rights of the society as a whole. Conversely, one has the right to demand the performance of the duties of others and the society as a whole which are due to him.

2.6. The right to property means the moral power to use, change or modify a thing in accordance with its end and the end of man. However, basing from the principle of stewardship, man has no absolute right to property. We have no right to use things arbitrarily, but to use them in accordance with their purposes and according to their natures.

2.7. When a gift is given, there is a corresponding commitment on the part of the recipient to use that gift in accordance with its purpose. Since his life is a gift from God with a supernatural purpose, man has the commitment or the duty to orient his natural acts to his supernatural end. This commitment is guided by the norms set by God, either as explicitly revealed or as manifested through human reason or as issued by the teaching authority of the Church.

2.8. By virtue of this supernatural end, human life is transcendental in nature and has an eschatological perspective. This perspective necessarily confronts man with the reality of death as a natural end. But viewed from our Christian hope, life is not the end. It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

In this regard, to strive by all means to cheat death by resorting to expensive medical procedures in order to prolong life awhile but whose quality seems to be in contradiction with human dignity seems questionable. Christian hope leads us to face death with dignity, courage and integrity with the belief that death is, after all, not an end but only a transition to a better life hereafter.

There are a lot more principles and norms that govern human life and its relations with the society where it is lived. Nevertheless, the preceding principles and norms which we have enunciated would suffice to govern our study at hand: morality and the dying.

## **II. The Patient as a Human Person with the Right to Life and the Right to Accept Death**

The patient is a human person. However, by the fact that he is a patient makes himself a particular case. In enunciating principles that could govern the situation of a patient and his/her relation with his/her family, the physician and the society as a whole, we cannot depart from general principles and norms that govern human life as it is. But owing to the fact that a patient is in a situation different from a normal human life, his/her case merits particular principles from which we can evaluate the morality of his/her situation.

1. Since life is entrusted to the person living that life, it follows that it is only the patient who has the power to administer his/her life, or another person to whom the patient explicitly delegates his personal decisions, or another person to whom the patient's delegation of authority is presumed in extreme cases, e.g., when the patient is in coma.

2. The physician is not an infrequent subject in discussing the morality or the immorality of procedures applied to the patient. As a matter of principle, the patient and the physician are the two indispensable members of the team of persons, if the need arises, who shall decide the procedures to be undertaken in treating the patient. The physician is a source of information which are decisive to reach a decision. But while his duty is to assist, inform and provide the patient with the necessary and immediate therapeutics, it is not his personal prerogative as a physician to decide for the patient. That is paternalism and such act is replete with moral questions. Neither has the family nor the society alone could claim a right over the life



of the patient without the latter's consent. Likewise, medical sciences and other allied sciences, though they are at the service of human life, should not take the patient as an object of experiments that have not yet previously tested.

3. The authority of the physician or other members of the medical staff over the patient must be understood as delegated by the patient himself. It is presumed that such authority is only granted by the patient after he/she has considered and understood the implications of such a delegation. For instance, a delegation that explicitly states or presumes the faculty to terminate life is immoral, likewise a delegated authority that presumes the use of the patient for researches and experimentations in progress whose effects are yet impossible to measure. It is conceded that the development of medical sciences is directed toward the good of patients and of humanity in general. But this development should not prescind from the duty to preserve, and not to destroy or manipulate, human life.

4. If the patient can no longer decide for himself/herself, the right to administer his life is transferred to his family, as when we were born and remained dependent on our parents until we can decide for ourselves. When this time comes, human sentiments should not condition the decision to be reached once all the circumstances surrounding the patient are objectively presented. In view of this principle, the doctor has no right to resort to procedures without the consent of the family.

5. As a rule, the right of the physician over the patient does not extend beyond the limits of the authority delegated to him by the patient. When medical procedures involve great expense and risks not foreseen by the decision previously reached, the physician should not proceed without prior consultations with the family. A physician may not be in a position to assess the burdens that such procedures may cause the family. An authority delegated by the patient to the physician takes the form of a contract where both are free and have knowledge of all its implications. In ordinary situations, one cannot presume knowledge of the considerations that may enter into such a contract. For clarity's sake, we could fix the use of ordinary means as the limit and the extension of a physician's authority over the patient.

6. There are cases and situations wherein this delegated authority can be extended, i.e. in cases of comatose patients. A comatose patient may need medical or surgical procedures imme-

diately and the family cannot be immediately reached. Likewise, the same exception could be applied when a patient undergoing surgery may undergo complications not foreseen before the start of the operation. Further, when the patient is psychologically incapable and the consent of his/her family is physically and morally impossible to obtain, it is morally acceptable that the physician may use this delegated authority. If medical therapeutic processes clearly indicate the urgency of this intervention, the legislation of the law normally respects the validity of the physician's act.

7. When the patient refuses to accept medical treatment which is not urgent or absolutely needed but rather preventive in nature, the will of the patient must be respected presuming that his decision really manifests the free choice of a man who is in full use of his faculties, and it is not reasonably foreseen that a delay in the use of such treatment does not have irreversible consequences. Thus, if the patient refuses treatment, it is the duty of the physician to do some objective representation to convince the patient of the importance of submitting himself to such a treatment which may eventually lead to a proper diagnosis of his/her sickness or may reasonably lead to a cure. Further, it is not moral to delay a medical procedure when the patient is unconscious and the good of the family demands it.

8. The patient has not only the right to life. He has also the corresponding duty to preserve it as long as it is humanly possible. Thus, he has the duty to protect it and to resort to means and medical procedures which can preserve it within the bounds of human reason and dignity. He should consider as morally right, and therefore, he has an obligation to accept them, those medical treatment which can help him preserve his life from deterioration. We are told to accept death. But prior to surrendering one's life to God, we are required to preserve it. There is no contradiction here.

### **III. The Patient as Conditioned by Circumstances: the Question of Ordinary and Extraordinary Means**

Our Catholic faith teaches us to accept all the conditions of human life, including the acceptance of death. We are not expected to resort to all means to prolong life unreasonably. When circumstances and conditions surrounding a patient do not warrant a reasonable prolongation of life, then one is expected to give back his life to the Creator with dignity and

grace. An increasing number of moralities speak about the theory of the right to die with dignity. This theory may have sound aspects. But the principles that must govern human life must not be overlooked. Thus, euthanasia, when studied within the framework of the necessary principles of stewardship on the part of man and an absolute ownership on the part of God, is immoral in the sense that it violates God's prerogative to give and take life.

An illness or malady may be *terminal* or *subject to recovery*. When the illness is subject to recovery, the patient has a serious moral obligation to undergo all treatment which can prevent a deterioration of his health. He should accept medical procedures or surgical interventions that are needed for him to recover his health and for him to enjoy a healthy life. All men are duty-bound to take all those steps which are needed for a healthy life: nutrition, diet, rest, relaxation, etc., otherwise, man exposes himself or his life to destruction which is already a failure in one's commitment to protect and preserve it.

When the illness or malady is terminal, various medico-moral problems confront the patient, the family, the physician and the society as a whole. Several options are present: a) there might still be a possibility of recovery; b) as could be attested to by medical experiences of precedent similar cases, the life of the patient might still be prolonged without contradicting the demands of human dignity; c) there may be no possibility of recovery but the life of the patient could still be indefinitely prolonged though in such a manner that the patient's right to dignity is in question, and d) there is the question of the costs of these extraordinary measures of prolonging life.

As already said, everybody has the duty to preserve his life. This duty entails that the patient has the duty to resort to means which offers reasonable hope of recovery and which do not destroy his human dignity. However, when the futility of such medical efforts are foreseen and the patient has no more reasonable hope for recovery and of living with dignity, many would rather prefer to set limits to such medical procedures though they may be useful for the furtherance of medical science.

Thus, we speak of ordinary and extraordinary means. By ordinary means we refer to "all medicines, treatments, and operations, which offer a reasonable hope of benefit for the patient and which can be obtained and used without excessive expense, pain, or other inconvenience". Ordinary means are those which

are commonly used either because of the simplicity of the process or the relative convenience or the availability of such means. By extraordinary means, we refer to "all medicines, treatments, and operations which cannot be obtained or used without excessive expense, pain, or inconvenience, or which, if used, would not offer a reasonable hope of recovery."

What means are to be considered ordinary and what means are to be considered extraordinary is a very relative question. A lot of considerations or factors must be taken into account before one can consider a means to be extraordinary or ordinary. One means can be ordinary to a patient, yet it can be extraordinary to another patient. Factors as the expenses to be incurred by the patient or his/her family, chances of recovery or the danger of untested medical or surgical procedures should be taken into account and must play vital roles in reaching decisions.

In view of the above considerations, the following principles apply and could be employed by persons who are in difficult moral dilemmas to be able to arrive at the best decision possible.

1. The patient is morally obliged to accept and undergo ordinary means or procedures to restore health. The physician is morally obliged to apply ordinary means to cure the patient. The family is bound by justice to provide their patient with such ordinary means. To determine whether or not a means is ordinary for a particular patient is determined by the circumstances of persons, times, culture, the society in which the patient belongs, and the economic status of the family of the patient. In other words, one is held to use ordinary means, which do not involve any grave burden for the patient or another.

2. If there is a need of extraordinary means because of a well-founded hope of recovery and the quality of life is not altered, the patient has the right to opt for this extraordinary means and to secure assistance from the society of which he is a member. Such an assistance would not be due to him in justice but in charity. The problem is aggravated from the human and moral point of view when this help is not provided by institutionalized medicare but becomes an exclusive responsibility of the patient and his/her family. Our situation in the Philippines is an example.



It is here that medico-moral dilemmas enter. A consideration of the relationships between rights and duties of the patients, the physician, the family and the society as a whole. While the patient has the right to demand from his/her family the assistance necessary to recover health and to maintain the quality of his/her life, he/she has also an obligation to consider the status of his/her family. Will his/her welfare undermine the right of his/her family? It may happen that the use of an extraordinary means may undermine and compromise the future of the family. The economic aspect plays an important role. The use of such extraordinary means may incur tremendous expenses in which the family may not be capable of producing, or may put tremendous burdens for a long time in the future in a manner that it will affect the quality of the life of the family for a long time.

3. A terminal illness demands an attitude of openness to the medical diagnosis and to the recommendations of the physician. If a terminal illness takes the form of a lingering malady wherein consciousness remains, the patient deserves serious attention and human efforts should not be given up although the quality of the patient's life may not be as it is in nature. If a terminal illness takes the form in which the patient is unconscious or in coma, and the key bodily organs are biologically irreversible and there is no reasonable hope of recovery a prolonged medical treatment and even experimentations are morally objectionable.

Through the use of extraordinary means, a patient may be expected to live for a time but in a manner which is contrary to the dignity of human life. A lingering and slow deterioration of life may give problems to both patient and his/her family. This situation may solicit compassion and a desire to resort to extravagant medical procedures which offer no hope whatsoever but only incur for the patient and his/her family huge expenses in which they are incapable to pay. The justifiability of such an act is questionable since there is no chance of recovery and it only gives the family and the patient tremendous expenses which may compromise their future.

4. In cases of patients who are kept alive artificially through respirators, suction, oxygen tanks and other means, the questions on hope for recovery, the expenses incurred, the anxiety of the patient and the family and the dignity of life are vital. For these patients, is there any meaning in life? Is there any capacity for spiritual or supernatural merits when the patient

is not conscious anymore but only artificially kept alive? Is it advisable to resuscitate a patient after a cardiac arrest when a severe brain damage is expected to have taken place, and consequently, the hope of recovery is null? How moral is the resuscitation of a terminally ill patient when the prolongation of his/her life is often in contradiction with the dignity of human life? Will hardships, economic burdens, pains and anxiety suffice to justify the termination of these extraordinary means to prolong a life without any hope of recovery?

5. While we maintain that it is immoral to positively terminate the life of a patient, we sustain that we ought not to continue a costly treatment which falls on the category of extraordinary means while offering no hope of cure and the expenses incurred are beyond the capacity of the patient and the family.

6. Medicine is intended to improve the condition of a patient if not to cure his illness. When the seriousness of a malady proves medicine ineffective, it loses its constitutive finality. Medicine is not primarily intended to prolong a life of pain and suffering deprived of the minimum requirements of human life with dignity. Such medicine does not deserve to be categorized as therapeutic. Some people cling as long as they can to artificial and extraordinary means which do not bring at all dignity to the artificially kept life. Is it because they cannot accept the inexitable end of this earthly life: death?

#### IV. Moral Norms Governing the Case of a Terminally ill Patient

1. The first moral principle that should govern any medical case where there is no hope of recovery is the *principle of stewardship*. Because no man has an absolute right over his life, he or another person has no right to take it; otherwise, he would be "playing God." Thus, it is morally evil to positively intervene in terminating the life of a patient whether such positive intervention comes from the patient himself/herself, or from the family or from the physician. Whoever takes the initiative, the act can never be morally justified. Euthanasia is always objectively gravely wrong no matter what humanitarian reasons there might be.

This does not mean, however, that any patient who takes his/her life is always culpably committing such an objectively grave moral act. In other words, we cannot always presume guilt on the part of the patient. An objectively evil act may

not be subjectively culpable due to the determining effects of the circumstances surrounding the patient. It must also be noted that any objectively evil act can never be made subjectively good, although such can be inculpable. For instance, a patient under psychological pressure and excruciating physical pain may take his life. If he/she is under such pressures that he/she is already deprived of the right use of reason and free will, his/her act of taking his/her life which act is objectively gravely wrong, may not be imputable to him/her. The patient is already deprived of the capacity to weigh choices. Thus, he/she does not act responsibly.

However, when the patient takes such a decision in a state of emotional stability and psychological balance, thereby presuming that the conditions required for a moral act are present, total guilt can be presumed. In this case, what is objectively evil is at the same time subjectively evil. This reservation in evaluating the morality of the patient's act in terminating his/her life does not mean we can easily presume innocence or inculpability on the part of the patient. What this accommodation tries to imply is that there might be circumstances which can incapacitate the patient to decide responsibly.

We could apply the same moral consideration when the family or the doctor initiates or performs the act of euthanasia. The family could also be under unbearable duress making its act inculpable. But because it is already detached from the patient, a greater doubt as regard its inculpability or innocence must be cast. In the case of the doctor or physician, it is presumed he is emotionally detached from the patient. Hence, it is so difficult to presume inculpability or innocence on his part. It is difficult to find any circumstance that may excuse the physician from grave moral guilt.

2. Another principle that must be applied in this case is the *principle of cooperation*. Cooperation in the evil moral acts of others is any physical or moral concurrence with a principal agent in a sinful act. Basic for the moral evaluation of cooperation is the distinction between formal and material cooperation. A formal cooperation happens when the cooperator concurs on consents both externally and internally to the evil act. This kind of cooperation is always sinful. On the other hand, a material cooperation happens when the cooperator externally concurs, but not internally, with the principal agent. In this case there are instances in which it is not sinful.

In accordance with this principle, any medical staff (a nurse, resident or a paramedical) who assists the family or the doctor in the process of terminating the life of the patient, and both internally and externally concurs with the evil end, he/she associates himself/herself with the act and imputes upon himself/herself the evil act. If her cooperation is only material and such cooperation is occasioned by unavoidable circumstances, such cooperation may be permissible. The principle is that the nearer he/she associates himself/herself to the evil act, the greater his/her moral responsibility, and conversely.

3. Since the question of positively terminating the life of a terminally ill patient is out of the question, what are then the alternatives? It seems that the only viable solution to this moral problem of terminally ill patients without any hope of recovery is the distinction between *ordinary* and *extraordinary* means which we have already discussed.

As already enunciated, the patient is morally bound to use all ordinary means to preserve his life. Likewise, the family and physician are morally bound to give to the patient the ordinary means. This is due to the patient not in charity but in justice. Moreover, the patient, as well as the family and the physician, is morally free whether or not to resort to extraordinary means. As also said, there is no black and white distinction between what is ordinary and what is extraordinary. The means are relative to the patient, to the family, to the physician and to the society as a whole. A poor patient may consider extraordinary what is considered ordinary to a rich patient. A backward hospital may consider extraordinary what is ordinary in modern and sophisticated hospitals, etc.

The economic implication of extraordinary means plays an important role in reaching decisions as regard this case of terminal and irreversible patients. The huge costs that these means entail may just be too much for the family to shoulder. Here, it is already presumed that the patient has no more chance of recovery. His/her life is merely prolonged. Such means may only deprive the other members of the family the resources directly needed to defray the expenses of even the most basic family needs, e.g., food, clothing, shelter, education, etc. It must be noted that extraordinary means are not due to the patient in justice but in charity. Now, it would be both unjust and uncharitable if the terminally ill patient would deprive the family of a dignified existence by being to provide for the members sufficient provision for their needs.



This assessment could also be extended and applied to the society as a whole. On the basis of the above considerations, it seems morally right to consider as extraordinary means all those procedures which entail expenses beyond the capacity of the patient, the family or the society as a whole. Thus, we may come to a point wherein, after having found out that a medical procedure does not have a positive effect on the patient and does not upgrade the quality of life, it is morally imperative to suspend such means because it is obviously extraordinary in nature. This does not mean, of course, that we have to stop all the other means which are ordinary with respect to the situation. Otherwise, it is tantamount to positively intervening to end life.

4. Another principle that may play a role in this medico-moral problem is the *principle of totality*. This principle considers human life as a whole which includes the interrelationships it entails with others in the family or in the society. For instance, if the patient is already biologically irreversible and the moment of death is just awaited, then it is better to let the patient die with dignity and not to resort to whatever medical procedure which in reality does not and cannot offer any remedy. To keep the patient artificially alive for a long time may have a lot of implications as regard the patient's relation with his/her family the society. \* He might just be too much of economic or emotional burden to the family. Thus, the principle of totality limits the use of medically useless treatment in order to prolong a life which is already deprived of its dignity.

The wonders of modern medicines and surgery make our moral evaluation on the case more difficult and apparently more relative. For instance, modern medicines and medical procedures may offer a reasonable hope of recovery which hope may justify the economic burdens they entail. Such sophisticated methods may offer the hope of a lasting remedy, thereby justifying the burdens involved. Obviously, the added factor here is the hope of recovery and a lasting remedy which apparently make these extraordinary means obligatory for use.

In summary, the decision to terminate the use of extraordinary means which do not offer any hope of recovery and which are gravely burdensome for the patient, the family or the society should consider the following points carefully:

1. a possible misinterpretation of the facts and the real issues involved. One's decision to terminate extraordinary

means may be based on wrong facts. In other words, a correct assessment of facts may not lead one to decide to terminate these extraordinary means.

2. the advances of medicine and surgery may offer some hope of recovery or an indefinite prolongation of the terminally ill patient. But such procedures must be viewed against the backdrop of other significant circumstances, e.g., the economic burdens they may give to the patient, the family or the society.

3. doctors do not have the right to decide whether or not to continue an ordinary or extraordinary means without consulting the patient or the next of kin. His authority is merely delegated and the terms of the contract does not extend to this case, except when it is impossible to get the consent of either the patient or the family.

4. when the patient or the family decides to continue an extraordinary means, such decision must be respected as long as such an option can be reasonably supported from the medical and ethical point of view.

5. in a case wherein the emotionally distressed and psychologically unbalanced patient or family may take immoral options, as to decide to positively terminate life, the physician may withdraw from the case. But he is also obliged to explain to them the evil consequences of their decision.

Preventive diagnosis offers more chances of survival and the possibility of timely intervention, hence, the importance of the medical procedures along this line. When a patient is constrained to live for months or years under therapeutic treatment the moral evaluation has to consider first the expenses involved; second, the relationship of friendship that is suspended by the progressive worsening of the malady and by the anguish derived from the inability to conquer the sickness in a definite manner, third, the therapeutic procedure to be used.

Malignant cases have to be monitored, the progress of therapy and in cases like these a doctor renders a precious service by his assiduous labour and research which in the last analysis would materialize in the good of medicine.

Would science had ceased struggling for life and engaged itself in the search for cure of human diseases medical sciences would have never been able to advance nor to obtain the success they have managed to achieve; to abdicate this role of medicine is offensive to the dignity of the dying and the human person.

If the family cannot support the journeys and the heaviest expenditures in search for cure, charitable organizations and society could set up the economic resources needed. When a doctor is medically convinced of the chances of recovery as well as the relations of charity and justice that may be compromised he must suggest the use of experimental medical treatments. The family may support him in this search for cure. Finally the presence of suffering, even in the terminal phase, while it should stimulate every effort to lessen the pain out, it must sustain the spirit of the dying, we cannot allow actions or omissions which by their nature or in the intention of the agent have as their goal to shorten the life so as to escape the patient or his relative suffering.

The suffering Christ is seen in the sick person and the salvific value of christian suffering benefits the entire ecclesial body. Medical personnel should consider their assistance to the dying as the exercise of the mission of Christ the physician expressing the gospel since the regard of those who visit and attend to the sick is repaid with gifts that surpass all expectations (Mt. 25, 26).

BONIFACIO SOLIS-GARCIA, O.P.

## TO TWO WORKING GROUPS OF THE PONTIFICAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

# Life is a treasure and death is a natural event

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I extend a most cordial welcome to all of you. And I rejoice with the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and its illustrious President, Professor Carlos Chagas, for having succeeded in bringing together two groups of such distinguished scientists to reflect on the themes: "The Artificial Prolongation of Life and the Determination of the Exact Moment of Death", and "The Interaction of Parasitic Diseases and Nutrition".

In the specialized areas encompassed by these themes, the men and women of science and medicine give yet another proof of their desire to work for the good of humanity. The Church joins with you in this task, for she too seeks to be *the servant* of humanity. As I said in my first Encyclical, *Redemptor Hominis*: "The Church cannot abandon man, for his 'destiny' that is to say, his election, calling, birth and death, salvation or perdition, is so closely and unbreakably linked with Christ" (No. 14).

2. Your presence reminds me of the Gospel parable of the Good Samaritan, the one who cared for an unnamed person who had been stripped of everything by robbers and left wounded at the side of the road. *The figure of that Good Samaritan I see reflected in each one of you*, who by means of science and medicine offer your care to nameless sufferers, both among peoples in full development and among the hosts of those individuals afflicted by disease caused by malnutrition.

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\* Address of Pope John Paul II to the two groups of scientists assembled at the invitation of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences to discuss the themes: "The Artificial Prolongation of Life and the Determination of the Exact Moment of Death" and "The Interaction of Parasitic Diseases and Nutrition. Published in *L'Osservatore Romano*, XVIII, no. 44 (910).



For Christians, life and death, health and sickness, are given fresh meaning by the words of Saint Paul: "None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's" (Rom. 14:7-8).

### Provide appropriate care

These words offer great meaning and hope to us who believe in Christ; non-Christian, too, whom the Church esteems and with whom she wishes to collaborate, understand that within the mystery of life and death there are values which transcend all earthly treasures.

3. When we approach the theme which you have dealt with in your first Group, "The Artificial Prolongation of Life and the Determination of the Exact Moment of Death", we do so with two fundamental convictions, namely: Life is a treasure; Death is a natural event.

Since *life is indeed a treasure*, it is appropriate that scientists promote research which can enhance and prolong human life and that physicians be well informed of the most advanced scientific means available to them in the field of medicine.

Scientists and physicians are called to place their skill and energy at the service of life. They can never, for any reason or in any case, suppress it. For all who have a keen sense of the supreme value of the human person, believers and non-believers alike, euthanasia is a crime in which one must in no way cooperate or even consent to. *Scientists and physicians must not regard themselves as the lords of life, but as its skilled and generous servants.* Only God who created the human person with an immortal soul and saved the human body with the gift of the Resurrection is the Lord of life.

4. It is the task of doctors and medical workers to give the sick the treatment which will help to cure them and which will aid them to bear their sufferings with dignity. Even when the sick are incurable they are never untreatable: whatever their condition, appropriate care should be provided for them.

Among the useful and licit forms of treatment is *the use of pain-killers*. Although some people may be able to accept suffering without alleviation, for the majority pain diminishes their moral strength. Nevertheless, when considering the use

of these, it is necessary to observe the teaching contained in the Declaration issued on 5 June 1980 by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith: "Painkillers that cause unconsciousness need special consideration. For a person not only has to be able to satisfy his or her moral duties and family obligations; he or she also has to prepare himself or herself with full consciousness for meeting Christ".

5. The physician is not the lord of life, but neither is he the conqueror of death. *Death is an inevitable fact of human life, and the use of means for avoiding it must take into account the human condition.* With regard to the use of ordinary and extraordinary means the Church expressed herself in the following terms in the Declaration which I have just mentioned: "If there are no other sufficient remedies, it is permitted, with the patient's consent, to have recourse to the means provided by the most advanced medical techniques, even if these means are still at the experimental stage and are not without a certain risk... It is also permitted, with the patient's consent, to interrupt these means, where the results fall short of expectations. But for such a decision to be made, account will have to be taken of the reasonable wishes of the patient and the patient's family, as also of the advice of the doctors who are especially competent in the matter... It is also permissible to make do with the normal means that medicine can offer. Therefore one cannot impose on anyone the obligation to have recourse to a technique which is already in use but which carries a risk or is burdensome... When inevitable death is imminent in spite of the means used, it is permitted in conscience to take the decision to refuse forms of treatment that would only secure a precarious and burdensome prolongation of life, so long as the normal care due to the sick person in similar cases is not interrupted".

6. We are grateful to you, Ladies and Gentlemen, for having studied in detail the *scientific problems connected with attempting to define the moment of death.* A knowledge of these problems is essential for deciding with a sincere moral conscience the choice of ordinary or extraordinary forms of treatment, and for dealing with the important moral and legal aspects of transplants. It also helps us in the further consideration of whether the home or the hospital is the more suitable place for treatment of the sick and especially of the incurable.

The right to receive good treatment and the right to be able to die with dignity demand human and material resources, at home and in hospital, which ensure the comfort and dignity

of the sick. Those who are sick and above all the dying must not lack the affection of their families, the care of doctors and and nurses and the support of their friends.

Over and above all human comforts, no one can fail to see the enormous help given to the dying and their families by *faith in God and by hope in eternal life*. I would therefore ask hospitals, doctors and above all relatives, especially in the *present climate of secularization, to make it easy for the sick to come to God*, since in their illness they experience new questions and anxieties which can find an answer only in God.

7. In many areas of the world the matter which you have begun to study in your second Working Group has immense importance, namely *the question of malnutrition*. Here the problem is not merely that of a scarcity of food but also the quality of food, whether it is suitable or not for the healthy development of the whole person. Malnutrition gives rise to diseases which hinder the development of the body and likewise impede the growth and maturity of intellect and will.

The research which has been completed so far and which you are now examining in greater detail in this colloquium aims at identifying and treating the disease associated with malnutrition. At the same time, it points to the need of adapting and improving methods of cultivation, methods which are capable of producing food with all the elements that can ensure proper human subsistence and the full physical and mental development of the person.

It is my fervent hope and prayer that your deliberations will encourage the governments and peoples of the economically more advanced countries to help the populations more severely affected by malnutrition.

8. Ladies and Gentlemen, the Catholic Church, which in the coming world Synod of Bishops will celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council, reconfirms the words which the Council Fathers addressed to the men and women of thought and science: "Our paths could not fail to cross. Your road is ours. Your paths are never foreign to ours. We are the friends of your vocations as searchers, companions in your labours, admirers of your successes, and, if necessary, consolers in your discouragement and your failures".

It is with these sentiments that I invoke the blessings of God, the Lord of life, upon the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, upon all the members of the two present Working Groups and upon your families .

JOHN PAUL II

ENCYCLICAL LETTER

**DOMINUM ET VIVIFICANTEM**

OF THE SUPREME PONTIFF

**JOHN PAUL II**

ON THE HOLY SPIRIT  
IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH  
AND THE WORLD

INTRODUCTION

1. The Church professes her faith in the *Holy Spirit* as "*the Lord, the giver of life*". She professes this in the Creed which is called Nicene-Constantinopolitan from the name of the two Councils — of Nicaea (A.D. 325) and Constantinople (A.D. 381) — at which it was formulated or promulgated. It also contains the statement that the Holy Spirit "has spoken through the Prophets".

These are words which the Church receives from the very source of her faith, Jesus Christ. In fact, according to the Gospel of John, the Holy Spirit is given to us with the new life, as Jesus foretells and promises on the great day of the Feast of Tabernacles: "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water' ".<sup>1</sup> And the Evangelist explains: "*This he said about the Spirit*, which those who believed in him were to receive";<sup>2</sup> It is the same simile of water which Jesus uses in his conversation with the Samaritan woman, when he speaks of "a spring of water welling up to eternal life",<sup>3</sup> and in his conversation with Nicodemus when he speaks

<sup>1</sup> Jn. 7:37 f.

<sup>2</sup> Jn. 7:39.

<sup>3</sup> Jn. 4:14; cf. SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 4.



of the need for a new birth "of water and the Spirit" in order to "enter the kingdom of God".<sup>4</sup>

The Church, therefore, instructed by the words of Christ, and drawing on the experience of Pentecost and her own apostolic history, has proclaimed since the earliest centuries her faith in the Holy Spirit, as *the giver of life*, the one in whom the inscrutable *Triune God communicates himself to human beings*, constituting in them the source of eternal life.

2. This faith, uninterruptedly professed by the Church, needs to be constantly reawakened and deepened in the consciousness of the People of God. In the course of the last hundred years this has been done several times: by *Leo XIII*, who published the Encyclical Epistle *Divinum Illud Munus* (1897) entirely devoted to the Holy Spirit; by *Pius XII*, who in the Encyclical Letter *Mystici Corporis* (1943) spoke of the Holy Spirit as the vital principle of the Church, in which he works in union with the Head of the Mystical Body, Christ;<sup>5</sup> at the *Second Vatican Ecumenical Council*, which brought out the need for a new study of the doctrine on the Holy Spirit, as *Paul VI* emphasized. "The Christology and particularly the ecclesiology of the Council must be succeeded by a new study of and devotion to the Holy Spirit, precisely as the indispensable complement to the teaching of the Council".<sup>6</sup>

In our own age, then, we are called anew by the ever ancient and ever new faith of the Church, to draw near to the Holy Spirit as *the giver of life*. In this we are helped and stimulated also by the heritage we share with the *Oriental Churches*, which have jealously guarded the extraordinary riches of the most important ecclesial events of recent years has been the *Sixteenth Centenary of the First Council of Constantinople*, celebrated simultaneously in Constantinople and Rome on the Solemnity of Pentecost in 1981. The *Holy Spirit* was then better seen, through a meditation on the mystery of the Church, as the one who points out the ways leading to the union of Christians, indeed as the *supreme source of this unity*, which comes from God himself and to which Saint Paul gave a par-

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Jn. 3:5.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. LEO XIII, Encyclical *Divinum Illud Munus* (9 May 1897): *Acta Leonis*, 17 (1898), pp. 125-148; PIUS XII, Encyclical *Mystici Corporis* (29 June 1943): *AAS* 35 (1943), pp. 193-248.

<sup>6</sup> General Audience of 6 June 1973: *Insegnamenti di Paolo VI*, XI (1973), 477.

ticular expression in the words which are frequently used to begin the Eucharistic liturgy: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all".<sup>7</sup>

In a certain sense, my previous Encyclicals *Redemptor Hominis* and *Dives in Misericordia* took their origin and inspiration from this exhortation, celebrating as they do the event of our salvation accomplished in the Son, sent by the Father into the world "that the world might be saved through him"<sup>8</sup> and "every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father".<sup>9</sup> From this exhortation now comes the present Encyclical on the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; with the Father and the Son he is adored and glorified: a divine Person, he is at the centre of the Christian faith and is the source and dynamic power of the Church's renewal.<sup>10</sup> The Encyclical has been drawn from the heart of the heritage of the Council. For the Conciliar texts, thanks to their teaching on the Church in herself and the Church in the world, move us to penetrate ever deeper into the Trinitarian mystery of God himself, through the Gospels, the Fathers and the liturgy; to the Father, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit.

In this way the Church is also responding to certain deep desires which she believes she can discern in people's hearts today: a fresh discovery of God in his transcendent reality as the infinite Spirit, just as Jesus presents him to the Samaritan woman; the need to adore him "in spirit and truth";<sup>11</sup> the hope of finding in him the secret of love and the power of a "new creation";<sup>12</sup> yes, precisely the *giver of life*.

The Church feels herself called to this mission of proclaiming the Spirit, while together with the human family she approaches the end of the second Millennium after Christ. Against the background of a heaven and earth which will "pass away", she knows well that "the words which will not pass away"<sup>13</sup> acquire a particular eloquence. They are the words of Christ

<sup>7</sup> Roman Missal; cf. 2 Cor. 13:13.

<sup>8</sup> Jn. 3:17.

<sup>9</sup> Phil. 2:11.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 4; JOHN PAUL II, Address to those taking part in the International Congress on Pneumatology (26 March 1982), I: *Insegnamenti* V/1 (1982), p. 1004.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Jn. 4:24.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Rom. 8:22; Gal. 6:15.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Mt. 24:35.

about the Holy Spirit, the inexhaustible source of the "water welling up to eternal life",<sup>14</sup> as truth and saving grace. Upon these words she wishes to reflect, to these words she wishes to call the attention of believers and of all people, as she prepares to celebrate — as will be said later on — the great Jubilee which will mark the passage from the second to the third Christian Millennium.

Naturally, the considerations that follow do not aim to explore exhaustively the extremely rich doctrine on the Holy Spirit, nor to favour any particular solution of questions which are still open. Their main purpose is to develop in the Church the awareness that "she is compelled by the Holy Spirit to do her part towards the full realization of the will of God, who has established Christ as the source of salvation for the whole world".<sup>15</sup>

## PART I

### THE SPIRIT OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON,

#### 1. Jesus' promise and revelation at the Last Supper

3. When the time for Jesus to leave this world had almost come, he told the Apostles of "another Counsellor".<sup>16</sup> The evangelist John, who was present, writes that, during the Last Supper before the day of his Passion and Death, Jesus addressed the Apostles with these words: "Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son... I will pray to the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth".<sup>17</sup>

It is precisely this Spirit of truth whom Jesus calls the Paraclete — and *parakletos* means "counsellor", and also "intercessor", or "advocate". And he says that the Paraclete is "another" Counsellor, the second one, since he, Jesus himself, is

<sup>14</sup> Jn. 4:14.

<sup>15</sup> SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 17.

<sup>16</sup> ἄλλον παράκλητον: Jn. 14:16.

<sup>17</sup> Jn. 14:13. 16 f.

the first Counsellor,<sup>18</sup> being the first bearer and giver of the Good News. The Holy Spirit comes after him and because of him, in order to continue in the world, through the Church, the work of the Good News of salvation. Concerning this continuation of his own work by the Holy Spirit Jesus speaks more than once during the same farewell discourse, preparing the Apostles gathered in the Upper Room for his departure, namely for his Passion and Death on the Cross.

The words to which we will make reference here are found in the Gospel of John. Each one adds a new element to that prediction and promise. And at the same time they are intimately interwoven, not only from the viewpoint of the events themselves but also from the viewpoint of the mystery of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which perhaps in no passage of Sacred Scripture finds so emphatic an expression as here.

4. A little while after the prediction just mentioned Jesus adds: "But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he *will teach you* all things, and *bring to your remembrance* all that I have said to you".<sup>19</sup> The Holy Spirit will be the Counsellor of the Apostles and the Church, always present in their midst — even though invisible — as the teacher of the same Good News that Christ proclaimed. The words "he will teach" and "bring to remembrance" mean not only that he, in his own particular way, will continue to inspire the spreading of the Gospel of salvation but also that he will help people to understand the correct meaning of the content of Christ's message; they mean that he will ensure continuity and identity of understanding in the midst of changing conditions and circumstances. The Holy Spirit, then, will ensure that in the Church there will always continue the *same truth* which the Apostles heard from their Master.

5. In transmitting the Good News, the Apostles will be in a special way associated with the Holy Spirit. This is how Jesus goes on: "When the Counsellor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, *he will bear witness to me*; and you also are witnesses, because you have been with me from the beginning".<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Cf. 1 Jn. 2:1.

<sup>19</sup> Jn. 14:26.

<sup>20</sup> Jn. 15:26 f.



The Apostles were the direct eyewitnesses. They "have heard" and "have seen with their own eyes", "have looked upon" and even "touched with their hands" Christ, as the evangelist John says in another passage.<sup>21</sup> This human, first-hand and "historical" witness to Christ is linked to the witness of the Holy Spirit: "He will bear witness to me". *In the witness of the Spirit of truth*, the human testimony of the Apostles *will find its strongest support*. And subsequently it will also find therein the hidden *foundation* of its continuation among the generations of Christ's disciples and believers who succeed one another down through the ages.

The supreme and most complete revelation of God to humanity is Jesus Christ himself, and *the witness of the Spirit* inspires, guarantees and convalidates the faithful transmission of this revelation in the preaching and writing of the Apostles,<sup>22</sup> while the *witness of the Apostles* ensures its human expression in the Church and in the history of humanity.

6. This is also seen from the strict correlation of content and intention with the just mentioned prediction and promise, a correlation found in the next words of the text of John: "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, *he will guide you into all the truth*"; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come".<sup>23</sup>

In his previous words Jesus presents the *Counsellor*, the Spirit of truth, as the one who "will teach" and "bring to remembrance", as the one who "will bear witness" to him. Now he says: "he will guide you into all the truth". This "guiding into all the truth", referring to what the Apostles "cannot bear now", is necessarily connected *with Christ's self-emptying* through his Passion and Death on the Cross, which, when he spoke these words, was just about to happen.

Later, however it becomes clear that this "guiding into all the truth" is connected not only with the *scandal of the Cross*,

<sup>21</sup> Cf. 1 Jn. 1:1-3; 4:14.

<sup>22</sup> "The divinely revealed truths, which are contained and expressed in the books of the Sacred Scripture, were written through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit", and thus the same Sacred Scripture must be "read and interpreted with the help of the same Spirit by means of whom it was written": SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum*, 11, 12.

<sup>23</sup> Jn. 16:12 f.

but also with everything that Christ "did and taught".<sup>24</sup> For the *mystery of Christ* taken as a whole demands faith, since it is faith that adequately introduces man into the reality of the revealed mystery. The "guiding into all the truth" is therefore achieved in faith and through faith: and this is the work of the Spirit of truth and the result of his action in man. Here the Holy Spirit is to be man's supreme guide and the light of the human spirit. This holds true for the Apostles, the eye-witnesses, who must now bring to all people the proclamation of what Christ did and taught, and especially the proclamation of his Cross and Resurrection. Taking a longer view this also holds true for all the generations of disciples and confessors of the Master, since they will have to *accept* with faith and *confess* with candour the mystery of God at work in human history, the revealed mystery which explains the definitive meaning of that history.

7. Between the Holy Spirit and Christ there thus subsists, in the economy of salvation, an intimate bond, whereby the Spirit works in human history as "another Counsellor", permanently ensuring the transmission and spreading of the Good News revealed by Jesus of Nazareth. Thus, in the Holy Spirit-Paraclete, who in the mystery and action of the Church unceasingly continues the historical presence on earth of the Redeemer and his saving work, the glory of Christ shines forth, as the following words of John attest: "He (the Spirit of truth) will glorify me, for *he will take what is mine and declare it to you*".<sup>25</sup> By these words all the preceding statements are once again confirmed: "He will teach . . . , will bring to your remembrance . . . , will bear witness". The supreme and complete self-revelation of God, accomplished in Christ and witnessed to by the preaching of the Apostles, continues to be manifested in the Church through the mission of the invisible *Counsellor*, the Spirit of truth. How intimately this mission is linked with the mission of Christ, how fully it draws from this mission of Christ, consolidating and developing in history its salvific results, is expressed by the verb "take": "he will take what is mine and declare it to you". As if to explain the words "he will take" by clearly expressing the divine and Trinitarian unity of the source, Jesus adds: "*All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you*".<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Acts 1:1.

<sup>25</sup> Jn. 16:14.

<sup>26</sup> Jn. 16:15.

By the very fact of taking what is "mine", he will draw from "what is the Father's".

In the light of these words "he will take", one can therefore also explain the other significant words about the Holy Spirit spoken by Jesus in the Upper Room before the Passover: "It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; *but if I go, I will send him to you.* And when he comes, he will convince the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment".<sup>27</sup> It will be necessary to return to these words in a separate reflection.

## 2. Father, Son and Holy Spirit

8. It is a characteristic of the text of John that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are clearly called Persons, the first distinct from the second and the third, and each of them from one another. Jesus speaks of the Spirit-Counsellor, using several times the personal pronoun "he"; and at the same time, throughout the farewell discourse, he reveals the bonds which unite the Father, the Son and the Paraclete to one another. Thus "the Holy Spirit . . . proceeds from the Father"<sup>28</sup> and the Father "gives" the Spirit.<sup>29</sup> The Father "sends" the Spirit in the name of the Son,<sup>30</sup> the Spirit "bears witness" to the Son.<sup>31</sup> The Son asks the Father to send the Spirit-Counsellor,<sup>32</sup> but likewise affirms and promises, in relation to his own "departure" through the Cross: "If I go, I will send him to you".<sup>33</sup> Thus, the Father sends the Holy Spirit in the power of his Fatherhood, as he has sent the Son;<sup>34</sup> but at the same time he sends him in the power of the Redemption accomplished by Christ — and in this sense the Holy Spirit is sent also by the Son: "I will send him to you".

Here it should be noted that, while all the other promises made in the Upper Room foretold the coming of the Holy Spirit *after* Christ's departure, the one contained in the text of John 16:7f also includes and clearly emphasizes the relationship of

<sup>27</sup> Jn. 16:7 f.

<sup>28</sup> Jn. 15:26.

<sup>29</sup> Jn. 14:16.

<sup>30</sup> Jn. 14:26.

<sup>31</sup> Jn. 15:26.

<sup>32</sup> Jn. 14:16.

<sup>33</sup> Jn. 16:7.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Jn. 3:16 f, 34; 6:57; 17:3. 18. 23.

interdependence which could be called *causal* between the manifestation of each: "If I go, I will send him to you". The Holy Spirit will come insofar as Christ will depart through the Cross: he will come not only *afterwards*, but *because* of the Redemption accomplished by Christ, through the will and action of the Father.

9. Thus in the farewell discourse at the Last Supper, we can say that *the highest point of the revelation of the Trinity* is reached. At the same time, we are on the threshold of definitive events and final words which in the end will be translated into the great missionary mandate addressed to the Apostles and through them to the Church: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations", a mandate which contains, in a certain sense, the Trinitarian formula of baptism: "*baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*".<sup>35</sup> The formula reflects the intimate mystery of God, of the divine life, which is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the divine unity of the Trinity. The farewell discourse can be read as a special preparation for this Trinitarian formula, in which is expressed the life-giving power of the Sacrament which brings about *sharing in the life of the Triune God*, for it gives sanctifying grace as a supernatural gift to man. Through grace, man is called and made "capable" of sharing in the inscrutable life of God.

10. In his intimate life, God "is love",<sup>36</sup> the essential love shared by the three divine Persons: personal love is the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the Father and the Son. Therefore he "searches even the depths of God",<sup>37</sup> as *uncreated Love-Gift*. It can be said that in the Holy Spirit the intimate life of the Triune God becomes totally gift, an exchange of mutual love between the divine Persons, and that through the Holy Spirit God exists in the mode of gift. It is the Holy Spirit who is *the personal expression* of this self-giving, of this being-love.<sup>38</sup> He is Person-Love. He is Person-Gift. Here we have an inexhaustible deepening of the concept of *person* in God, which only divine Revelation makes known to us.

At the same time, the Holy Spirit, being consubstantial with the Father and the Son in divinity, is love and uncreated

<sup>35</sup> Mt. 28:19.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. 1 Jn. 4:8. 16.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. 2:10.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa Theol.* Ia, qq. 37-38.



gift from which derives as from its source (*fons vivus*) all giving of gifts vis-à-vis creatures (created gift): the gift of existence to all things through creation; the gift of grace to human beings through the whole economy of salvation. As the Apostle Paul writes: "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us".<sup>39</sup>

### 3. The salvific self-giving of God in the Holy Spirit

11. Christ's farewell discourse at the Last Supper stands in particular reference to this "giving" and "self-giving" of the Holy Spirit. In John's Gospel we have as it were the revelation of the most profound "logic" of the saving mystery contained in God's eternal plan, as an extension of the ineffable communion of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is the divine "logic" which from the mystery of the Trinity leads to the mystery of the Redemption of the world in Jesus Christ. The *Redemption accomplished by the Son* in the dimensions of the earthly history of humanity — accomplished in his "departure" through the Cross and Resurrection — is at the same time, in its entire salvific power, *transmitted to the Holy Spirit*: the one who "will take what is mine".<sup>40</sup> The words of the text of John indicate that, according to the divine plan, Christ's "departure" is an indispensable condition for the "sending" and the coming of the Holy Spirit, but these words also say that what begins now is the new salvific self-giving of God, in the Holy Spirit.

12. It is a new beginning in relation to the first, original beginning of God's salvific self-giving, which is identified with the mystery of creation itself. Here is what we read in the very first words of the Book of Genesis: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth . . . , and the Spirit of God (*ruah Elohim*) was moving over the face of the waters".<sup>41</sup> This biblical concept of creation includes not only the call to existence of the very being of the cosmos, that is to say the giving of existence, but also the presence of the Spirit of God in creation, that is to say the beginning of God's salvific self-communication to the things he creates. This is true first of all concerning man,

<sup>39</sup> Rom. 5:5.

<sup>40</sup> Jn. 16:14.

<sup>41</sup> Gen. 1:1 f.

who has been created in the image and likeness of God: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness".<sup>42</sup> "Let us make": can one hold that the plural which the Creator uses here in speaking of himself already in some way suggests the Trinitarian mystery, the presence of the Trinity in the work of the creation of man? The Christian reader, who already knows the revelation of this mystery, can discern a reflection of it also in these words. At any rate, the context of the Book of Genesis enables us to see in the creation of man the first beginning of God's salvific self-giving commensurate with the "image and likeness" of himself which he has granted to man.

13. It seems then that even the words spoken by Jesus in the farewell discourse should be read again in the light of that "beginning", so long ago yet fundamental, which we know from Genesis. "If I do not go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you". Describing his "departure" as a *condition* for the "coming" of the Counsellor, Christ links the new beginning of God's salvific self-communication in the Holy Spirit with the mystery of the Redemption. It is a new beginning, first of all because *between* the first beginning and the whole of human history — from the original fall onwards — *sin has intervened*, sin which is in contradiction to the presence of the Spirit of God in creation, and which is above all in *contradiction to God's salvific self-communication to man*. Saint Paul writes that, precisely because of sin, "creation... was subjected to futility..., has been groaning in travail together until now" and "waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God".<sup>43</sup>

14. Therefore Jesus Christ says in the Upper Room: "It is to your advantage I go away;... if I go, I will send him to you".<sup>44</sup> The "departure" of Christ through the Cross has the power of the Redemption — and this also means a new presence of the Spirit of God in creation: the new beginning of God's self-communication to man in the Holy Spirit. "And that you are children is proven by the fact that God has sent into our hearts the Spirit of his Son who cries: Abba, Father!" — as the Apostle Paul writes in *the Letter to the Galatians*.<sup>45</sup> The Holy Spirit is *the Spirit of the Father*, as the words of the farewell

<sup>42</sup> Gen. 1:26.

<sup>43</sup> Rom. 8:19-22.

<sup>44</sup> Jn. 16:7.

<sup>45</sup> Gal. 4:6; cf. Rom. 8:15.

discourse in the Upper Room bear witness. At the same time he is *the Spirit of the Son: he is the Spirit of Jesus Christ*, as the Apostles and particularly Paul of Tarsus will testify.<sup>46</sup> With the sending of this Spirit "into our hearts", there begins the fulfilment of that for which "creation waits with eager longing", as we read in the *Letter to the Romans*.

The Holy Spirit comes *at the price of Christ's "departure"*. While this "departure" caused the *Apostles to be sorrowful*,<sup>47</sup> and this sorrow was to reach its culmination in the Passion and Death on Good Friday, "this sorrow will turn into joy".<sup>48</sup> For Christ will add to this redemptive "departure" the glory of his Resurrection and Ascension to the Father. Thus the sorrow with its underlying joy is, for the Apostles in the context of their Master's "departure", an "advantageous" departure, for thanks to it another "Counsellor" will come.<sup>49</sup> At the price of the Cross which brings about the Redemption, in the power of the whole Paschal mystery of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit comes in order to remain *from the day of Pentecost onwards* with the Apostles, to remain with the Church and in the Church, and through her in the world.

In this way there is definitively *brought about that new beginning* of the self-communication of the Triune God in the Holy Spirit through the work of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of man and of the world.

#### 4. The Messiah, anointed with the Holy Spirit

15. There is also accomplished in its entirety the mission of the Messiah, that is to say of the One who has received the fullness of the Holy Spirit for the Chosen People of God and for the whole of humanity. "Messiah" literally means "Christ", that is, "Anointed One", and in the history of salvation it means "the one anointed with the Holy Spirit". This was the prophetic tradition of the Old Testament. Following this tradition, Simon Peter will say in the house of Cornelius: "You must have heard about the recent happenings in Judaea . . . , after the baptism which John preached: how *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power*".<sup>50</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Gal. 4:6; Phil. 1:19; Rom. 8:11.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Jn. 16:6.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Jn. 16:20.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Jn. 16:7.

<sup>50</sup> Acts 10:37 f.

From these words of Peter and from many similar ones,<sup>51</sup> one must first go back to the prophecy of *Isaiah*, sometimes called "the Fifth Gospel" or "the Gospel of the Old Testament". Alluding to the coming of a mysterious personage, which the New Testament revelation will identify with Jesus, *Isaiah* connects his person and mission with a particular action of the Spirit of God — the Spirit of the Lord. These are the words of the Prophet:

"There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

And *the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him*,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

And his delight shall be the fear of the Lord".<sup>52</sup>

This text is important for the whole pneumatology of the Old Testament, because it constitutes a kind of bridge between the ancient biblical concept of "spirit", understood primarily as a "charismatic breath of wind", and the "*Spirit*" as a person and as a gift, a gift for the person. The Messiah of the lineage of David ("from the stump of Jesse") is precisely that person upon whom the Spirit of the Lord "shall rest". It is obvious that in this case one cannot yet speak of a revelation of the Paraclete. However, with this veiled reference to the figure of the future Messiah there begins, so to speak, the path towards the full revelation of the Holy Spirit in the unity of the Trinitarian mystery, a mystery which will finally be manifested in the New Covenant.

16. It is precisely the Messiah himself who is this path. In the Old Covenant, anointing had become the external symbol of the gift of the Spirit. The Messiah (more than any other anointed personage in the Old Covenant) is that single great personage *anointed by God himself*. He is the Anointed One in the sense that he possesses the fullness of the Spirit of God. He himself will also be the mediator in granting this Spirit to the whole People. Here in fact are other words of the Prophet:

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,  
because the Lord *has anointed me*

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Lk. 4:16-21; 3:16; 4:14; Mk. 1:10.

<sup>52</sup> Is. 11:1-3.



to bring good tidings to the afflicted;  
 he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
 to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
 and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;  
 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour".<sup>53</sup>

The Anointed One is *also sent "with the Spirit of the Lord"*:  
 "Now the Lord God has sent me and his Spirit".<sup>54</sup>

According to the Book of Isaiah, the Anointed One and the One sent together with the Spirit of the Lord is also the chosen *Servant of the Lord* upon whom the Spirit of God comes down:

*"Behold my servant, whom I uphold,  
 my chosen, in whom my soul delights;  
 I have put my Spirit upon him"*.<sup>55</sup>

We know that the Servant of the Lord is revealed in the *Book of Isaiah* as the true Man of Sorrows: the *Messiah who suffers* for the sins of the world.<sup>56</sup> And at the same time it is precisely he whose mission *will bear for all humanity the true fruits of salvation*:

"He will bring forth justice to the nations...";<sup>57</sup> and he will become "a covenant to the people, a light to the nations...";<sup>58</sup> "that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth".<sup>59</sup>

For: "My spirit which is upon you and my words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth or out of the mouth of your children's children, says the Lord, from this time forth and for evermore".<sup>60</sup>

The prophetic texts quoted here are to be read *in the light of the Gospel* — just as, in its turn, the New Testament draws a particular clarification from the marvellous light contained in these Old Testament texts. The Prophet presents the Messiah as the one who *comes in the Holy Spirit*, the one who *possesses the fullness of this Spirit in himself* and at the same time *for others*, for Israel, for all the nations, for all humanity. The fullness of the Spirit of God is accompanied by many different

<sup>53</sup> Is. 61:1 f.

<sup>54</sup> Is. 48:16.

<sup>55</sup> Is. 42:1.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Is. 53:5-6. 8.

<sup>57</sup> Is. 42:1.

<sup>58</sup> Is. 42:6.

<sup>59</sup> Is. 49:6.

<sup>60</sup> Is. 59:21.

gifts, the treasures of salvation, destined in a particular way for the poor and suffering, for all those who open their hearts to these gifts — sometimes through the painful experience of their own existence — but first of all through that interior availability which comes from faith. The aged Simeon, the “righteous and devout man” upon whom “rested the Holy Spirit”, sensed this at the moment of Jesus presentation in the Temple, when he perceived in him the “salvation... prepared in the presence of all peoples” at the price of the great suffering — the Cross — which he would have to embrace together with his Mother.<sup>61</sup> The Virgin Mary, who “had conceived by the Holy Spirit”,<sup>62</sup> sensed this even more clearly, when she pondered in her heart the “mysteries” of the Messiah, with whom she was associated.<sup>63</sup>

17. Here it must be emphasized that clearly the “spirit of the Lord” who rests upon the future Messiah is above all *a gift of God for the person* of that Servant of the Lord. But the latter is not an isolated and independent person, because he acts in accordance with the will of the Lord, by virtue of the Lord’s decision or choice. Even though in the light of the texts of Isaiah the salvific work of the Messiah, the Servant of the Lord, includes the action of the Spirit which is carried out through himself, nevertheless in the Old Testament context there is no suggestion of a distinction of subjects, or of the Divine Persons as they subsist in the mystery of the Trinity, and as they are later revealed in the New Testament. Both in Isaiah and in the whole of the Old Testament *the personality of the Holy Spirit* is completely *hidden*: in the revelation of the one God, as also in the foretelling of the future Messiah.

18. *Jesus Christ will make reference to this prediction contained in the words of Isaiah* at the beginning of his messianic activity. This will happen in the same Nazareth where he had lived for thirty years in the house of Joseph the carpenter, with Mary, his Virgin Mother. When he had occasion to speak in the Synagogue, he opened the *Book of Isaiah* and found the passage where it was written: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me”; and having read this passage he said to those present: “*Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing*”.<sup>64</sup> In this way he confessed and proclaimed

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Lk. 2:25-35.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Lk. 1:35.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Lk. 2:19. 51.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Lk. 4:16-21; Is. 61:1 f.

that he was the Messiah, the one in whom the Holy Spirit dwells as the gift of God himself, the one who possesses the fullness of this Spirit, the one who marks the "new beginning" of the gift which God makes to humanity in the Spirit.

### 5. Jesus of Nazareth, "exalted" in the Holy Spirit

19. Even though in his home-town of Nazareth Jesus is not accepted as the Messiah, nonetheless, at the beginning of his public activity, his messianic mission in the Holy Spirit is *revealed to the people by John the Baptist*. The latter, the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth, foretells at the Jordan the coming of the Messiah and administers the baptism of repentance. He says: "I baptize you with water; he who is mightier than I is coming, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire".<sup>65</sup>

John the Baptist foretells the Messiah-Christ not only as the one who "is coming" in the Holy Spirit but also as the one who "brings" the Holy Spirit, as Jesus will reveal more clearly in the Upper Room. Here John faithfully echoes the words of Isaiah, words which in the ancient Prophet concerned the future, while in John's teaching on the banks of the Jordan they are the immediate introduction to the new messianic reality. John is not only a prophet but also a messenger: he is the precursor of Christ. What he foretells is accomplished before the eyes of all. Jesus of Nazareth too comes to the Jordan to receive the baptism of repentance. At the sight of him arriving, John proclaims: "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world".<sup>66</sup> He says this through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit,<sup>67</sup> *bearing witness to the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah*. At the same time he confesses his faith in the redeeming mission of Jesus of Nazareth. On the lips of John the Baptist, "Lamb of God" is an expression of truth about the Redeemer no less significant than the one used by Isaiah: "Servant of the Lord".

Thus, by the testimony of John at the Jordan, Jesus of Nazareth, rejected by his own fellow-citizens, is *exalted before*

<sup>65</sup> Lk. 3:16; cf. Mt. 3:11; Mk. 1:7 f.; Jn. 1:33.

<sup>66</sup> Jn. 1:29.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Jn. 1:33 f.

*the eyes of Israel as the Messiah*, that is to say the "One Anointed" with the Holy Spirit. And this testimony is corroborated by another testimony of a higher order, mentioned by the three Synoptics. For when all the people were baptized and as Jesus, having received baptism, was praying, "the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form, as a dove"<sup>68</sup> and at the same time "a voice from heaven said "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased"<sup>69</sup>.

This is a *Trinitarian theophany* which bears witness to the exaltation of Christ on the occasion of his baptism in the Jordan. It not only confirms the testimony of John the Baptist but also reveals another more profound dimension of the truth about Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah. It is this: *the Messiah is the beloved Son of the Father*. His solemn exaltation cannot be reduced to the messianic mission of the "Servant of the Lord". In the light of the theophany at the Jordan, this exaltation touches the mystery of the very person of the Messiah. He has been raised up because he is the beloved Son in whom God is well pleased. The voice from on high says: "my Son".

20. The theophany at the Jordan clarifies only in a fleeting way the mystery of Jesus of Nazareth, whose entire activity will be carried out in the active presence of the Holy Spirit.<sup>70</sup> This mystery would be gradually revealed and confirmed by Jesus himself by means of everything that he "did and taught".<sup>71</sup> In the course of this teaching and of the messianic signs which Jesus performed before he came to the farewell discourse in the Upper Room, we find events and words which constitute particularly important stages of this progressive revelation. Thus the evangelist Luke, who has already presented Jesus as "full of the Holy Spirit" and "led by the Spirit . . . in the wilderness",<sup>72</sup> tells us that, after the return of the seventy-two disciples from the mission entrusted to them by the Master,<sup>73</sup> while they were joyfully recounting the fruits of their labours, "in that same hour (*Jesus*) rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said: 'I think you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes; yea, Father for such was your gracious will'.<sup>74</sup> Jesus

<sup>68</sup> Lk. 3:21 f.; cf. Mt. 3:16; Mk. 1:10.

<sup>69</sup> Mt. 3:17.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. ST. BASIL, *De Spiritu Sancto*, XVI, 39; PG. 32, 139.

<sup>71</sup> Acts 1:1.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Lk. 4:1.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Lk. 10:17-20.

<sup>74</sup> Lk. 10:21; cf. Mt. 11:25 f.



rejoices at the fatherhood of God: he rejoices because it has been given to him to reveal this fatherhood; he rejoices, finally, as at a particular outpouring of this divine fatherhood on the "little ones". And the evangelist describes all this as "rejoicing in the Holy Spirit".

This "rejoicing" in a certain sense prompts Jesus to say still more. We hear: "All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except *the Son* and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him".<sup>75</sup>

21. That which during the theophany at the Jordan came so to speak "from outside", from on high, here comes "from within", that is to say *from the depths of who Jesus is*. It is another revelation of the Father and the Son, united in the Holy Spirit. Jesus speaks only of the fatherhood of God and of his own sonship — he does not speak directly of the Spirit who is Love and thereby the union of the Father and the Son. Nonetheless *what he says of the Father and of himself-the Son flows from that fullness of the Spirit which is in him, which fills his heart, pervades his own "I", inspires and enlivens his action from the depths*. Hence that "rejoicing in the Holy Spirit". The union of Christ with the Holy Spirit, a union of which he is perfectly aware, is expressed in that "perceptible" its hidden source. Thus there is a particular manifestation and rejoicing which is proper to the Son of Man, the Christ-Messiah, whose humanity belongs to the person of the Son of God, substantially one with the Holy Spirit in divinity.

In the magnificent confession of the fatherhood of God, Jesus of Nazareth also manifests himself, his divine "I": for he is the Son "*of the same substance*", and therefore "no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son", that Son who "for us and for our salvation" became man *by the power of the Holy Spirit* and was born of a virgin whose name was Mary.

#### 6. The Risen Christ says: "Receive the Holy Spirit"

22. It is thanks to Luke's narrative that we are brought closest to the truth contained in the discourse in the Upper Room. Jesus of Nazareth, "raised up" in the Holy Spirit, during this dis-

<sup>75</sup> Lk. 10:22; cf. Mt. 11:27.

course and conversation presents himself as *the one who "brings" the Spirit*, as the one who is to bring him and "give" him to the Apostles and to the Church at the price of this own "departure" through the Cross.

The verb "bring" is here used to mean *first of all "reveal"*. In the Old Testament, from the *Book of Genesis* onwards, the Spirit of God was in some way made known, in the first place as a "*breath*" of God which gives life, as a supernatural "*living breath*". In the *Book of Isaiah*, he is presented as a "*gift*" for the person of the Messiah, as the one who comes down and rests upon him, in order to guide from within all the salvific activity of the "Anointed One". At the Jordan, Isaiah's proclamation is given a concrete form: Jesus of Nazareth is the one *who comes in the Holy Spirit* and who brings the Spirit as the gift proper to his own *Person*, in order to distribute that gift by means of this humanity: "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit".<sup>76</sup> In the Gospel of Luke, this revelation of the Holy Spirit is confirmed and added to, *as the intimate source* of the life and messianic activity of Jesus Christ.

In the light of what Jesus says in the farewell discourse in the Upper Room, the Holy Spirit is revealed in a new and fuller way. He is *not only the gift to the person* (the person of the Meesiah), but is a *Person-gift*. Jesus foretells his coming as that of "another Counsellor" who, being the Spirit of truth, will lead the Apostles and the Church "into all the truth".<sup>77</sup> This will be accomplished by reason of the particular communion between the Holy Spirit and Christ: "He will take what is mine and declare it to you".<sup>78</sup> This communion has its *original source in the Father*: "All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you".<sup>79</sup> Coming from the Father the Holy Spirit is sent by the Father.<sup>80</sup> The Holy Spirit is *first sent as a gift for the Son* who was made man, in order to fulfil the messianic prophecies. After the "departure" of Christ the Son, the Johannine text says that the Holy Spirit "*will come*" directly (it is his new mission), to complete the work of the Son. Thus it will be he who brings to fulfilment the new era of the history of salvation.

<sup>76</sup> Mt. 3:11; Lk. 3:16.

<sup>77</sup> Jn. 16:13.

<sup>78</sup> Jn. 16:14.

<sup>79</sup> Jn. 16:15.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Jn. 14:26; 15:26.

23. We find ourselves on the threshold of the Paschal events. The new, definitive revelation of the Holy Spirit as a Person who is the gift is accomplished at this precise moment. The Paschal events — the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ — are also the *time of the new coming* of the Holy Spirit, as the Paraclete and the Spirit of truth. They are the time of the “new beginning” of the self-communication of the Triune God to humanity in the Holy Spirit through the work of Christ the Redeemer. This new beginning is the Redemption of the world: “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son”.<sup>81</sup> Already the “giving” of the Son, *the gift of the Son*, expresses the most profound essence of God who, as Love, is the inexhaustible source of the giving of gifts. The gift *made by the Son* completes the revelation and giving the eternal love: *the Holy Spirit*, who in the inscrutable depths of the divinity is a Person-gift, through the work of the Son, that is to say by means of the Paschal mystery, is given to the Apostles and to the Church in a new way, and through them is given to humanity and the whole world.

24. The definitive expression of this mystery is had *on the day of the Resurrection*. On this day Jesus of Nazareth, “descended from David according to the flesh”, as the Apostle Paul writes, is “designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his Resurrection from the dead”.<sup>82</sup> It can be said therefore that the messianic “raising up” of Christ in the Holy Spirit reaches its zenith in the Resurrection, in which he reveals himself also as the *Son of God*, “full of power”. And this power, the sources of which gush forth in the inscrutable Trinitarian communion, is manifested, first of all, in the fact that the Risen Christ does two things: on the one hand he fulfils God’s promise already expressed through the Prophet’s words “A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you, . . . my spirit”;<sup>83</sup> and on the other hand he fulfils his own promise made to the Apostles with the words “If I go, I will send him to you”.<sup>84</sup> It is he: the Spirit of truth, the Paraclete sent by the Risen Christ to transform us into his own risen image.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Jn. 3:16.

<sup>82</sup> Rom. 1:3 f.

<sup>83</sup> Ez. 36:26 f.; cf. Jn. 7:37-39; 19:34.

<sup>84</sup> Jn. 16:7.

<sup>85</sup> ST. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, *In Ioannis Evangelium*, Bk. V, Ch. II: PG. 73, 755.

"On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you'. When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you'. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, '*Receive the Holy Spirit*'".<sup>86</sup>

All the details of this key-text of John's Gospel have their own eloquence, especially if we read them in reference to the words spoken in the same Upper Room at the beginning of the Paschal events. And now these events — the *Triduum Sacrum* of Jesus whom the Father consecrated with the anointing and sent into the world — reach their fulfilment. Christ, who "gave up his spirit" *on the Cross*<sup>87</sup> as the Son of Man and the Lamb of God, once risen goes to the Apostles "*to breathe on them*" with that power spoken of in the *Letter to the Romans*.<sup>88</sup> The Lord's coming fills those present with joy: "Your sorrow will turn into joy",<sup>89</sup> as he had already promised them before his Passion. And above all there is fulfilled the principal prediction of the farewell discourse: the Risen Christ, as it were beginning a new creation, "*brings*" *to the Apostles the Holy Spirit*. He brings him at the price of his own "departure": he gives them this Spirit as it were through the wounds of his crucifixion: "He showed them his hands and his side". It is in the power of this crucifixion that he says to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit".

Thus there is established a close link between *the sending of the Son* and *the sending of Holy Spirit*. There is no sending of the Holy Spirit (after original sin) without the Cross and the Resurrection: "If I do not go away, the *Counsellor* will not come to you".<sup>90</sup> There is also established a close link *between the mission of the Holy Spirit and that of the Son* in the Redemption. The mission of the Son, in a certain sense, finds its "fulfilment" in the Redemption. The mission of the Holy Spirit "draws from" the Redemption: "He will take what is mine and declare it to you".<sup>91</sup> The *Redemption* is totally carried

<sup>86</sup> Jn. 20:19-22.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Jn. 19:30.

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Rom. 1:4.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Jn. 16:20.

<sup>90</sup> Jn. 16:7.

<sup>91</sup> Jn. 16:15.



out by the Son as the Anointed One, who came and acted in the power of the Holy Spirit, offering himself finally in sacrifice on the wood of the Cross. And this Redemption is, at the same time, *constantly carried out* in human hearts and minds — in the history of the world — by the Holy Spirit, who is the “other Counsellor”.

### 7. The Holy Spirit and the era of the Church

25. “Having accomplished the work that the Father had entrusted to the Son on earth (cf. *Jn.* 17:4), *on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was sent to sanctify the Church for ever*, so that believers might have access to the Father through Christ in one Spirit (cf. *Eph.* 2:18). He is the Spirit of life, the fountain of water springing up to eternal life (cf. *Jn.* 4:14; 7:38 ff.), the One through whom the Father restores life to those who are dead through sin, until one day he will raise in Christ their mortal bodies (cf. *Rom.* 8:10 f).<sup>92</sup>

In this way the Second Vatican Council speaks of *the Church's birth* on the day of Pentecost. This event constitutes the definitive manifestation of what had already been accomplished in the same Upper Room on Easter Sunday. The Risen Christ came and “brought” to the Apostles the Holy Spirit. He gave him to them, saying “Receive the Holy Spirit”. What had then taken place *inside the Upper Room*, “the doors being shut”, later, on the day of Pentecost is manifested also outside, in public. The doors of the Upper Room are opened and the Apostles go to the inhabitants and the pilgrims who had gathered in Jerusalem on the occasion of the feast, in order to bear witness to Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. In this way the prediction is fulfilled: “*He will bear witness to me: and you also are witnesses, because you have been with me from the beginning*”.<sup>93</sup>

We read in another document of the Second Vatican Council: “Doubtless, the Holy Spirit was already at work in the world before Christ was glorified. Yet on the day of Pentecost, he came down upon the disciples to remain with them for ever. On that day the Church was publicly revealed to the multitude,

<sup>92</sup> SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 4.

<sup>93</sup> *Jn.* 15:26 f.

and the Gospel began to spread among the nations by means of preaching<sup>94</sup>.

The *era of the Church* began with the "coming", that is to say with the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles gathered in the Upper Room in Jerusalem, together with Mary, the Lord's Mother.<sup>95</sup> The time of the Church began at the moment when *the promises and predictions* that so explicitly referred to the Counsellor, the Spirit of truth, began to be fulfilled in complete power and clarity upon the Apostles, thus determining the birth of the Church. The *Acts of the Apostles* speak of this at length and in many passages, which state that in the mind of the first community, whose convictions Luke expresses, the *Holy Spirit assumed the invisible* — but in a certain way "perceptible" — *guidance* of those who after the departure of the Lord Jesus felt profoundly that they had been left orphans. With the coming of the Spirit they left capable of fulfilling the mission entrusted to them. They felt full of strength. It is precisely this that the Holy Spirit worked in them, and this is continually at work in the Church, through their successors. For the grace of the Holy Spirit which the Apostles gave to their collaborators through the imposition of hands continues to be transmitted in Episcopal Ordination. The bishops in turn by the Sacrament of Orders render the sacred ministers sharers in this spiritual gifts and, through the Sacrament of Confirmation, ensure that all who are reborn of water and the Holy Spirit are strengthened by this gift. And thus, in a certain way, the grace of Pentecost is perpetuated in the Church.

As the Council writes, "*the Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful as in a temple* (cf. 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19). In them he prays and bears witness to the fact that they are adopted sons (cf. Gal. 4:6, Rom. 8:15-16.26). The Spirit *guides the Church into the fullness of truth* (cf. Jn. 16:13) and gives her a unity of fellowship and service. He furnishes and directs her with various gifts, both hierarchical and charismatic, and adorns her with the fruits of his grace (cf. Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Cor. 12:4; Gal. 5:22). By the power of the Gospel *he makes the Church grow, perpetually renews her, and leads her to perfect union with her Spouse*".<sup>96</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity *Ad Gentes*, 4.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Acts 1:14.

<sup>96</sup> Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 4. There is a whole Patristic and theological tradition concerning the intimate union between the Holy Spirit and the Church, a union presented sometimes as analogous to the relation between the soul and the body in man: cf. ST. IRENAEUS, *Adversus Haereses*, III, 24, 1: SC. 211, pp. 470-474; ST.

26. These passages quoted from the Conciliar Constitution *Lumen Gentium* tell us that the era of the Church began with the coming of the Holy Spirit. They also tell us that this era, *the era of the Church*, continues. It continues *down the centuries and generations*. In our own century, when humanity is already close to the end of the second Millennium after Christ, this era of the Church expressed itself in a special way through the Second Vatican Council, as the Council of our century. For we know that it was in a special way an "ecclesiological" Council: *a Council on the theme of the Church*. At the same time, the teaching of this Council is essentially "pneumatological": it is *permeated by the truth about the Holy Spirit*, as the soul of the Church. We can say that in its rich variety of teaching the Second Vatican Council contains precisely all that "the Spirit says to the Churches"<sup>97</sup> with regard to the present phase of the history of salvation.

Following the guidance of the Spirit of truth and bearing witness together with him, the Council has given a special confirmation of the presence of the Holy Spirit — the Counsellor. In a certain sense, the Council has made the Spirit newly "present" in our difficult age. In the light of this conviction one grasps more clearly the great importance of all the initiatives aimed at implementing the Second Vatican Council, its teaching and its pastoral and ecumenical thrust. In this sense also the subsequent *Assemblies of the Synod of Bishops* are to be carefully studied and evaluated, aiming as they do to ensure that the fruits of truth and love — the authentic fruits of the Holy Spirit — become a lasting treasure for the People of God in its earthly pilgrimage down the centuries. This work being done by the Church for the testing and bringing together of the salvific fruits of the Spirit bestowed in the Council is something indispensable. For this purpose one must learn how to "discern" them carefully from everything that may instead come originally from the "prince of this world".<sup>98</sup> This discernment

AUGUSTINE, *Sermo* 267, 4, 4: PL 38, 1231; *Sermo* 268, 2: PL 38, 1232; *In Iohannis Evangelium Tractatus*, XXV, 13; XXVII, 6: CCL 36, 266, 272 f.; ST. GREGORY THE GREAT, *In Septem Psalmos Poenitentiales Expositio*, Psal. V, 1: PL 79, 602; DIDYMUS THE BLIND, *De Trinitate*, II, 1: PG 39, 449 f.; ST. ATHANASIUS, *Oratio III contra Arianos*, 22, 23, 24: PG 26, 368 f.; 372 f.; ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *In Epistolam ad Ephesios*, Homily IX, 3: PG 62, 72 f. ST. THOMAS AQUINAS has synthesized the preceding Patristic and theological tradition, presenting the Holy Spirit as the "heart" and the "soul" of the Church; cf. *Summa Theol.*, III, q. 8, a. 1 ad 3; *In Symbolum Apostolorum Expositio*, a. IX; *In Tertium Librum Sententiarum*, Dist. XIII, q. 2, a. 2, Quaestiuncula 3.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. Rev. 2:29; 3:6. 13. 22.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Jn. 12:31; 14:30; 16:11.

in implementing the Council's work is especially necessary in view of the fact that the Council *opened itself widely to the contemporary world*, as is clearly seen from the important Conciliar Constitutions *Gaudium et Spes* and *Lumen Gentium*.

We read in the Pastoral Constitution: "For theirs (i.e. of the disciples of Christ) is a community composed of men. United in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey to the kingdom of their Father and they have welcomed the news of salvation which is meant for every man. That is why this community realizes that is truly and intimately *linked with mankind and its history*".<sup>99</sup> "The Church truly knows that only God, whom she serves, meets the deepest longings of the human heart, which is never fully satisfied by what the world has to offer".<sup>100</sup> *God's Spirit... with a marvellous providence directs the unfolding of time and renews the face of the earth*".<sup>101</sup>

## PART II

### THE SPIRIT WHO CONVINCES THE WORLD CONCERNING SIN

#### 1. Sin, righteousness and judgment

27. When Jesus during the discourse in the Upper Room foretells the coming of the Holy Spirit "at the price of" his own departure, and promises "I will send him to you", in the very same context he adds "And when he comes, he *will convince the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment*".<sup>102</sup> The same Counsellor and Spirit of truth who has been promised as the one who "will teach" and "bring to remembrance", who "will bear witness", and "guide into all the truth", in the words just quoted is foretold as the one who "will convince the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment".

The *context* too seems significant. Jesus links this foretelling of the Holy Spirit to the words indicating his "departure"

<sup>99</sup> Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 1.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>102</sup> Jn. 16:7 f.



through the Cross, and indeed emphasizes the need for this departure: "It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counsellor will not come to you".<sup>103</sup>

But what counts more is *the explanation that Jesus himself adds* to these three words: sin, righteousness, judgment. For he says this: "He will convince the world concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged".<sup>104</sup> In the mind of Jesus, sin, righteousness and judgment have a *very precise meaning*, different from the meaning that one might be inclined to attribute to these words independently of the speaker's explanation. This explanation also indicates how one is to understand the "convincing the world" which is proper to the action of the Holy Spirit. Both the meaning of the individual words and the fact that Jesus linked them together in the same phrase are important here.

"Sin", in this passage, means the incredulity that Jesus encountered among "his own", beginning with the people of his own town of Nazareth. Sin means the rejection of his mission, a rejection that will cause people to condemn him to death. When he speaks next of "*righteousness*", Jesus seems to have in mind that definitive justice, which the Father will restore to him when he grants him the glory of the Resurrection and Ascension into heaven: "I go to the Father". In its turn, and in the context of "sin" and "righteousness" thus understood, "*judgment*" means that the Spirit of truth will show the guilt of the "world" in condemning Jesus to death on the Cross. Nevertheless, Christ did not come into the world only to judge it and condemn it: *he came to save it*.<sup>105</sup> Convincing about sin and righteousness has as its purpose the salvation of the world, the salvation of man. Precisely this truth seems to be emphasized by the assertion that "judgment" concerns only the "*prince of this world*", Satan, the one who from the beginning has been exploiting the work of creation against salvation, against the covenant and the union of man with God: he is "already judged" from the start. If the Spirit-Counsellor is to convince the world precisely concerning judgment, it is in order to continue in the world the salvific work of Christ.

<sup>103</sup> Jn. 16:7.

<sup>104</sup> Jn. 16:8-11.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. Jn. 3:17; 12:47.

28. Here we wish to concentrate our attention principally on this mission of the Holy Spirit, which is "*to convince the world concerning sin*", but at the same time respecting the general context of Jesus' words in the Upper Room. The Holy Spirit, who takes from the Son the work of the Redemption of the world, by this very fact takes the task of the salvific "*convincing of sin*". This convincing is *in permanent reference to "righteousness"*: that is to say to definitive salvation in God, to the fulfilment of the economy that has as its centre the crucified and glorified Christ. And this *salvific economy of God* in a certain sense removes man from "*judgment*", *that is from the damnation* which has been inflicted on the sin of Satan, "the prince of this world", the one who because of his sin has become "the ruler of this world of darkness".<sup>106</sup> And here we see that, through this reference to "*judgment*", vast horizons open up for understanding "*sin*" and also "*righteousness*". The Holy Spirit, by showing sin against the background of Christ's Cross in the economy of salvation (one could say "*sin saved*"), enables us to understand how his mission is also "*to convince*" of the sin that has already been definitively judged ("*sin condemned*").

29. All the words uttered by the Redeemer in the Upper Room on the eve of his Passion *become part of the era of the Church*: first of all, the words about the Holy Spirit as the Paraclete and Spirit of truth. These words become part of it in an ever new way, in every generation, in every age. This is confirmed, as far as our own age is concerned, by the teaching of the Second Vatican Council as a whole, and especially in the *Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et Spes*. Many passages of this document indicate clearly that the Council, by opening itself to the light of the Spirit of truth, is seen to be the *authentic depositary* of the predictions and promises made by Christ to the Apostles and to the Church in the farewell discourse: in a particular way as the depositary of the predictions that the Holy Spirit would "*convince the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment*".

This is already indicated by the text in which *the Council explains how it understands the "world"*: "The Council focuses its attention on the world of men, the whole human family along with the sum of those realities in the midst of which that family lives. It gazes upon the world which is the theatre of man's history, and carries the marks of his energies, his tragedies, and

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Eph. 6:12.

his triumphs; that world which the Christian sees as created and sustained by its Maker's love, *fallen indeed into the bondage of sin, yet emancipated now by Christ*. He was crucified and and rose again *to break the stranglehold of personified Evil*, so that this world might be fashioned anew according to God's design and reach its fulfilment".<sup>107</sup> This very rich text needs to be read in conjunction with the other passages in the Constitution that seek *with all the realism of faith* the situation of sin in the contemporary world and that also seek to explain its essence, beginning from different points of view.<sup>108</sup>

When on the eve of the Passover Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit as the one who "will convince the world concerning sin", on the one hand this statement must be given *the widest possible meaning*, insofar as it includes all the sin in the history of humanity. But on the other hand, when Jesus explains that this sin consists in the fact that "they do not believe in him", this meaning seems to *apply only* to those who rejected the messianic mission of the Son of Man and condemned him to death on the Cross. But one can hardly fail to notice that this more "limited" and historically specified meaning of sin expands, until it assumes a universal dimension *by reason of the universality of the Redemption*, accomplished through the Cross. The revelation of the mystery of the Redemption opens the way to an understanding in which *every sin* wherever and whenever committed has a reference to the Cross of Christ — and therefore indirectly also to the sin of those who "have not believed in him", and who condemned Jesus to death on the Cross.

From this point of view we must return to the event of Pentecost.

## 2. The testimony of the day of Pentecost

30. *Christ's prophecies* in the farewell discourse found their most exact and direct *confirmation* on the day of Pentecost, in particular the prediction which we are dealing with: "The Counsellor . . . will convince the world concerning sin". On that day, the *promised Holy Spirit came down* upon the Apostles gathered in prayer together with Mary the Mother of Jesus, in the same Upper Room, as we read in the *Acts of the Apostles*: "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other

<sup>107</sup> Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 2.

tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance",<sup>109</sup> "thus bringing back to unity the scattered races and offering to the Father the first-fruits of all the nations".<sup>110</sup>

The connection between Christ's prediction and this event is clear. We perceive here the first and fundamental fulfilment of the promise of the Paraclete. He comes, sent by the Father, "*after*" the departure of Christ, "at the price of" that Cross, and later, forty days after the Resurrection, through his Ascension into heaven. Once more, at the moment of the Ascension, Jesus orders the Apostles "not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father"; "but before many days you shall be *baptized with the Holy Spirit*"; "but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judaea and Samaria and to the end of the earth".<sup>111</sup>

These last words contain an echo or reminder of the prediction made in the Upper Room. And on the day of Pentecost this prediction is fulfilled with total accuracy. Acting under the influence of the Holy Spirit, who had been received by the Apostles while they were praying in the Upper Room, *Peter comes forwards and speaks* before a multitude of people of different languages, gathered for the feast. He proclaims what *he certainly would not have had the courage to say before*: "Men of Israel, . . . Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs which God did through him in your midst . . . this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you *crucified* and killed by the hands of lawless men. But God raised him up, having loosed the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it".<sup>112</sup>

Jesus had foretold and promised: "He will bear witness to me, . . . and you also are my witnesses". In the first discourse of Peter in Jerusalem this "witness" *finds its clear beginning*: it is the witness to Christ crucified and risen. The witness of the Spirit-Paraclete and of the Apostles. And in the very content of that first witness, the Spirit of truth, through the lips of Peter, "*convinces the world concerning sin*": first of all, con-

<sup>108</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 10, 13, 27, 37, 63, 73, 79, 80.

<sup>109</sup> Acts 2:4.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. ST. IRENAEUS, *Adversus Haereses*, III, 17, 2: SC 211, p. 330-332.

<sup>111</sup> Acts 1:4. 5. 8.

<sup>112</sup> Acts 2:22-24.



cerning the sin which is the rejection of Christ even to his condemnation to death, to death on the Cross on Golgatha. Similar proclamations will be repeated, according to the text of the Acts of the Apostles, on other occasions and in various places.<sup>113</sup>

31. Beginning from this initial witness at Pentecost and for all future time, the action of the Spirit of truth who "convinces the world concerning the sin" of the rejection of Christ is *linked* inseparably with the witness to be borne to the Paschal Mystery: *the mystery of the Crucified and Risen One*. And in this link the same "convincing concerning sin" reveals its own salvific dimension. For it is a "convincing" that has its purpose not merely *the accusation* of the world and still less its *condemnation*. Jesus Christ did not come into the world to judge it and condemn it but *to save it*.<sup>114</sup> This is emphasized in this first discourse, when Peter exclaims: "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified".<sup>115</sup> And then, when those present ask Peter and the Apostles: "Brethren, what shall we do?", this is Peter's answer: "*Repent, and be baptized every of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*".<sup>116</sup>

In this way "convincing concerning sin" becomes at the same time a convincing *concerning the remission of sins*, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Peter in his discourse in Jerusalem calls people to conversion, as Jesus called his listeners to conversion at the beginning of his messianic activity.<sup>117</sup> Conversion *requires convincing of sin*; it includes the interior judgment of the conscience, and this, being a proof of the action of the Spirit of truth in man's inmost being, becomes at the same time a new beginning of the bestowal of grace and love: "Receive the Holy Spirit".<sup>118</sup> Thus in this "convincing concerning sin" we discover *a double gift*: the gift of the truth of conscience and the gift of the certainty of redemption. The Spirit of truth is the Counsellor.

The convincing concerning sin, through the ministry of the *apostolic kerygma* in the early Church, is *referred* — under the impulse of the Spirit poured out at Pentecost — *to the re-*

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Acts 3:14 f.; 4:10.27 f.; 7:52; 10:39; 13:28 f.; etc.

<sup>114</sup> Cf. Jn. 3:17; 12:47.

<sup>115</sup> Acts 2:36.

<sup>116</sup> Acts 2:37 f.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Mk. 1:15.

<sup>118</sup> Jn. 20:22.

*demptive power* of Christ crucified and risen. Thus the promise concerning the Holy Spirit made before Easter is fulfilled: "He will take what is mine and declare it to you". When therefore, during the Pentecost event, Peter speaks of *the sin of those who "have not believed"*<sup>119</sup> and have sent Jesus of Nazareth to an ignominious death, he bears witness to victory over sin: a victory achieved, in a certain sense, through the greatest sin that man could commit: *the killing of Jesus, the Son of God consubstantial with the Father!* Similarly, the death of the Son of God conquers human death: "I will be your death, O death",<sup>120</sup> as the sin of having crucified *the Son of God "conquers" human sin!* That sin which was committed in Jerusalem on Good Friday — and also every human sin. For the greatest sin on man's part is matched, in the heart of the Redeemer, *by the oblation of supreme love* that conquers the evil of all the sins of man. On the basis of this certainty the Church in the Roman liturgy does not hesitate to repeat every year, at the Easter Vigil, "O happy fault!", in the deacon's proclamation of the Resurrection when he sings the "*Exsultet*".

32. However, no one but *he himself, the Spirit of truth, can "convince the world"*, man or the human conscience of this ineffable truth. He is the Spirit who "searches even the depths of God".<sup>121</sup> Faced with the mystery of sin we have to search "the depths of God" *to their very depth*. It is not enough to search the human conscience, the intimate mystery of man, but we have to penetrate the inner mystery of God, those "depths of God" that are summarized thus: to the Father — in the Son — through the Holy Spirit. It is precisely the Holy Spirit who "searches" the "depths of God", and from them draws *God's response* to man's sin. With this response there closes the process of "convincing concerning sin", as the event of Pentecost shows.

By convincing the "world" concerning the sin of Golgotha, concerning the death of the innocent Lamb, as happens on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit also convinces of every sin, committed in any place and at any moment in human history: *for he demonstrates its relationship with the Cross of Christ*. The "convincing" is the demonstration of the evil of sin, of every sin, in relation to the Cross of Christ. Sin, shown in this relationship, *is recognized in the entire dimension of evil*

<sup>119</sup> Cf. Jn. 16:9.

<sup>120</sup> Hos. 14:14 *Vulgate*; cf. 1 Cor. 15-55.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. 2:10.

proper to it, through the "*mysterium iniquitatis*"<sup>122</sup> which is hidden within it. Man does not know this dimension — he is absolutely ignorant of it apart from the Cross of Christ. So he cannot be "convinced" of it except by the *Holy Spirit*: the Spirit of truth, but who is also the Counsellor.

For sin, shown in relation to the Cross of Christ, is at the same time identified in the full dimension of the "*mysterium pietatis*",<sup>123</sup> as indicated by the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia*.<sup>124</sup> Man is also absolutely ignorant of this dimension of sin apart from the Cross of Christ. And he cannot be "convinced" of this dimension either except by the *Holy Spirit*: the one who "searches the depths of God".

### 3. The witness concerning the beginning: the original reality of sin

33. This is the dimension of sin that we find in the witness concerning the beginning, commented on in the *Book of Genesis*.<sup>125</sup> It is the sin that according to the revealed Word of God constitutes the principle and root of all the others. We find ourselves faced with the original reality of sin in human history and at the same time in the whole of the economy of salvation. It can be said that in this sin the "*mysterium iniquitatis*" has its beginning, but it can also be said that this is the sin concerning which the redemptive power of the "*mysterium pietatis*" becomes particularly clear and efficacious. This is expressed by Saint Paul, when he contrasts the "*disobedience*" of the first Adam with the "*obedience*" of Christ, the second Adam: "Obedience unto death".<sup>126</sup>

According to the witness concerning the beginning, sin in its original reality takes place in man's will — and conscience — first of all as "disobedience", that is, as opposition of the will of man to the will of God. This original disobedience presupposes a rejection, or at least a turning away from the truth contained in the Word of God, who creates the world. This Word is the same Word who was "in the beginning with God", who

<sup>122</sup> Cf. 2 Thes. 2:7.

<sup>123</sup> Cf. 1 Tim. 3:16.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* (2 December 1984), 19-22 AAS 77 (1985), pp. 229-233.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. Gen. 1-3.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Rom. 5:19; Phil. 2:8.

"was God", and without whom "nothing has been made of all that is", since "the world was made through him".<sup>127</sup> He is the Word who is also the eternal law, the source of every law which regulates the world and especially human acts. When therefore on the eve of his Passion Jesus Christ speaks of the sin of those who "*do not believe in him*", in these words of his, full of sorrow, there is *as it were a distant echo of that sin* which in its original form is obscurely *inscribed* in the mystery of creation. For the one who is speaking is not only the Son of Man but the one who is also "the first-born of all creation", "for in him all things were created... through him and for him".<sup>128</sup> In the light of this truth we can understand that the "disobedience" in the mystery of the beginning presupposes in a certain sense the same "non-faith", that same "*they have not believed*", which will be repeated in the Paschal Mystery. As we have said, it is a matter of a rejection or at least a turning away from the truth contained in the Word of the Father. The rejection expresses itself in practice as "disobedience", in an act committed as an effect of the temptation which comes from the "father of lies".<sup>129</sup> Therefore, at the root of human sin is the lie which is a radical *rejection of the truth* contained in the Word of the Father, through whom is expressed the loving omnipotence of the Creator: the omnipotence and also the love "of God the Father. Creator of heaven and earth".

34. "The Spirit of God", who according to the biblical description of creation "was moving over the face of the water",<sup>130</sup> signifies the same "Spirit who searches the depths of God": "*searches the depths of the Father and of the Word-Son* in the mystery of creation. Not only is he the direct witness of their mutual love from which creation derives, but he himself is this love. He himself, as love, is the eternal uncreated gift. In him is *the source and the beginning of every giving of gifts to creatures*. The witness concerning the beginning, which we find in the whole of Revelation, beginning with the *Book of Genesis*, is unanimous on this point. To create means to call into existence from nothing: therefore, to create means *to give* existence. And if the visible world is created for man, therefore the world is given to man.<sup>131</sup> And at the same time that same man in his own humanity receives as a gift a special "*image*"

<sup>127</sup> Cf. *Jn.* 1:1. 2-3. 10.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. *Col.* 1:15-18.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. *Jn.* 8:44.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. *Gen.* 1-2.

<sup>131</sup> Cf. *Gen.* 1:26. 28. 29.



*and likeness*" to God. This means not only rationality and freedom as constitutive properties of human nature, but also, from the very beginning, the capacity of having a *personal relationship* with God, as "I" and "you", and therefore the *capacity of having a covenant*, which will take place in God's salvific communication with man. Against the background of the "image and likeness" of God, "the gift of the Spirit, ultimately means a *call to friendship*, in which the transcendent "depths of God" become in some way opened to participation on the part of man. The Second Vatican Council teaches: "The invisible God out of the abundance of his love speaks to men as friends and lives among them, so that he may invite and take them into fellowship with himself".<sup>132</sup>

35. The Spirit, therefore, who "searches everything, even the depths of God", knows from the beginning "the secrets of man".<sup>133</sup> For this reason he alone *can fully "convince concerning the sin" that happened at the beginning*, that sin which is the root of all other sins and the sources of man's sinfulness on earth, a source which never ceases to be active. The Spirit of truth knows the original reality of the sin caused in the will of man by the "father of lies", he who already "has been judged".<sup>134</sup> The Holy Spirit therefore convinces the world of sin in connection with this "judgment", but by constantly *guiding toward the "righteousness"* that has been revealed to man together with the Cross of Christ: through "obedience unto death".<sup>135</sup>

Only the Holy Spirit can convince concerning the sin of the human beginning, precisely he who is the love of the Father and of the Son, he who is gift, whereas *the sin of the human beginning consists in untruthfulness and in the rejection of the gift and the love* which determine the beginning of the world and of man.

36. According to the witness concerning the beginning which we find in the Scriptures and in Tradition, after the first (and also more complete) description in the *Book of Genesis*, sin in its original form is understood as "disobedience" and this means simply and directly *transgression of a prohibition laid down by*

<sup>132</sup> Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum*, 2.

<sup>133</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. 2:10 f.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. Jn. 16-11.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. Phil. 2:8.

*God*.<sup>126</sup> But in the light of the whole context it is also obvious that the ultimate roots of this disobedience are to be sought in the whole real situation of man. Having been called into existence, the human being — man and woman — is a creature. The "image of God", consisting in rationality and freedom, expresses the greatness and dignity of the human subject, who is a person. But this *personal subject* is also always a creature: in his existence and essence he depends on the Creator. According to the *Book of Genesis*, "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" was to express and constantly remind man of the "limit" impassable for a created being. God's prohibition is to be understood in this sense: the Creator forbids man and woman to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The words of the enticement, that is to say the temptation, as formulated in the sacred text, are an inducement to transgress this prohibition — that is to say to *go beyond* that "limit": "When you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God ("like gods"), knowing good and evil".<sup>127</sup>

"Disobedience" means precisely going beyond that limit, which remains impassable to the will and the freedom of man as a created being. For God the Creator is the one definitive source of the moral order in the world created by him. Man cannot decide by himself what is good and what is evil — cannot "know good and evil, like God". In the created world God indeed remains the first and sovereign source *for deciding about good and evil*, through the intimate truth of being, which is the reflection of the Word, the eternal Son, consubstantial with the Father. To man, created to the image of God, the Holy Spirit gives the gift of *conscience*, so that in this conscience the image may faithfully reflect its model, which is both Wisdom and eternal Law, the source of the moral order in man and in the world. "Disobedience", as the original dimension of sin, means the *rejection of this source*, through man's claim to become an independent and exclusive source for deciding about good and evil. The Spirit who "searches the depths of God", and who at the same time is for man the light of conscience and the source of the moral order, knows in all its fullness this dimension of the sin inscribed in the mystery of man's beginning. And the Spirit does not cease "*convincing the world of it*" in connection with the Cross of Christ on Golgotha.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. *Gen.* 2:16 f.

<sup>127</sup> *Gen.* 3:5.

37. According to the witness of the beginning, God in creation has revealed himself as omnipotence, which is love. At the same time he has revealed to man that, as the "image and likeness" of his Creator, he is *called to participate in truth and love*. This participation means a life in union with God, who is "eternal life".<sup>138</sup> But man, under the influence of the "father of lies", has separated himself from this participation. To what degree? Certainly not to the degree of the sin of a pure spirit, to the degree of the sin of Satan. The human spirit is incapable of reaching such a degree.<sup>139</sup> In the very description given in *Genesis* it is *easy to see the difference of degree* between the "breath of evil" on the part of the one who "has sinned (or remains in sin) from the beginning"<sup>140</sup> and already "has been judged",<sup>141</sup> and the evil of disobedience on the part of man.

Man's disobedience, nevertheless, always means a *turning away from God*, and in a certain sense *the closing up* of human freedom in his regard. It also means a certain opening of this freedom — of the human mind and will — to the one who is the "father of lies". This act of conscious choice is not only "disobedience" but also involves a *certain consent to the motivation* which was contained in the first temptation to sin and which is unceasingly renewed during the whole history of man on earth: "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil".

Here we find ourselves at the very centre of what could be called the "anti-Word", that is to say "the anti-truth". For *the truth about man* becomes *falsified*: *who man is* and what are the *impassable limits* of his being and freedom. This "anti-truth" is possible because at the same time there is a complete *falsification* of the *truth about who God is*. God the Creator is placed in a state of suspicion, indeed of accusation, in the mind of the creature. For the first time in human history there appears the perverse "genius of suspicion". He seeks to "falsify" *Good itself, the absolute Good*, which precisely in the work of creation has manifested itself as the Good which gives in an inexpressible way: as *bonum diffusivum sui*, as *creative love*. Who can completely "convince concerning sin", or con-

<sup>138</sup> Cf. *Gen.* 3:22 concerning the "tree of life"; cf. also *Jn.* 3:36; 4:14; 5:24; 6:40, 47; 10:28; 12:50; 14:6; *Acts* 13:48; *Rom.* 6:23; *Gal.* 6:8; 1 *Tim.* 1:16; *Tit.* 1:2; 3:7; 1 *Pet.* 3:22; 1 *Jn.* 1:2; 2:25; 5:11.13; *Rev.* 2:7.

<sup>139</sup> Cf. ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa Theol.*, Ia-IIae, q. 80, a. 4, ad 3.

<sup>140</sup> 1 *Jn.* 3:8.

<sup>141</sup> *Jn.* 16:11.

cerning this motivation of man's original disobedience, except the one who alone is the gift and the source of all giving of gifts, except the Spirit, who "searches the depths of God" and is the love of the Father and the Son?

38. For in spite of all the witness of creation and of the salvific economy inherent in it, the spirit of darkness<sup>142</sup> is capable of showing *God as an enemy* of his own creature, and in the first place as an enemy of man, *as a source of danger and threat to man*. In this way *Satan* manages to sow in man's soul the seed of opposition to the one who "from the beginning" would be considered as man's enemy — and not as Father. Man is challenged to become the adversary of God!

The analysis of sin in its original dimension indicates that, through the influence of the "father of lies", *throughout the history of humanity there will be a constant pressure on man to reject God*, even to the point of hating him: "*Love of self to the point of contempt for God*", as Saint Augustine puts it.<sup>143</sup> Man will be inclined to see in God primarily a limitation of himself, and not the source of his own freedom and the fullness of good. We see this confirmed in the modern age, when the atheistic ideologies seek to *root out religion* on the grounds that religion causes the radical "*alienation*" of man, as if man were dispossessed of his own humanity when, accepting the idea of God, he attributes to God what belongs to man, and exclusively to man! Hence a process of thought and historico-sociological practice in which the rejection of God has reached the point of declaring his "death". An absurdity, both in concept and expression! But the ideology of the "death of God" is more a threat to man, as the Second Vatican Council indicates when it analyzes the question of the "independence of earthly affairs" and writes: "For without the Creator the creature would disappear... when God is forgotten the creature itself grows unintelligible".<sup>144</sup> The ideology of the "death of God" easily demonstrates in its effects that on the "theoretical and practical" levels it is the ideology of the "death of man".

<sup>142</sup> Cf. Eph. 6:12; Lk. 22:53.

<sup>143</sup> *De Civitate Dei*, XIV, 28; CCL 48, p. 541.

<sup>144</sup> Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 36.



#### 4. The Spirit who transforms suffering into salvific love

39. The Spirit who searches the depths of God was called by Jesus in his discourse in the Upper Room *the Paraclete*. For from the beginning the Spirit "is invoked"<sup>145</sup> in order to "convince the world concerning sin". He is invoked in a definitive way through the Cross of Christ. Convincing concerning sin means showing the evil that sin contains, and this is equivalent to revealing the *mystery of iniquity*. It is not possible to grasp the evil of sin in all its sad reality without "searching the depths of God". From the very beginning, the obscure mystery of sin has appeared in the world against the background of a reference to the Creator of human freedom. Sin has appeared as an act of the will of the creature-man *contrary* to the will of God, *to the salvific will of God*; indeed, sin has appeared in opposition to the truth, on the basis of the lie that has now been definitively "judged": the lie that has placed in a state of accusation, a state of permanent suspicion, creative and salvific love itself. Man has followed the "father of lies", setting himself up in opposition to the Father of life and the Spirit of truth.

Therefore, will not "convincing concerning sin" also have to mean *revealing suffering*? *Revealing the pain*, unimaginable and inexpressible, which on account of sin the Book of Genesis in its anthropomorphic vision seems to glimpse in the "depths of God" and in a certain sense in the very heart of the ineffable Trinity.? The Church, taking her inspiration from Revelation, believes and professes that *sin is an offence against God*. What corresponds, in the inscrutable intimacy of the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, to this "offence", this rejection of the Spirit who is love and gift? The concept of God as the necessarily most perfect being certainly excludes from God any pain deriving from deficiencies or wounds; but in the "depths of God" there is a Father's love that, faced with man's sin, in the language of the Bible reacts so deeply as to say: "I am sorry that I have made him".<sup>146</sup> "The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth... And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth... The Lord said: 'I am sorry that I have made them'".<sup>147</sup> But more often the Sacred Book speaks to us of a Father who feels compassion for man, as though sharing his pain. In a word, this inscrutable and indes-

<sup>145</sup> In Greek the verb is παρακαλεῖν, which means to invoke, to call to oneself.

<sup>146</sup> Cf. Gen. 6:7.

<sup>147</sup> Gen. 6:5-7.

cribable fatherly "pain" will bring about above all the wonderful economy of redemptive love in Jesus Christ, so that through the *mysterium pietatis* love can reveal itself in the history of man as stronger than sin. So that the "gift" may prevail!

The Holy Spirit who in the words of Jesus "convinces concerning sin" is the love of the Father and the Son, and as such is the Trinitarian gift, and at the same time the eternal source of every divine giving of gifts to creatures. Precisely in him we can picture as personified and actualized in a transcendent way that mercy which the Patristic and theological tradition, following the line of the Old and New Testaments, attributes to God. In man, mercy includes sorrow and compassion for the misfortunes of one's neighbour. In God, the Spirit-love expresses the consideration of human sin in a fresh outpouring of salvific love. From God, in the unity of the Father with the Son, the economy of salvation is born, the economy which fills the history of man with the gifts of the Redemption. Whereas sin, by rejecting love, has caused the "suffering" of man which some way has affected the whole of creation,<sup>148</sup> the *Holy Spirit* will enter into human and cosmic suffering with a new outpouring of love, which will redeem the world. And on the lips of Jesus the Redeemer, in whose humanity the "suffering" of God is concretized, there will be heard a word which manifests the eternal love full of mercy: "*Misereor*".<sup>149</sup> Thus on the part of the Holy Spirit "convincing of sin" becomes a manifestation before creation, which is "subjected to futility", and above all in the depth of human consciences, that *sin* is *conquered through the sacrifice of the Lamb of God* who has become even "unto death" the *obedient servant* who, by making up for man's *disobedience*, accomplishes the redemption of the world. In this way the Spirit of truth, the Paraclete, "convinces concerning sin".

40. The redemptive value of Christ's sacrifice is expressed in very significant words by the author of the *Letter to the Hebrews*, who after recalling the sacrifices of the Old Covenant in which "the blood of goats and bulls..." purifies in "the flesh", adds: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, *who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God*, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"<sup>150</sup> Though we are aware of other possible interpretations, our

<sup>148</sup> Cf. *Rom.* 8:20-22.

<sup>149</sup> Cf. *Mt.* 15:32; *Mk.* 8:2.

<sup>150</sup> *Heb.* 9:13 f.

considerations on the presence of the Holy Spirit in the whole of Christ's life lead us to see this text as an invitation to reflect on the presence of the same Spirit also in the redemptive sacrifice of the Incarnate Word.

To begin with we reflect on the first words dealing with this sacrifice, and then separately on the "purification of conscience" which it accomplishes. For it is a sacrifice offered "*through the eternal Spirit*", that "derives" from it the power to "convince concerning sin". It is the same Holy Spirit, whom, according to the promise made in the Upper Room, *Jesus Christ* "will bring" to the Apostles on the day of his Resurrection, when he presents himself to them with the wounds of the crucifixion, and whom "he will give" them "*for the remission of sins*": "Receive the Holy Spirit; if you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven".<sup>151</sup>

We know that "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power", as Simon Peter said in the house of the centurion Cornelius.<sup>152</sup> We know of the Paschal Mystery of his "departure", from the *Gospel of John*. The words of the *Letter to the Hebrews* now explain to us how Christ "offered himself without blemish to God", and how he did this "with an eternal Spirit". In the sacrifice of the Son of Man the Holy Spirit is present and active just as he acted in Jesus's conception, in his coming into the world, in his hidden life and in his public ministry. According to the *Letter to the Hebrews*, on the way to his "departure" through Gethsemani and Golgotha, the same *Christ Jesus* in his own humanity *opened himself totally* to this action of the Spirit-Paraclete, who from suffering enables eternal salvific love to spring forth. Therefore he "was heard for his godly fear. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered".<sup>153</sup> In this way *this Letter* shows how *humanity, subjected to sin* in the descendants of the first Adam, in Jesus Christ became *perfectly subjected to God* and united to him, and at the same time full of compassion towards men. Thus there is a *new humanity*, which in Jesus Christ through the suffering of the Cross has returned to the love which was betrayed by Adam through sin. This new humanity is discovered precisely in the divine source of the original outpouring of gifts: in the Spirit, who "searches . . . the depths of God" and is himself love and gift.

<sup>151</sup> *Jn.* 20:22 f.

<sup>152</sup> *Acts* 10:38.

<sup>153</sup> *Heb.* 5:7 f.

The Son of God Jesus Christ, as man, in the ardent prayer of his Passion, enabled the Holy Spirit, who had already penetrated the inmost depths of his humanity, *to transform that humanity into a perfect sacrifice* through the act of his death as the victim of love on the Cross. He made this offering by himself. As the one priest, "he offered himself without blemish to God".<sup>154</sup> In his humanity he was worthy to become this sacrifice, for *he alone* was "without blemish". But he offered it "through the eternal Spirit", which means that the Holy Spirit acted in a special way in this absolute self-giving of the Son of Man, in order to transform *this* suffering into redemptive love.

41. The Old Testament on several occasions speaks of "fire from heaven" which burnt the oblations presented by men.<sup>155</sup> By analogy one can say that the Holy Spirit is the "*fire from heaven*" which works in the depth of the mystery of the Cross. Proceeding from the Father, he directs towards the Father the sacrifice of the Son, bringing it into the *divine reality of the Trinitarian communion*. If sin caused suffering, now the pain of God in Christ crucified acquires through the Holy Spirit its full human expression. Thus there is a paradoxical mystery of love: in Christ there suffers a God who has been rejected by his own creature: "They do not believe in me!"; but at the same time, *from the depth of this suffering* — and indirectly from the depth of the very sin "of not having believed" — the Spirit *draws a new measure of the gift made to man and to creation* from the beginning. In the depth of the mystery of the Cross love is at work, that love which brings man back again to share in the life that is in God himself.

The Holy Spirit as Love and Gift comes down, in a certain sense, *into the very heart of the sacrifice* which is offered on the Cross. Referring here to the biblical tradition we can say: *he consumes this sacrifice with the fire of the love* which unites the Son with the Father in the Trinitarian communion. And since the sacrifice of the Cross is an act proper to Christ, also in this sacrifice he "*receives*" the Holy Spirit. He receives the Holy Spirit in such a way that afterwards — and he alone with God the Father — can "*give him*" to the Apostles, to the Church, to humanity. He alone "*sends*" the Spirit from the Father.<sup>156</sup> He alone presents himself before the Apostles in the Upper Room, "breathes upon them" and says: "Receive the Holy Spirit;

<sup>154</sup> Heb. 9:14.

<sup>155</sup> Cf. Lev. 9:24; 1 Kings 18:38; 2 Chron. 7:1.

<sup>156</sup> Cf. Jn. 15:26.



if you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven",<sup>157</sup> as John the Baptist had foretold: "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire".<sup>158</sup> With those words of Jesus the Holy Spirit is *revealed and at the same time made present* as the Love that works in the depths of the Paschal Mystery, as the source of the salvific power of the Cross of Christ, and as the gift of new and eternal life.

This truth about the Holy Spirit finds daily *expression in the Roman liturgy*, when before Communion the priest pronounces those significant words: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, by the will of the Father *and the work of the Holy Spirit* your death brought life to the world...". And in the Third Eucharistic Prayer, referring to the same salvific plan, the priest asks God that the Holy Spirit may "*make us an everlasting gift to you*".

### 5. The blood that purifies the conscience

42. We have said that, at the climax of the Paschal Mystery, the Holy Spirit is definitively revealed and made present in a new way. The Risen Christ says to the Apostles: "Receive the Holy Spirit". Thus the Holy Spirit is *revealed*, for the words of Christ constitute the confirmation of what he had promised and foretold during the discourse in the Upper Room. And with this the Paraclete is also *made present* in a new way. In fact, he was already at work from the beginning in the mystery of creation and throughout the history of the Old Covenant of God with man. His action was fully confirmed by the sending of the Son of Man as the Messiah, who came in the power of the Holy Spirit. At the climax of Jesus' messianic mission, the Holy Spirit becomes present in the Paschal Mystery *in all his divine subjectivity*: as the one who is now to continue the salvific work rooted in the sacrifice of the Cross. Of course Jesus entrusts this work to humanity: to the Apostles, to the Church. Nevertheless, in these men and through them the Holy Spirit remains the transcendent principal agent of the accomplishment of this work in the human spirit and in the history of the world: the invisible and at the same time omnipresent Paraclete! The Spirit who "blows where he wills".<sup>159</sup>

<sup>157</sup> Jn. 20:22 f.

<sup>158</sup> Mt. 3:11.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. Jn. 3:8.

The words of the Risen Christ on the "first day of the week" give particular emphasis to the presence of the Paraclete-Counsellor as the one who "convinces the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment". For it is only in this relationship that it is possible to explain the words which Jesus directly relates to the "gift" of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles. He says: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained".<sup>160</sup> Jesus confers on the Apostles the power to forgive sins, so that they may pass it on to their successors in the Church. But this power granted to men presupposes and includes the saving action of the Holy Spirit. By becoming "the light of hearts",<sup>161</sup> that is to say the light of consciences, the Holy Spirit "convinces concerning sin", which is to say, *he makes man realize his own evil* and at the same time *directs him towards what is good*. Thanks to the multiplicity of the Spirit's gifts, by reason of which he is invoked as the "sevenfold one", every kind of human sin can be reached by God's saving power. In reality — as Saint Bonaventure says — "by virtue of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit all evils are destroyed and all good things are produced".<sup>162</sup>

Thus the conversion of the human heart, which is an indispensable condition for the forgiveness of sins, is brought about by the influence of the Counsellor. Without a true conversion, which implies inner contrition, and without a sincere and firm purpose of amendment, sins remain "unforgiven", in the words of Jesus, and with him the Tradition of the Old and New Covenants. For the first words uttered by Jesus at the beginning of his ministry, according to the *Gospel of Mark*, are these: "Repent, and believe in the Gospel".<sup>163</sup> A confirmation of this exhortation is the "convincing concerning sin" that the Holy Spirit undertakes in a new way by virtue of the Redemption accomplished by the Blood of the Son of Man. Hence the *Letter to the Hebrews* says that this "blood purifies the conscience".<sup>164</sup> In therefore, so to speak, *opens to the Holy Spirit* the door into man's inmost being, namely into the sanctuary of human consciences.

43. The Second Vatican Council mentioned the Catholic teaching on conscience when it spoke about man's vocation and in

<sup>160</sup> *Jn.* 20:22 f.

<sup>161</sup> Cf. Sequence *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*.

<sup>162</sup> ST. BONAVENTURE, *De Septem Donis Spiritus Sancti*, Collatio II, 3: Ad Claras Aquas, V, 463.

<sup>163</sup> *Mk.* 1:15.

<sup>164</sup> Cf. *Heb.* 9:14.

particular about the dignity of the human person. It is precisely the *conscience* in particular which determines this dignity. For the conscience is "the most secret core and sanctuary of a man, where he is alone with God, whose voice echoes in his depths". It "can... speak to his heart more specifically: do this, shun that". This capacity to command what is good and to forbid evil, placed in man by the Creator, is the main characteristic of the personal subject. But at the same time, "in the depths of his conscience, man detects a law which he does not impose upon himself, but which holds him to obedience".<sup>165</sup> The conscience therefore is not an independent and exclusive capacity to decide what is good and what is evil. Rather there is profoundly imprinted upon it a *principle of obedience vis-à-vis the objective norm* which establishes and conditions the correspondence of its decisions with the commands and prohibitions which are at the basis of human behaviour, as from the passage of the *Book of Genesis* which we have already considered.<sup>166</sup> Precisely in this sense the conscience is the "secret sanctuary" in which "God's voice echoes". The conscience is "the voice of God" even when man recognizes in it nothing more than the principle of the moral order which it is not humanly possible to doubt, even without any direct reference to the Creator. It is precisely in reference to this that the conscience always finds its foundation and justification.

The Gospel's "convincing concerning sin" under the influence of the Spirit of truth can be accomplished in man in no other way except *through the conscience*. If the conscience is upright, it serves "to resolve according to truth the moral problems which arise both in the life of individuals and from social relationships"; then "persons and groups turn aside from blind choice and try to be guided by the objective standards of moral conduct".<sup>167</sup>

A result of an upright conscience is, first of all, *to call good and evil by their proper name*, as we read in the same Pastoral Constitution: "Whatever is opposed to life itself, such as any type of murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia, or wilful self-destruction, whatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, torments inflicted on body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself; whatever insults human dignity,

<sup>165</sup> Cf. Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 16.

<sup>166</sup> Cf. *Gen.* 2:9. 17.

<sup>167</sup> SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 16.

such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where people are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than as free and responsible persons"; and having called by name *the many different sins that are so frequent and widespread in our time*, the Constitution adds.: "All these things and others of their kind are infamies indeed. They poison human society, but they do more harm to those who practise them than those who suffer from the injury. Moreover, they are a supreme dishonour to the Creator".<sup>168</sup>

By calling by their proper name the sins that most dishonour man, and by showing that they are a moral evil that weighs negatively on any balance-sheet of human progress, the Council also describes all this as a stage in "a dramatic struggle between good and evil, between light and darkness", which characterizes "all of human life, whether individual or collective".<sup>169</sup> The 1983 Assembly of the *Synod of Bishops* on reconciliation and penance specified even more clearly the personal and social significance of human sin.<sup>170</sup>

44. In the Upper Room, on the eve of his Passion and again on the evening of Easter Day, Jesus Christ spoke of the Holy Spirit as the one who bears witness that *in human history sin continues to exist*. Yet sin has been subjected to the *saving power of the Redemption*. "Convincing the world concerning sin" does not end with the fact that sin is called by its right name and identified for what it is throughout its entire range. In convincing the world concerning sin *the Spirit of truth comes into contact with the voice of human consciences*.

By following this path we come to a *demonstration of the roots of sin*, which are to be found in man's inmost being, as described by the same Pastoral Constitution: "The truth is that the imbalances under which the modern world labours are linked with that more basic *imbalance rooted in the heart of man*. For in man himself many elements wrestle with one another. Thus, on the one hand, as a creature he experiences his limitations in a multitude of ways. On the other, he feels himself to be boundless in his desires and summoned to a higher life. Pulled by manifold attractions, he is constantly forced to choose among

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>169</sup> Cf. Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* (2 December 1984), 16: AAS 77 (1985), pp. 213-217.

<sup>170</sup> Cf. Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* (2 December 1984), 16: AAS 77 (1985), pp. 213-217.



them and to renounce some. Indeed, as a weak and sinful being, *he often does what he would not, and fails to do what he would*".<sup>171</sup> The Conciliar text is here referring to the well-known words of Saint Paul.<sup>172</sup>

The "convincing concerning sin" which accompanies the human conscience in every careful reflection upon itself thus leads to the discovery of sin's roots in man, as also to the discovery of the way in which the conscience has been conditioned in the course of history. In this way we discover that original reality of sin of which we have already spoken. The *Holy Spirit "convinces concerning sin"* in relation to the mystery of man's origins, showing the fact that man is a *created being*, and therefore in complete ontological and ethical dependence upon the Creator. The Holy Spirit reminds us, at the same time, of the hereditary sinfulness of human nature. But the Holy Spirit the Counsellor "*convinces concerning sin*" *always in relation to the Cross of Christ*. In the context of this relationship Christianity rejects any "fatalism" regarding sin. As the Council teaches: "A monumental struggle against the powers of darkness pervades the whole history of man. The battle was joined from the very origins of the world and will continue until the last day, as the Lord has attested".<sup>173</sup> "*But the Lord himself came to free and strengthen man*".<sup>174</sup> Man, therefore, far from allowing himself to be "ensnared" in his sinful condition, by relying upon the voice of his own conscience "is obliged to wrestle constantly if he is to cling to what is good. Nor can he achieve his own interior integrity without valiant efforts and *the help of God's grace*".<sup>175</sup> The Council rightly sees sin as a *factor of alienation* which weighs heavily on man's personal and social life. But at the same time it never tires of reminding us of the possibility of victory.

45. The Spirit of truth, who "convinces the world concerning sin", comes into contact with that laborious effort on the part of the human conscience which the Conciliar texts speak of so graphically. This *laborious effort of conscience* also determines

<sup>171</sup> Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 10.

<sup>172</sup> Cf. *Rom.* 7:14-15, 19.

<sup>173</sup> Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 37.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

the paths of human conversion: turning one's back on sin, in order to restore truth and love in man's very heart. We know that recognizing evil in ourselves sometimes demands a great effort. We know that *conscience* not only commands and forbids but also *judges* in the light of interior dictates and prohibitions. It is also the *source of remorse*: man suffers interiorly because of the evil he has committed. Is not this suffering as it were a distant echo of that "repentance at having created man" which in anthropomorphic language the Sacred Book attributes to God? Is it not an echo of that "reprobation" which is interiorized in the "heart" of the Trinity and by virtue of the eternal love is translated into the suffering of the Cross, into Christ's obedience unto death? When the Spirit of truth permits the human conscience to *share in that suffering*, the suffering of the conscience becomes particularly profound, but also particularly salvific. Then, by means of an act of perfect contrition, the authentic conversion of the heart is accomplished: this is the evangelical "metanoia".

The laborious effort of the human heart, the laborious effort of the conscience in which this "metanoia" or conversion takes place, is a *reflection* of that process whereby *reprobation is transformed into salvific love*, a love which is capable of suffering. The hidden giver of this saving power is the Holy Spirit: he whom the Church calls "the light of consciences" penetrates and fills "the depths of the human heart".<sup>176</sup> Through just such a conversion in the Holy Spirit *a person becomes open to forgiveness, to the remission of sins*. And in all this wonderful dynamism of conversion-forgiveness there is confirmed the truth of what Saint Augustine writes concerning the mystery of man, when he comments on the words of the Psalm: "*The abyss calls to the abyss*".<sup>177</sup> Precisely with regard to these "unfathomable depths" of man, of the human conscience, the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit is accomplished. The *Holy Spirit "comes"* by virtue of Christ's "departure" in the in the Paschal Mystery: he comes in *each concrete case of conversion-forgiveness*, by virtue of the sacrifice of the Cross. For in this sacrifice "the blood of Christ . . . purifies your conscience

<sup>176</sup> Cf. Sequence of Pentecost: *Reple cordis intima*.

<sup>177</sup> Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE, *Enarr. in Ps. XLI*, 13: CCL, 38, 470: "What is the abyss, and what does the abyss invoke? If abyss means depth, do we not consider that perhaps the heart of man is an abyss? What indeed is more deep than this abyss? Men can speak, can be seen through the working of their members, can be heard in conversation; but whose thought can be penetrated, whose heart can be read?"

from dead works to serve the living God".<sup>178</sup> Thus there are continuously fulfilled the words about the Holy Spirit as "another Counsellor", the words spoken in the Upper Room to the Apostles and indirectly spoken to everyone: "You know him, for *he dwells with you* and will be in you".<sup>179</sup>

## 6. The sin against the Holy Spirit

46. Against the background of what has been said so far, certain other words of Jesus, shocking and disturbing ones, become easier to understand. We might call them *the words of "unforgiveness"*. They are reported for us by the Synoptics in connection with a particular sin which is called "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit". This is how they are reported in their three versions: *Matthew*: "Whoever says a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven: but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come".<sup>180</sup> *Mark*: "All sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin".<sup>181</sup> *Luke*: "Every one who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven".<sup>182</sup>

Why is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit unforgivable? *How should this blasphemy be understood?* Saint Thomas Aquinas replies that it is a question of a sin that is "unforgivable by its very nature, insofar as it excludes the elements through which the forgiveness of sin takes place".<sup>183</sup>

According to such an exegesis, "blasphemy" does not properly consist in offending against the Holy Spirit in words; it consists rather *in the refusal to accept the salvation which God offers to man through the Holy Spirit*, working through the power of the Cross. If man rejects the "convincing con-

<sup>178</sup> Cf. Heb. 9:14.

<sup>179</sup> Jn. 14:17.

<sup>180</sup> Mt. 12:13 f.

<sup>181</sup> Mk. 3:28 f.

<sup>182</sup> Lk. 12:10.

<sup>183</sup> ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa Theol.* IIa-IIae, q. 14, a. 3: cf. ST. AUGUSTINE, *Epist.* 185, 11, 48-49: PL 33, 814 f.; ST. BONAVENTURE, *Comment. in Evang. S. Lucae*, Chp. XIV, 15-16: Ad Claras Aquas, VII, 314 f.

cerning sin" which comes from the Holy Spirit and which has the power to save, he also rejects the "coming" of the Counsellor — that "coming" which was accomplished in the Paschal Mystery, in union with the redemptive power of Christ's Blood: the Blood which "purifies the conscience from dead works".

We know that the result of such a purification is the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, whoever rejects the Spirit and the Blood remains in "dead works", in sin. And the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit consists precisely in *the radical refusal to accept this forgiveness*, of which he is the intimate giver and which presupposes the genuine conversion which he brings about in the conscience. If Jesus says that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven either in this life or in the next, it is because this "*non-forgiveness*" is linked, as to its cause, to "*non-repentance*", in linked, as to its cause, to "*non-repentance*", in order words to the radical refusal to be converted. This means the refusal to come to the sources of Redemption, which nevertheless remain "always" open in the economy of salvation in which the mission of the Holy Spirit is accomplished. The Spirit has infinite power to draw from these sources: "he will take what is mine", Jesus said. In this way he brings to completion in human souls the work of the Redemption accomplished by Christ, and distributes its fruits. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, then, is the sin committed by the person who claims to have a "*right*" to *persist in evil* — in any sin at all — and who thus rejects Redemption. One closes oneself up in sin, thus making impossible one's conversion, and consequently the remission of sins, which one considers not essential or not important for one's life. This is a state of spiritual ruin, because blasphemy against the Holy Spirit does not allow one to escape from one's self-imposed imprisonment and open oneself to the divine sources of the purification of consciences and of the remission of sins.

47. The action of the Spirit of truth, which works towards the salvific "convincing concerning sin", encounters in a person in this condition an interior resistance, as it were an impenetrability of conscience, a state of mind which could be described as fixed by reason of a free choice. This is what Sacred Scripture usually calls "hardness of heart".<sup>184</sup> In our own time this attitude of mind and heart is perhaps reflected in *the loss of the sense of sin*, to which the Apostolic Exhortation *Reconciliatio et*

<sup>184</sup> Cf. Ps. 81/80:13; Jer. 7:24; Mk. 3:5.



*Paenitentia* devotes many pages.<sup>185</sup> Pope Pius XII had already declared that "the sin of the century is the loss of the sense of sin",<sup>186</sup> and this loss goes hand in hand with the "loss of the sense of God". In the Exhortation just mentioned we read: In fact, God is the origin and the supreme end of man, and man carries in himself a divine seed. Hence it is the reality of God that reveals and illustrates the mystery of man. It is therefore vain to hope that there will take root a sense of sin against man and against human values, if there is no sense of offence against God, namely the true sense of sin".<sup>187</sup>

Hence the Church constantly implores from God the grace that *integrity of human consciences* will not be lost, that their *healthy sensitivity* with regard to good and evil will not be blunted. This integrity and sensitivity are profoundly linked to the intimate action of the Spirit of truth. In this light the exhortation of Saint Paul assume particular eloquence: "*Do not quench the Spirit*"; "*Do not grieve the Holy Spirit*".<sup>188</sup> But above all the Church constantly implores with the greatest fervour that there will be no increase in the world of the sin that the Gospel calls "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit". Rather, she prays that it will decrease in human souls — and consequently in the forms and structures of society itself — and that it will make room for that openness of conscience necessary for the saving action of the Holy Spirit. The Church prays that that the dangerous sin against the Spirit will give way to a holy readiness to accept his mission as the Counsellor, when he comes to "convince the world concerning sin, and righteousness and judgment".

48. In his farewell discourse Jesus linked these *three areas of "convincing"* as elements of the mission of the Paraclete: sin, righteousness and judgment. They mark out the area of that *mysterium pietatis* that in human history is opposed to sin, to the *mystery of iniquity*.<sup>189</sup> On the one hand, as Saint Augustine says, there is "love of self to the point of contempt of God";

<sup>185</sup> Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* (2 December 1984), n. 18: AAS 77 (1985), pp. 224-228.

<sup>186</sup> PIUS XII, Radio Message to the National Catechetical Congress of the United States of America in Boston (26 October 1946); *Discorsi e Radiomessaggi*, VII (1946), 228.

<sup>187</sup> Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* (2 December 1984), n. 18: AAS 77 (1985), pp. 225 f.

<sup>188</sup> 1 Thess. 5:19; Eph. 4:30.

<sup>189</sup> Cf. Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* (2 December 1984), 14-22: AAS 77 (1985), pp. 211-233.

on the other, "love of God to the point of contempt of self".<sup>190</sup> The Church constantly lifts up her prayer and renders her service in order that the history of consciences and the history of societies in the great human family *will not descend towards the pole of sin*, by the rejection of God's commandments "to the point of contempt of God", but rather *will rise towards the love in which the Spirit that gives life is revealed*.

Those who let themselves be "convinced concerning sin" by the Holy Spirit, also allow themselves to be convinced "concerning righteousness and judgment". The Spirit of truth who helps human beings, human consciences, to know *the truth concerning sin*, at the same time enables them to know *the truth about that righteousness* which entered human history in Jesus Christ. In this way, those who are "convinced concerning sin" and who are converted through the action of the Counsellor are, in a sense, led out of the range of the "judgment": that "judgment" by which "the ruler of this world is judged".<sup>191</sup> In the depths of its divine-human mystery, conversion means the breaking of every fetter by which sin binds man to the whole of the *mystery of iniquity*. Those who are converted, therefore, are led by the Holy Spirit out of the range of the "judgment", and *introduced into that righteousness* which is in Christ Jesus, and is in him precisely because he receives it from the Father,<sup>192</sup> as a reflection of the holiness of the Trinity. This is the righteousness of the Gospel and of the Redemption, the righteousness of the Sermon on the Mount and of the Cross, which effects the purifying of the conscience through the Blood of the Lamb. It is the righteousness which *the Father gives to the Son and to all those united with him in truth and in love*.

In this righteousness the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Father and the Son, who "convinces the world concerning sin", reveals himself and makes himself present in man as *the Spirit of eternal life*.

<sup>190</sup> Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE, *De Civitate Dei*, XIV, 28: CCL 48, 451.

<sup>191</sup> Cf. *Jn.* 16:11.

<sup>192</sup> Cf. *Jn.* 16:15.

## Reflections from the Street Corners: Filipino Prophetism

"The land is full of bloody crimes and the city is full of violence" (Ez. 7:23). "The people will oppress one another, every man his fellow and every man his neighbour; the youth will be insolent to the elder, and the base fellow to the honourable" (Is. 3:5). "Their partiality witnesses against them; they proclaim their sin like Sodom, they do not hide it" (Is. 3:9).

Those words, quoted from the Holy Scripture, if printed in a metropolitan journal, could easily be taken for a description of our country or city in times not far gone. And yet, they are but prophetic denunciations of the old Israel, not quotations from any ecclesiastical quarter attacking the state of affairs in our society.

An ecclesial complacency seemed to pervade even before the most revolting abuses and crimes, to the point that pessimistic remarks like these have been heard: "We consider the results of the conferences of Bishops held at Medellin and a few years back in Manila to have gone to the rocks."<sup>1</sup>

"Despite the cry for change," it was said, "lamentably the Church has remained resolute in her traditional approach to the problem. It is truly indeed 'recalcitrant' even when an urgent change is demanded so as to fulfill her mission... As an offshoot, rampant ideas formulated into articles, books and manifestos have been circulated, resulting to the confusion of the faithful and even the clergies themselves."<sup>2</sup>

The end result which Bonifacio de Ocampo vowed at the time, was rather negative: "Perhaps it is quite late even if now the Church comes out to start fulfilling faithfully and relevantly her apostolic mission."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Position Paper on the Need for Real Prophets*, Presented by Rev. Bonifacio de Ocampo, Manila: USTCS, 1971.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

*Isolated Cries*

Is Ocampo's view of Filipino prophetism historically justified? The assertions, being so universal and sweeping, may not be able to hold ground, since the very presence of such restlessness in the midst of the priestly training in the Filipino Central Seminary is already a healthy sign that prophetism is not really dead, but perhaps merely dormant.

As a matter of fact, without prejudging in any way the historical merits or demerits from a purely prophetic point of view, it would be rather undeniable that names like Gomez, Burgos, Zamora and Aglipay could easily be categorized as prophetic voices against some patent colonial abuses. And what else could be said of present voices and actions like Balweg's, Edicio de la Torre's, Salgado's and Jalandoni's? One could endlessly debate about procedures and methodology, but hardly can those voices be dismissed as unprophetic. Still one has to accept that they have been historically echoing the great Prophet's lament: "Voices crying in the desert" (*Matth. 3:3*).<sup>4</sup>

*Dormant Prophetism*

Why such "cries in the desert"? It can not be said that it was so because of absence of evils to denounce. They have been, and still are, too rampant to be ignored. The reason for a general attitude of dormant prophetism has to be found somewhere else, and perhaps one can pinpoint it in a twofold area.

*Historical Contempt.* First is the historical contempt of the Prophets. Ocampo has said it this way: "Any time a minister makes it clear that he takes seriously the Gospel and intends that it shall result in decisions in individual and community life, he is in trouble. He's going to be the target of people who want to get rid of him."<sup>5</sup>

Ocampo is saying nothing special; he is simply verbalizing in modern terms the attitude taken by the rulers at the time of Jesus, THE Prophet of all the Prophets (*Jn. 11:45-54; Matth. 12:14*).

<sup>4</sup> John N. Schumacher, *Readings in Philippine Church History*, Manila: Loyola School of Theology, 1979, pp. 193-333; Pablo Fernandez, *History of the Church in the Philippines*, Manila: National Book Store, 1979; Pedro S. de Achutegui & Miguel Bernard, *Religious Revolution in the Philippines*, Manila: Ateneo de Manila, 1966.

<sup>5</sup> B. Ocampo, *l.c.*



We have ample evidence in the history of the Church to establish this kind of contempt and even repression of prophetic minds. Any pioneering ideas have often been seen as revolutionary, subversive, and therefore repressable targets. There have been instances like the condemnation of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) by some ecclesiastical and academic circles of the Sorbonne, the silent imposed on Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), the condemnation of Giordano Bruno (1548-1600). Even if one wishes to speak of not so distant eras, he can bring to attention the warnings issued on scholars like M. J. Lagrange, Teilhard de Chardin, Yves Congar and so many other pre-Vatican II Prophets.

When one reads about the "dialogues" to which contemporary pioneers are subjected to, like in the instances of Hans Kung or Edward Schillebeeckx, he gets a feeling of what "Christian freedom" in propheticism is all about. I am sure that even in our midst, people like Balweg, Salgado, Jalandoni and De la Torre have a rather day propheticism, for not too seldom such Prophets have gone over the fence not so much because they fell in love with radical revolutionary stands as because of their disgruntled feelings about the repressive environment within.

*Official Satisfaction.* Aside from the isolation felt by prophetic voices, there is a second area of reassessment that may help to explain the state of dormant propheticism, and that is the classic satisfaction of the officialdom.

It has been said that one does not have to be but a superficial learner of history, both universal and national, to see the generally good-living conditions of the people expected to be the pioneering voices to denounce abuses. Since time immemorial, the clergy (bishops and priests) in the country have been identified with the learned and the powerful, with the good living conditions of those in the establishment.

It has been voiced that hardly can it be denied that most of our people in the country cannot afford the satisfying living conditions of the clergy, of those whose example of poverty and virtue ought to shine for others to see and follow.

In a dramatic way, Salgado expresses it with these words: "Herein lies the difficulty of documents written by the Church hierarchy regarding the problems of the poor. Members of the hierarchy are generally rich people. How can rich people speak well in the name of the poor? How can they speak well of what is good for the poor, when this is generally opposite to what

is good for the wealthy? How can they be expected to sacrifice themselves wholeheartedly for social transformation, when it is clear they have so much vested interests in preserving the *status quo*?"

"It would be different were the Pope and the Bishops poor or, at least, were living more often with the poor. If the Pope and the Bishops would have the smelly, rickety houses of the slum dwellers of the big cities, or the small huts of the farmers in the forgotten barrios of our country; if they had to feed themselves with but salt and rice, or only *lugaw*; if they cannot get redress for injustices as the farmers, due to the government's disregard of farmers' rights; then the poor, I believe, will not begrudge them if they speak in their names about their problems and the solutions to them. Wealth, and power, and the privileged position the Pope and the Bishops hold in the present society; these are obstacles that could easily blind regarding the truth of the social problems."<sup>6</sup>

*Favored Status.* Aside from the official satisfaction and the good living conditions, there is an additional factor that helps explain the dormant status of prophetism, and it is the favors often enjoyed by those primarily called upon to raise their prophetic voices.

One does not have to discuss allegations like first class treatment (for the corresponding stipend) given to the rich through special baptism, first class weddings or first class funerals. One does not have to air that ministers of the Gospel are rather available (for an expected treatment) for the blessing of mansions and to lead enthronements in high places. One does not have to mention rumors about tax-free imported vehicles for "official use" by the ministers, or of other tax-free items for the service of the Church. One hears of the entire membership of the clergy of a diocese on the monthly "payroll" (it is called donation for the Church) of a wealthy businessman in the area. One hears of the "lovely" envelope to the celebrants and concelebrants attending official receptions, or of the free air tickets plus pocket money to the clergy entourage accompanying the influential people on "pilgrimages to holy places."

In short, if those allegations would prove to be accurate, how could those same ministers, profitting from such (un) holy favors, be able to go on the stand and denounce the ruling evils?

<sup>6</sup> Pedro Salgado, "Some Comments on the Vatican Instruction", *Witness*, 4 (1985), 68.

*Longing for Prophets*

And yet, God's voice is like the roaring forces of a volcano. It may be delayed or silenced for a while, but sooner or later it finds a crack and bursts open in forms and ways that one may least expect, for after all the Lord has always preserved his "remnant" of the Covenant among his chosen people.

The cries of the poor have kept raising up to the high skies and throughout the times a longing for authentic Prophets has been maintained. Authentic Prophets to denounce the abuse of the *sakadas*, or the denudating of the national forest, the squandering of the national treasury, the salaries of starvation or the scandals of palaces on the skies.

Longings for Prophets were felt, Prophets who would announce to the faithful the true position of the Gospel on class struggle and active revolt against oppressors. Military powers, dictatorial regimes, it has often been observed do, never reach a point of total satisfaction, neither a point of readiness to voluntarily step down. And the cries of the people kept raising, longing that authentic Prophets would not only denounce oppression, but confirm them in positions of struggle for liberation.

*Awakening*

The national awakening to prophetism in the Philippines has taken a long and slow process, leading it from the isolated historical cries to the present solemn stand. The process has been mainly a process of concientization, brought about by combined deteriorating factors, namely: growing social inequalities that have gradually, but dramatically, widened the gap between the have-all and the have-nothing; political manipulation that has exposed the people for several decades to the pharsical show of "choosing" what had been previously acted upon; the economic slavery that has led the country from modest poverty to international slavery through emigrant workers, local sex tours and IMF's dictation; militaristic situation, where the sacred law of the land has been changed for the rule of the gun; the institutionalized corruption that seems to have placed and unwritten tag on all transactions either in the legislative, executive or judicial branches and the traumatic play with life, where all unwanted elements were systematically removed either through midnight "salvaging", or on plain daylight, like the

murders in Cotabato (e.g. Father Favali), in Escalante (the sugar workers), in Antique (Ex-Governor Javier), or in the International Airport (Senator Aquino).

The presence of prophetism grew up to international levels, from the ecclesial pressure due to the disappearance of Father Rudy Romano and the murder of Father Favali, to the diplomatic influence during the show trials of the Bacolod priests and lay-workers, to the high level astonishment of the "Agrava Board" and the Aquino trial. The silent but unprecedented manifestation of prophetism was expressed in the funeral of Senator Aquino. Still, "only those with ears could hear"; the climax of the awakening was marked by the masses of people making carnivalistic comments like the foretelling of the decision of the Sandigan Bayan that would come out with a criminal verdict that it was Aquino who had killed Galman; or the comments of the Galman's family counsel, stating after the verdict that he had won, because he knew from the beginning what the outcome would be. After all, the final sentence was not too far away from the worst expectations since all the suspects came out judicially innocent.

### *The Eruption*

The outlet-valve that was (erroneously) precast as sufficient, was the call for "snap elections". The timing, the manipulation of the mass media, the activation of the political machinery, the alleged rolling of the Central Bank printing offices, the appointments to the Supreme Court and Comelec, all those and more were "ominous signs" that the outlet-valve had been properly set in place and a big show or *lutong macao* was in the making.

The skepticism of the people could be touched and weighed. Then fire started catching up; prophetic voices became loud and clear through people like bishops Escaler, Quevedo, Fortich, Claver and Labayen. NAMFREL put on a grand stand through a mixed support of international pressure, Church backing and personal honesty. Cardinal Sin came out with an advanced pastoral letter,<sup>7</sup> foretelling what the prophetic voice of the Church will stand for.

### *The Warning*

Added to all those factors, a joint pastoral letter, issued by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, came

<sup>7</sup> "All Call to Conscience", January 19, 1986.



out on January 25, 1986. The substance of the letter is prophetic. It is basically a warning to avoid evils, evils which are looming in the immediate national horizon: "It has been our sad experience that God's will has been flagrantly transgressed in the past through the violation of our electoral process. Registration anomalies and flying voters, vote buying and selling, bribery, unwarranted pressures, serious lies, black propaganda, the fraudulent casting, canvassing and reporting of votes, snatching and switching of ballot boxes, physical violence and killings have, often characterized our elections".

"It is with grave concern and great sadness that we see signs of these happening again now in a concerted manner, and threatening to escalate to a level never experienced before. These practices are sins against the Lord. They violate in a serious manner the dignity of human beings with whom the Lord has united himself."<sup>8</sup>

A call is issued to all parties involved, to renounce evil and to heed the voice of (the people) truth and honesty: "This will [of the people] must be expressed and respected. For the power to choose our leaders comes from God. From him all authority derives. In a democracy, he chooses to designate the bearers of this authority through the free and honest expression of the people's will. Hence, voting is a sacred right and duty. To exercise this right is to do God's will. To respect this right is to respect God himself."<sup>9</sup>

It is the call of proclamation of the Gospel values: "Vote into office the persons you believe God wants you to put in office as president and vice-president of this land. Vote for persons who embody the Gospel values of justice, humility, truth, freedom, courage, love, peace, respect for human rights and life."<sup>10</sup>

### *Prophetic Judgments*

The climax of the political exercise was reached without any of the denounced evils showing any signs of receding. And at that point Filipino prophecyism reached its apex through all forms of denunciations coming from members of NAMFREL, through the mouths of nuns, priests and ordinary laymen. When

<sup>8</sup> "We Must Obey God rather than Men", January 25, 1986.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

the bishops, fulfilling their previous agreement, met for a second time to examine the reports arriving from all sorts of life, the judgment was finally rendered in a clear voice. The system is evil (immoral), and Christians are called upon to act accordingly: "In our considered judgment, the polls were unparalleled in the fraudulence of their conduct."<sup>11</sup>

"According to moral principles, a government that assumes or retains power through fraudulent means has no moral basis. For such an access to power is tantamount to a forcible seizure and cannot command the allegiance of the citizenry . . . . If such a government does not of itself freely correct the evil it has inflicted on the people then it is our serious moral obligation as a people to make it do so."<sup>12</sup>

### *Comments*

Additional comments could be made at this point of time. When these thoughts were being organized and the February events had not yet taken place, a stage of further purification (perhaps even civil war) was forecast before evil would be cleansed. Now events have proved (fortunately) otherwise.

A comment was further projected about the increase polarization of forces where honesty and truth were perceived as the enemies of the system. It is a very sad situation indeed for anyone claiming to have a covenant with his people.

A further comment could be added about the dissenting opinions of some bishops concerning the CBCP's judgment statement. One has only to remember that it is in this fashion that the prophetic spirit works. Not a single document of a solemn ecclesial council has ever been approved by a one hundred per cent agreement. Still what the Community stands for remains in the solemn pronouncement.

A sequential suffering is the usual follow-up to prophecy. Will it not arrive to the Filipino Church? All Prophets had hoped that it would never come, and yet it came. If events or signs subsequent to the revolution of the "people's power" will not prove wrong, sufferings will come, although it may be too early to predict where will they come from, from former allies or enemies, or from present friends and adulators.

<sup>11</sup> "Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines Post Election Statement", February 13, 1986.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

*Future of Prophetism*

What role is in store for the Filipino prophetism? One could openly say that the role of the Church continues being prophetic. The immediate task is healing and reconciliation. In this regard the bishops of Manila, under the leadership of Cardinal Sin, issued a press statement relevant to the situation: "Let us bind the wounds that the recent election and its aftermath inflicted on the national soul. Let us stretch our hands in friendship and amity to others so that healing process may begin."<sup>13</sup>

Beyond that healing role, the Church ought to continue exercising the prophetism that she played so brilliantly during the last months of 1985 and up to the end of February of 1986, with a prophetism of "catholic" denunciation, regardless of color, culture, social or political tone, truly catholic, and with a prophetism of "catholic" proclamation of the Gospel values for all men (*Mtth.* 28:19), without exception, but with a clear option in orthodoxy and orthopraxis "for the poor."<sup>14</sup>

In practical terms, the Church's role is never to identify herself with any political party or economize class, but to project herself with the freedom of the Gospel with the end target of *total* liberation to be proclaimed particularly to the "oppressed", with any kind of oppression. That is what the Good News of Jesus is all about.

BRAULIO PEÑA, O.P.

<sup>13</sup> "Press Statement of His Eminence, Jaime Cardinal Sin and the Auxiliary Bishops of Manila", *Malaya*, March 2, 1986.

<sup>14</sup> John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, May 15, 1981; Donal Dorr, *Option for the Poor*, Dublin: Gill & MacMillan, 1983.

## CANON LAW

# HOLINESS OF LIFE OF CLERICS

### INTRODUCTION

In the life of man, holiness is an adventure. This truism becomes more relevant and challenging to clerics like you and me, who by virtue of our position in the church, are called upon to give witness to it, more than ordinary Christians. Holiness becomes somewhat measurable by the degree of our individual spirituality, which makes us aware of God's presence in ourselves and in our fellowmen.

Allow me to approach the subject as a bishop and pastor of souls, although reference will have to be made to Vatican II theology and the New Code of Canon Law in the course of the presentation. Perhaps in some way also, the experiences in the pastoral field in my seventeen years as a priest and thirteen years as a bishop, will help bring home the point of how vital is holiness for a successful priestly ministry.

We have all been witnesses to unprecedented events that left lasting imprints in the direction of the Church. Almost all of us have been part of the unfolding of epochal happenings after Vatican II. I am referring to the first ten years after the Council, a period in the history of the Church that was characterized as tragic for the priesthood. Not only was there a tremendous decrease in the number of aspirants to the priesthood but also a staggering increase in the number of those who left the ministry.

The next decade however, which has just ended, has somewhat soften the impact, and once more, we witness a better situation: more priestly vocations and less defections from the priesthood. If these are signs of the time, then we should take heart and read in them the will and grace of the Lord.

Holiness must be a way of life for all men. It must be more so for a priest. More than anybody else, the priest is at the forefront of crisis that demand a full measure of his spiri-



tuality and strength. In the last analysis, whatever problem may arise in the life of a priest, it can be traced to the quality of his priestly spirituality. The more spiritual he is, the easier he overcomes the crisis that may come his way. The less spiritual he is, the more he succumbs to the problems that arise.

Hence, the spiritual priest lives life here and now — with life's conflicts and paradoxes and tensions — not in spite of them or naively unaware of them. He encounters life and through this encounter, finds a fullness, that can be experienced as present, remembered as past, anticipated as future. And above all, the spiritual priest experiences these encounters with hope because he knows he is not alone... Christ is present in him.

In the light of this truism, it is therefore incumbent upon us: bishops, seminary rectors and formators, to see how we can intensify more and more the spiritual life of our priests and priest-to-be towards a genuine and fruitful priestly ministry.

### THE CALL TO HOLINESS

It must be stressed that the holiness of life of clerics has been repeatedly emphasized by the Church throughout the centuries. It is an imperative in the priestly life and ministry. Let us consider the mind of Mother Church, as she thinks aloud through the following lines in the New Code of Canon Law (Can. 276): "In leading their lives, clerics are especially bound to pursue holiness, because they are consecrated to God by a new title in the reception of orders as dispensers of God's mysteries in the service of His people...."

Vatican II in its document "*Presbyterorum Ordinis*", also brought light on the call to holiness for the clergy: "Priest are bound by a special reason to acquire perfection. They are consecrated to God in a new way in their ordination, and are made living instruments of Christ, the eternal Priest, and so are enabled to accomplish throughout all time that wonderful work of His, which with supernatural efficacy restored the whole human race. Since every priest, in his own way, assumes the person of Christ, he is endowed with a special grace. By this grace, the priest through his service of the people, committed to his care and all the people of God, is able the better to pursue the perfection of Christ whose place he takes. The human weakness of his is remedied by the holiness of Him, who became for us a high priest "holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners (Heb. 7:26)" (n. 12).

From the foregoing, I would characterize the type of spirituality that clerics should possess into the following categories:

First, *it must be PASTORAL*. Obviously, such spirituality is not, and cannot be the same as the spirituality of a monk or religious, whose primary aim is self-sanctification through the observance of the three vows of religion.

In direct contrast, the spirituality of priests must be the spirituality, based on the life of the Good Shepherd, who came to "serve and not to be served." As *Presbyterorum Ordinis* clearly states: "By assuming the role of the Good Shepherd they will find in the very exercise of pastoral love, the bond of priestly perfection which will unify their lives and activities..." (n. 14).

In like manner, the spirituality of priests must necessarily be that spirituality by which they sanctify themselves by sanctifying others and by which they bring Christ into themselves by bringing Him into the lives of others. It is the spirituality that moves priests to sacrifice their time, comfort and energy in order to be at the service of others. This type of spirituality moves them to work for the Christian formation of God's people towards a deepening of their faith and the right of worship of the Lord.

Secondly, *it must be EUCHARISTIC*. To accept it as a matter of truth, is to move priests to enter into close relationship with the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, especially through the practice of the Holy Hour. Such realization helps priests to look at the Eucharist as the source of all their enlightenment, inspiration and strength. Furthermore, this makes the Holy Mass the very center of their life and activities during the whole day.

As Canon 276, 2 puts it: "They (priests) are to nourish their spiritual life from the two tables of Sacred Scripture and the Eucharist priests are therefore earnestly invited to offer the sacrifice of the Eucharist daily and deacons are invited to participate daily in offering it".

The Eucharist indeed is a fountain of spiritual strength from where the priest can quench his thirst and draw his vigor, so vital and indispensable in the prosecution of his priestly ministry.

Thirdly, *it must be ECCLESIAL*. Priestly spirituality must necessarily move them to sense and feel with the Church (*sensire cum ecclesia*). To truly count themselves with the Church means to deepen and strengthen their loyalty to the Pope, the Bishops and other authorities in the Church.

Needless to say as they identify themselves with the Church and all that she stands for, they are moved never to attack but rather to defend and uphold the official teachings and policies of the Church. By these, they become living witnesses to the Church, and partners of Christ in building His Kingdom on earth.

Fourthly, *it must be SCRIPTURAL*. By scriptural spirituality, I mean that the priestly spirituality must be largely based on the Word of God as found in Scriptures. As the Vatican constitution on Divine Revelation (*Dei Verbum*) states: "Anyone becomes an empty preacher of the Word of God to others not being a hearer of the Word in his own heart" (n. 25). And as St. Jerome stated rather succinctly: "Ignorance of Scriptures is ignorance of Christ".

Lastly, the priest's spirituality *must be MARIAN*. In a special way Mary is offered to priests as the beautiful model for imitation. This type of spirituality is typically Christian and typically Filipino. Hence, the spirituality of a priest must be based on a model of the highest order among human beings: *Mary's spirituality*.

## SIGNS OF PRIESTLY HOLINESS

Vatican II states anew: "Priestly holiness itself contributes very greatly to a fruitful fulfilment of the priestly ministry..." (PO, n. 12). What then are the signs of priestly holiness?

1. *Joyful and dedicated service*. One of the very clear signs of priestly spirituality is the joy and dedication that a priest shows in his priestly ministry. A joyful priest, a dedicated priest, is surely a spiritual man: a man of God indeed. It cannot be otherwise.

Discontent and complaints are never the characteristics of a spiritual man that the priest should be. A priest who is never contented and satisfied with the assignment given to him, shows how poorly spiritual he is in his priestly life. Truly,

there is much to be desired in the way he gives witness to his ministry. There is much vacuum to fill — a vacuum in spirituality.

2. *Presbyteral Unity.* Another very clear sign of priestly spirituality is the unity it brings to the presbyterium in a diocese. Allow me to dwell extensively on this.

This presbyteral unity is very important if the diocese is to succeed in its pastoral mission. Vatican II talks of two kinds of unity among priests: *sacramental unity*, and *functional or ministerial unity*.

*Sacramental unity.* Where there is a high degree of spirituality among priests in a diocese, there the bond of unity among them and the bishop is very strong.

As a person bearing the dignity of sacred orders, the priest has a fundamental tie with his brother priests and the bishop. It is the sacrament of orders that first and foremost confers the unity in the presbyterium.

This sacramental unity is best symbolized in the rite of ordination, when priests after the bishop, lay their hands on the head of the ordinandus. This expresses in a very concrete way the sacramental unity of the presbyterium.

*Unity with the bishop.* The very unity of the priests' consecration and mission, requires their hierarchical community with the order of bishops. The priest is dependent on the bishop for the exercise of his function received from Christ through ordination. Priests must stand by their bishop in sincere charity and obedience. On the other hand, the bishop should regard his priests as his brothers and friends, and have at heart their spiritual and material welfare.

*Unity among priests.* Priests should form a unity of brotherhood that is unique, not only because of their common aim, but more so, because of their sharing Christ's essential priesthood. Therefore, each priest must be related to every other priest "in Christ".

All of these can easily be realized if priests in the diocese possess a high degree of spirituality.

*Functional or ministerial unity.* The holiness a priest brings about also what is called functional or ministerial unity.



The priesthood is not an isolated ministry. Even when a priest works kilometers away from his brother priests, he does so as a member of the presbyterium, in cooperation with the bishop from whom he receives his assignment. His call and his mission are directed towards a sharing in the mission held by the bishop and participated in by all his fellow priests.

No matter what a priest does, so long as it is priestly act, he does it as a member of the presbyterium. Thus, when he preaches, when he baptizes, when he absolves, when he offers the Eucharistic sacrifice, it is within the context of the presbyterium that he does so.

This ministerial or functional unity is best expressed in the liturgical concelebration, so much recommended by Vatican II, especially in priests' gatherings and assemblies.

### THE PURSUIT OF PRIESTLY HOLINESS

Vatican II states that "Priests will acquire holiness in their own distinctive way by exercising their functions sincerely and tirelessly in the spirit of Christ" (PO, n. 3).

However, besides this meaningful carrying out of their priestly ministry, there are certain means that appear to be very necessary to foster their spirituality to an eminent degree.

1. *A Deeper Knowledge of Christ.* Presbyterorum Ordinis stresses the need for priests to "draw nourishment through the word of God from the double table of Holy Scripture and the Eucharist" which should "hold a pre-eminent place above all spiritual aids . . ." (n. 18). Clerics therefore should nourish themselves with the Word of God toward a fuller and deeper knowledge of Christ. As "Dei Verbum" points out: "This nourishment enlightens the mind, strengthens the will and fires the hearts of men with the love of God" (n. 23).

Once Philip approached our Lord and said: "Lord, show us the Father and that is enough for us" Jesus answered "Philip, for a long time I have been with you all; yet you do not know Me. Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father . . . Philip, do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me?" (Jn. 14:9-10). Our Lord had a right to complain because Philip had not really known Him.

Obviously, we are speaking here not of a theoretical but of an *experiential* knowledge of Christ. It is the knowledge

that comes from a close and intimate contact with Christ. It is the result of a personal encounter with the Lord.

2. *A Greater Love for Christ.* The long history of the priesthood has proven one thing: *that the best motive for service is love.* Let us recall the incident after the Resurrection, when Christ appeared to His apostles by the Lake of Tiberias and worked a miracle in their behalf. Calling Peter to His side, he asked him the same question for three times: "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter categorically answered that he loved the Lord, and Christ entrusted to him the care of His flock.

There are those who see in this incident a triple profession of love, to pay for the triple denial that Peter made of the Lord during His passion. But St. John Chrysostom and several others, see a deeper meaning in these questions and answers by the Lake of Tiberias, almost two thousand years ago. It is the connection between love and service. Before offering to Peter the highest office in the Church, he assured Himself of Peter's love.

It is a fact that priests who have nurtured the love of Christ in their hearts, served faithfully well. Those who loved Him so little, served very little. And those who did not love Christ, did not serve at all. We have the beautiful example of St. Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles. He suffered so much for the Gospel, and in spite of all his sufferings, he was still able to exclaim: "Gladly will I send and be spent for the welfare of your souls" (2 Cor. 12:15). And later on, he gave the reason for this: "Because the love of Christ urges me on".

3. *The Spirit of Renunciation.* Renunciation is one condition for true discipleship. "If anyone wishes to be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me" (Mt. 16:24). In a priest, the spirit of renunciation is concretely expressed in the life of poverty, chastity and obedience that he should live.

a) It is a sad fact that the spiritual influence of the Church on the World becomes weaker and weaker, as the materialistic influence of the world on the Church becomes stronger and stronger. The greatest scandal that bishops and priests can give to people, is the excessive and improper desire for money and material goods. Blessed Camillo Batista of Italy once said: "O! how poor a person is, when he wants something other than God; and how rich a person is, when he is possessing nothing but God".

Poverty and simplicity of life are a main ingredient to the spiritual life of priests, especially in the world of today. Canon 282, #1 states: "Clerics are to cultivate a simple style of life and are to avoid whatever has a semblance of vanity".

b) By a life of chastity and celibacy, priests make a renunciation, not only of their material possessions, but of their very own selves. Crucifixion by chastity and celibacy has always been the special mark of the catholic priesthood, so much so that in a priest, sins against chastity have always the additional malice of "sacrilege".

Canon 277, #1 has this to say: "Clerics are obliged to observe perfect and perpetual continence for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven, and therefore are obliged to observe celibacy which is a special gift of God, by which sacred ministers can adhere more easily to Christ with an undivided heart and can more freely dedicate themselves to the service of God and humankind".

c) By a life of obedience, the priest renounces the highest and precious faculty in him: *the will*. By obedience, the priest willingly submits himself to the legitimate disposition of his superiors for the love of God. The late Pope Paul VI, of saintly memory, once said: "Obedience is and must remain a holocaust of one's own will which is offered to God". For its part, the New Code of Canon Law states: "Clerics have a special obligation to show reverence and obedience to the Supreme Pontiff and to their own ordinary" (Can. 273).

If obedience is coupled with a fair sense of humility, it will not be hard for a priest to attain a higher degree of holiness as demanded by his state of life. (cf. PO. n. 15)

4. *A More Intense Prayer-life.* Prayer is essentially an encounter with God. And with this encounter, we make a discovery: a discovery of the infiniteness of God, and the littleness of man. Prayer is the best means to be fully human, which means to be in full communion with God, and ultimately to be, in the words of St. Peter "partakers of the divine nature..." Our humanity is purified all the more, as we come in contact with divinity through prayer.

The new Code of Canon Law specifies the duties of priests in order to deepen their prayer-life: the daily liturgy of the  
(Continued on page 234.)

## CASES AND INQUIRIES

### 1. EXTRAORDINARY FORM OF MARRIAGE

Mr. A and Mrs. B, Catholics, were married civilly, but after some years they found it was impossible to live together peacefully. By common agreement, though without any legal process, they just separated from each other, providing properly for their children. Later on Mr. A found a new partner, and similarly Mrs. B; and both have formed a new home, without any marriage at all.

Now Mr. A realizes his sinful condition, and wants to return to God and receive the Sacraments of the Church. Mrs. B has a new family also and there is no probability she would ever prosecute him for bigamy.

#### Questions:

- 1) Can Mr. A marry another civilly or canonically as long as Mrs. B, his first wife, is alive?
- 2) What form of canonical marriage could you suggest? Can the extraordinary canonical form before two witnesses only (can. 1116), without any priest solemnizing it, be resorted to?

A Priest

The answer to the first question is clear. Mr. A cannot marry again *civilly* as long as Mrs. B, his first wife is alive. Their civil marriage is still subsisting before the civil law. To attempt another civil marriage would be a ground for Mrs. B to prosecute him for bigamy. Whether she will prosecute him or not, is a different problem. However, Mr. A is free before God and His Church to marry *canonically*. His previous civil marriage was void from the very beginning before God and before the Church. It had not even the appearance of marriage, since no canonical form was observed and their consent was not declared *in facie Ecclesiae*.

The second question posed by our consultant is more difficult because of the conflict existing between the Church and



State laws on marriage. The existing civil marriage is a diriment impediment to contract a second marriage for the Civil Law, while it does not constitute an impediment for the Church law. Due to this conflict, no priest would proceed to solemnize the canonical marriage of Mr. A because of the danger of incurring the civil penalties. This is the reason why canon 1071.1, 2° of the New Code of Canon Law states that "except in the case of necessity, no one is to assist without the permission of the local Ordinary at a marriage which cannot be recognized by the civil law or celebrated in accordance with it." In view of the foregoing difficulty what can be done in order to normalize the condition of Mr. A, so that he will be able to receive the Sacraments of the Church?

Canon 1116 of the new Code gives us the solution. When a priest "cannot be present without grave inconvenience to the celebration of marriage, the contracting parties can validly and lawfully give their mutual consent in the presence of two witnesses only." The priest is presumed physically absent when "though materially present in the place he cannot ask and receive the matrimonial consent because of some grave inconvenience" (AAS, XXIII, 1931, p. 388). The Plenary Council of the Philippines gives as an example the grave inconvenience which might come from the civil authorities who forbid the marriage under grave penalty (cfr. *Acta et Decreta*, n. 459). Cfr. also *Manual for Parish Priests*, 2nd ed. 1985. num. 674.

The new spouses must be duly forewarned that this canonical marriage, valid before God and His Church, will not leave civil effects as the legitimacy of their children, inheritance, etc.

## 2. LAWS RULING JURIDICAL ACTS

*In one of our regular meetings the effectivity and force of our present Code has been the topic of our discussion. Since the present Code contains some laws contrary to the previous laws, some say that juridical acts considered null and void by the 1917 Code are automatically convalidated by the new laws of the new Code, if the latter considers the same kind of acts as*

*valid; and vice versa acts considered valid by the 1917 Code are nullified by the new Code if it considers the same kind of acts as null and void. They mention as a basis canon 6 of the new Code. What do you say about this?*

*A Priest*

Canon 6 of the new Code has nothing to do with the validity or nullity of juridical acts performed according to or against the laws contained in 1917 Code when those laws were still in force. Canon 6 reads as follows:

“§ 1. When this Code comes into force, the following are abrogated:

1. The Code of Canon Law promulgated in 1917;
2. Other laws, whether universal or particular, which are contrary to the provisions of this Code, unless it is otherwise expressly provided in respect of particular laws;
3. All penal laws enacted by the Apostolic See, whether universal or particular, unless they are resumed in this Code itself;
4. Any other universal disciplinary laws concerning matters which are integrally reordered by this Code.

§ 2. To the extent that the canons of this Code reproduce the former law, they are to be assessed in the light also of canonical tradition.”

As we can see, canon 6 merely states what laws of the old legislation have been abrogated by the new Code. But nowhere it is said that the juridical acts validly performed when the laws of the 1917 Code were still in force are nullified by the contrary laws contained in the new Code, nor that juridical acts invalidly performed before are now convalidated by the new legislation. In other words, although old laws have been abrogated by the new Code, it cannot be deduced that juridical acts performed according to those laws while they were in force have changed their validity or nullity with the promulgation of the new Code.

The norm which should really be considered is the one contained in canon 9 which reads as follows: “Laws concern matters of the future, not those of the past, unless provision is made in

them for the latter by name." The non-retroactivity of the laws is here clearly pointed out, unless the new laws provide otherwise. A different case is the retroactivity of the authentic interpretation of a law given by legitimate authority, as stated in canon 16, § 2. Another different case is the express provision concerning penal laws contained in canon 1313, which reads: "§ 1. If a law is changed after an offense has been committed the law more favorable to the offender is to be applied. § 2. If a later law removes a law, or at least a penalty, the penalty immediately lapses." Likewise, a distinction should be made between retroactivity of the law and retroactivity of an act or effect contemplated by the law, as it happens in the so-called "sanation in radice" of a marriage (can. 1161) and legitimation of children (can. 1140).

The foregoing principles will appear clearer if we give some examples. The 1917 Code required for the valid admission of a novice to temporal profession that he should be sixteen years of age (can. 573), while the new Code requires eighteen years of age. Does this mean that those religious who made, before November 27, 1983, their temporal profession at the age of sixteen have to convalidate it since the new Code requires eighteen years of age? Does it mean that a marriage contracted invalidly before November 27, 1983 between Peter and his dead wife's sister (diriment impediment of affinity-canon 1077 of 1917 Code) become automatically valid on November 27, 1983, because the new Code allows this kind of marriage? By no means. Juridical acts performed validly in conformity with the law of the 1917 Code while this was in force, are valid up to now, and juridical acts invalidly performed against the same law continue being invalid after the new Code took effectivity, unless the new laws provide otherwise.

In other words, juridical acts are to be judged in accordance with the laws existing when those acts were performed. The new Code has not changed their nature. The new legislation looks only to the future, as canon 9 says. It looks to the acts to be performed after it took effectivity, i.e., November 27, 1983.

FR. EXCELSO GARCIA, O.P.

# The Message of Lorenzo Ruiz for Filipinos Today\*

Faithful devotees of Blessed Lorenzo Ruiz  
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ

"Their death reveals Your power shining through  
our human weakness. You choose the weak and make  
them strong in bearing witness to You..."

(from the Preface of the Beatification  
Mass for Lorenzo Ruiz and companions)

The former sacristan from Binondo whom we are honoring today, would be utterly embarrassed were we to praise him as an extraordinary Filipino. For Lorenzo Ruiz, even at the threshold of a uniquely barbaric martyrdom, remained so ordinary and simple a man that even his name was omitted in the first list of martyrs presented to the ecclesiastical tribunal of Macao in 1637.

Today, three hundred and forty-nine years since his martyrdom in Nagasaki's holy hill, the obscurity of his life and the lucid courage of his death, mark the Blessed Ruiz as a Filipino with a message still relevant to our time and condition.

He was a reluctant traveller, loathe to leave his country and family behind. His was the lonely burden of an exile in flight, forced by circumstances beyond his control to wander far from his people. These are experiences that continue to be the lot of many of our countrymen to this day. Thousands of Filipinos still drink from the same bitter cup of exile and loneliness. A prolonged fratricidal conflict has forced many of our Muslim brethren to seek sanctuary in Sabah. A deepening economic crisis has pressured thousands of our professionals

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\* Homily delivered by His Eminence, Jaime L. Cardinal Sin, Archbishop of Manila, at Toronto, Canada, last August 16, 1986.



and workers to invest their talents and energy in developing, not the plains and villages of their homeland, but the deserts and oil fields of the Middle East.

There are many dangerous labyrinths into which the wanderer can stumble and remain entrapped. Out of his isolation and anguish, the Filipino in an alien land could live selfishly, pursuing the mirages of pleasure, possessions and pretensions. Deprived of the security and stability coming from one's traditional society and family system, the exile experiences a sense of freedom which if not properly managed, can lead to new insecurities and even to the loss of faith.

To Filipino wanderers hovering on the edge of meaninglessness and despair, our Blessed Lorenzo Ruiz can be consoler and intercessor. He who left home and family without any earthly possession or assured destination and who was armed only with the strength of his faith in God, this protomartyr of our race can help his brother Filipinos find meaning in their suffering. For Lorenzo of Binondo, freed suffering from its physical confines and raised it to the spiritual level, from which perspective he discovered its meaning. Suffering, then, became a consuming fire to purify his sinfulness and to transform him into the likeness of the Crucified Christ.

There was an element of human frailty in Blessed Lorenzo's reaction to impending death that makes him more reachable and understandable by ordinary Filipinos. His was not a fanatical, headlong plunge into the exquisitely designed torments awaiting him in Nagasaki. Rather, he dallied with an alternative to escape an inhuman situation, as he whispered to the interpreter: "I would like to know if, by apostatizing, they will spare my life." Do we not catch here a distant echo of that anguished cry from the Garden of Gethsemane: "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass me by."

And in this darkest hour of his soul, Lorenzo Ruiz saw that he needed not the answer of man, but the answer of his Master who chose to abide by His Father's will. And to this simple, unknown layman was given the divine strength to answer in words that will forever be enshrined in the sacred history of our nation.

"I am a Christian, and this I profess until the hour of my death; and for God, I shall give my life."

Like our *beatus*, we are also subject to temptations that imperil our faith. There are temptations to betray vows pledged long ago at home and now seemingly made irrelevant by distance and anonymity in a foreign land. There are temptations to succumb to a materialistic life style that barricades itself from the needs of others.

Such temptations, while not carrying the extremity of choice that the martyrs of Nagasaki, had to contend with, nevertheless demand a dying to one's self interests and a surrender of one's will to the Father's. For the grace not to succumb to those daily betrayals that erode the image of God in our souls, we need to reflect often on the amazing courage of our simple Filipino compatriot who, when tempted a second time, replied still more strongly:

"... because I am a Christian, I shall die for God and for Him I will give many thousands of lives if I had them..."

There is another characteristic in the life of our proto-martyr that links him with contemporary Filipinos. Lorenzo Ruiz belonged to the common *tao* whose lot it was to live "extra muros" among the poor, rather than "intra muros" among the *ilustrados* of his time. Some Filipinos might have been disappointed that our country's first martyr and blessed, rather than being the scion of an illustrious family and an alumnus of either the Ateneo or of Sto. Tomas University, was instead a Chinese mestizo sacristan doing errands in Binondo as a house-boy.

But is this not another proof of God's magnificent preference for the poor, for exalting the lowly and for choosing as keynote that which the builders have rejected?

Ecce Homo! Behold, it is the suffering figure of Lorenzo Ruiz whom God has chosen to remind us of Christ's own acceptance of the cross for the salvation of man.

Ecco Homo! Behold, the broken body of this "poor little one" whose death has ennobled our race, endowed our families with dignity, and directed our country towards the path of hope and peace.

Ecce Homo! Behold, the glorification of this poor family man by the Church as a reminder to us of our responsibility towards the least of our brethren, especially those who are persecuted and suffer injustice for His Name's sake.

Our country and our people continue to be enmeshed in an economic and political crisis. In the presence of so much uncertainty and potential for more suffering, Divine wisdom gave us a seemingly unlikely model to follow — Lorenzo Ruiz. For one could ask what learned theories could this simple sacristan offer us to solve our economic problems. What erudite comments on political options could come out of a Binondo houseboy?

The unfathomable wisdom of God foresaw that to solve our problems requires neither technical cleverness nor command of material wealth — but a simple faith that gives direction to the heart, an equanimity of soul that is ever prepared to reject hatred in favor of peace and forgiveness.

Lorenzo Ruiz going forth in the night on a fragile *sampan*, kept ignorant of its final destination and of the dire fate awaiting those who ventured on forbidden land — represents very much the present condition of his countrymen.

Should it be God's will that we, as a people, be purified by sufferings as bloody and cruel as those Lorenzo endured in Nagasaki, then, may our response be marked with equal bravery, with the same simple faith and charity shown by Lorenzo Ruiz, glorious citizen of Holy Mother the Church and of the Philippines!

But I pray daily to Blessed Lorenzo Ruiz and companions and request you to do so likewise, for two special miracles that would serve as outstanding testimonies towards their eventual canonization as Saints.

The first miracle is the gift of magnanimity and humility for our political, economic, military leadership: — that they may show their basic humanity by responding to the longstanding appeals of their citizens for social reform.

The second miracle is the gift of peace and reconciliation throughout our land. Let our Muslim brothers and sisters forgive the transgression of their Christian brethren and bring to our southern islands, that peace and brotherhood which both the Holy Koran and the Gospels proclaim. Let the New People's Army negotiate for an honorable peace that will enable them

to lay down their arms with pride and to rejoin their long-suffering families.

If our leaders and people allow the graces of magnanimity and humility, of peace and reconciliation to enter their hearts and be reflected in their deeds, then, God's wrath against our nation will cease and He will bless our people as He did Jerusalem of old proclaiming through the prophet Jeremiah:

I will hasten their recovery and their cure;  
I will let them know peace and security in full measure.  
I will restore their fortunes... and build them  
again as they were before. And Jerusalem shall be  
my theme of joy, my honour, and my boast before  
all the nations of earth. (Jeremiah 33:6-9)

May Blessed Lorenzo Ruiz intercede before God for the fulfillment of these blessings upon us all. Amen.

† JAIME CARD. SIN

## HOLINESS OF LIFE OF CLERICS

*(Continued from page 225.)*

hours, the annual retreat, and regular mental prayer (cf. can. 276, #2). Through the exercise of prayer, the Church expects her priests to attain to "greater holiness that will make them daily more effective instruments for the service of all God's people" (P.O., n. 12).

## CONCLUSION

This year, we celebrate the second centenary of the birth of St. John Mary Vianney, the Cure of Ars, who has been proclaimed by the Church as the patron of diocesan priests. In his letter to all the priests of the Church for Holy Thursday, 1986, the Holy Father Pope John Paul II extolled the holiness of life in St. John Mary Vianney. "The Cure of Ars, he said, is a model of priestly zeal for all pastors... The Eucharist was at the very center of his spiritual life and pastoral work". May this beautiful example of this humble saint be an inspiration to us all in our struggle for holiness of life, in order to be a model to all, by the grace of our examples, by the wisdom of our counsels and by our edifying solicitude for goodness and righteousness.

MOST REV. CIRILO R. ALMARIO, D.D.



## 1. APPOINTMENT OF MSGR. DEOGRACIAS INIGUEZ

Joannes Paulus Episcopus Servus Servorum Dei

dilecto filio DEOGRATIAS INIGUEZ, Cancellario Curiae Malolosinae atque Apostolico Visitatori Seminariorum minorum in Insulis Philippinis, electo Episcopo titulo Claternense atque Auxiliari pastoris Ecclesiae Malolosinae, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Ex provida consuetudine huius Apostolicae Sedis ita efficitur, ut Nostrum nunc sit videre ne usquam quid dominicus grex detrimenti capiat; ideoque diligenter etiam curamus ut unus vel plures Episcopi auxiliares pastori dioecetano iuste et legitime petenti concedantur. Cum igitur Episcopus Malolosinus, ob frequentiores factos fideles sibi commissos, postulaverit nuper ut novum sibi episcopale daretur auxilium, hac ipsa die, precibus eius omnino auditis, de consilio Venerabilium fratrum Nostrorum S.R.E. Cardinalium Congregationis pro Episcopis negotiis praepositorum, quod ratum habemus, deque summa potestate Nostra Apostolica Te, dilecte fili, ad dignitatem episcopalem evehimus Ecclesiaeque CLATERNENSIS titulo insignimus necnon memorato dioecesis Malolosinae pastori Auxiliarem assignamus, simul atque omnia Tibi officia iniungimus iuraque facimus, quae cum eiusmodi munere cohaerent ad canonum praescripta. Antequam rite ordinationem episcopalem accipias, tuum esto sive professionem rectae fidei nuncupare sive fidelitatem erga Nos Nostrosque Successores iure iurando servatisque servandis apte spondere. Suo autem tempore formulas ad utrumque adhibitas, sueto more subsignatas sigilloque impressas, curabis Congregationi pro Episcopis mittendas. Tibi denique, dilecti fili, vehementer amantique animo suademus ut intra fines tui muneris proprios tuam dein dilecto isti Episcopo assiduam praestes gnavi audiutoris operam in dioecesis negotiis expediendis, quibus quam celerrime Malolosinae provehatur Ecclesialis Communitas. Datum Romae, die tertia mensis Julii, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo octogesimo quinto, Pontificatus Nostri VII.

Joannes Paulus II

Hyginus Quadraroli, Prot. Ap.

## 2. APPOINTMENT OF MSGR. ANGEL LAGDAMEO

Joannes Paulus Episcopus Servus Servorum Dei

Venerabili Fratri ANGELO LAGDAMEO, hactenus Episcopo titulo Oretano atque Auxiliari Archiepiscopi Cebuani, electo coadiutori Episcopi Dumaguettensis, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Christifidelium per orbem terrarum vitam degentium bono spirituali apprime prospicientis, Nostrum ducimus munus peculiari cum sollicitudine subvenire sacrorum Antistitibus opportuna poscentibus auxilia. Quia ergo venerabilis Frater Epiphanius Surban Belmonte, Episcopus Dumaguettensis, auctis magnopere negotiis atque gregis sui necessitatibus augescentibus, Virum coadiutorem sibi assignari petiit, eiusmodi petitioni benigne concedere decrevimus. Audito ergo consilio Venerabilis Fratris Nostri S.R.E. Cardinalis Congregationis pro Episcopis praefecti, ad id officium destinamus, cuius pietatem, prudentiam, usum rerum cognoscimus, quique episcopalis officii obeundi iam dedisti specimina. Apostolica igitur Nostra potestate te Venerabilis Frater, vinculo Ecclesiae titulo Oretanae solvimus simulque Coadiutorem nominamus sacri Pastoris Dumaguettensis, plane confisi te non solum Episcopo tuo diligenter amanterque adfuturum sed et populum iuvaturum. Ad iura autem tua, officia, potestates sive nunc sive in posterum quod attinet haec omnia sacri canones docebunt; singulatim tamen monemus tibi, ab iteranda fidei professione exempto, fidelitatis ius iurandum erga Nos et Successores Nostros esse dandum, ad Juris Canonici normam. Id insuper tuae curae erit, ut hae Litterae Nostrae clero populoque Dumaguettensis innotescant. Quos sane, dilectos filios et filias, hortamur ut te filiorum more venerentur tibi que pareant. Ceterum, Venerabilis Frater, videto ut soli Deo semper confisus peramanter agas cum sacerdotibus et fidelibus tibi ita creditis. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die uno et tricesimo mensis Januarii, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo octogesimo sexto, Pontificatus Nostri octavo.

Joannes Paulus II

Marcellus Rossetti, Protonot. Ap.

### 3. APPOINTMENT OF MSGR. ORLANDO QUEVEDO

#### JOANNES PAULUS EPISCOPUS SERVUS SERVORUM DEI

Venerabili Fratri Orlando B. Quevedo, hactenus Episcopo Kidapawanensi, ad metropolitanam Sedem Novae Segobiae translato, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. In hac Apostolorum Principis Cathedra constituti spirituali Christifidelium omnium bono atque regimini magna sollicitudine nitimur providere. Quare, cum esset praeficiendus sacrorum Antistes metropolitanae Ecclesiae Novae Segobiae, vacanti postquam venerabilem Fratrem Josephum T. Sanchez Secretarium Congregationis pro Gentium Evangelizatione seu de Propaganda Fide nominavimus, te, quem congruis dotibus ornatum necnon rerum pastoralium novimus esse peritum, idoneum putavimus cui huiusmodi officium concederemus. De consilio igitur Venerabilis Fratris Nostri, S.R.E. Cardinalis Praefecti Congregationis pro Episcopis, Apostolica Nostra usi potestate te, vinculo solutum prioris, quam diximus, Sedis, Ecclesiae Novae Segobiae Archiepiscopum Metropolitanam renuntiamus, cum omnibus iuribus et obligationibus. Ab iterandis autem catholicae fidei professione iureque iurando erga Nos et Successores Nostros te eximimus, contrariis quibuslibet non obstantibus. Praeterea mandamus ut de his Litteris Nostris facias certiores clerum ac populum istius Archdioecesis, ad normam iuris; quos dilectos Nobis filios data occasione hortamur ut te libenti animo accipiant tisque mandatis diligentissime pareant. Tibi denique, Venerabilis Frater, supernorum donorum copiam poscimus ut pastorale munus tuum patris amore contendas explere, Deo fisus Eiusque almae Genetrici, quae Episcoporum est Mater, Magistra et Regina. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die altero et vicesimo mensis Martii, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo octogesimo sexto, Pontificatus Nostri actavo.

Joannes Paulus II

#### 4. APPOINTMENT OF MSGR. DIOSDADO TALAMAYAN

Joannes Paulus Episcopus Servus Servorum Dei

Venerabili Fratri ADEODATO A. TALAMAYAN, hactenus Episcopus titulo Girensi atque Auxiliari Tuguegaraoano, electo Archiepiscopo atque Metropolitae eiusdem Archidioecesis, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. In Petro Apostolorum principe Nobismetipsis a Christo Domino universalis Dei populi regendi potestas tradita Nos sollicitat ut cunctis ubicumque terrarum Ecclesiis consulamus ipsarumque incremento studiose provideamus. Eam propter causam ob renuntiationem Venerabilis Fratris THEODULFI S. DOMINGO, Archidioecesi suo gubernatore carente, Nos virtutibus profecto tuis atque fidelium sollicito studio perspectis quibus ornaris, huius sedis tibi committendae, iniimus. Hac de causa consulto Venerabili Fratre Nostro S.R.E. Cardinali Congregationis pro Episcopis Praefecto atque ex Nostra potestate te solutum tit. Girensi, Archiepiscopum Metropolitam Tuguegaraoanum renuntiamus, dato regimine, iuribus oneribusque impositis, quae ex normis canonicis munus tuum consequuntur. Licet a professione fidei sis exemptus, oportet tamen ius iurandum fidelitatis erga Nos et Successores Nostros des iuxta consuetam formulam quam ad Congregationem pro Episcopis sedulo mittes de more signatam sigilloque impressam. Non est vero omittendum tuum esse has Litteras clerum pupulumque docendos a curare. Istius archidioecesis praetera fideles paterne hortamur ut humani te excipiant pastorem, tuaque mandata ac consilia, quae ad ipsorum religionem prosperitatem danda esse credideris, libentur exequantur. Ad extremum denique, Venerabilis Frater, etsi in pastoralis re te magnum usum habere scimus, attamen ut summo studio incumbas in officium munusque tuum, sane gravissima, tibi paterno animo suademus. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die trigesimo primo mensis Januarii, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo octogesimo sexto, Pontificatus Nostri octavo.

Joannes Paulus II

Marcellus Rossetti, Proton. Ap.



# **SACRA CONGREGATIO PRO INSTITUTIONE CATHOLICA**

## **CONGREGATIO PRO INSTITUTIONE CATHOLICA**

attentis litteris Rev.mi Rectoris Pontificiae studiorum Universitatis Urbanianae, perpensa approbataque CONVENTIONE die XXXI Octobris — MCMLXXXVI inita inter laudatum Rectorem et Exc.mum Praesidentem Consilii Seminarii, cum compererit in Studio Philosophico vulgo "San Pablo Seminary", in urbe "Baguio City" vigenti, disciplinas philosophicas diligenter tradi ac promoveri, petitionem eiusdem Rectoris libenter excipiens, eandem,

**SCHOLAM PHILOSOPHICAM  
SEMINARII SANCTI PAULI  
in BAGUIO CITY siti**

Facultati Philosophiae eiusdem Pontificiae studiorum Universitatis Urbanianae

## **A F F I L I A T U M**

ad quinquennium experimenti gratia constituit declaratque: collata insuper (?) potestate academicum Philosophiae BACCALAUREATUS gradum suis (?) studentibus conferendi, qui curriculum philosophicum feliciter emensi: specialia pericula sub ductu et auctoritate Facultatis in aedibus eiusdem SCHOLAE vel laudatae Facultatis bene superaverint, servat is ceteris de iure servandis, in primis peculiaribus NORMIS ad affiliationem philosophicam exsequendam, ab utraque parte die XXXI Octobris a.D. MCMLXXXVI subsignatis et ab eadem Congregatione approbatis; contrariis quibuslibet minime obstantibus.

Datum Romae, ex aedibus eiusdem Congregationis, d. XXVI Januarii anni MCMLXXXVII.

**P R A E F E C T U S**

Villelmar Card. Baum

**A SECRETIS**

## SACRA CONGREGATIO DE SEMINARIIS ET UNIVERSITATIBUS

Prot. Num. 485/47

Romae, d.d. 30 m. aprilis a.D. 1947

Rev.me Domine,

Supplices litteras sedulo perpendimus, quibus Vice-Magnus Cancellarius, Rector et Senatus Academicus Universitatis Manilanae Sancti Thomae instanter postulant ut eidem Atheneo nomen in posterum imponatur UNIVERSITAS CATHOLICA PHILIPPINARUM.

Attentis tum singularibus laudibus quas per plura saecula Universitas Manilana Sancti Thomae, de Ecclesia et de Republica optime merita, sibi comparavit, tum utilitatem quae in bonum cedit animarum ex manifesta catholici nominis professione, pro munera significamus Sacram Congregationem de Seminariis et Studiorum Universitatibus assensu suo comprobare ut laudatum Atheneum *Universitas Catholica Philippinarum* in posterum nuncupetur, servatis titulis, privilegiis et honoribus quibus Romani Pontifices Universitatem Manilanam Sancti Thomae condecorare dignati sunt, in primis titulo "Pontificiae Universitatis", Litteris Apostolicis "Quae Mari sinico" d. 17 m. septembris a.D. 1902 a Leone XIII f. r. benignissime collato.

Laeta faustaue capta occasione, libenter insigni Universitati Catholicae cui digne praees prospera cuncta adprecamur, ut in aevum vivat, crescat, floreat.

In Chr. J. Tibi addictissimus

(FDO.) Card. Pizzardo

(FDO.) I. Rossino, Secret.

Rev. mo Domino

P. EMMANUEL SUAREZ, O.P.

Magistro Generali O.P.

Magno Cancellario Manilanae

Pontificiae Universitatis Sancti Thomae

- Romae -

## **SACRED CONGREGATION FOR SEMINARIES AND UNIVERSITIES**

Prot. No. 485/47

Most Reverend Father,

We have carefully considered the letter of petition, in which the Vice-Grand Chancellor, the Rector and the Academic Senate of the University of Santo Tomas of Manila earnestly request that said University be henceforth given the title of CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Considering the exceptional commendations that the University of Santo Tomas of Manila has meritoriously received through the centuries from the Church and the Republic of the Philippines, as well as the spiritual benefit which men will derive from its official recognition as Catholic, We now officially declare that the Sacred Congregation for Seminaries and Universities fully approves that the praiseworthy University be henceforth called THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES, without prejudice to the other titles, privileges and honours which the Roman Pontiffs have deigned to bestow on the University of Santo Tomas of Manila, especially the title "Pontifical University", most kindly conferred on it by Leo XIII, of happy memory, in his Apostolic Letter "Quae Mari Sinico" of 17 September 1902.

On this happy and auspicious occasion, We wholeheartedly wish this illustrious Catholic University worthily headed by Your Reverence every good fortune, so that in the years to come it may always live, grow and flourish.

Devotedly yours in Christ,

(SGD) Card. Pizzardo, Prefect

(SGD) I. Rossino, Secretary

Most Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Suarez, O.P.

Master General O.P.

Grand Chancellor, Pontifical University of Santo Tomas, Manila  
Rome

## HOMILETICS

# homilies for may to July

*May 8 to June 21, 1987: by Fr. Hermogenes Bacraza, S.V.D.*

*June 28 to July 26, 1987: by Msgr. Ybañez*

### THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 3, 1987

Jesus was sent by God to the world to save men from sin and death. But the people crucified and killed Him. But God raised Him up again for it was impossible that death should have a hold on Him (*first reading*). We are delivered from sin and death by the blood of a spotless, unblemished lamb, Christ, whom God raised from the dead (*second reading*). Do we recognize the Risen Lord in our lives? Sometimes we are slow to believe, like the two disciples in the lovely Emmaus story who asked the Lord: "Are you the only resident of Jerusalem who does not know the things that have gone on there these past few days?" (*Good News*).

*First Reading:* Acts 2, 14: 22-28

*Second Reading:* 1 Peter 1:17-21

*Good News:* Luke 24:13-35

Theme: Stay with us for it is getting dark!

It has been said that Filipinos are lovers of fiestas and celebrations. In some way this is true. For we go to faraway places to work and save only to spend the year's earnings on a town fiesta back home. However, far from home we work, when it is fiesta time, or when celebrations such as anniversaries, baptisms, or weddings come, we always make it a point to go home by all means. Foreigners see this custom as sheer stupidity, but it seems that it has already been embedded in our system, a necessary evil. We want to free ourselves from the humdrum of our daily routine, or get out of things and forget our problems, at least for a while.



We may be able to do this sometimes at the expense of draining our pockets, but certainly not all the time. We have to face life and reality. We must go home, and put ourselves to work and get things done.

### 1. Disappointments in life

At the time of Jesus' death and resurrection, two of his disciples went to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of the Passover. It is not certain where these disciples came from. However, we know that, besides the twelve apostles, the disciples accompanied Jesus in his missionary journeys. It is possible that these two disciples were around the place of Emmaus. While in Jerusalem, they witnessed the sad and fatal events of Good Friday. It was indeed a great blow to them. Their hope that Jesus would be the answer to their problems was shattered. They found it hard to understand that Jesus, who had worked so many miracles and had raised the dead to life, could allow his enemies to put him to death by crucifixion.

### 2. They did not recognize Him at first

A noted Bible scholar suggested that the very reason why the disciples did not recognize Jesus while they were on their way to Emmaus was that they were walking against the setting sun. Emmaus was west of Jerusalem. So the disciples were practically unable to recognize anybody. However, it is our personal experience that when we are so sad and depressed, as when we have lost a loved one, we can hardly recognize a person. We are so taken up by our own emotions. It seems that the whole world is falling down on us.

### 3. Christ enlightens them

Surprised at their ignorance, Christ explained the meaning of the scriptures: that the Messiah had to suffer and die in order to enter into his glory, that his passion and death were necessary to attain the world's salvation. By his resurrection Jesus put the divine seal of His messiahship and His being the true son of the Father. All this he proved to the two disciples from the Old Testament prophecies.

Jesus restored the two disciples their faith in life. Once again the meaning of life became clear and the darkness became

light. "Were not our hearts burning inside us as He talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?" (Lk. 24:32)

#### 4. Stay with us

Sometimes in our lives we also express this appeal to God to stay with us when it is getting dark. We need you, Lord. When our problems seem insurmountable and the whole world seems to turn against us, we can invite the Lord as the disciples did in their way to Emmaus. As we journey through the road of life with all its problems, distractions, disappointments, and discouragement, we can certainly lose our bearings sometimes. Let us invite the good Lord to stay always at our side.

### FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 10, 1987

The Fourth Sunday of Easter is Good Shepherd Sunday. Christ described Himself as the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for His sheep. We are His sheep, sometimes wounded and lost, but picked up and carried on the shoulders of our Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

For us who have seldom seen a sheep, much less a shepherd, the picture of a Good Shepherd does not probably draw much interest and attention. But for the early followers of Christ, this was their favorite picture, as catacomb paintings in Rome indicate.

"Let the whole house of Israel know beyond any doubt the God has made both Lord and Messiah this Jesus whom you crucified" (*first reading*). Since His resurrection, Christ has exercised this dignity. The *second reading* tells us that by His wounds we were healed. At one time we were straying like lost sheep, but now we have returned to the shepherd, the guardian of our souls. The *Good News* tells us that Christ is the Good Shepherd, or, particularly, the sheepfold.

<i>First Reading:</i>	Acts 2: 14, 36-41
<i>Second Reading:</i>	1 Peter 2:20-25
<i>Good News:</i>	John 10:1-10

Theme: The Good Shepherd

One of the most beautiful painting in the Roman catacombs is that of Christ carrying the injured, straying sheep gently

on His shoulders back through the gate of the sheepfold. It shows Christ's deep concern for His sheep, the real Good Shepherd of His flock, sincerely interested in its true welfare. Indeed, the Risen Christ is our real Good Shepherd. We certainly have good reason to rejoice and be glad.

### 1. Door of the sheep

The gospel of today presents Jesus as the door of the sheep. Why door? He was certainly thinking of the warm, sunny seasons when the sheep were out on the hills and did not return at night to the village at all. They were then gathered into the sheepfolds on the hillside, which were just open spaces enclosed by a wall. There was however an opening in these sheepfolds through which the sheep would come in and out. But there was no door of any kind. What happened was that at night the shepherd himself lay down across the opening and no sheep could get out or in except over his body. Therefore, our Lord compares Himself with this door. "I am the door of the sheep." (Jn. 10:7). Through Him and through Him alone, men find access to God. In the same thinking, St. Paul writes: "Through Him we have access to the Father." (Eph. 2:18)

### 2. Christ opens the way to God

If Jesus, our Good Shepherd, is our door to heaven, then He opens the way to God. A great spiritual writer says: "Until Jesus came, men could think of God only as, at best, a stranger and as, at worst, an enemy. But Jesus came to show men what God is like, and to open that way to Him. He is the door through whom alone entrance to God becomes possible for men."

### 3. Christ feeds His Church

The Lord is my Shepherd; there is nothing I shall want (Ps. 23: 1-3). We surely are fortunate to belong to the sheepfold of Christ, His Church. "I am the Good Shepherd." He then proceeded to distinguish the difference between a good shepherd and a hireling. A good shepherd will lay down his life for his sheep; but the hireling, who does not own the sheep, but is paid to watch them, sees the wolf coming and runs away. Christ literally did lay down His life for His sheep on the cross. He feeds us through the Apostolic ministry.

## 4. Duties of a good shepherd

What actually are the duties of a good shepherd? The first duty of a good shepherd is to know his flock. He is familiar with all the sheep that belong to him, and they are constantly on his mind. He counts their number frequently to see that none of them is missing or has strayed. He watches and observes that one is sick or suffering in any way. As our Good Shepherd, He knows our weaknesses, temptations, struggles, and wailings. He is aware of our safety and our well-being. This knowledge comes from His great concern and love for us. He knows us more than we know ourselves.

The second duty of a good shepherd is to feed his flock. A good shepherd must lead his flock to streams to drink and to green pastures to graze. He must keep them away from poisonous weeds which would harm or kill them. As our Good Shepherd, Christ nourishes us with His own body and blood. He has given us the sacraments as a constant source of life and grace.

The third duty of a good shepherd is to protect his flock. He must not lead them near dangerous cliffs or ravines. He must protect them from the danger of wolves or other predators. As our Good Shepherd, Christ surrounds the soul of each of us with a mantle of grace. He gives sufficient grace toward off any temptation. In time of danger we need only to pray to Him, and He will not fail to hear and help us.

## 5. Absolutely safe and secure

When our country was under Martial Law, we could not freely go in and out of the country. That only proved that the country was not in order. There was no peace, no security, no safety. But now that the authoritarian regime has been toppled and freedom has been restored, people go in and out of the country without fear. The country is at peace, the forces of law and order reign supreme. Men enjoy almost perfect security. In the same way we, members of Christ's flock, will go on in life reminding ourselves that it is through Christ alone that we come to God. And once we find through Christ what God is like, then a sense of security, stability, and satisfaction will fill our life.



## 6. Our response to the Good Shepherd

As members of the Risen Christ's flock, we have an obligation to know Him through instruction in Christian doctrine, bible reading and studies, by joining Catholic charismatic groups, and through healthy discussions about religion. The Sunday gospels and homilies are also a good source of a deeper knowledge of Christ. Once we know our Shepherd, we have the obligation to obey and follow Him by faithfully observing His laws and the laws of the Church.

## FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 17, 1987

The Farewell Address of Christ is taken up for our reflection on the fifth, sixth, and seventh Sundays of Easter as we move towards the Ascension. Chapters 14—17 of St. John's gospel give us Christ's tender advice to His apostles. Today's *first reading* shows how the young Church develops, as seven men were chosen as ministers to help the Apostles in showing their followers the right way to the Heavenly Father. The *second reading* shows how St. Peter compared the followers of Christ to a building, with the once rejected Christ as cornerstone and ourselves as the stones. Like Israel, we are all a royal priesthood, a chosen and priestly people.

The *Good News* tells us that Jesus is going to prepare a place for us, He is the way to the heavenly Father because He is the truth and the life.

<i>First Reading:</i>	Acts 6:1-7
<i>Second Reading:</i>	1 Peter 2:4-9
<i>Good News:</i>	John 14:1-12

Theme: Jesus, the Way to our Heavenly Father

Today's gospel is taken from the Lord's farewell address at the Last Supper, just a few hours before His death. He had already announced Judas' betrayal (Jn. 13:21-30), his own departure (Jn. 12:31-33), and Peter's denial (Jn. 13:36-38). Christ had to leave the Apostles and had to die a shameful death on the cross.

## 1. Deeply sad and disappointed

Suppose you were one of the Apostles listening to the Lord's discourses, what would you have done? How would you have felt? Sad? Depressed? Discouraged? The Apostles could not yet grasp that Jesus must suffer and so enter into His glory. They had not yet realized that He was really God as well as man. So Christ consoled them by telling them that His dying was important and necessary for their future eternal happiness. "Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me." His death would open the gates of heaven, where there are many rooms. "I go to prepare a place for you." (Jn. 14:2)

## 2. He who seeks will find in the end

Thomas, the Doubter, was simply a man who was sincere in his thoughts. He could never play the role of a hypocrite who could say that he understood what he did not actually understand. He was far too much in earnest to be fully satisfied with any vague expression. He was a *segurista*, he wanted to be cocksure. So he questioned Jesus: "Lord, we do not know where you are going, how can we know the way?" It was in fact a very logical question! It was a question of an honest, doubting man, a question which provoked one of the greatest things Jesus said about Himself says, one need not be ashamed of his own doubts, for it is wonderfully true that he who seeks will, in the end find.

## 3. Tremendous claim of Jesus

When Thomas asked Jesus about the way, a great description of Jesus Himself came out of His lips: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." In general, this loaded statement of Jesus summarizes the gospel of St. John: Jesus, the Incarnate Son of God, is the one and only way to the Father and to eternal life. Without the coming of Christ in our human nature, we could not become adopted sons of God and co-heirs with Christ of heaven. He is the truth; He is God's Word, which is the word of truth itself. He is the life, the true, everlasting life. Historically, however, the ideas of way, truth, and life were three basic concepts of the Jewish religion. In today's gospel, therefore, Jesus made the tremendous claim that in Him all three concepts found their full realization.

## 4. Jesus is the Way to the Father

In the Old Testament, the Jews spoke much about the way in which men should walk. The Lord God said to Moses: "You shall walk in all the ways which the Lord has commanded you to do, that you may live and prosper and enjoy length of days in the land you shall possess." (Dt. 5:33). To the people Moses said: "I know that after my death you will deal very corruptly and abandon the way I have enjoined upon you." (Dt. 31:29) The Psalmist loved to pray: "Teach me your ways, O Lord!" (Ps. 27:11). To the Jews, therefore, the way of God in which men must walk was well known. And Jesus said, "I am the Way."

How can Jesus be the way? Some people are very good in showing directions to strangers. They would say: "You go this way, straight ahead, then turn right after reaching three blocks, then turn left, and when you reach the gasoline station, turn right, then straight ahead!" Before you reach the place, you are already lost. This would not happen if the one giving directions accompanied you so that you would not lose your way; that person is the way. That is what Jesus does for us. He does not give complicated directions. He leads us, strengthens us, and guides us everyday. He does not tell us about the way. He himself is the Way. He is definitely our way to the heavenly Father.

## SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 24, 1987

This is the Sunday before the Feast of the Ascension of our Lord. It is appropriate that the Gospel gives us some of the Farewell Address of the Father, as given in St. John's Gospel. Encouraging his followers to have a strong spirit of love, the Lord Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to comfort and guide them. (Vat. II, S.M.)

*First Reading:* Acts 8:5-8; 14-17

*Second Reading:* 1 Peter 3:15-18

*Good News:* John 14:15-21

Theme: Our need of the Paraclete

## 1. Hard to say goodbye

When the Philippine strongman, Ferdinand Marcos, had to leave the country because of the pressure of people power, it

must have been hard for him and his family to say goodbye. He had ruled the country with an iron hand for almost twenty years, he had built up his wealth at home and abroad with overwhelming success, he had secured his name in the annals of history as symbolized in his great bust at the outskirts of Agoo, La Union, only to leave them all at the mercy of other people. Offered asylum by a foreign power, he reluctantly left his country. And there was great rejoicing among the majority of the people that their dictator had finally gone out of their sight.

## 2. Jesus goes to send us the Paraclete

In today's gospel there was also leave-taking. Jesus had to go. Not that he was pressured to go. "It was much better for you that I go, I will send the Paraclete to you." Jesus knew what and who were needed in His Father's plan of salvation. He was going to die and he was going to rise from the grave. But this was not enough. If it were so, then He would not be speaking at all of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, the Counselor. "And I pray to the Father, and He will give another Counselor, to be with you forever... (Jn. 14:16)

## 3. Paraclete means someone called in to help

Jesus did not want to leave His apostles and disciples to struggle with their apostolic life by themselves. He would send another paraclete to guide them as to what to do and enable them to do it. By "another" Jesus was thinking of the third person, like the Father and Himself; a person who would also have divine power. For the apostles, Jesus was the Paraclete, but since He was going to leave them He would ask the Father to send another Paraclete, the Holy Spirit. (Greek: *paraklētos* means to be called in to help in time of trouble or need). What Jesus was actually saying was: "I am assigning you a real hard task, sending you out on a very difficult mission. But don't worry, I am going to send you someone, the *paraklētos*, who will guide you on what to do and enable you to do it." The Holy Spirit will instruct their hearts. He will complete the work of Jesus Christ on earth. This is the idea Jesus was trying to bring home to the apostles who were sad and depressed.

## 4. We need the Holy Spirit

How successful was the Holy Spirit in guiding the Apostles and His Church? The history of the Church offers fulfillment



of Jesus' promise. Because of the direct and active aid of the Holy Spirit, the Church, in spite of the crises and near catastrophes caused by both heads and members, has survived and spread to all the world and continued to send saints to heaven. Empires have risen and fallen. Names of mighty men and women who ruled over millions of people with absolute power have come and gone. Strongmen of today, ruling their countries with an iron hand, share the fate of their predecessors. But the Church of Christ has continued to flourish because it is guided by the Holy Spirit, who abides within it.

If the Apostles needed the Holy Spirit, then we must also realize that we need Him more in our lives now. We have been baptized into Christ and we renewed our own baptism seven weeks ago. We were also confirmed, filled with the Holy Spirit. But if our daily lives now are still dominated by sadness, then we surely need the Holy Spirit. Father Emeric A. Lawrence, OSB, wrote about the need of the Holy Spirit:

"If we lack maturity in our attitude toward daily obligations and duties, towards the difficulties and trials of life, if we try to escape life, if we do not learn to control our fears, if we allow our moral strivings to be motivated by fear of hell, fear of punishment, rather than love for our Father, then we need the Holy Spirit."

##### 5. "Come Holy Spirit!"

Because of our human weakness and shortcomings, we really are in need of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives. We don't need to wait for the yearly Pentecost. Everyday should be our Pentecost. Let this beautiful prayer spring from our hearts:

*Come Holy Spirit, make us alive with faith and trust, let us amaze at the influence you have on us. Give us your peace and joy and strength, that we may truly live and act by the power of Your Word.*

### SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

May 31, 1987

The Solemnity of the Ascension of our Lord is observed in the Philippines on the seventh Sunday of Easter, not on the Thursday preceding it. This is due to the fact that the number

of holidays of obligation falling on weekdays has been reduced. The first reading is taken from the Acts of the Apostles, supplementing Luke's account in the last verses of Luke's gospel. Here in the Acts we have details, with the apostles still uncomprehending, still looking for political power.

The responsorial psalm is a song of joy because the Lord "mounts his throne" after the Ascension.

The second reading is taken from the Letter of Paul to the Ephesians, considered the "Queen of the Epistles". This is a loaded prayer, rich in theology. The ideas continued in this beautiful prayer are connected with the Ascension. For example, Christ is now exalted above the universe; He is the head of the Church; He is seated at the right hand of the Father, the place of highest honor.

The Gospel reading is St. Matthew's version of the Ascension, which focuses on the final commission given by Christ to His Apostles: to go out with authority, to make disciples, to baptize, to teach — with the assurance of Christ's continual presence among them and among us all until the end of the world.

<i>First Reading:</i>	Acts 1:1-11
<i>Second Reading:</i>	Ephesians 1:17-23
<i>Good News:</i>	Matthew 28:16-20

### 1. "I carried you."

A story is told of a man who dreamed one night that he was walking with Christ along the shore. Across the sky flashed scenes from his own life. For every scene he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand, one belonging to him, the other to the Lord. When the last scene had flashed before his eyes, he looked back at the footprints and noticed that many times along the path there was only one set of footprints. He also noticed that this happened during the very lowest and saddest times of his life.

This really bothered him and he asked the Lord. "Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, You would walk all the way with me, but I noticed that during the most turbulent days of my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed You most, You abandoned me."

Christ the Lord replied: "My son, my precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

Has not the Lord also carried us in times of crisis? Certainly, He has. He was one with us. But in today's gospel did not the Lord promise to be with us always until the end of the world? "Behold I am with you always until the end of the world!" (Mt. 28, 20). And has this promise not been fulfilled since that time He uttered those words? Where do we see Jesus Christ in our modern world today? Where can we encounter Him? Can we see Him with eyes of faith really present among us? Certainly, we see Him really present in the Holy Eucharist, in Holy Scriptures, and in the hearts of men. What could be more inspiring and encouraging than to realize the presence of Jesus in these places.

## 2. Jesus' presence in the Holy Eucharist

Persons whom we love so much on earth linger in our memories for a long time. They are present in our minds. But the presence of Christ is more than just thinking of the persons we love. Jesus' presence in the Holy Eucharist is a real presence of Christ in our midst, no less real than his presence now at the right hand of His heavenly Father. Thus, there is a great difference between Christ's presence elsewhere on earth and His presence in the Holy Eucharist. What a great privilege for us, Catholics, to enter into a church or a chapel and see a flickering sanctuary lamp near the tabernacle! That little flame reminds us of the real presence of Christ there in the Blessed Sacrament. How much has Christ's presence in the tabernacle comforted and strengthened millions of people of all ages!

## 3. Jesus presence in the Holy Scriptures

Christ is present with us in His Word — the gospels. This presence is also real. As you listen to the gospel, you are truly experiencing the presence of Christ, as real as the air you breathe. It is a "must" for all of us Catholics to read the Bible, meditate and reflect on the words of Christ. The more we read the Bible, the more we know Christ. The less we read it, the less we know Christ. As St. Jerome says in his classic statement: "Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ."

Read and listen with faith and longing to the Gospel readings every day at the Holy Mass. That faith and that longing enable the Holy Spirit to make Christ present in you in a very special way. They enable you to accept Christ's invitation: "Come to me all you who are weary and find life burdensome, and I will refresh you." (Mt. 11:28).

#### 4. Jesus' presence in the hearts of men

The most challenging and dynamic among the modes of Jesus' presence, besides its being most available at all times, is His presence in human beings. This is not a phantasy, neither is it a metaphor. So close is Christ's union with us, the members of His Church, that what we do to them, we do to Him. This was brought home to Saul when one day on the road to Damascus, as he was on his way to persecute the Christians in Jerusalem, Christ said: "Saul, Saul why do you persecute Me?" (Acts 22, 7).

Christ Himself tells us pointedly how He will judge us one day: "I was hungry and you gave something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave something to drink; I was a stranger and you gathered Me in; naked and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you came to visit Me; in prison, and you came to Me." "Lord, when did we do all these things?" "Whatever you do to the least of My brothers, you did it to Me." (Mt. 25:35-37)

If I am really convinced that Christ is present in me and in all human beings, then this conviction can change my life. I will never need to feel alone. I am always with Christ, with God. And if Christ's presence in other people is acknowledged and appreciated, I need not be afraid of the evil that is in the world nor despair in the face of any human failure or tragedy. Why should I fear? God is always there. Where God is, there is always victory, even in defeat!

#### 5. Gift from the Holy Spirit

It is certainly a gift from the Holy Spirit to have a deep vibrant living awareness of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, in the Gospels and in human beings. It is a gift that God is more anxious for us to receive than we are to receive it. Let us, therefore, pray hard and constantly be open to the Lord's gift-giving. God will never be turned off by this kind of prayer.



## PENTECOST SUNDAY

June 7, 1987

The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and the Blessed Virgin Mary, promised before by the Father and Christ Himself, took place on the Jewish feast of Pentecost, 50 days after the Passover. The Apostles, Mary, and other pious women and cousins of Jesus were filled with the Holy Spirit (*first reading*). The Spirit has since then given the Church and all her members with various gifts of charisms and ministries (*second reading*). Fifty days earlier, the risen Lord appeared to the Apostles, breathed on them, and gave them the Holy Spirit which was necessary for their function as ministers to forgive and retain sins (*Good News*).

The Sequence is an ancient beautiful poem which asks the Holy Spirit to come into our hearts.

*First Reading:* Acts 2:1-11

*Second Reading:* 1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13

*Good News:* John 20:19-23

Theme: Come, Holy Spirit

### 1. Welcoming the Holy Spirit

Much has been written about People Power which finally ended the twenty-year rule of the deposed President Ferdinand Marcos. A columnist wrote that communities of cloistered nuns were responding to the urgent plea of Cardinal Sin to pray and fast unto death until the dictator is gone. These holy nuns prayed and fasted, hoping that miracles would happen during the February revolution. Indeed, their prayers and fasting were answered since the loyalist soldiers did not attack the two arch-rebels holed up in Camp Crame. Soldiers and pilots joined the Reformists and the least bloodshed occurred in the four days of tension and fear.

Back in Jerusalem some twenty centuries earlier, a group of people huddled together and, paralyzed with fear, waited for the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Apostles and some relatives and friends prayed and fasted, not to drive away a dictator, but to welcome in their hearts the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.

## 2. The Jewish Pentecost

If we really want to appreciate more the meaning of Pentecost in our lives, then we have to go back to the Old Testament to know the historical Pentecost. This feast was originally a feast of harvest, therefore a day of thanksgiving and joy. "On the day after the seventh week, the fiftieth day, you shall present new cereal offering to the Lord." (Lev. 23:16) Two loaves were offered in thanksgiving for the harvest. There was even a law that on that day no servile work should be done (Num. 28:26).

Historically, however, the feast commemorated the giving of the Law to Moses on Mt. Sinai. On this mountain God appeared to him and gave him the Law written on tablets of stone. God made a covenant with the people: "You have seen what I did to Egypt, while I carried you on eagles' wings and brought to Myself. Now then, if you will obediently observe My message and keep My covenant, then you will be above all nations, My personal possession; for the whole earth is Mine. You will become to Me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation." (Ex. 19:4-6). The people responded: "Everything the Lord has said, we will do." (Ex. 19:8). Pentecost therefore retains the memory of the day when the Old Covenant, the Ten Commandments, between God and His people, was concluded.

## 3. Promise of a New Covenant

Unfortunately, the Old Covenant which God made with His own people was many times violated. So the Lord promised a New Covenant through His prophets. "The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers the day I took them by the hand to lead them forth from the land of Egypt for they broke my covenant." (Jer. 31-32) "I will put my law in their inward parts, and upon their hearts will I write it; I will be their God and they shall be My people." (Jer. 31-33)

## 4. The Christian Pentecost: what happened?

Just as the Old Covenant was established on Mt. Sinai, the New Covenant was made on Mt. Zion in Jerusalem on Pentecost Day. "Suddenly from up in the sky there came a noise like a strong, driving wind which was heard all through the house

where they were seated." (Acts 2:2) What more expressive image could be used to talk about the Spirit, the breath of God, than the image of a mighty wind! And tongues of fire like flames appeared to them and settled on each of them.

We know of course that wind is invisible. We don't know where it came from and where it will go. Amado Pineda can tell us his observations about the origin and development of violent storms, but if one has experienced being in the middle of the storm, he still will feel that he is surrounded and enveloped by something powerful and incomprehensible. The wind can bend things, break or uproot trees. It pushes clouds, spreads seeds, and scatters dust particles. It either destroys or improves the soil. In a greater sense, we can speak of the Holy Spirit. He breathes where He wills. We hear his voice, but we do not know where He comes from or where He is going. Many times we are unaware He is there, working in our hearts and minds. In most cases we know His effects. He is the source of life, light, courage, and holiness.

#### 5. Pentecost for us

We, Christians, have our Pentecost. Did not the Holy Spirit with His sevenfold gifts come to us at our Baptism and Confirmation? Did not the same Holy Spirit fill us on special occasions of our lives as He filled the Apostles and other people on Pentecost day? There is no arguing about what the Holy Spirit did for us in the past. But the question is here and now: Why do we sometimes behave like *spiritual balimbings*, saying yes to God and the devil under different circumstances? Why do we ignore the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge, in our decision making, and problem solving, as if the Holy Spirit did not exist at all?

#### 6. We must desire to be transformed

The Holy Spirit cannot and will not transform us, unless we desire to be transformed. It is true He inspires us, leads us, and prompts us to do what we ought to do. But the final decision is ours: either we accept Him or reject Him. We are free to do either. Unless we want to be transformed, we cannot be transformed by the Holy Spirit. Unless we desire to change, the Holy Spirit can never change us. We have got to say: Come, Holy Spirit, come! "Heal our wounds, our strength renew; on our dryness pour our dew; wash the stains of guilt

away; bend the stubborn heart and will; melt the frozen, warm the chill; guide the steps that go astray. On the faithful, who adore and confess thee, evermore in they sevenfold gifts descend; give them virtue's reward, give them they salvation, Lord; give them joys that never end. Amen. Alleluia" (Sequence)

## SOLEMNITY OF THE BLESSED TRINITY

June 14, 1987

Easter Season ends with the celebration of the Feast of the Most Blessed Trinity. This is one of the few feasts celebrated in honor of a doctrine rather than of an event of salvation history. The Trinity is our basic Christian doctrine. It stands for all doctrines.

From the book of Exodus a part of the Revelation on Mount Sinai is expressed: the Lord God is merciful and gracious (*first reading*). He is the God of love and peace, dwelling in those who are peaceful and loving. Paul's greeting contains reference to the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity (*second reading*). God so loved the world that He sent His only Son for our salvation (good news).

*First Reading:* Exodus 34:4-6, 8-9

*Second Reading:* 2 Corinthians 13:11-13

*Good News:* John 3:16-18

Theme: Community of persons in love

Inside the Church of Christ the King along E. Rodriguez Boulevard, Quezon City, is a beautiful stained glass background of God's wonderful work of creation. Seen from the inside, the background offers life and a wide variety of theology to the individual viewer. But seen from the outside, it is nothing but the dull greyness of lifeless glass and steel. In the same way, we experience dryness and coldness as we see with our ordinary eyes and intelligence the Church's doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. To brighten our life with this mystery, we should therefore approach it, together with Jesus Himself, looking at the Trinity from within.



### 1. God is community of Persons

One of the most radical revelations of Jesus Christ while He was on earth was that God is community and that we are called by Him to live as He lives. God is three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. There is then a community of persons in love. When we see around us a community of people loving each other as Jesus loves them, then we say it is heaven on earth. Why do we say so? Because of the community of persons in love in the Blessed Trinity, the very life of God, the real life of heaven. There is perfect love in God, perfect togetherness, and as one biblical scholar says, complete *koinonia* (fellowship, communion).

### 2. God's existence is a relational existence

The saying, "no man is an island" has a truth applicable even to the existence of the Persons in the Blessed Trinity. The book of Genesis tells us that when God created man, He said: "Let us make man in our image..." He did not say "I will make man in my image." Yes, we are indeed created in the image and likeness of God, that is, the *Triune* God. The Triune God presents to us an ideal, a model. Through the grace of the Son we are to establish a loving community in the Holy Spirit. Our human community must be a true reflection of the loving union of the three divine Persons.

Since we were created in the image of the Triune God, then our earthly existence must also be a relational existence. We must somehow relate ourselves to others as the three Persons relate themselves to each other. We know who we are when we see ourselves reflected in the eyes of those who know and love us, and who live in a relationship with us. If we have really good friends, and if we have experienced the joy of loving and being loved, we have begun to experience the community which exists in the Holy and Triune God.

### 3. We exist for others, not for ourselves

Being a Christian loner is a contradiction in terms. We do not live isolated from each other. We live a community life whether it be a family life, a religious community life, or as a People of God. We cannot exist without other people. We could not even have survived our birth. We need each other and we love each other. We discover the meaning of life when

we are in love with one another. Our identity problems begin to be solved when we find ourselves in a community which allows us to be ourselves.

#### 4. Our relationship to the Triune God

The doctrine of the Blessed Trinity is important not only to Christ and His Church, but even to us in our lives. We were baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Our sins are forgiven in the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the name of the three divine Persons. We start our prayers with the sign of the cross, again in the name of the three divine Persons. Holy Mother Church seals the bond of matrimony between two persons in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We leave this world comforted with the Last Sacraments of the Church, anointed with Holy oil in the "name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit."

However, the doctrine, for many of us, remains just a doctrine and nothing more. Does it warm our hearts or influence our spiritual thinking and living? It is not necessary to understand really how there can be three Persons in one God. What is necessary is that we see ourselves truly related to each of the three divine Persons. First, let us experience Christ, the Divine Son, living in us, filling our minds with his principles, and our hearts with his love. With St. Paul we shall be able to say: "I live, no, not I, but Christ lives in me." Secondly, the Holy Spirit should fill us with a relish for the things of God. We must desire him more and more intensely as the guest of our hearts. Let us experience the Holy Spirit as a moving Spirit of courage and love who keeps us going when we are tired. Thirdly, let us direct our life, love and prayer, our whole being to the Father, according to the words of the Mass: "Through Him (Christ), with Him, in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, forever and ever. Amen."

### SOLEMNITY OF THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

June 21, 1987

In order to have a really dynamic spiritual life, our Lord Jesus Christ said that His followers must receive His flesh and blood. Holy Communion, therefore, is necessary to sustain that spiritual life. The Feast of the Body of Christ (*Corpus Christi*)

is an excellent opportunity for Christians all over the world to show appreciation and gratitude for this gift of Jesus in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in our churches and chapels, and in our lives.

A symbol of the Blessed Sacrament is the manna of the Old Testament. With it as food on their way, the Lord God fed the Jews in the desert (*first reading*). The Body of Christ makes us one, although we are many. We all partake of the one loaf (*second reading*). Christ claims to be the living bread from heaven. The man who feeds on this bread shall live forever (*Good News*).

*First Reading:* Dt. 8:2-3; 14-16

*Second Reading:* 1 Co. 10:16-17

*Good News:* Jn. 6:51-59

Theme: Unity, growth and sacrifice

In the early thirteenth century there lived in Belgium a nun who had a very special devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. Her name was Sister Juliana.

While Sister Juliana was at prayer, she had a vision. She saw the Church below the full moon. But there was one dark spot in the moon. Christ appeared to her and said: "Juliana, what really bothers you is that a feast is lacking in My Church. It is the feast I desire to establish. It is the feast of the Most Blessed Sacrament. At present the celebration of this mystery is observed only on Holy Thursday. But on that day my sufferings and death are the main object of consideration. Therefore, I desire another day to be set apart in which it shall be celebrated by the whole Christendom. And you, Juliana, are chosen to give the opportunity for the establishment of this feast."

### 1. Reasons for Corpus Christi Feast

The Sister went to her bishop and explained Christ's request to establish a new feast to honor the Body of Christ. At first the bishop was skeptical about the proposal but Sister Juliana explained to him further the three reasons Christ gave for establishing a new feast. First, He wished that men's faith in the Eucharist be strengthened. Secondly, He wished the

faithful to draw strength from the Eucharist to live a life of virtue. Thirdly, He wanted people to make reparation to the Eucharist for their irreverences shown to Him.

The Bishop made known to Pope Urban IV Juliana's proposal. In 1264 Pope Urban made Corpus Christi a universal Feast of the Church.

## 2. We who are one body

As we celebrate this beautiful feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, we commemorate what the Eucharist accomplishes in the Body of Christ, the Church. The Eucharist is *the* sacrament which creates and preserves unity. St. Paul tells us in the second reading: "Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread." (1 Cor. 10:17)

When our Lord asked His disciples to eat His flesh and drink His blood, he demanded of them blind faith, the hardest test. He does it even today. The reception of the Eucharist is, indeed, a profession of faith that this tiny piece of white bread and the few drops of wine are the body and blood of Christ. One needs real faith.

If we have faith then the Eucharist is to accomplish in us two things. First, as we assimilate the sacramental bread and wine, we become one with Christ and God. Secondly, Paul in the second reading tells us that Holy Communion should make us one with each other. Communion is community forming, a unity that is brought about by love.

## 3. Food for the faithful

We celebrate also today the Body of Christ given us as our *viaticum*, food of our pilgrim journey here on earth. Just as God gave the Israelites "manna" on their journey from Egypt to Canaan, so Christ also gives us His Body and Blood for our journey here on earth to eternity. John tells us in his gospel that Jesus our Lord declared His intention to give us His Body and Blood as food for our journey to eternal life. "My flesh is food indeed and My Blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me and I in him." (John 6:55-56) So then Jesus gives us as food for our souls the Holy Eucharist, His Body and Blood.



## 4. Proclaiming the death of the Lord

Giving His Body to be the food of our souls is already a sacrifice. But the Holy Eucharist is more than just a sacrifice. The Mass, which is actually the Lord's Supper repeated according to Christ's command, "Do this in memory of Me," is a sacrifice *par excellence*. According to the Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy, it says: "At the Last Supper, on the night when He was betrayed, our Savior instituted the eucharistic sacrifice of His Body and Blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross through the centuries until He should come again." (n. 47) St. Paul tells us today in the second reading: "Every time that you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of our Lord until He comes." (1 Cor. 11:26)

To proclaim His death is more than just to have the words on our lips. We must become dead with Christ — dead to our sins, to our pride, to our selfishness, to our lack of love. Do we really love Christ enough to die physically for Him? Cast your die, give yourself to Christ.

If Christ our Lord could offer Himself for us on the cross for our redemption and continually offer Himself in the Sacrifice of the Mass everyday, then let us offer ourselves to Him in love and adoration, in joy and in pain.

## 13TH SUNDAY, ORDINARY TIME

June 28, 1987

## OUR CROSS: ITS HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL BARS

*Matthew 10:37-42*

In the rite of Baptism, when you and I were baptized, at the very start of the entire baptismal ceremony, the baptizing priest, our father, mother and the sponsors traced the sign of the cross on our forehead.

The first of the seven sacraments. Baptism is the Sacrament of Initiation. Baptism inducts us into the family of God, into the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, into the Christian community. No one can be validly called a Christian unless he had been validly baptized.

In today's Gospel, Jesus sort of enumerated the distinguishing marks of his followers, the characteristics of a true Christian.

To be a Christian, to follow Christ, His attitudes, His teachings and spirit, according to the Gospel, entails *external* as well as *internal* renunciation.

External renunciation means the renunciation of anything or anybody that impedes our following Christ, who said "Whoever loves his father or mother, son or daughter, more than me is not worthy of me".

Internal renunciation is self-denial which is what Jesus meant when He said: "He who seeks only himself brings himself to ruin, whereas he who brings himself to nought for me discovers who he is."

Now, both external and internal renunciations are summarized in Christ's words: "Whoever does not take up his cross and follow in my steps is not fit to be my disciple."

The cross indeed is the symbol of a Christian. The cross certainly is a sign of pain and shame, yet, for us Christians the cross is a sign of victory and glory. St. Paul wrote that "The cross is nonsense to those who are being lost; but for us who are being saved, it is God's power."

When Jesus said "Take up your cross", He did not mean the small, medium or large crosses, made of gold, silver, bronze or plastic or wood or cement, that we see as piece of decoration in many places or hung on our necklaces. The "cross" meant by Christ is our human condition, our own selves with our shortcomings. It is our circumstances, our duties, our worries and anxieties, our frustrations and failures.

As you know the cross consists of two bars, a horizontal and a vertical bar that cross each other at right angles. The vertical bar symbolizes our relationship with God, while the horizontal means our relationship with our fellowmen, with our community.

This means that our cross is the pain and shame and, yes, the "nonsense" of fulfilling our duties towards God and our fellowmen. But, on the other hand, we cannot say that there shall be no pain and no shame in the non-fulfilment of these duties.

It is precisely through "our cross" that we accomplish our baptismal vocation: to die with Christ on the cross, and to live anew the experience of God and love for others.

Let us now ask our own selves these two questions: What do I here and now consider my "cross"? What hinders or slows down my following of Jesus?

But remember this one little truth: a cup of cold water given in Jesus name, can bring us a reward.

## 14TH SUNDAY, ORDINARY TIME

July 5, 1987

### THREE POINTS TO PONDER

*Matthew 11:25-30*

Today's Gospel reading affords us three beautiful points to ponder upon: Thanksgiving, Christ's revelation and Christ's invitation.

We all know that God is our Father. And like Jesus, we can very truly say: "My father has given me all things." Very true are the words of St. Paul: "Didn't God give you everything you have? Well, then, how can you boast, as if what you have were not a gift? Therefore, like Jesus, let us fill our hearts with the spirit of thankfulness to God and express our gratitude to God in word and in deed.

We should avoid boasting of what we have or we think we have. Of course, God does not condemn intellectual power; but God condemns *intellectual pride*. It is not cleverness which shuts us out of God; it is pride. It is not stupidity which admits God and His teachings; it is humility.

Let's celebrate this Eucharist as it really is and ought to be, that is an act of Thanksgiving.

Today's Gospel also narrates to us the greatest claim that Jesus ever made, the claim which is the center of the Christian Faith, that Christ alone can reveal God to men. This is what Jesus revealed when He said: "No one knows the Father except

the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him." In other words, Jesus said: "If you want to see what God is like, if you want to see the mind of God, the heart of God, the nature of God, if you want to see God's whole attitude to men — look at me!"

It is the Christian conviction that in Jesus Christ alone we can see what God is like; and that Jesus can give that knowledge to anyone who is humble enough and trustful enough to receive it.

Christ said: "Come to me, all of you who are tired of carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest." Christ's audience were Jews to whom religion was a thing of burdens. To the Jew, religion was a thing of endless rules, 613 positive and negative commandments. Jesus reduced these innumerable commandments to a double commandment of loving God and loving our neighbor. But, however, it is not really that the burden is light and easy to carry. It is rather that it is laid on us in love. It is meant to be buried in love. And love makes even the heaviest burden light. You must have heard of the beautiful story which tells of a man who met a little boy carrying upon his back a slightly smaller boy, who was lame, and said: "That is a heavy burden for you to carry." The boy answered: "This is no burden; this is my younger brother." The burden, the cross mentioned in last Sunday's Gospel, which is given in love and carried in love is always light.

## 15TH SUNDAY, ORDINARY TIME

July 12, 1987

### *HOW TO BE GOOD SOIL*

*Matthew 13:1-23 (or 13:1-9)*

One of the 16 documents of the Second Vatican Council is the "Dei Verbum", the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation. This document says: "The Church has always venerated the Divine Scriptures as she venerates the Body of the Lord, in so far as she never ceases, particularly in the Sacred Liturgy, to partake of the Bread of Life and to offer it to the faithful



from *the one table* of the Word of God and the Body of Christ.... Just as from constant attendance at the eucharistic mystery the life of the Church draws increase, so a new impulse of spiritual life may be expected from increased veneration of of the Word of God, which stands forever" (DV 21,26).

The words from the Vatican II document were quoted because of today's Gospel parable of the *seed*. As you know, the seed is the symbol of the word of God.

Jesus Christ gives us His truths — seeds — which we are to plant in our own minds and then in the minds of others. These truths, these seeds, Christ gives us through the public worship of the church. He founded, through Catholic reading, through His inspired word, the Bible, and through the preaching of His special servants, His priests.

The priest's job is to tell you Christ's truth. Your job is to hear it and make it grow. In the words of Jesus: "Listen, then, if you have ears."

May I make a few suggestions on how you can get the most out of sermons.

You don't have to be a farmer or gardener to know that you have to prepare the soil for the seed. How helpful it would be if everyone on the way to Mass would prepare himself for receiving God's truth: not, "Dear Lord, don't let Father talk too long today," but "Dear Lord, help Father give me some truth I can nourish for my good." Every worthwhile preacher prays that those who hear him will benefit from what he says, will provide fertile ground for the truths he is planting. How about returning the favor by praying for the preacher?

As you enter Church make the sign of the cross thoughtfully over your body, washing away the distractions of the world, the flesh and the evil. Make yourself open to the seed of God's truth.

Listen carefully to the prayers and readings, especially the Gospel. Pay close attention to the homily. Try to understand. Try to remember.

Christ is speaking to you through His priest, however that priest may be. The man in the pulpit can be an effective instrument of Christ. He can also be ineffective. The message may come through loud and clear, or it may be dull and garbled. But it is an important message. Keep the soil ready.

For most Catholics the only time they receive the seed of God's truth is from the Sunday worship and the celebrant's explanation. Be ready to receive it.

We priests are trying to renew and improve our preaching. Help us by trying to improve your listening. But, above all, be punctual in coming to Mass.

## 16TH SUNDAY, ORDINARY TIME

July 19, 1987

### *PATIENCE IS THE KEY*

*Matthew 13:24-43 (or 24-30)*

You must have heard of the story of a 75 year-old man who married a 25 year-old girl. Two weeks after the wedding, the young wife discovered that her septuagenarian husband was meeting a woman in a downtown hotel. "I don't mind you cheating," said the wife, "but with a 65 year-old woman? What has she got that I do not have?" "Patience," said the man.

The Christian virtue of patience is the lesson of today's Gospel. Jesus wants to tell us today that the Church is not the community of saints, but rather a mixed community of saints and sinners who strive to become better. There is no reason to be scandalized. Imperfections and great faults and even sins are to be expected. They belong to the Church too. We have to accept this fact. Otherwise, we would not be realistic but heretical by expecting too much.

You know that the great majority of people are trying to be good. They try to be honest, kind, sober, clean of heart, according to their consciences. Yet, we find weeds, men and women who make no effort to be good persons. Inwardly they are evil, although outwardly their way of life may appear attractive. Often they prosper, they succeed, they seem to thrive. They have comfortable homes, plenty of food, pleasant times, good health. They are attractive weeds; yet they can harm the wheat.

And why does God permit irreligious, worldly, and even simple people to thrive and succeed? Jesus gives us the answer in today's Gospel. God has planted the wheat — good people. Their enemy, the devil, has planted weeds — wicked people. Jesus tells us to let both the wheat and the weeds grow until harvest, the judgment, when the wheat will be gathered and saved, while the weeds will be gathered and burned.

But let us remember that God is just. One reason God allows the evil not only to live but even to be materially successful is to reward them on earth for the little good they may have done. On the other hand God permits the good to suffer on earth for the few wrong they may have done, so that their joy may be more complete at the judgment.

Another reason why the "boss" does not want wheat and weeds to be separated right away is that both look very much alike. One could easily mistake the one for the other and pull out the wheat instead of the weeds. Applied to our life it means that we often enough are poor in our judgment of other people, although we think we know somebody perfectly. Do you really know how much of a weed somebody is? Are you not perhaps mistaken? Have we not often made the experience that we had to correct our judgment of a certain person, that somebody whom we could not stand became even our close friend? And how often have we been disappointed because another person was really that ideal we thought him to be? Only the Lord can search the hearts and judge perfectly.

Now, one good way of overcoming the weed is to be strong wheat. Where the wheat grows, there is no space for the weeds. If we want to improve bad people, we better try to live a good life ourselves. If we have to live and to work with people who are weeds, who are not our type, it can help us to be better wheat because we have to apply ourselves harder.

And for all this, we need a great deal of patience. Let us all together ask our Lord the gift of patience for one another.

17TH SUNDAY, ORDINARY TIME

July 26, 1987

ON THINGS NEW AND OLD

*Matthew 13:44-52 (or 13:44-46)*

Msgr. Arthur Tonne in his book "Five-Minute Homilies on the Gospel" tells this story. An old lady in Scotland was so poor that the community had to support her, even though her son had come to America and had become very wealthy. "Why doesn't John help his mother?" the neighbors often whispered.

One day a neighbor dropped in and suggested that her son would surely help her if he knew of her need. Mother-like, she defended her son: "Oh, John is so thoughtful, but he needs all his money. He's a good boy. See, he writes to me every week, the nicest letter. And in every letter he sends a picture. They are strange pictures." "Did you save them?" asked the neighbor. "Oh, sure," replied the mother, as she reached for her Bible. "I save all his letters and put the pictures in the Good Book."

Between the leaves of the Bible the visitor found hundreds of United States bank notes, more than enough to keep the old mother in comfort. She had a treasure but she did not know it.

Today's Gospel brings us the Hidden Treasure, the Precious Pearl: the Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom of Heaven stands for all the goods of salvation God gives us, for our union with God and thus for all the means that enable and bring about this union: Scripture, the sacraments, God's grace; and in concrete our call to this goal, our vocation in life, our own place in the kingdom, our share to materialize God's rule among people more perfectly. This treasure, the pearl of great price, is hidden. We often do not realize these supernatural realities, we often enough do not believe God has something special for us in mind.

When Jesus had finished speaking about the Kingdom, He asked his disciples if they had understood. And they had understood, at least part. Then Jesus goes on to speak about the scribe (teacher of the Law), instructed in the Kingdom of Heaven, bringing out of his treasure-house things old and new. What Jesus is in effort saying is this: "You are able to understand, because you came to me with a fine heritage. You came



with all the teaching of the law and the prophets. A scribe comes to me with a lifetime of study of the law and of all its commandments. That background helps you to understand. But after you have been instructed by me, you have the knowledge, not only of the things you used to know, but of things you never knew before, and even the knowledge which you had before is illuminated by what I have told to you."

There is something very suggestive here. For it means that Jesus never desired or intended that any man should forget all he knew when he came to him; but that he should see his knowledge in a new light and use it in a new service. When he does that, what he knew before becomes a greater treasure than ever it was.

Every man comes to Jesus Christ with some ability. Jesus does not ask that he should give up his gift. So many people think that when a man declares for Christ he must give things up and concentrate upon the so-called religious things. But a scholar does not give up his scholarship when he becomes a Christian; rather he uses it for Christ. A business man need not give up his business; rather he should run it as a Christian would. One who can sing, or dance, or act, or paint need not give up his art, but must use his art as a Christian would. The family man need not give up his family, but must behave as a Christian would. Jesus did not come to empty life but to fill it, not to impoverish life but to enrich it. Here we see Jesus telling men, not to abandon their gifts, but to use them even more wonderfully in the light of the knowledge which he has given them.

Today is FIL-MISSION Sunday. FIL-MISSION is the MISSION SOCIETY OF THE PHILIPPINES (M.S.P.). Fil-Mission is an institution established by our Philippine Hierarchy in 1965 to recruit, train, support and send Filipino missionaries outside the Philippines. To some of us Fil-Mission is something old, 21 years old; to others it is something new. Old or new, let us remember today the FIL-MISSION and support it by our prayers and sacrifices. The collection at all Masses today will be given to our FIL-MISSION.

in pace christi

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VERY REVEREND  
father BERNABE alonso, o.p.

Fr. Bernabé Alonso y Sanz, O.P., died on April 2nd, 1987 at noon in the Dominican Convent of Santo Tomás, Avila, Spain.

For many in the Hierarchy of the Philippines, whose professor and constant counselor in ecclesiastical matters he was, the news will mean the loss of a good friend and of a valuable support for themselves and for the Philippines at large, in whose present day religious development he has had a most unobtrusive, yet effective influence. A short biography is in order.

Fr. Bernabé Alonso y Sanz was born in Cedillo, a town of the province of Segovia in Spain, on June 11, 1912. At home he absorbed with the love of God and fatherland a most christian education and the sense and love for law and jurisprudence, as his father was a most respected and honorable Justice of the town.

He entered the Dominican College of La Mejorada near Olmedo (Valladolid) as a postulant to be received into the Dominican Order in 1924. Energetic, serious in his studies, enthusiastic with gardening and in long excursions through the forest of pinetrees he gathered in three years the most outstanding mastery of Latin language and literature. In his late years he relished remembering his assisting his professor in selecting an anthology of the classic Ovidius, Virgilius, Horatius and the christian Prudentius, Juvenius or Sedulius. The privilege of completing in three years the regular course of four was a tribute to his excellent performance.

During his novitiate at the convent of Santo Tomas in Avila, started by his receiving the Dominican habit in 1927 and finished by his profession on September 15, 1928, he met what was a strong challenge for him, as he had to study and master the Constitutions of the Order just finished to be remodelled accord-

ing to the recently issued Code of Canon Law, what meant a constant exercise of legal checking between the new and the old regulations done for his novices by the excellent Master that was Fr. Juan Ortega.

During the four following years, wholly dedicated to a complete and orderly study of Natural Sciences for one year and for another three of Philosophy in all its parts, Introduction to Sacred Scriptures, History of the Church and of Fundamental Theology, the most solemn and precise celebration of the Dominican Liturgy developed in him a lifelong exquisite sense and understanding of the public service of God in the Church.

In the Studium Generale of Rosaryville near Ponchatoula and New Orleans of the State of Louisiana U.S.A., whereto he was sent in August 1932, he studied Theology on the text of Summa Theologica of St. Thomas commented and adapted, Exegesis of both the Old and the New Testament in the commentary of the six most relevant biblical books, History of Dogma and Patrology, and Canon Law on the text of the Code itself. Here he shone. He was seen continually browsing on his pocket edition of the Code, and in conversations and discussions, in or outside the classroom, appeared that he was busy memorizing the whole of the ecclesiastical law. A fast and eager reader besides legal literature, Latin and Spanish classics were always in his hands, as well as the works of the Fathers of the Church available in the library of the College. By supplementing with work and reading the scanty facilities he found for learning English there, and without any other opportunity, he acquired a knowledge of it that served him well all along his life. And he was very alive. Explorer of the surrounding woods, swamps and river, feller of trees for firewood, collaborator of the type-written publication of the students, junior sacristan still he found time for occasionally cheating the "dry law" vident then in the U.S.A. by making some wine out of raisins, strawberries, raspberries and other forest fruits, and for taking exception to the rules for students with an occasional cigar or cigarette.

In the year 1935 Rosaryville in America was closed and Rosaryhill in Hongkong was to be inaugurated as Studium Generale of the Dominican Order for the Province of the Most Holy Rosary under the patronage of St. Albert the Great. At the inauguration Fr. Bernabe was there as a senior student. The following June 1936 he finished his ecclesiastical career by graduating Lector in Theology for the Dominican Order. And then he was ordained priest.

Assigned to Manila he resided first at the convent of Santo Domingo in Intramuros while being enrolled and following classes at U.S.T. in Sulucan. Having obtained his degree of Licentiate at the Faculty of Canon Law of the University of Santo Tomas he wrote his doctoral thesis on a subject that has busied his mind since his earlier days as student, the *Epicheia*, that is the understanding, human approach to the rough letter of the Law.

Doctor of Canon Law in 1939 he started immediately to work as Professor in U.S.T., as collaborator in the *Boletin Ecclesiastico de Filipinas*, and at the Curia of the Archdiocese of Manila by request of the then Archbishop D. Miguel O'Daugherty.

The World War II in the Orient (1941-1945) disrupted the regularity of his work, but not so much that the Archbishop of Manila would not find in his youth and learning a welcoming support. When the war was over he collaborated unreservedly with bishops and priests in rebuilding the ecclesiastical structures. During the following years a deep and large reorganization of the Church in the Philippines happened and many new dioceses or ecclesiastical provinces were created. A great number of the new pastors, officials and parish priests had been his pupils and looked for his advice in the initial organization. He never refused. Then he started to be called by his fellow Dominicans by the nick name "El Fiscal" (The promoter of Justice) because of his well known and strenuous work at his initial post in the High Court of Appeals for Matrimonial Causes in Manila and for the Philippines, in which he became the Official for several times.

A ministry he carried on with the utmost care and acceptance till the end of his life was the establishment, revision and remodelling according to the Codes of Canon Law, both that of 1917 and that of 1973, of the rules and constitutions of the congregations of Religious Women, Dominican and others, resident in the Philippines and in the surrounding mission countries. He was a constant adviser of the Superiors and very frequently he was requested to attend and assist in their Chapters Provincial of General. He always obliged.

At the Faculty of Canon Law of the University of Santo Tomas his teaching, regular and brilliant, completed by personal direction of the candidates for degrees was unrelentingly continued until years after his seventieth one. For three terms



(1951-1953, 1964-1967, 1967-1970) he directed as Dean the life of the Faculty. Consultants from the Asian countries of Mission, Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan, Indochina, and from America and Europe, Rome included, kept him busy at a correspondence he faithfully and carefully maintained. This contributed to put him always abreast in canonical information and aware of the very latest development on Jurisprudence and practices of the Roman Curia.

He served his Dominican Order as auxiliary of the Provincials, Secretary, Vicar and Delegate of his Province of the Most Holy Rosary to provincial and General Chapters. He for three times had the extraordinary honor and responsibility of having been called to take part in the General Chapters of Riverforest, Tallaght and Rome as recorder and redactor because of his knowledge and expertise, although he had not been formally elected. In the administration of the University of Santo Tomas he was for years Assistant to the Treasurer, and then Treasurer; and the regularization of the landscape of the campus in Sulucan, as well as the planning or remodelling of several of the grand buildings owe to him many a good initiative and realization. This position too afforded him the opportunity of handling the great contribution the University of Santo Tomas had in the building of the Dominican convent of Santo Domingo in Quezon City. Almost uninterruptedly he had a post in the ruling bodies of the University.

Msgr. Rufino Santos, who as Auxiliary Bishop of Manila has worked with him in reorganizing the Archdiocese, and as Archbishop has had him as his regular counselor, when as Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church and Head of the Hierarchy of the Philippines had to attend the Vatican Council II, called for him to be his personal Theologian in all the session of the Council. His stay in Rome, on orders of the Cardinal, had to be at the Colegio Filipino so that his services be available to the rest of the Filipino Fathers of the Council.

Elected Provincial of the Province of the Most Holy Rosary he became ex officio Vice-Grand Chancellor of the University in 1973, and the Philippines owe to him a great service. The Province was carrying the process for Beatification of a group of her martyrs in Japan; Lorenzo Ruiz was among them but not included; his case was put forward, Fr. Bernabé evaluated the merits, gave the permission and put the proceedings in the right path and the result was that the Philippines has her first canonical, recognized saint, Blessed Lorenzo Ruiz.

He was a prolific writer; yet the confidential, vital and juridical character of his literary production withholds it from quick publication. We earnestly hope that one day the well bound, neatly collected papers wherein he preserved the gist of his juridical studies and intervention be made available.

His health was not as good as his energetic movements and spirits hinted. In his younger years he was continually haunted by asthma; and in his late years he had to submit himself to two major operations. His eyes were his constant handicap, and for quite a number of years he was reading by using one eye and this with the help of a magnifying glass. For those who were close to him the feat was a real miracle.

Compelled mainly by health difficulties he requested, and was granted to revert to his native Spain. Immediately after arriving there he went into his work of juridical assistance to priests and religious; but human life, even that of heroic minds has a limit, and at noon of the 2nd of April, 1987, Fr. Bernabé Alonso surrendered his spirit to the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he has served calmly, spontaneously, wholeheartedly with a piety as devoid of exhibitions as it was true.

In the cemetery of the community of Santo Tomas at Avila, under the shadow of pinetrees, an iron cross surmounts a heap of earth; a disc at the foot reads; "Rev. Fr. Bernabé Alonso y Sanz, O.P. — 1912-1987." Perhaps an epitaph should be added: "HONEST TO GOODNESS MAN OF JESUS CHRIST AND OF HIS CHURCH."

FR. JESUS MA. MERINO ANTOLINEZ, O.P.

# NEWS PRAYER

## ● CHINA SWING SYNDROME

In the last few years, many began to hope that, with Deng Xiaoping at the driver's seat, China's syndrome to swing from tolerance to repression, from democratic postures to Party militancy, had at least become a thing of the past. The events of the last two months came as a hard blow to such a widespread hope. The fall of Hu Yao Pang — for seven years the General Secretary of the Communist Party and the second most powerful man in China — may well be the opening salvo to a new cycle of political control by the more "conservative" leaders of the Party.

## PRAYER:

Lord of History, may your spirit deliver the leaders of China from the evil of self-seeking power and grant the Chinese people the freedom and security they are longing for.

## ● PILGRIMS TO THE ISLAND WHERE XAVIER DIED

On December 3, Feast of St. Francis Xavier, seven Jesuits from Macau went in pilgrimage to the island of Shangchuan. About 70 Catholics from the nearby centers of Jiangmen, Taishan and Xinhui joined them together with Fr. Linus Wong, who attends to the Catholic communities of this whole region of Guangdong Province. The relic of St. Francis Xavier (part of his arm) brought from Macau was placed in his tomb during the Mass celebrated in the newly-built chapel. "It was a very profound experience," said Fr. Sequeira. In a way, it was the first public pilgrimage to the island since 1933. "Through the relic we brought, it was a second coming to China for St. Francis Xavier and a ray of hope for the future."

**PRAYER:**

Lord Jesus, as winter ends and the spring season begins, more people of your pilgrim Church will go to China. Guide their steps to follow your ways.

• **PERSEVERANCE**

Peter Zhuang was a young seminarian when he was arrested in the late 50's. He spent most of the next 20 years in prison cells and labor camps and, had to attend to endless sessions of Marxist indoctrination. But when he was released in 1979, he was still determined to follow his Call. His adventurous journey to the priesthood ended last December 21. He was ordained in the Basilica of Our Lady at She Shan after 36 years of faithful waiting. Filled with joy and gratitude, Peter Zhuang said: "Now I can go back to my home village for Christmas and begin to serve my people the best I can." Maryknoll Fr. Howard Trube, 75 years old who has been Fr. Zhuang's pastor when he first entered the seminary, travelled from Hongkong to Shanghai with Peter's elder brother and two nephews to be present at the ordination. A handsome chalice was his gift to Peter, in memory of his deceased parents whom Fr. Trube has known so well.

**PRAYER:**

Lord Jesus, we pray for the Bishops and priests in China. We pray for all of them, for the strong and for the weak. May their Faith in You help them to work together in faithful service to the Church.

• **MANAGERS IN NORTH CHINA**

"At last, we have found the church. In fact it is not far away from our place of work. We never thought that the small gate in that big wall was the way to get into the Church. There was a courtyard behind the wall and as we entered, we saw a group of people kneeling on the snow before a grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes. The priest appeared quite reserved at first, but when we told him that we were Filipino catholics, he became



at once very happy. He speaks English quite well. He invited us to join his people for Mass for it was Christmas night. Inside the Church, there were several hundred people. The sounds of "Silent Night" heard in that Chinese Church so far away from home touched us very deeply. Since then, we go to that Church every Sunday. We are the only foreigners in the congregation and so, when we are seen by some of them on the streets or in the marketplace, they never fail to greet us with very warm smiles. After three months here, we begin to understand better what you said about christian witnessing in 'low key'."

#### • PRAYING WITH THE HOLY FATHER

O Lord, our God, we constantly beg you to bless the great Chinese people, the most numerous in the world. Relatively few of the sons and daughters of this people have been able to welcome the teaching of Christ, your Son. May the living faith of these few, supported by our prayer, obtain your abundant blessings for all.

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