

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

THE OFFICIAL INTERDIOCESAN BULLETIN

A NEW ADVENT
Editorial

**PAGTATAPOS NG
INTERNATIONAL
MARIAN YEAR**
J. Card. Sin

**THE VIRGIN MARY
IN INTELLECTUAL
AND SPIRITUAL
FORMATION**
*S. Congr.
for Cath.
Education*

**THE
"ABA GINOONG
MARIA"**
E. Garcia, O.P.



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A NEW ADVENT

ON AUGUST 15, 1988, His Eminence Jaime Cardinal Sin, D.D., concluded the celebration of the International Marian Year. The concluding ceremonies took place in the campus of the venerable institution, the University of Santo Tomas, with delegates national and local gathered to participate and to witness the impressive rites honoring our Blessed Mother. No less than the leader of our nation, President Corazon C. Aquino, participated by leading the multitude in the National Prayer to Mary.

In that event, during the Mass Cardinal Sin underscored the fact that while the International Marian Year would end that day, the coming twelve years will be years of preparation for the third millenium. Speaking in the national language, he said:

"Magwawakas na ba talaga ang taon ni Maria? Hindi, mga kapatid. Simula sa araw na ito, bubuksan natin ang labindalawa pang taon ni Maria hanggang marating natin ang taong dalawang libo! Sa aklat ng apokalipsis, si Maria ay nakalarawan bilang isang ba-

baeng may labindalawang korona. Simula sa araw na ito hanggang sa taong dalawang libo, maghandog tayo kay Maria ng korona ng pag-ibig, korona ng labindalawang taon ni Maria. ..."

These twelve years, therefore, will be the New Advent.

Within these twelve years, Mary is still to play a very important role in the national as well as the universal Church. To ignore this would be most disgraceful on our part. For the work of the Church is also the work of Mary. In these twelve years, the laity is expected to do all it can to prepare the families, the parishes, or whatever organizations they are involved in so that they will be able to portray a life as envisioned by the Second Vatican Council, if the Church is to flourish by the third millenium. By that time, Vatican II shall be in the 35th year of its aftermath. The Church certainly would like to see a renewed people, a renewed Church, and a renewed world.

May the Holy Spirit bless the constituted Church so that by the third millenium our world will be marked with progress and true peace.

Pagtatapos ng International Marian Year*

MGA MINAMAHAL KONG KAPATID kay Kristo:

Parang kailan lamang, ikapito ng Hunyo noong isang taon, nagtipun-tipon tayo sa katedral ng Maynila upang magdasal ng santo rosaryo kasama ang Santo Papa sa Roma at ang buong daigdig. Sa pagkakataong iyon, sinimulan natin ang pandaigdig na taon ni Maria. Napakaraming tao sa loob ng katedral; mas marami pang tao ang nasa labas. Nag-uumapaw na pag-ibig ang ating inihandog sa ating Ina. Ang buong daigdig ay lumuhod upang magdasal; ang buong daigdig ay may hawak na rosaryo upang papurihan ang Ina ng lahat ng tao! Mabuhay si Maria!

Bukas ay wawakasan natin ang taon ni Maria. Ipagdiriwang ng buong daigdig ang kanyang pag-akyat sa langit. Sini-

* Homilyang binigkas ng Kanyang Kabunyan, Jaime Kardinal Sin, Arsobispo ng Maynila, sa Misang ginanap sa pagtatapos ng *International Marian Year* sa U.S.T. campus, España, Manila, noong ika-14 ng Agosto, 1988 sa ganap na ika-4:30 ng hapon.

mulan natin ang taon ni Maria kasabay ng pagdiriwang ng Pentekostes o pagbaba ng Espiritu Santo. Kasama ni Maria noong isang taon, nagdasal tayo upang ang Espiritu Santo ay bumaba sa buong daigdig. Sa kapistahan ng dakilang pag-akyat sa langit, kay Maria nakikita na natin kung paano magwawakas ang anumang buhay na puno ng Espiritu Santo. Buhay na maluwalhati, buhay na matagumpay, buhay sa piling ng ating Diyos Ama sa langit.

Magwawakas na ba talaga ang taon ni Maria? Hindi, mga kapatid! Simula sa araw na ito, bubuksan natin ang labindalawa pang taon ni Maria hanggang marating natin ang taong dalawang libo! Sa aklat ng Apokalipsis, si Maria ay nakalarawan bilang isang babaeng may labindalawang korona. Simula sa araw na ito hanggang sa taong dalawang libo, maghandog tayo kay Maria ng korona ng pag-ibig, korona ng labindalawang taon ni Maria! Kung handa kayong makiisa sa pagdiriwang na ito hanggang sa taong dalawang libo, palakpakan natin ang Mahal na Ina!

Ano ba ang dapat nating gawin sa loob ng labindalawang taon? Ano ba ang ibig kong sabihin na tayo ay magkakaroon ng labindalawang taon ng pag-aalay kay Maria? Labindalawang taon ng paghihintay sa Panginoong Hesus?

Isa-isip nating palagi, mga kapatid, na ang Diyos ay palaging handang dumalaw at manatili sa ating puso. Ang Panginoon na muling nabuhay ay palagi nating kapiling sa ating pamayanan, sa ating mga pagdiriwang, sa ating mga pagpapakasakit, sa ating pagmamahalan at malasakit sa bawa't isa. Subalit tayo, ikaw, kayo, sila at ako — ay inaasahang tanggapin siya at kupkupin sa ating kalooban. Patuloy siya sa pagkatok, patuloy siyang naghahandog ng kanyang sarili. Tinatanggap ba natin siya? Ito ang dahilan kung bakit ako nananawagan sa inyong lahat na ang natitirang labindalawang taon nitong ating siglo ay gawin nating taon ng tunay na paghahanda at pagtanggap sa ating Panginoon. Manalangin tayo ng buong sigasig, maghanda tayo ng buong puso, magpakasakit tayo ng buong pagmamahal sa loob ng labindalawang taong darating. Sa gani-

tong paraan, ang taong dalawang libo ay magiging taon ng panibagong simula sa sanlibutan. Bubuksan natin ang taong dalawang libo sa pamamagitan ng pagbubukas ng ating puso, kalooban at kaluluwa kay Kristong ating Mananakop, at kay Mariang kanyang Ina. Ang panahon nating ito ay maaari nating tawaging panahon ng isang mahabang adviento. Adviento ang tawag natin sa apat na linggong paghahanda sa pagdiriwang ng Pasko. Ang labindalawang taong hinahanap natin ay magiging parang bagong adviento ng ating kapanahunan upang sa taong dalawang libo, si Kristo ay tunay na sumilang sa ating sanlibutan. Kailangan natin ang tunay na makabagong pagdating ng Panginoon sa ating sanlibutan.

Hindi ba ninyo napapansin na sa ating paligid ay unti-unting kumukupas ang larawan ng ating Panginoon? Malayo na ang nilakbay ng daigdig, pati na ng ating bansa, palayo sa ating Panginoon. Kaya nga kailangan na naman nating ibalik si Kristo at si Maria sa ating puso at sa ating bayan. Kailangan natin ang bagong pagsilang sa daigdig na ito. Isang bagong pagsilang sa Espiritu Santo, sa tulong at patnubay ni Mariang ating Ina.

Bigyan natin ng pansin ang nagaganap sa ating daigdig. Taglay ngayon ng tao sa lupa ang lahat ng kapangyarihan upang gunawin ang mundo. Ang banta ng *nuclear destruction* ay naka-umang sa ating mata. Ang sabi ng mga dalubhasa, ang mga *nuclear bombs* na hawak ng mga bansang makapangyarihan ay maaaring sumabog ng sunud-sunod upang lipulin ang mga tao sa bawat bayan, sa bawat lungsod at bansa. Sino ba talaga ang ating Panginoon? Hindi ba si Hesus, ang maamong anak ng Galilea? Sa nakikita ko sa ating paligid, para bagang ang ating Diyos ay si Molok, ang diyos ng digmaanan na ang batas ay patayin ang lahat ng tao. Ang nabubuhay sa patalim ay sa patalim din mamamatay. Ang nabubuhay sa *armalite* ay sa *armalite* mamamatay. Ang nabubuhay sa *nuclear bomb* ay sa *nuclear bomb* din masasawi.

Bigyan din natin ng pansin ang likas na yaman ng ating bansa. Inuubos natin ang puno sa gubat; pinapantay

natin ang bundok at burol; ginagawa nating basurahan ang ilog at dagat. Pagdating ng takdang panahon, tatanungin tayo ng Diyos: "Bakit mo sinira ang kagandahan ng sanlibutan? Bakit mo sinayang ang handog kong mga kayamanan?"

Tingnan din natin ang moralidad sa ating lipunan. Gumagawa tayo at namimigay ng gamot na sumisira sa buhay ng tao. Naghahanap tayo ng kaligayahan ng mundo at pagkatapos ay ipalalaglag natin ang sanggol na bunga ng ating pagmamahalan. Ginagawa nating pampalipas oras ng kahalayan ang mga batang walang malay. Ginagawa nating laruang puwedeng bayaran ang ating kababaihan. Dapat isumpa ang mga kasalanang ito!

Kailan tayo magsasawa sa karahasan at sa pagdanak ng dugo? Maglakad tayo sa lansangan ng Metro Manila, nagkalat ang mga *billboards* ng mga pelikula. Lalaking may hawak na baril. Babaeng may hawak na baril. Subalit hindi lamang sa pelikula. Maging sa tunay na buhay ay kabi-kabila ang pagdanak ng dugo, patayan at barilan. Hindi pa ba tayo nagsasawa? Ang ating Diyos ay Diyos ng pag-ibig, hindi ang diyos ng karahasan at alitan!

Mahigit nang dalawang taon ang nakalilipas nang ipakita natin sa mundo ang maka-Kristianong paraan ng pagbabago sa lipunan, ang sabi natin noon: "Tama na, sobra na ang lagayan at kurakot sa pamahalaan." Buhay pa ba sa atin ang Espiritung ito? Mahalaga pa ba ang katapatan sa paglilingkod at prinsipyo sa buhay? Nakalulungkot at nakahihiya ang pagbalik natin sa dating ugali!

Mga kapatid ko, saan patungo itong ating daigdig? Bayang Pilipinas, magbalik tayo sa Panginoong Diyos! Kailangan natin ang pagbabago, kailangan natin ang Panginoon, kailangang ihanda natin ang ating puso upang Siya ay tunay na maging Hari at Panginoon ng sanlibutan.

Sa bagong pagsilang ng Panginoon sa ating panahon, siya ay gagamit ng isang tanda — ang tanda ng isang babae, nais ng Diyos na itanghal si Maria sa kalangitan bilang isang daki-

lang tanda ng pag-asa. Kapag naroon si Maria, naroon ang pag-asa. Siya ang tunay na tala ng pag-asa. Kapag kasama natin si Maria, kapag pinatuloy natin si Maria sa ating kalooban, naroon ang pag-asa. Sapagkat kung naroon si Maria, ay naroon din ang kanyang anak na si Hesus.

Ano nga ba ang tunay na paraan ng paghahanda para sa pagsapit ng tunay na paghahari ng Panginoon sa ating daigdig? Ano ba ang dapat nating gawin upang ang kapayapaan, karunungan, katotohanan, kalayaan at pag-ibig ay tunay na mamayani sa ating bansa?

Sa pagkakataong ito ay hayaan ninyong ikuwento ko sa inyo ang aking mga nakita noong ako ay pumunta sa Polonya noong isang linggo. Sa Polonya ay mayroon silang isang lara-wan ng Mahal na Ina na tinatawag nilang Birhen ng Jasna Gora o *Black Madonna*. Kapag ganitong panahon ng taon, halos lahat ng kabataan sa Polonya ay naglalakad mula sa kanilang bahay patungo sa simbahan ng Jasna Gora. Ang marami ay kailangang maglakad ng lima o sampung araw. Ang bawat grupo ng kabataan ay may kasamang pari bilang *leader*. Walang sinuman sa kanila ang nag-iisip na mahirap gawin iyon. Ang nasa isip lamang nila ay — “mahal ko ang aking Ina, wala akong sakripisyong hindi magagawa.” Takot ang mga komunista sa mga kabataang taga-Polonya. Walang armas ang mga bata. Ang tangi nilang armas ay si Hesus at si Maria sa kanilang puso.

Mayroon kaya tayong pananampalatayang katulad ng sa kanila? Sa loob ng labindalawang taong darating, pagsikapan nating tunay na maging mga anak ng ating mahal na Ina. Gawin nating atin ang dalangin ng ating Santo Papa, *Totus Tuus*... ako ay tunay na sa iyo, tanging sa iyo lamang! Italaga natin ang ating puso sa malinis na puso ng ating Ina upang ang ating puso ay makatulad ng puso ng anak niyang si Hesus.

Si Kristo lamang ang tanging makapagliligtas sa daigdig na unti-unting winawasak ng kasakiman ng tao. Kailangan natin si Kristo, kailangang tuluyan na siyang manatili sa ating puso. Kailangang sumilang na muli si Kristo sa ating mundo!

Paano natin ito gagawin? Ihandog natin ang ating puso, ang ating buhay, ang ating buong pagkatao sa paanan ng ating Ina, upang gawin niya tayong katulad ni Hesus. Kayong mga kabataan ang magiging mga pinuno ng daigdig pagdating ng ikadalawang libong taon. Kung maraming kabataan ang magaalay ng kanilang buhay kay Hesus at kay Maria, maraming pinuno ng kinabukasan ang babago sa takbo ng daigdig.

Si Mariang iniakyat sa langit ang tala ng pag-asa para sa daigdig na madilim at makasalanan. Maluwalhati na siya sa piling ng ating Ama sa langit. Magiging atin din ang tagumpay ni Maria, sa pamamagitan ng ating taos-pusong pagtatalaga ng ating sarili sa kanya. Mariang aming Ina, ipakita mo sa amin ang iyong anak na si Hesus. Amen.

Homily at close of Marian Year*

*During the past year
we have followed you,
O Mother,
on your pilgrimage of faith.*

1. "ALL GENERATIONS WILL CALL ME blessed" (Lk 1:48).

Virgin and Mother of God! In this blessedness proclaimed by all the generations, receive also the acclamation of our voices: they call you blessed, *the generation of men and women alive in the world in these closing years of the second Millennium after Christ.*

* The Marian Year, which began at Pentecost 1987, was officially closed by the Holy Father on Monday, 15 August 1988, during Mass in St. *Romani*," was carried in procession from the Pauline Chapel in the Apostolic Palace to the Basilica as a symbol of the pilgrim Church accompanied by Mary. As in the other Marian celebration during the year, various Eastern Churches participated in the liturgy, which concluded with the ritual closing of the Marian Year by the Pope. *L'Osservatore Romano*, N. 34 (1052) 22 August 1988.

They call you blessed, because you are she whom *the Eternal Father chose* to be the Mother of the Eternal Son, when "the fullness of time had come" (cf. Gal 4:4).

They call you blessed because you are she on whom descended the *Holy Spirit*; you are she whom the power of the Most High overshadowed (cf. Lk 1:35), and thus was born of you the Eternal Son of God, as man.

They call you blessed. Thus you have been called by all the generations. And our generation, here at the end of the twentieth century, also calls you blessed.

The Marian Year, which today comes to its close on the solemnity of your Assumption, has been, throughout the whole Church, *one special way of calling you blessed.*

2. Hail Mary! "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb" (Lk 1:42).

With these words the liturgy salutes you today. And these are the words of your cousin Elizabeth, pronounced *during the Visitation*, which took place, according to tradition, at Ain-Karim.

Hail Mary! Blessed are you who believed that the words of the Lord would be fulfilled (cf. Lk 1:45).

In you we have placed our trust

During the Marian Year we have followed you on your journey of visitation. The whole Church has followed you, Mother of God, repeating the words of Elizabeth. And look *how the Church*, in fact, *has learned* in Vatican Council II *to look to you*, as to the living and perfect *Figure* of itself.

It learned it anew, in the measure of our times and of our generation, recalling that it was thus that the ancient generations of disciples who followed Christ looked to you in their day. The illustrious *Fathers of the first centuries called you* the first Model (*Typus*) of the Church.

The Church of our times has learned it over again. It has professed once more that you, O Blessed Virgin, *precede in the pilgrimage of the faith* all the generations of the People of God on the earth (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 58).

Blessed are you who have believed! In the pilgrimage of faith, which was your life upon earth, you *went forward* faithfully preserving your union with your Son there at the foot of the Cross, where you remained through the will of God (cf. *ibid.*).

3. *The same pilgrimage of faith*, which you carried out even in the depths of the mystery of Christ, your Son — from the Annunciation to Calvary — *you then resumed together with the Church*. You resumed it on the day of Pentecost with the Church of the Apostles and witnesses, which was born in the Cenacle of Jerusalem under the breath of the Consoler — the Spirit of Truth.

And so we began our pilgrimage of the Marian Year on the solemnity of Pentecost 1987 — in Rome and in the whole Church as far as the ends of the earth.

We have begun our pilgrimage of faith with you, we, the generation which is drawing near to *the beginning of the third Millennium* after Christ. We have begun to walk with you, we, a generation which bears *a certain resemblance* to that *first Advent*, when on the horizon of human longing for the coming of the Messiah, a mysterious light was enkindled: *the Morning Star* — the Virgin of Nazareth, prepared by the Most Holy Trinity to be the Mother of the Son of God: *Alma Redemptoris Mater*.

4. We have dedicated to you, Mary, this period of human time, which is also *the liturgical time of the Church*: the Year which began with Pentecost 1987, and which ends today with the solemnity of the Assumption, in the year 1988.

We have dedicated it to you! *In you we have placed our trust*. In you, to whom God “entrusted” himself in human his-

tory. In you, to whom your Crucified Son *confided humanity* as in a supreme last testament of the mystery of Redemption. That man at the foot of the Cross was the Apostle John, the Evangelist. In him, a single human being, was represented all humanity.

In the spirit of this paschal "entrusting," which became a particular fruit of faith, of hope and of charity, when the sword of sorrow pierced your Heart, *there follow you the people and the human community* in all the world. There follow you the people and the nations. There follow you the generations. From high on the Cross Christ himself directed them to your maternal Heart — and *your Heart* returns them, in the simplest way, to Christ: *you introduce them into the mystery of the Redemption. Mother of our Redeemer, truly!*

5. As in all the past generations, the Church in our generation also sings an antiphon in which it prays thus:

"Assist your people, who fall, but who long to rise up"
(*Soccurre cadenti — surgere qui curat, populo!*).

In the words of this prayer of "entrustment" *we find also the truth about our generation.* Does it not perhaps — just like the other generations, and maybe more than most — pass its life between "falling" and "rising up" between sin and grace?

O Mother, you who know us, be always with your children! Help the individual, the people, the nations, to rise up. This *cry of the Marian Year* has resounded in the various parts of the earth, through the diverse experiences of the age we live in, which while priding itself on progress which has never before been seen, feels nevertheless in a particularly acute way, the threats that menace the whole great human family. And ever more urgent becomes the *sollicitudo rei socialis*.

6. *Today, the solemnity of the Assumption!*

Today on the horizon of the cosmos there appears — to use the words of the Apocalypse of John — *the Women clothed with the sun* (cf. Apoc 12:1).

Of this Woman the Council says: "*In the most Blessed Virgin the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she exists without spot or wrinkle (cf. Eph 5:27).*" And at the same time "*the faithful must still strive to conquer sin and increase in holiness. And so they turn their eyes to Mary*" (*Lumen Gentium*, 65).

All this Year which is now ending was a time of "*turning the eyes*" to you, Virgin Mother of God, constantly present in the mystery of Christ and of the Church.

The Marian Year finishes today. But the time for "*turning the eyes*" to Mary, that *does not finish*.

7. Following you, Mother, in our earthly pilgrimage by means of the faith, we find ourselves today *on the threshold of your glorification in God*.

The pilgrimage of faith — the way of faith. Your way of faith leads to the *threshold of the Visitation*, in Ain-Karim, to the *threshold of the glorification*.

This is what today's liturgy shows us.

And at the threshold of glorification, at the threshold of celestial union with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we listen once more to *the words of the Magnificat*:

"My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God,
my Saviour...

He that is mighty has done great things to me"

(Lk 1:46-47, 49)

Great things: magnalia! Magnalia Dei!

Blessed are you who have believed!

Amen.

into the future
with Mary

CLOSING REMARKS:

Queen of Heaven, rejoice!
Hail, most holy Lady!

With the Marian Year we are concluding, the Church has been "called not only to remember everything which in its past testifies to the special maternal cooperation of the Mother of God in the work of salvation in Christ the Lord, but also to prepare, on its part, for the future the ways of this cooperation: because the end of the second Christian Millennium opens, as it were, a whole new perspective" (*Redemptoris Mater*, 49) and at the same time directs our gaze towards the Mother of the Redeemer (*Redemptoris Mater*, 3).

In these years "we wish to turn in a special way to her who, in the night of awaiting the advent of the Word, began to shine as a true "morning star" (*Redemptoris Mater*, 3), by means of a maturing of values which the experience of the Marian Year has just finished bringing into being, in study and in evangelization, as well as in charity and culture.

From today on, let us place with full confidence under the vigilant intercession of Holy Mary, Sister and Mother of the Church, the passage to the year 2000 and the prospect of the Third Millennium, fully aware that our true goal is the Kingdom, already initiated with the ascension of Jesus Christ and with the bodily assumption of Mary, and now coexisting with history, as well as being its ultimate and highest point.

The Third Millennium remains, anyhow, for us a horizon of very stimulating reflections, because it makes us look forward in hope. The Blessed Mary is the guide in this new exodus towards the future (*Redemptoris Mater*, 3), which we face as a liturgy of the threshold, pilgrims with her towards the Absolute and the Eternal.

And let our last word be a prayer:

O Holy Mary, first of virgins, trustingly we invoke you on the threshold of the third Millennium of the life of Christ's holy Church: the Church which is already you yourself, humble tent of the Word, moved solely by the breath of the Spirit. Mercifully accompany our steps towards the frontiers of a redeemed and peaceful humanity and make our heart glad and secure in the certainty that the Dragon is not stronger than your Beauty, gentle and eternal woman, first among the redeemed and friend of every creature, who still groans and hopes in the world. Amen.

Finding Mary in Liturgical Year

(A PASTORAL LETTER ON THE MARIAN YEAR)

Introduction

My dear People of God,

1. In announcing the Marian Year, the Holy Father indicated the principal purpose of the celebration.

“This year is intended to stir up in both the clergy and the laity the desire to deepen their understanding of the presence of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of her mission in the Saving mystery of Christ and the Church, keeping in mind the cultural aspects and the sensibilities of our time.”

“Understanding the presence of the blessed Virgin Mary” in the Church today — this is the reason for all these efforts to celebrate the Marian Year on the eve of the third Christian millennium. This is the most natural thing for us to do, since Mary is continuously present in the Catholic Church.

2. On the day of Pentecost, she who is "blessed because she believed" (cf. Lk 1:45) was already with the Apostles in the Upper Room. Mary was present when the Church was born and when the great pilgrimage of the People of the New Covenant through history began. Mary was present with the Apostles on the very day of the descent of the Spirit of truth and power. And, even after her departure from this earth, she remains present in the mystery of Christ and the Church. She will remain present. She will be "the first" to go forward in the great pilgrimage of faith, hope and charity at the head of all the generations of God's People on this earth.

For this reason the Church, which on her pilgrim journey is approaching the end of the second millennium after Christ, began her Marian Year precisely on the feast of Pentecost. This is a coincidence and a kind of convergence of events which has great significance and which deserved to be emphasized: on that historic day, when the Spirit was poured out on the Church, we find Mary; on the day of Pentecost 1987, when the Spirit is still being poured out, we must find Mary.

3. We must find and experience the maternal presence of Mary! This is our common Marian cry! Mary's motherhood in our regard is manifested in many forms, her presence appears in many ways among us. She meets us in "her dwelling places," places in which a special presence of the Mother is felt. There are many such dwelling places. They are of all kinds: from a special corner in the home or little wayside shrines adorned with an image of the Mother of God, to chapels and churches built in her honor. These are the Marian shrines or sanctuaries. For us in Bicol, the Peñafrancia Shrine is such a place.

Mary and the Liturgical Year

4. But this time I wish to refer to her *presence in the liturgical year*. The Holy Father has pointed to the liturgical year

as the natural context in which to include the various initiatives to be programmed by the local churches to celebrate the year dedicated to the Blessed Virgin (cf. 6, 18, *L'Osservatore Romano*, 2-3 Jan. 1987, p. 5).

Rediscovering the Richness of the Liturgical Year

5. The celebration of the Marian Year is a good occasion to develop or start again to instruct the faithful about the primary importance of the liturgical year.

The whole mystery of Christ, from the Incarnation and Christmas to the Ascension, Pentecost, and the waiting in hope for the return of the Lord is celebrated harmoniously throughout the year. For many of the faithful it will be a consoling discovery to know that every liturgical year is a "year of mercy" (cf. Is 61:31), a truly "Holy Year," full of the mystical presence of Christ, and that throughout the ordered succession of the various liturgical seasons and by means of the celebration of the holy mysteries, there is "given to God perfect glory and men are sanctified."

In the measure that the faithful acknowledge the beauty of the liturgical year and its sanctifying force they will also, in the same way, appreciate this "holy sign" that allows them to celebrate the whole history of salvation and to transform the time on earth into time of salvation.

The Presence of Mary in the Liturgical Year

6. In a similar way, from a well-given instruction, the faithful will learn that every Liturgical Year is also, so to say, a "Marian year." In fact, because of her singular participation in the mystery of Christ, during the Liturgical Year the Blessed Virgin is constantly honored in an admirable variety of ways:

— Advent, particularly rich in suggestive references to the Immaculate Mother of the Lord, with whom culminates the

awaiting of Israel "having reached the fulness of time and the commencement of the new covenant" (LG 55).

— The Christmas Season which celebrates the mysteries of the infancy of the Savior and brings incessantly to mind the figure of the Blessed Virgin. In particular, the Solemnity of January 1 is rightly considered to be the oldest commemoration in the Church of Rome, celebrating the divine, salvific and virginal maternity of Mary. In the liturgy of the day no other celebration must be allowed to obscure or in any way diminish this commemoration.

— Lent, when the way leading to Easter is filled by a more attentive listening to the Word, a more decided conversion of heart, and a more conscious taking up of one's cross is emphasized (cf. Mt 16:24; Mk 8:34). This way can be modelled on the way walked by the Virgin, the first disciple of Christ, diligent guardian of the Word (cf. Lk 2:19-51) and faithful Woman at the foot of the cross (cf. Jn 19:25-27).

— Eastertide, when the ecclesial joy of the Resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit is a kind of extension of the joy of Mary at Nazareth, the Mother of the Risen Lord. In fact, according to the thinking of the Church, she was filled with "ineffable joy" at the victory of her Son over death, and, according to the Acts of the Apostles, she was the center of the beginning Church awaiting the Paraclete (cf. Acts 1:14).

— Throughout the Year, in which are celebrated various feasts in honor of the Blessed Virgin. Among them, the most important is the Assumption, the coronation of her itinerary of grace, and the feast of her vocation to full happiness.

7. The Church looks at Mary as her model in the practice of worship and, by celebrating the liturgy, she presents the Blessed Virgin to the faithful as the model of Christian life. The liturgy frequently places before the eyes of the faithful the figure of Mary of Nazareth. Therefore, especially in the liturgical celebration, the Mother of Christ, shines as "model of virtue" and of faithful cooperation in the work of salvation. This

exemplarity that emerges from the very liturgical action induces the faithful to conform themselves to the Mother in order to conform themselves better to the Son, invites them to praise God with gladness and to thank him with joy; to serve God and the brethren faithfully and even to offer their lives generously for them: to pray to the Lord with perseverance and implore him confidently, to love God in everything and above everything, and to await with vigilance the coming of the Lord (cf. "*Collectio missarum de B. Mariae Virginis*" *Praenotanda*, n. 17).

A Precious Gift of the Marian Year: the Plenary Indulgence

8. In order that all may benefit from the year long celebration, and in accordance with the Decree of the Sacred Penitentiary (May 2, 1987) all Christ's faithful may gain a Plenary Indulgence *once a day* during the Marian Year, on the following occasions:

1. On the opening and closing of the Marian Year, by attending the sacred celebration for this purpose, held in their parish churches or any Marian Shrine or any sacred place.
2. On all solemnities and liturgical feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary; on any Saturday or any day in which any mystery or title of the Blessed Mother is celebrated with solemnity; by participating devoutly in any rites which are performed in the parish churches, Marian shrines, or in any sacred place in order to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary.
3. On any day within the Marian Year by joining a pilgrimage to any of the Marian Shrines, namely the Basilica Minore of Our Lady of Peñafrancia, Naga City, the Shrine of Our Lady of Peñafrancia, Naga City, and the Parish Church of Our Lady of Fatima, San Isidro, Iriga City.

4. When the Holy Rosary is devoutly recited in any church or oratory, or in any place if the Holy Rosary is recited together with several people.

Conclusion

As we welcome the Marian Year celebration in Caceres, let us do so with a prayer:

*To you, Mother of Christians,
we entrust in a special way
the peoples who are celebrating,
Your Year and Our Marian Year.
The long history of our people
is profoundly marked by devotions to you.
Turn towards them your loving glance;
give strength to those
who are suffering for the faith.
To you, Mother of the Philippines,
Mother of the Bicolanos,
we confidently entrust our country
with its hopes and fears.
Do not let it lack the light of true wisdom.
Guide it to seek the ways of peace.
Enable all to meet Christ,
the way and the truth and the life.*

*Sustain us, O Virgin Mother,
on our journey of faith
and obtain for us the grace
of eternal salvation.*

*O clement, O loving, O sweet Mother of God
and our Mother, Mary!*

Marialis Cultus and Lumen Gentium, VIII: a Comparative Study*

Introduction

The relationship of *Marialis Cultus* with Vatican II is too obvious to be ignored. From the point of view of the cult of Mary and the doctrine on her, the dependence of *Marialis Cultus* on Chapter VIII of *Lumen Gentium* is even more obvious. There are numerous citations of passages from Chapter VIII of *Lumen Gentium* which are either inserted in the text or simply referred to in the footnotes. (Cf. *Marialis Cultus* nos. 19, 20, 23, 28, 31, 32, etc.) These quotations and references are many and very significant insofar as they show the connection existing between the Apostolic Exhortation and the Council.

In this article I will analyse the nature and relevance of the relationship existing between *Marialis Cultus* and Chapter VIII of *Lumen Gentium*. By doing so, I hope to be able to bring out both the dependence of the former on the conciliar document, and the development which *Marialis Cultus* contributes to it.

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1. Methodology of the two documents

Both *Lumen Gentium*, VIII and *Marialis Cultus* are Marian documents of a theological-pastoral character. Aside from this similarity, the two documents differ in nature, purpose, and audience.

NATURE — While Chapter VIII of *Lumen Gentium* (LG) keeps and pursues the doctrinal thrust of the conciliar document of which it is a part, *Marialis Cultus* (MC) is first and foremost a liturgical document.

PURPOSE — The principal purpose of Chapter VIII of *Lumen Gentium* is "to set forth painstakingly both the role of the Blessed Virgin in the mystery of the Incarnate Word and the Mystical Body" (n. 54). On the other hand, the purpose of MC is to contribute to the reformation and promotion of the devotion to the Blessed Virgin as part of the renewal of Christian worship. It is true that LG touches on the main aspects of the cult to Mary, but this is done only secondarily and in a derived way.

AUDIENCE — The two documents differ also in their intended recipients. LG, VIII, like all Vatican II documents, has a universal perspective; it is addressed to the whole Church. It is characterized by an ecumenical dimension, and enunciates general principles and guidelines which are valid always and everywhere, and does not go down to concrete and detailed applications. That is why when it comes to consider the cult to Mary in its various forms, the Vatican II document accepts them on the ground that they have been approved by the Magisterium along the centuries, and because they are expressions of a devotion responding to the temperament and mentality of each people.

Some council Fathers had formally petitioned that the Rosary be presented in the document as one of the most significant exercises of Marian piety. But such a request was not

accepted and this is why the Rosary is not mentioned in the conciliar document. The main reason for such an omission has to be found in the universal character and ecumenical dimension of the doctrine of *LG*.

MC, on the other hand, since it aims at bringing about a concrete reformation of the Marian devotion especially within the Roman Church, is much more practical and specific in its effort to implement the general principles of the Council. It is not handicapped by having to be too careful with the preferences of other Christian confessions.

A specific example of the difference between *MC* and *LG*, *VIII* can be found in the third part of the body of *MC*, devoted to the presentation of the theological and pastoral factors which should favor the renewal of the Rosary, as the exercise of Marian piety *par excellence*, approved and recommended by the Popes all along the centuries.

MC treats this topic very extensively, and some might even think too much in proportion to the whole documents — fourteen long paragraphs, nn. 42-55. The Rosary, in the context of the criteria of the conciliar documents, could have never been treated so thoroughly. On the contrary, this is perfectly understandable and acceptable in a papal exhortation having an "implementative character" and addressed only to the bishops in communion with the Holy See.

Close Relationship of the two Documents

These differences notwithstanding, a closer examination of the two documents will show that they are intrinsically connected and inter-related. They are, in fact, both inspired by the same principles aiming to renew profoundly the Marian doctrine and cult.

A specific example of this relationship, from the methodological viewpoint, can be found in the "doctrinal criteria" presented in Part II of *MC*. There we find indicated the three theological notes (trinitarian, christological, and ecclesial)

which are to be the characteristic of all Marian devotion, and the four "orientations" (biblical, liturgical, ecumenical, and anthropological) which are to be the criteria that will guide all the renewal of the Marian cult. From the point of view of methodology, this part of *MC* is at the same level as any conciliar document, and it is closely dependent on the methodology of the *LG*, *VIII*.

This dependence however — and this is the beauty of *MC* — did not prevent it (*MC*) to explain these very same things with a note of both originality and thoroughness. The originality consists in the explicit and systematic manner with which such criteria are indicated; while its thoroughness is shown in the deepening of the theological and liturgical content, as well as in the critical vigor with which they are analyzed and proposed.

Let us be more specific.

In *LG*, *VIII* these notes and orientations are not explicitly and systematically expressed. They are, however, the underlying perspective and the pervading spirit of the whole structure in the presentation of the doctrine.

This chapter of *LG*, in fact, has both a christological and ecclesial perspective which offer the framework not only for the doctrine on Mary, but also for her cult. In addition to this, the mystery of Mary and the cult offered her by the Church are both related to the Trinity, though this is barely enunciated and therefore not adequately deepened (*LG*, 66).

Equally evident in *LG* are the four "orientations" which, though not all explicitated, nonetheless, form the underlying doctrinal basis on which the theological and liturgical content of the document rests.

Conclusion of Part I

As a conclusion of this brief analysis on the relationship between *MC* and Chapter *VIII* of *LG*, from the methodological viewpoint, we can state that the two documents are inter-related and are both governed by the same critical principles, in spite

of their difference in nature, purpose, structure, and target audience. *MC* explicates and applies more concretely the general criteria of *LG, VIII*. We can also say that, for some aspects, *MC* contains developments and explications of what is implicitly contained in the last chapter of *LG*.

II. Doctrine of the two documents

Dependence and development: these are the two qualities that define the relationship between the two documents. It is clear from the point of view of method; it is even clearer from the point of view of doctrine, i.e., from their theological and pastoral content.

Our first observation in this connection is: *MC* does not limit itself to restate or apply the doctrine of the Council, but appropriately develops and deepens specific aspects of some doctrine. In some instances, however, though rarely, *MC* seems to lose sight of the general and universal criteria of the Council and goes back to doctrinal postulates of the preconciliar pontifical magisterium, thereby giving the impression of a certain involution as compared with the doctrine of *LG, VIII*.

My purpose is to point out the different aspects of this doctrinal relationship, by giving special attention to the salient elements emerging from the Mariology of *MC*.

We will examine those elements in the same sequence in which they are treated in the Apostolic Exhortation. But in order to appreciate all the relevance of the doctrinal content and its relatedness to the doctrine of the Council, I will make some preliminary observations.

The fundamental perspective from which *LG, VIII*, considers the person, work, and cult of Mary is that of "salvation history." The mystery of Mary is presented from the point of view of Christ the Savior, the Redeemer and Mediator, as well as from the perspective of the Church, seen as the people of God marching toward the Kingdom, and as sacrament of salvation in the history of men. It is from these new and more meaningful

theological perspectives that the Council presents the nature, purpose, features, and reform of the cult which the Church owes to Mary.

MC also underscores the Mariological doctrine which grounds the reform of the Marian cult. And it does this with the same characteristics and from the same perspectives as that of the Council. These characteristics and perspectives are either implicitly or explicitly contained in each of the three parts of the Exhortation, but they are formally presented in Part II, Section I, more specifically in nn. 11, 25-29, 33.

After these preliminary remarks, we may proceed to analyze some doctrinal points of *MC* which more than others show a relationship of either dependence or development, implementation or difference from those already expressed in *LG, VIII*.

1. Sociological Awareness of Marialis Cultus

N. 5, Part I, section 1, mentions the feast of the Holy Family among the feasts of the Christmas period. *MC*, following Mt 1:19, mentions Saint Joseph who leads a holy life in the house of Nazareth together with Jesus and Mary.

The hint appears to be general and insignificant since we are speaking of the Holy Family. But there is more in this than meets the eye. *MC* shows a sociological awareness which is precious for the understanding of the person and family life of Mary. This element, i.e., the mention of Joseph together with Mary and Jesus as a member of the Holy Family, though it does not deepen the reality of the marriage and family life between Mary and Joseph, brings *MC* closer to the historical reality and makes it more explicit than *LG, VIII*. *LG, VIII* does not mention Joseph as Mary's husband, thereby depriving her figure and mission of that truly human and social dimension which are hers by the marriage and life with the man whom the Evangelist calls "upright" (see Mt 1:19).

2. *Mary as Model of the Church*

Still in Part I, Section II of the Exhortation, we find presented a topic which puts it in close connection with the typological doctrine of *LG, VIII*, but to which it contributes a more significant mariological development, and a liturgical deepening which is pastorally more effective. This is in numbers 16 to 23. It consists in the presentation of Mary as a model of the spiritual attitude with which the Church celebrates the liturgy. Such "exemplarity" is grounded on the conciliar doctrine on Mary and the Church, i.e., from Mary's being the model of the Church in the order of faith, charity, and perfect union with Christ. It is also indicated by some characteristics of Mary's spiritual attitude during the whole of her life.

By deepening the data from the Bible, the Fathers and the Magisterium, *MC* underscores these characteristics and presents her as the "*Virgin who listens*," the "*Virgin who prays*," the "*Virgin Mother*," and the "*Virgin who offers*." Such are the attitudes which make Mary the exemplar of the Church.

LG, VIII had presented Mary as the model of the Church under three aspects: the practice of the theological virtues, the union and conformity with Christ, and the apostolate. But it had presented them only in a general way, without giving any concrete application (*LG* 65). On the other hand, *MC* does not limit itself to taking inspiration from much conciliar document; it applies it to the cultic reality of the Church, thereby contributing a development of considerable pastoral value.

3. *The Holy Spirit and Mary*

In Part II, Section I, n. 26, we find another example of doctrinal development and a deepening brought about by *MC*: the relationship between the Holy Spirit and Mary.

The Council limited itself to short biblical or patristic references on the action of the Holy Spirit in the person and work of Mary. With telling sobriety, it presents the Virgin

as temple of the Holy Spirit, new creature moulded by the Spirit, overshadowed by him at the moment of the Annunciation, petitioning the Holy Spirit to descend on the Church at Pentecost (LG nn. 53, 56, 59, 63). Unfortunately it did not deepen the pneumatological dimension of the mystery of the Blessed Virgin, an aspect in which especially the tradition of the Eastern Church would have plenty to offer.

MC completes and deepens the Council in this area. In what has been greatly welcomed by non-Catholics and by the Orthodox, it presented the relationship between the Holy Spirit and Mary in the light of the teaching of both the Western and Eastern Fathers, whose numerous texts are referred to in comprehensive footnotes.

The relationships between the Holy Spirit and Mary is analyzed in reference to her "original justification" and her progress in faith, charity, and conformity with Christ; in reference to her conception of the Word of God, in which the Holy Spirit consecrated Mary's virginity and made it fruitful; and in reference to whatever pertains to the theme Mary-Church, in which the Holy Spirit has carried on and keeps carrying on efficaciously his work (MC 26).

4. Mary and the Church

Here again *MC* has gone beyond and improved on the Council by its new doctrinal content and a greater conceptual clarity. *LG, VIII* presents Mary Virgin and Mother as a symbol of the Church, itself virgin and mother, in a rather entangled theological jargon. The Conciliar explanation of this theme is so ambiguous that it is difficult to understand whether the virginal motherhood refers to either Christ or the faithful (LG nn. 63-64).

Not so with *MC*. With clarity of terms and logic, it explains this double virginal motherhood, explicitly applying it both to the birth of Christ and to the spiritual birth of the faithful. By quoting a passage by Isaac of Stella, it adds a

clarification which is totally new: though both Mary and the Church are "mother of Christ," neither of the two generates the whole body without the other (MC 28).

5. *Liturgical and Anthropological Guidelines*

Another area where *MC* shows a further deepening and development of the Council teaching is the area of methodological and doctrinal orientation. I will not analyze the doctrinal content of the biblical and ecumenical guidelines since they strictly adhere to what is already found in the conciliar documents. Instead, I turn my attention to the liturgical and anthropological guidelines which contain some elements of development and practical action.

In its guidelines for the renewal of the devotion to Mary, *MC*, after taking its cue from the general indications of *LG, VIII*, re-echoes the concrete norm found in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, according to which the pious exercises must draw their inspiration from the liturgy, lead to it and be harmonized with it, taking into consideration the liturgical seasons (MC 31).

Following the guidance of such norm, *MC* criticizes the attitude of those who despise the pious devotional practices and tend to suppress them without replacing them with others. It also criticizes the attitude of those who allow such practices but combine them with liturgical actions, in a hybrid celebration. It concludes with a doctrinal orientation which can have a pastoral application: the renewal of the Marian devotion must lead, first of all, to distinguish and underline the nature proper to liturgical acts, but also to value the devotional practices, which are to be performed with the ecclesial communities, in order that they effectively become precious helps of the liturgy (MC 31).

These principles, besides being normative, have also a doctrinal, liturgical, and pastoral value. They represent in fact a clarifying development and a specific application to the Marian

field of the general norms contained both in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and in chapter VIII of *LG*.

Regarding the anthropological guidelines, it is important to look into *LG* first. *LG*, VIII does not use the term "anthropological" to describe the human and personal aspects of Mary vis-a-vis the salvific plan of God and the work of Christ and of the Church. Likewise, it does not present the doctrinal content, presupposed by such terms in a systematic exposition. Instead, it limits itself to enunciate all its constitutive elements here and there, as it describes the mystery of Mary. In this conciliar document, the person of the Blessed Virgin, though gratuitously predestined by God and therefore the subject of a unique privilege, emerges in all her human dimension of freedom and action, committed to and actively involved with all her strength in the mission entrusted to her.

The Council document then describes Mary's progress in faith and in her conformity to Christ, and the whole of her life as being characterized by a conscious obedience and personal responsibility. In so doing, it implicitly hints at the fundamental anthropological elements of devotion to Mary. It lays the doctrinal foundation necessary to present her as the model of religious behavior for all the Church. It also presents the imitation of Mary's virtues as one of the characteristics of the cult rendered to her. This is the conciliar orientation.

In developing this orientation, *MC* offers a deeper and systematic treatment of the importance of valuing the findings of human sciences, the anthropological conceptions and the socio-cultural realities of our time. All these lead to a deeper knowledge of man and woman, and of their mission both in the family and in public life. They also allow us to offer an image of Mary more understandable to the present-day mentality, and help renew the forms and the content of Marian devotional practices within the changed human sensitivity (*MC*, 34).

But it should not end there. If we want these data to contribute to the creation of an authentic picture of Mary, we must compare them with the picture which the Gospels offer of

the Mother of Jesus. And it is exactly along these lines that MC analyzes in broad lines the Gospel image of Mary, i.e., her personal commitment vis-a-vis God's salvific plan and her standing by Christ in his work. At the same time, MC avoids giving importance to those changing and conditioning elements which the blessed Virgin could derive from her life as a woman in the socio-cultural environment of her time and country.

This analysis which considers the salient and more significant Gospel episodes of the life and mission of Mary, leads MC to present her as the perfect model of the disciple of Christ. She is, therefore, a religious model which is valid even now for the expectations of the world of today (MC 35, 37).

This exemplarity synthesizes the doctrinal content of the three aspects of Marian exemplarity proposed by LG, VIII. It also shows a specific cultic concern. *Mary* is proposed as a *model for every Christian*, and this is an answer to the critical attitude of those who are not in favor of the cult to Mary, and find it difficult to see her as a valid model for today, since the horizon of her life is too narrow in comparison with the one of contemporary life.

Together with this proposal are two normative observations. In the first place, the Pope points out that the Church has, at all times, proposed Mary as a model for her religious attitude toward God's will. This is a permanent and universal value not conditioned by variable elements (MC 35). The other observation concerns the difficulties expressed by some against the Marian cult. MC grants that such difficulties may be justified vis-a-vis certain images of Mary found in popular religiosity or literature. But they lose their strength in front of the picture of Our Lady presented by the Gospels and described in the doctrinal data drawn from the explicitation of revelation (MC 36).

6. The Rosary

Let us examine what *MC* has to say about the Rosary. As a specific topic, it appears to be altogether new and independent from the theme of *LG, VIII*. But it fits well in that series of doctrinal topics treated by some documents of the modern and contemporary magisterium of the Popes, including Paul VI himself (*MC 44*). However, the theological/pastoral elements indicated to illustrate the nature, contents, features, and value of the Rosary are inspired by, and almost derived from, the Council

MC illustrates the pious practice of the Rosary with three fundamental doctrinal notes: *theological, liturgical and pastoral*.

With the theological note *MC* underlines the Gospel nature of the mysteries of the Rosary which make it a Christological and soteriological prayer in which the participation of Mary is also duly emphasized. The subdivision of those mysteries follows the chronological order of the biblical events, reflects the structure of the primitive proclamation of the faith (*kerygma*,) and presents the mystery of the Saviour according to the order of the Pauline hymn in the letter to the Philippians (*MC 44-46*). In his theological note there is no explicit reference to *LG, VIII*.

The liturgical note presents the Rosary as a prayer of praise, supplication, but especially contemplation, which is its essential element. *MC* also describes the structure of the Rosary, analyzing and explaining it, part by part and element by element. It then moves on to list the different ways in which the Rosary can be recited, i.e., privately, in the family, in the ecclesial community. But more significant is the aspect of doctrinal deepening of the relationship between the Rosary and the liturgy, a relationship which *MC* presents by recalling the general liturgical norms of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.

The Rosary can be considered a "popular shoot" sprouted from the liturgical trunk of the Church. However, it cannot be put on the same level as the liturgy, but it should not be

played against it, either. The Rosary, in fact, originates from the liturgy, leads to it, and has the communitarian form characterizing the liturgy. Its cultic nature, however, is such that it should never be recited in combination with liturgical actions.

The third note is of a pastoral nature. It pervades the whole theme, but it surfaces prominently in the preoccupation of *MC* to re-launch the custom, in many places almost completely lost, of reciting the Rosary in the home. The foundation of this pastoral note is the revitalization of the theological concept of the family as the "domestic church," expressed in the conciliar decree *Apostolicam Actuositatem* and in *LG*. It is in the Christian family where we must witness a re-flourishing of the recitation of the Rosary as one of the most excellent and efficacious community prayers. This pastoral note is characterized by great balance and an objective evaluation. For all its worth, however, the Rosary should never be presented to the faithful with exclusivism. A Christian must feel that he is totally free. He should be attracted to recite it only by its intrinsic beauty (*MC* 52-54).

The whole of the theological, liturgical and pastoral elements make these paragraphs on the Rosary a remarkable example of doctrinal synthesis.

III. Evaluation

By way of conclusion, I would like to point out the following:

1. Though the two documents have a different nature and aim, and consequently a different structure, in their basic Mariological content they show an explicit connection both in terms of explanations and new themes, which have flourished after the Council. *MC* contains also some elements of involution due to the pastoral demands of applying to particular situations to the general guidelines proclaimed by the Council.

2. From the liturgical viewpoint, *MC* marks a decisive step forward in comparison with *LG*, VIII. By drawing inspiration

not only from the indications of *LG*, but also from the norms of *Sacrosanctum concilium*, and the books of the reformed Roman rite, the Pope's document does not limit itself to the application of the doctrine for the reformation of Marian devotion in all its aspects, but also offers directives and liturgical reflections which deepen its meaning. From the pastoral viewpoint, *MC* contains an analysis of modern cultural and social situations. This allows it to apply concretely to particular cases the theological and liturgical principles of *LG*, *VIII*, and to promote in the Church the renewal of the Marian devotion and piety, especially through specific orientations and the revitalization of pious practices like the *Angelus* and the *Rosary*.

3. From the dogmatic viewpoint, it is clear that *MC* is not as important as *LG VIII*. And this is so not only because *MC* is a simple papal exhortation, while the chapter in question is part of a dogmatic constitution, but also because the scope of *MC* is the liturgical reform taking place in the Roman Church while the scope of *LG*, *VIII* is a doctrinal renewal concerning the whole Church. However, as far as the dogmatic value of its Marian doctrine is concerned, the one of *MC* is not inferior to that of the Council, since it reflects it integrally, explicates it and proposes it anew.

The Virgin Mary in Intellectual and Spiritual Formation

Introduction

1. The Second Extraordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops which was held in 1985 for "the celebration, verification and promotion of Vatican Council II"¹ affirmed that "special attention must be paid to the four major Constitutions of the Council"² in order to implement a programme "having as its object a new, more extensive and deeper knowledge and reception of the Council."³

On his part, His Holiness Pope John Paul II has explained that the Marian Year is meant "to promote a new and more careful reading of what the Council said about the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the mystery of Christ and of the Church."⁴

¹ SYNODUS EPISCOPORUM, *Ecclesia sub Verbo Dei mysteria Christi celebrans pro salute mundi. Relatio finalis* (Civitas Vaticana 1985) I, 2.

² *Ibid.*, I, 5.

³ *Ibid.*, I, 6.

⁴ IOANNES PAULUS PP. II, Litt., Enc. *Redemptoris Mater* (25 Martii 1987) 48: AAS 79 (1987) 427.

In the light of these developments the Congregation for Catholic Education addresses this present Circular Letter to theological faculties, to seminarians and to other centres of ecclesiastical studies in order to offer some reflections on the Blessed Virgin and to emphasize that the promotion of knowledge, research and piety with regard to Mary of Nazareth is not to be restricted to the Marian Year, but must be permanent since the exemplary value and the mission of the Virgin are permanent. The Mother of the Lord is a '*datum* of divine Revelation' and 'maternal presence' always operative in the life of the Church.⁵

I. The Virgin Mary and essential datum of the faith and of the life of the Church

The wealth of Marian doctrine

2. The history of dogma and theology bears witness to the Church's faith about and constant attention to the Virgin Mary and to her mission in the history of salvation. Such attention is already evident in some of the New Testament writings and in a number of pages by authors in the sub-apostolic age.

The first Symbols of the faith and, successively, the dogmatic formulas of the Councils of Constantinople (381), of Ephesus (431) and of Chalcedon (451) are evidence of the developing appreciation of the mystery of Christ, true God and true man, and at the same time of the progressive discovery of the role of Mary in the mystery of the Incarnation, a discovery which led to the dogmatic definition of Mary's divine and virginal motherhood.

The attention of the Church to Mary of Nazareth runs through the centuries, with many pronouncements about her being made. Without underestimating the blossoming which

⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 1. 25.

Mariological reflection produced in earlier periods of history, here we draw only on the more recent.

3. We recall the doctrinal importance of the dogmatic Bull *Ineffabilis Deus* (8th December 1854) of Pius IX, the Apostolic Constitution *Munificentissimus Deus* (1st November 1950) of Pius XII, and the dogmatic Constitution *Lumen gentium* (21st November 1964), chapter VIII of which is the fullest and most authoritative synthesis of Catholic doctrine about the Mother of the Lord ever to have been compiled by an ecumenical council. Also to be remembered for their theological and pastoral significance are other documents such as *Professio fidei* (30th June 1968), the Apostolic Exhortation *Signum magnum* (13th May 1967) and *Marialis cultus* (2nd February 1974) of Paul VI, as well as the Encyclical *Redemptoris Mater* (25th March 1987) of John Paul II.

4. It is also important to remember the influence of several 'movements' which in several ways and from various points of view raised interest in the person of the Virgin and considerably influenced the composition of the Constitution *Lumen gentium*: the biblical movement, which underlined the primary importance of the Sacred Scriptures for a presentation of the role of the Mother of the Lord, truly consonant with the revealed Word; the patristic movement, which put Mariology in contact with the thought of the Fathers of the Church so that its roots in Tradition could be more deeply appreciated; the ecclesiological movement, which contributed abundantly to the reconsideration and deepening appreciation of the relationship between Mary and the Church; the missionary movement, which progressively discovered the value of Mary of Nazareth, the first to be evangelised (cf. Lk 1:26-38) and the first evangeliser (cf. Lk 1:39-45), fount of inspiration in her commitment to the spreading of the Good News; the liturgical movement, which initiated a rich and rigorous study of the various liturgies and was able to document the way the rites of the Church testified to a heartfelt veneration towards Mary, the "ever-Virgin,

Mother of Jesus Christ, our Lord and God;"⁶ the ecumenical movement, which called for a more exact understanding of the person of the Virgin in the sources of Revelation, identifying more exactly the theological basis of Marian piety.

The Marian teaching of Vatican II

5. The importance of chapter VIII of *Lumen gentium* lies in the value of its doctrinal synthesis and in its formulation of doctrine about the blessed Virgin in the context of the mystery of Christ and of the Church. In this way the Council:

— allied itself to the patristic tradition which puts the history of salvation in pride of place as the model for every theological tract;

— stressed that the Mother of the Lord is not a peripheral figure in our faith and in the panorama of theology; rather, she, through her intimate participation in the history of salvation, "in a certain way unites and mirrors within herself the central truths of the faith;"⁷

— formulated a common vision for the different positions about the way in which Marian matters are to be treated.

A. In relation to the Mystery of Christ

6. According to the doctrine of the Council, the relationship between Mary and God the Father derives from her role in relation to Christ. "When the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman... so that we might receive adoption as sons" (Gal 4:5-5).⁸ Mary, therefore, the Handmaid of the Lord (cf. Lk 1:38.48), "received the Word of God in her heart and in her body, and gave Life to the world," becoming by grace "Mother of God."⁹ In view of this unique mis-

⁶ Missale Romanum, Prex Eucharistica I, *Communicantes* —

⁷ *Lumen gentium*, 65.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, 53.

sion, God the Father preserved her from original sin, enriched her with an abundance of heavenly gifts and, in his wise plan, "willed that the consent of the predestined mother should precede the Incarnation."¹⁰

7. The Council, illustrating the participation of Mary in the history of salvation, expounded the multiple aspects of the relationship between the Virgin and Christ:

— she is "the most excellent *fruit* of the redemption,"¹¹ having been "redeemed in an especially sublime manner by reason of the merits of her Son;"¹² thus the Fathers of the Church, the Liturgy and the Magisterium have called her "daughter of her Son"¹³ in the order of grace;

— she is the *mother*, who, accepting with faith the message of the Angel, conceived the Son of God in his human nature in her virginal womb through the action of the Holy Spirit and without the intervention of man; she brought him to birth, she fed him, tended him and educated him;¹⁴

— she is the faithful *handmaid* who "devoted herself totally... to the person and work of her Son;"¹⁵

— she is the *cooperator* with the Redeemer: "She conceived, brought forth and nourished Christ. She presented Him to the Father in the Temple, and was united with Him in suffering as He died on the cross. In an utterly singular way she cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope and burning charity in the Saviour's work of restoring supernatural life to souls;"¹⁶

— she is the *disciple* who, during the preaching of Christ "received his praise when, in extolling a kingdom beyond the

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹¹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 103.

¹² *Lumen gentium*, 53.

¹³ Cf. *Concilium Toletanum* XI, 48: DENZINGER — SCHÜMMETZER, *Enchiridion Symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* (Barcinone 1976) 536.

¹⁴ Cf. *Lumen gentium*, 57. 61.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 61. Cf. *ibid.*, 56. 58.

calculations of flesh and blood, he declared blessed (cf. Mk 3:35; Lk 11:27-28) those who heard and kept the Word of God, as she was faithfully doing (cf. Lk 2:19,51)."¹⁷

8. The relationship between Mary and the Holy Spirit is also to be seen in the light of Christ: "she is a kind of new substance and a new creature"¹⁸ of the Holy Spirit, and, in a special way, is His temple;¹⁹ through the power of the same Spirit (cf. Lk 1:35) she conceived in her virginal womb and gave Jesus Christ to the world.²⁰ During the Visitation the gifts of the Messiah flowed through her: the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Elizabeth, the joy of the future Precursor (cf. Lk 1:41).

Full of faith in the promise of the Son (cf. Lk 24:49), the Virgin is present, praying in the midst of the community of disciples: persevering with them in one accord, we see Mary "prayerfully imploring the gift of the Spirit, who had already overshadowed her in the Annunciation."²¹

B. In relation to the mystery of the Church

9. For Christ, and therefore also for the Church, God willed and predestined the Virgin from all eternity. Mary of Nazareth is:

— "hailed as a pre-eminent and altogether singular *member* of the Church"²² because of the gifts of grace which adorn her and because of the place she occupies in the mystical Body;

— *mother* of the Church, since she is Mother of Him who, from the first moment of the Incarnation in her virginal womb,

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 58.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, 53.

²⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 52. 63. 65.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 59.

²² *Ibid.*, 53.

unites to Himself as Head His Mystical Body which is the Church;²³

— *figure* of the Church, being virgin, spouse and mother, for the Church is virgin because its fidelity is whole and pure, spouse by its union with Christ, mother of the children of God;²⁴

— virtuous *model* of the Church, which is inspired by her in the exercise of faith, hope and charity²⁵ and in apostolic work;²⁶

— through her manifold acts of intercession, continuing to obtain the gifts of eternal salvation for the Church. By her maternal charity she cares for the brethren of her Son on their pilgrim way. Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked by the Church with the titles of *Advocate*, *Auxiliatrix*, *Adjutrix* and *Mediatrix*;²⁷

— assumed body and soul into heaven, “the *eschatological image* and first flowering” of the Church²⁸ which sees and admires in her “that which she herself wholly desires and hopes to be,”²⁹ finding in Mary “a sign of sure hope and solace.”³⁰

Post-Conciliar Marian developments

10. During the years immediately following the Council work by the Holy See, by many Episcopal Conferences, and by famous scholars, illustrating the teaching of the Council and responding to the problems that were emerging by and by, gave a new relevance and vigour to reflection on the Mother of the Lord.

²³ PAULUS PP. VI, *Allocutio tertia SS. Concilii periodo exacta* (21 Novembris 1964): AAS 56 (1964 1014-1018).

²⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 64.

²⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 53. 63. 65.

²⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, 65.

²⁷ Cf. *Lumen gentium*, 62.

²⁸ Cf. *Lumen gentium*, 68.

²⁹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 103.

³⁰ *Lumen gentium*, 68.

The Apostolic Exhortation "Marialis cultus" and the Encyclical "Redemptoris Mater" have made a particular contribution to this Mariological reawakening.

This is not the place to list completely all the various sectors of post-conciliar reflection on Mary. However it seems useful to illustrate some of them in summary as example and stimulus to further research.

11. Biblical exegesis has opened new frontiers for Mariology, even dedicating more attention to the inter-testamental literature. Some texts of the Old Testament, and especially the New Testament parts of Luke and Matthew on the infancy of Jesus, and the Johannine pericopes have been the object of continuous and deep study, the results of which have reinforced the biblical basis of Mariology and considerably enriched its themes.

12. In the field of dogmatic theology, the study of Mariology has contributed in the post-conciliar debate to a more suitable illustration of dogmas brought about in: the discussions on original sin (dogma of the Immaculate Conception), on the Incarnation of the Word (dogma of the virginal conception of Christ, dogma of the divine maternity), on grace and freedom (doctrine of the cooperation of Mary in the work of salvation), on the ultimate destiny of man (dogma of the Assumption). This has required critical study of the historical circumstances in which these dogmas were defined, and of the language in which they were formulated, understanding them in the light of the insights of biblical exegesis, of a more rigorous understanding of Tradition, of the questions raised by the human sciences and with a refutation of unfounded objections.

13. The study of Mariology has taken great interest in the problems connected with devotion to the Blessed Virgin. There has been research into the historical roots of the devotion,³¹

³¹ Six International Marian Congresses, organized by the Pontificia Accademia Mariana Internazionale, held between 1967 and 1987, systematically studied manifestations of Marian piety from the 1st to the 20th centuries.

study of its doctrinal foundation, of its place in the "one Christian devotion,"³² evaluation of its liturgical expression and its multiple manifestations of popular piety, and a deepening appreciation of their mutual relationship.

14. Mariology has also been especially considered in the field of ecumenism. With regard to the Churches of the Christian East, John Paul II has underlined "how profoundly the Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church and the ancient Churches of the East feel united by love and praise of the Theotokos;"³³ on his part, Dimitrios I, the Ecumenical Patriarch, has noted that "our two sister Churches have maintained throughout the centuries unextinguished the flame of devotion to the most venerated person of the all holy Mother of God,"³⁴ and he went on to say that "the subject of Mariology should occupy a central position in the theological dialogue between our Churches... for the full establishment of our ecclesial communion."³⁵

With regard to the Reformation Churches, the post-conciliar period has been characterized by dialogue and by the thrust towards mutual understanding. This has brought an end to the centuries-old mistrust, and has led to a better knowledge of respective doctrinal positions; it has also led to a number of common initiatives in research. Thus, at least in some cases, it has been possible to understand both the dangers in 'obscuring' the person of Mary in ecclesial life, and also the necessity of holding to the data of Revelation.³⁶

During these years, in the area of inter-religious discourse, Mariology has studied Judaism, source of the "Daughter of

³² PAULUS PP. VI, Adh. Ap. *Marialis cultus* (2 Februarii 1974) Intr.: AAS 66 (1974) 114.

³³ *Redemptoris Mater*, 31.

³⁴ DIMITRIOS I, *Homily given on 7th December 1987 during the celebration of Vespers at St. Mary Major* (Rome): *L'Osservatore Romano* (7-8 December 1987) 6.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

³⁶ The Ecumenical Directory provides guidelines for a Mariological formation which is attentive to ecumenical needs: SECRETARIATUS AD CHRISTIANORUM UNITATEM FOVENDAM. *Spiritus Domini* (16 Aprilis 1970) AAS 62 (1970), 705-724.

Sion." It has also studied Islam, in which Mary is venerated as holy Mother of Christ.

15. Post-conciliar Mariology has given renewed attention to anthropology. The Popes have repeatedly presented Mary of Nazareth as the supreme expression of human freedom in the cooperation of man with God, who "in the sublime event of the Incarnation of his Son, entrusted himself to the ministry, the free and active ministry of a woman."³⁷

In the convergence of the data of faith and the data of the anthropological sciences, when these turn their attention to Mary of Nazareth, one understands more clearly that the Virgin is both the highest historical realization of the Gospel³⁸ and the woman who, through her self-control, her sense of responsibility, her openness to others and to the spirit of service, her strength and her love, is the most completely realized on the human level.

For example, the necessity has been noted:

— of drawing out the relevance of the human reality of the Virgin to people in our own time, stressing the fact that she is a historical person, a humble Jewish girl;

— of showing forth the permanent and universal human values of Mary in such a way that discourse about her throws light on discourse about man.

In this context, the subject of 'Mary and women' has been treated many times, but it is susceptible of many different approaches, and it is a long way from being exhausted and from yielding its fine fruits; and it awaits further developments.

16. New themes and treatments from new points of view have emerged in post-conciliar Mariology; the relationship between the Holy Spirit and Mary; the problem of inculturation

³⁷ *Redemptoris Mater*, 46.

³⁸ Cf. III CONFERENCIA GENERAL DEL EPISCOPADO LATINO-AMERICANO (PUEBLA 1979), *La evangelización en el presente y en el futuro de America Latina* (Bogotá 1979) 282.

of Marian doctrine and forms of Marian piety; the value of the *via pulchritudinis* for advancing in knowledge of Mary and the capacity of the Virgin to stimulate the highest expressions of literature and art; the discovery of the significance of Mary in relation to some urgent pastoral needs in our time (pro-life, the option for the poor, the proclamation of the Word...); the revaluation of the "Marian dimension of the life of a disciple of Christ."³⁹

The Encyclical 'Redemptoris Mater' of John Paul II

17. In the wake of *Lumen gentium* and of the magisterial documents which followed the Council comes the Encyclical *Redemptoris Mater* of John Paul II, (which confirms the Christological and ecclesiological approach to Mariology, which necessarily reveals the wide range of its contents.

Through a prolonged meditation on the exclamation of Elizabeth, "Blessed is she who believed". (Lk 1:45) the Holy Father thoroughly studies the multiple aspects of the 'heroic faith' of the Virgin, which he considers "a kind of key which unlocks for us the innermost reality of Mary,"⁴⁰ and he illustrates the 'maternal presence' of the Virgin in the pilgrimage of faith according to two lines of thought, one theological, the other pastoral and spiritual:

—the Virgin was actively present in the life of the Church — at its beginning (the mystery of the Incarnation), in its being set up (the mystery of Cana and of the Cross) and in its manifestation (the mystery of Pentecost) — she is an 'active presence' throughout the Church's history, being "at the centre of the pilgrim Church,"⁴¹ performing a multiple function: of cooperation in the birth of the faithful in the life of grace, of exemplarity in the following of Christ, of 'maternal mediation';⁴²

³⁹ *Redemptoris Mater*, 45.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁴¹ Title of part II of the Encyclical *Redemptoris Mater*.

⁴² Title of part III of the Encyclical *Redemptoris Mater*.

— the deed by which Christ entrusted the Disciple to the Mother and the Mother to the Disciple (cf. Jn 19:25-27) has established the very closest relationship between Mary and the Church. The will of the Lord has been to assign a 'Marian note' to the physiognomy of the Church, its pilgrimage, its pastoral activity; and in the spiritual life of each disciple, says the Holy Father, a 'Marian dimension' is inherent.⁴³

Redemptoris Mater as a whole can be considered the Encyclical of the 'maternal and active presence' of Mary in the life of the Church:⁴⁴ in the pilgrimage of faith, in the worship of the Lord, in the work of evangelization, in progressive configuration to Christ, in ecumenical endeavour.

The contribution of Mariology to theological research

18. The history of theology shows that an understanding of the mystery of the Virgin contributes to a more profound understanding of the mystery of Christ, of the Church and of the vocation of man.⁴⁵ Similarly, the close link of the Virgin with Christ, with the Church and with humanity means that the truth about Christ, the Church and man throws light on the truth about Mary of Nazareth.

19. In Mary in fact "everything is relative to Christ."⁴⁶ In consequence, "only in the mystery of Christ is her mystery fully made clear."⁴⁷ The more the Church deepens her appreciation of the mystery of Christ, the more it understands the singular dignity of the Mother of the Lord and her role in the history of salvation. But, in a certain measure, the contrary is also true: the Church, through Mary, that "exceptional witness to the mystery of Christ,"⁴⁸ has deepened its understanding of the mystery of the kenosis of the "Son of God" (Lk 3:38;

⁴³ Cf. *Redemptoris Mater*, 45-46.

⁴⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 1. 25.

⁴⁵ Cf. *Lumen gentium*, 65.

⁴⁶ *Marialis cultus*, 25.

⁴⁷ *Redemptoris Mater*, 4; cf. *ibid.*, 19.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 27.

cf. Phil 2:5-8) who became in Mary "Son of Adam" (Lk 3:38), and has recognized more clearly the historical roots of the "Son of David" (cf. Lk 1:32), his place among the Hebrew people, his membership of the "poor of Yahweh."

20. Everything about Mary — privileges, mission, destiny — is also intrinsically referable to the mystery of the Church. In the measure in which the mystery of the Church is understood the more distinctly does the mystery of Mary become apparent. Contemplating Mary, the Church recognizes glory, and the pilgrimage of faith which it must follow.⁴⁹

21. Finally, in Mary everything is referable to man, to all times and all places. She has a universal and permanent value. She is "our true sister,"⁵⁰ and "because she belongs to the offspring of Adam she is one with all human beings in their need for salvation,"⁵¹ Mary does not disappoint the expectations of contemporary man. Because she is the "perfect follower of Christ"⁵² and the woman most completely realized as a person, she is a perennial source of fruitful inspiration.

For the disciples of the Lord the Virgin is a great symbol: a person who achieves the most intimate aspirations of her intellect, of her will and of her heart, being open through Christ in the Spirit to the transcendence of God in filial dedication, taking root in history through hardworking service of others.

As Paul VI wrote, "Contemplated in the episodes of the Gospels and in the reality which she already possesses in the City of God, the Blessed Virgin Mary offers a calm vision and reassuring word to modern man, torn as he often is between anguish and hope, defeated by the sense of his own limitations and assailed by limitless aspirations, troubled in his mind and divided in his heart, uncertain before the riddle of death, oppressed by loneliness while yearning for fellowship, a prey to

⁴⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, 2.

⁵⁰ *Marialis cultus*, 56.

⁵¹ *Lumen gentium*, 53.

⁵² *Marialis cultus*, 35.

boredom and disgust. She shows forth the victory of hope over anguish, of fellowship over solitude, of peace over anxiety, of joy and beauty over boredom and disgust, of eternal visions over earthly ones, of life over death."⁵³

22. "Among all believers she is like a 'mirror' in which are reflected in the most profound and limpid way 'the mighty works of God (Acts 2:11),'⁵⁴ which theology has the task of illustrating. The dignity and importance of Mariology, therefore, derive from the dignity and importance of Christology, from the value of ecclesiology and pneumatology, from the meaning of supernatural anthropology and from eschatology: Mariology is closely connected with these tracts.

II. The Virgin Mary in intellectual and spiritual formation

Research in Mariology

23. The data expounded in the first part of this Letter show that Mariology is alive and active in relevant questions in matters doctrinal and pastoral. However it is necessary that the study of Mariology, together with attention to the pastoral problems which are emerging by and by, attend to rigorous research, conducted according to scientific criteria.

24. The words of the Council apply: "Sacred theology rests on the written word of God, together with sacred Tradition, as its primary and perpetual foundation. By scrutinizing in the light of faith all truth stored up in the mystery of Christ, theology is most powerfully strengthened and constantly rejuvenated by that word."⁵⁵ The study of the sacred Scriptures, therefore, must be the soul of Mariology.⁵⁶

25. Further, the study of Tradition is essential to research in Mariology because, as Vatican II teaches, "sacred Tradition

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁵⁴ *Redemptoris Mater*, 25.

⁵⁵ *Dei Verbum*, 24.

⁵⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, 24; *Optatam totius*, 16.

and sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God, which is committed to the Church."⁵⁷ The study of Tradition shows how particularly fruitful in quality and quantity is the Marian patrimony of the various Liturgies and of the Fathers of the Church.

26. Research into Scripture and Tradition, conducted according to the most fruitful methods and with the most reliable instruments of critical enquiry, must be guided by the Magisterium since "the task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church."⁵⁸ This research must also integrate and be strengthened by the more secure fruits of learning in anthropology and the human sciences.

The teaching of Mariology

27. Considering the importance of the Virgin in the history of salvation and in the life of the people of God, and after promptings of Vatican Council II and of the Popes, it would be unthinkable that the teaching of Mariology be obscured today: it is necessary therefore that it given its just place in seminaries and theological faculties.

28. Such teaching, consisting of a 'systematic treatment' will be:

a) *organic*, that is inserted adequately in the programme of studies of the theological curriculum;

b) *complete*, so that the person of the Virgin be considered in the whole history of salvation, that is in her relation to God; to Christ, the Word incarnate, saviour and mediator; to the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier and giver of life; to the Church, sacrament of salvation; to man — in his origins and his development in the life of grace, and his destiny to glory;

⁵⁷ *Dei Verbum*, 10.

⁵⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, 10.

c) *suited* to the various types of institution (centres of religious culture, seminaries, theological faculties...) and to the level of the students: future priests and teachers of Mariology, animators of Marian piety in the dioceses, those who are responsible for formation in the religious life, catechists, those who give conferences, and the many who want to deepen their knowledge of Mary.

29. Teaching thus given will avoid one-sided presentations of the figure and mission of Mary, presentations which are detrimental to the whole vision of her mystery. Sound teaching will be a stimulus to deep research — in seminaries and through the writing of licence and doctoral theses — into the sources of Revelation and the documents. Mariological study can also profit from interdisciplinary teaching.

30. It is necessary, therefore, that every centre of theological study — according to its proper physiognomy — plan that in its *Ratio studiorum* the teaching of Mariology be included, having the characteristics listed above; and consequently, with the teachers of Mariology being properly qualified.

31. With regard to this latter point, we would draw attention to the Norms of the Apostolic Constitution — *Sapientia Christiana* which provide for licences and doctorates in theology, specializing in Mariology.⁵⁹

Mariology and pastoral service

32. Like every other theological discipline, Mariology has a precious contribution to make to pastoral life. *Marialis cul-*

⁵⁹ This Congregation has been pleased to note the dissertations for the licence or doctorate in theology which have treated Mariological themes. Persuaded of the importance of such studies and desiring their increase, in 1979 the Congregation instituted the "licence or doctorate in theology with specialization in Mariology" [cf. IOANNES PAULUS PP. II, Const. Ap. *Sapientia Christiana* (15 Aprilis 1979) Appendix II ad atr. 64 "Ordinationum", n. 12: AAS 71 (1979) 520]. Two centres offer this specialization: the Pontifical "Marianum" Faculty of Theology in Rome, and the International Marian Research Institute, University of Dayton, Ohio, U.S.A., which is linked to the "Marianum."

tus affirms that "devotion to the blessed Virgin, subordinated to worship of the divine Saviour and in connection with it, also has great pastoral effectiveness and constitutes a force for renewing Christian living."⁶⁰ Also, Mariology is called to make its contribution to the work of evangelization.⁶¹

33. Mariological research, teaching and pastoral service tend to the promotion of the authentic Marian piety which should characterize the life of every Christian, especially those who are dedicated to theological studies and who are preparing for the priesthood.

The Congregation for Catholic Education draws the attention of Seminary Educators to the necessity of promoting an authentic Marian piety among seminarians who will one day be principal workers in the pastoral life of the Church.

Vatican II, treating the necessity of seminarians having a profound spiritual life, recommended that seminarians "should love and honour the most Blessed Virgin Mary, who was given as a mother to His disciple by Christ Jesus as He hung dying on the cross."⁶²

For its part, this Congregation, conforming to the thought of the Council, has underlined many times the value of Marian piety in the formation of seminarians:

— in the *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis* the Congregation requests the seminarian "to have a fervent love for the Virgin Mary, Mother of Christ, who was in a special way associated with the work of Redemption;"⁶³

— in the *Circular letter concerning some of the more urgent aspects of spiritual formation in seminaries* the Congregation noted that "there is nothing better than true devotion to Mary,

⁶⁰ *Marialis cultus*, 57.

⁶¹ Cf. *Sapientia Christiana*. 3.

⁶² *Optatam totius*, 8.

⁶³ CONGREGATIO PRO INSTITUTIONE CATHOLICA, *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis* (Romae 1985) 54 e.

⁶⁴ ID., *Circular letter concerning some of the more urgent aspects of spiritual formation in seminaries*, II. 4.

conceived as an ever more complete following of her example, to introduce one to the joy of believing,"⁶⁴ which is so important for anyone who will spend the rest of his life in the continual exercise of faith;

The Code of Canon Law, treating of the formation of candidates for the priesthood, recommends devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary so that nourished by the exercises of piety the students may acquire the spirit of prayer and be strengthened in their vocation.⁶⁵

Conclusion

34. With this Letter the Congregation for Catholic Education wishes to reaffirm the necessity of furnishing seminarians and students of all centres of ecclesiastical studies with Mariological formation which embraces study, devotion and lifestyle. They must:

a) acquire a *complete and exact knowledge* of the doctrine of the Church about the Virgin Mary which enables them to distinguish between true and false devotion, and to distinguish authentic doctrine from its deformations arising from excess or neglect; and above all of disclosing to them the way to understand and to contemplate the supreme beauty of the glorious Mother of Christ;

b) nourish an *authentic love* for the Mother of the Saviour and Mother of mankind, which expresses itself in genuine forms of devotion and is led to "the imitation of her virtues,"⁶⁶ above all to a decisive commitment to live according to the commandments of God and to do His will (cf. Mt 7:21; Jn 15:14);

c) develop the *capacity to communicate* such love to the Christian people through speech, writing and example, so that their Marian piety may be promoted and cultivated.

There are numerous advantages to be derived from an adequate Mariological formation in which the ardour of faith and the commitment to study are harmoniously composed:

⁶⁵ Cf. *Codex Iuris Canonici*, can. 246 §3.

⁶⁶ *Lumen gentium*, 67.

— on the *intellectual level*, so that the truth about God, about Man, about Christ and about the Church are understood the more in understanding the “truth about Mary”;

— on the *spiritual level*, so that such formation will help a Christian to welcome the Mother of Jesus and “bring her into everything that makes up his inner life;”⁶⁷

— on the *pastoral level*, so that the Mother of the Lord may be strongly felt as a presence of grace among the Christian people.

36. The study of Mariology holds as its ultimate aim the acquisition of a sound Marian spirituality, and essential aspect of Christian spirituality. On his pilgrim way to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:13), knowing the mission which God has entrusted to the Virgin in the history of salvation and in the life of the Church, the Christian takes her as ‘mother and teacher of the spiritual life:’⁶⁸ with her and like her, in the light of the Incarnation and of Easter, he impresses on his very existence a decisive orientation towards God through Christ in the Spirit, in order to express by his life in the Church the radical message of the Good News, especially the commandment of love (cf. Jn 15:12).

Your Eminences, Your Excellencies, Reverend Rectors of Seminaries, Reverend Presidents and Deans of ecclesiastical faculties, we trust that these brief guidelines will be responsibly received by teachers and students and will bring forth welcome fruits.

Wishing you the abundance of God’s blessings, we remain,

Yours devotedly in Our Lord,

William Cardinal Baum
Prefect

Antonio M. Javierre Ortas
Tit. Archbishop of Meta
Secretary

Rome, 25th March 1988

⁶⁷ *Redemptoris Mater*, 45.

⁶⁸ Cf. *Marialis cultus*, 21; *Collectio missarum de b. Maria Virgine*, form. 32.

Concerts in Churches*

I. Music in churches other than during liturgical celebrations

1. The interest shown in music is one of the marks of contemporary culture. The ease with which it is possible to listen at home to classical works, by means of radio, records, cassettes and television, has in no way diminished the pleasure of attending live concerts, but on the contrary has actually enhanced it. This is encouraging, because music and song contribute to elevating the human spirit.

The increase in the number of concerts in general has in some countries given rise to a more frequent use of churches for such events. Various reasons are given for this: local needs, where for example it is not easy to find suitable places; acoustical considerations, for which churches are often ideal; aesthetic reasons, namely the desire to perform in beautiful surroundings; reasons of fittingness, that is, to present the works in the setting for which they were originally written; purely practical reasons, for example facilities for organ recitals: in a word, churches are considered to be in many ways apt places for holding a concert.

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2. Alongside this contemporary development a new situation has arisen in the church.

The *Scholae cantorum* have not had frequent occasion to execute their traditional repertory of sacred polyphony music within the context of a liturgical celebration.

For this reason, the initiative has been taken to perform this sacred music in church in the form of a concert. The same has happened with Gregorian chant, which has come to form part of concert programmes both inside and outside of church.

Another important factor emerges from the so-called "spiritual concerts," so termed because the music performed in them can be considered as religious, because of the theme chosen, or on account of the nature of the texts set to music, or because of the venue for the performance.

Such events are in some cases accompanied by readings, prayers and moments of silence. Given such features they can almost be compared to a "devotional exercise".

3. The increased numbers of concerts held in churches has given rise to doubts in the minds of pastors and rectors of churches as to the extent to which such events are really necessary.

A general opening of churches for concerts could give rise to complaints by a number of the faithful, yet on the other hand an outright refusal could lead to some misunderstanding.

Firstly it is necessary to consider the significance and purpose of a Christian church. For this, the Congregation for Divine Worship considers it opportune to propose to the episcopal conferences, and in so far as it concerns them, to the national commissions of liturgy and music, some observations and interpretations of the canonical norms concerning the use of churches for various kinds of music: music and song, music of religious inspiration and music of non-religious character.

4. At this juncture it is necessary to reread recent documents which treat of the subject, in particular the Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Instruction *Musicae Sacram*, of 5 March 1967, the Instruction *Liturgicae Instaurationes* of 5 September 1970, in addition to the prescriptions of the Code of Canon Law, cann. 1210, 1213 and 1222.

In this present letter the primary concern is with musical performances outside of the celebration of the liturgy.

The Congregation for Divine Worship wishes in this way to help individual bishops to make valid pastoral decisions, bearing in mind the socio-cultural situation of the area.

II. Points for consideration

The character and purpose of churches

5. According to tradition as expressed in the rite for the dedication of a church and altar, churches are primarily places where the People of God gather, and are "made one as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one, and are the Church, the temple of God built with living stones, in which the Father is worshipped in spirit and in truth." Rightly so, from ancient times the name "church" has been extended to the building in which the Christian community unites to hear the word of God, to pray together, to receive the sacraments, to celebrate the Eucharist and to prolong its celebration in the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (cf. Order of the Dedication of a Church, ch. II, 1).

Churches, however, cannot be considered simply as public places for any kind of meeting. They are sacred places, that is, "set apart" in a permanent way for Divine Worship by their dedication and blessing.

As visible constructions, churches are signs of the pilgrim Church on earth; they are images that proclaim the heavenly Jerusalem, places in which are actualized the mystery of the

communion between man and God. Both in urban areas and in the countryside, the church remains the house of God, and the sign of his dwelling among men. It remains a sacred place, even when no liturgical celebration is taking place.

In a society disturbed by noise, especially in the big cities, churches are also an oasis where people gather, in silence and in prayer, to seek peace of soul and the light of faith.

That will only be possible in so far as churches maintain their specific identity. When churches are used for ends other than those for which they were built, their role as a sign of the Christian mystery is put at risk, with more or less serious harm to the teaching of the faith and to the sensitivity of the People of God, according to the Lord's words: "My house is a house of prayer" (Lk 19:46).

Importance of sacred music

6. Sacred music, whether vocal or instrumental, is of importance. Music is sacred "in so far as it is composed for the celebration of divine worship and possesses integrity of form" (*Musicam Sacram* n. 4a). The Church considers it a "treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art," recognizing that it has a "ministerial function in the service of the Lord" (cf. *SC* n. 112); and recommending that it be "preserved and fostered with great care" (*SC* n. 114).

Any performance of sacred music which takes place during a celebration, should be fully in harmony with that celebration. This often means that musical compositions which date from a period when the active participation of the faithful was not emphasized as the source of the authentic Christian spirit (*SC* n. 14; Pius X *Tra le sollecitudini*) are no longer to be considered suitable for inclusion within liturgical celebration.

Analogous changes of perception and awareness have occurred in other areas involving the artistic aspect of divine worship: for example, the sanctuary has been restructured, with

the president's chair, the ambo and the altar *versus populum*. Such changes have not been made in a spirit of disregard for the past, but have been deemed necessary in the pursuit of an end of greater importance, namely, the active participation of the faithful. The limitation which such changes impose on certain musical works can be overcome by arranging for their performance outside the context of liturgical celebration in a concert of sacred music.

Organ

7. The performance of purely instrumental pieces on the organ during liturgical celebration today is limited. In the past the organ took the place of the active participation of the faithful, and reduced the people to the role of "silent and inert spectators" of the celebration (Pius XI, *Divini Cultus*, n. 9).

It is legitimate for the organ to accompany and sustain the singing either of the assembly or the choir within the celebration. On the other hand, the organ must never be used to accompany the prayers or chants of the celebrant nor the readings proclaimed by the reader or the deacon.

In accordance with tradition, the organ should remain silent during penitential seasons (Lent and Holy Week), during Advent and the Liturgy for the Dead. When, however, there is real pastoral need, the organ can be used to support the singing.

It is fitting that the organ be played before and after a celebration as a preparation and conclusion of the celebration.

It is of considerable importance that in all churches, and especially those of some importance, there should be trained musicians and instruments of good quality. Care should be given to the maintenance of organs and respect shown towards their historical character both in form and tone.

III. Practical directives

8. The regulation of the use of churches is stipulated by canon 1210 of the Code of Canon Law:

"In a sacred place only those things are to be permitted which serve to exercise or promote worship, piety and religion. Anything out of harmony with the holiness of the place is forbidden. The Ordinary may, however, for individual cases, permit other uses, provided they are not contrary to the sacred character of the place."

The principle that the use of the church must not offend the sacredness of the place determines criteria by which the doors of a church may be opened to a concert of sacred or religious music, as also the concomitant exclusion of every other type of music. The most beautiful symphonic music, for example, is not in itself of religious character. The definition of sacred or religious music depends explicitly on the original intended use of the musical pieces or songs, and likewise on their content. It is not legitimate to provide for the execution in the church of music which is not of religious inspiration and which was composed with a view to performance in a certain precise secular context, irrespective of whether the music would be judged classical or contemporary of high quality or of a popular nature. On the one hand, such performances would not respect the sacred character of the church, and on the other, would result in the music being performed in an unfitting context.

It pertains to the ecclesiastical authority to exercise without constraint its governance of sacred places (cf. canon 1213), and hence to regulate the use of churches in such a way as to safeguard their sacred character.

9. Sacred music, that is to say, music which was composed for the liturgy, but which for various reasons can no longer be performed during a liturgical celebration, and religious music, that is to say, music inspired by the text of Sacred Scripture or

the liturgy and which has reference to God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Saints or the Church, may both find a place in the church building, but outside liturgical celebration. The playing of the organ or other musical performance, whether vocal or instrumental, may "serve to promote piety or religion." In particular they may:

a. prepare for the major liturgical feasts, or lend to these a more festive character beyond the moment of actual celebration;

b. bring out the articular character of the different liturgical seasons;

c. create in churches a setting of beauty conducive to meditation, so as to arouse even in those who are distant from the Church an openness to spiritual values;

d. create a context which favours and makes accessible the proclamation of God's Word, as for example, a sustained reading of the Gospel;

e. keep alive the treasures of Church music which must not be lost; musical pieces and songs composed for the liturgy but which cannot in any way be conveniently incorporated into liturgical celebrations in modern times; spiritual music, such as oratorios and religious cantatas which can still serve as vehicles for spiritual communication;

f. assist visitors and tourists to grasp more fully the sacred character of a church, by means of organ concerts at pre-arranged times.

10. When the proposal is made that there should be a concert in a church, the Ordinary is to grant the permission *per modum actus*. These concerts should be occasional events. This excludes permission for a series of concerts, for example in the case of a festival or a cycle of concerts.

When the Ordinary considers it to be necessary, he can, in the conditions foreseen in the Code of Canon Law, can. 1222

par. 2, designate a church that is no longer used for divine service, to be an "auditorium" for the performance of sacred or religious music, and also of music not specifically religious but in keeping with the character of the place.

In this task the bishop should be assisted by the Diocesan Commission for Liturgy and Sacred Music.

In order that the sacred character of a church be conserved in the matter of concerts, the Ordinary can specify that:

a. Requests are to be made in writing, in good time, indicating the date and time of the proposed concert, the programme giving the works and the names of the composers.

b. After having received the authorization of the Ordinary, the rectors and parish priests of the churches should arrange details with the choir and orchestra so that the requisite norms are observed.

c. Entrance to the church must be without payment and open to all.

d. The performers and the audience must be dressed in a manner which is fitting to the sacred character of the place.

e. The musicians and the singers should not be placed in the sanctuary. The greatest respect is to be shown to the altar, the president's chair and the ambo.

f. The Blessed Sacrament should be, as far as possible, reserved in a side chapel or in another safe and suitably adorned place (cf. C.I.C., can. 938, par. 4).

g. The concert should be presented or introduced not only with historical or technical details, but also in a way that fosters a deeper understanding and an interior participation on the part of the listeners.

h. The organizer of the concert shall declare in writing that he accepts legal responsibility for expenses involved, for leaving the church in order, and for any possible damage incurred.

11. The above practical directives should be of assistance to the bishops and rectors of churches in their pastoral responsibility to maintain the sacred character of their churches, designed for sacred celebrations, prayer and silence.

Such indications should not be interpreted as a lack of interest in the art of music.

The treasury of sacred music is a witness to the way in which the Christian faith promotes culture.

By underlining the true value of sacred or religious music, Christian musicians and members of "scholae cantorum" should feel that they are being encouraged to continue this tradition and to keep it alive for the service of the faith, as expressed by the Second Vatican Council in its message to artists:

"Do not hesitate to put your talent at the service of the divine truth. The world in which we live has need of beauty in order not to lose hope. Beauty, like truth, fills the heart with joy. And this, thanks to your hands" (cf. Second Vatican Council, Message to Artists, 8 December 1965).

Rome, 5 November 1987.

Paul Augustine Card. Mayer, O.S.B.
Prefect

Virgilio Noè
Titular Archbishop of Vancaria
Secretary

Communion during the Mass

One topic very much discussed in our periodical meetings is Holy Communion. Some priests insist that the Hosts for Holy Communion during a given Mass are to be consecrated during that same Mass. We all admit that perhaps theoretically it can be sustained. But in practice, it is impossible. What is the official teaching of the Church, if there is anything issued on the matter?

A Parish Priest

FORTUNATELY, WE CAN OFFER our consultant and other parish priests what before and after the liturgical reform has been published by the Holy See on the matter. We agree with the consultant parish priest that in practice it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to carry out the Church's desire on this matter. The big number of communicants in most of our parishes does not allow them to do what in small parishes and oratories can be easily done.

Pius XII in his Encyclical *Mediator Dei*, issued on November 20, 1947, while dealing with this matter, mentions the testimony of Benedict XIV, saying: "Our predecessor of immortal memory Benedict XIV, wishing to emphasize and throw fuller light upon the truth that the faithful by receiving the Holy Eucharist become partakers of the divine Sacrifice itself, praises the devotion of those who, when attending Mass, not only elicit a desire to receive Holy Communion, but also want to be nourished by *Hosts consecrated during the Mass*, even though, as he himself states, they really and truly take part in the Sacrifice should they receive a Host which has been duly consecrated at a previous Mass. He writes as follows: 'And although in addition to those to whom the celebrant gives a *portion of the Victim he himself has offered in the Mass*, they also participate in the same Sacrifice to whom a priest distributes the Blessed Sacrament that has been reserved; however the Church has not for this reason ever forbidden, nor does she now forbids, a celebrant to satisfy the piety and just request of those who, when present at Mass, want to become partakers of *the same Sacrifice*, because they likewise offer it after their own manner, nay more, she approves of it and desires that it should not be omitted and would reprehend those priests through whose fault and negligence this participation would be denied to the faithful'" (n. 118).

And Pius XII adds: "Now it is very fitting, as the liturgy otherwise lays down, that the people receive Holy Communion after the priest has partaken of the divine repast upon the altar; and, as we have written above, they should be commended who, when present at Mass, receive *Hosts consecrated at the same Mass*, so that it is actually verified, 'that as many of us, as, at this altar, shall partake of and receive the most Holy Body and Blood of the Son, may be filled with every heavenly blessing and grace.'" (n. 121).

The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* makes the following statement: "That more complete form of participation in the Mass by which the faithful, after the priest's Communion,

receives the Lord's Body *from the same sacrifice*, is strongly endorsed" (n. 55).

Likewise the Sacred Congregation for the Divine Worship in the Instruction *Eucharisticum Mysterium* issued on May 25, 1967, says in number 31: "In order that the Communion may stand out more clearly even through signs as a participation in the sacrifice actually being celebrated, steps should be taken that enable the faithful to receive *Hosts consecrated at that Mass*."

In the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, number 56, we read: "It is most desirable that the faithful receive the Lord's Body from *Hosts consecrated at the same Mass*... Communion is thus a clearer sign of sharing in the sacrifice that is actually celebrated."

In view of the foregoing statements issued by the Church herself, it is beyond any doubt that the Church's desire is that the Hosts for Holy Communion during the Mass may be consecrated in that Mass. But the question is: is it easy to do this? One factor, however, is to be taken into account, namely the number of communicants. It would be relatively easy to follow the Church's desire in places where a small number of faithful approach the communion rail during Mass. They can even be requested to approach and place a host each in the ciborium for consecration. This can easily be done if all come to the chapel or oratory on time before the Mass. The priest can easily know the number of communicants. But in places where the congregation is numerous, not even an approximate number of hosts can be consecrated. Considering the big congregations gathering in our churches in the Philippines, especially in the cities, how can the priest know the number of faithful who will communicate?

We are fully aware of the possibility of always using Hosts consecrated in previous Masses. But what will be the reaction of our faithful when they see that some communicants are given Hosts consecrated during that Mass, while others are given Hosts consecrated in previous Masses? If they don't react adversely, well and good. This will be the only solution.

At any rate, a sound instruction on the matter given to our faithful will facilitate putting into practice the Church's desire. All priests should follow whatever the local Hierarchy might establish on this matter.

The “Aba Ginoong Maria”

On several occasions I have discussed our devotion to the Blessed Mother with a friend of mine, affiliated to a non-Catholic denomination. She has brought up the fact that our Tagalog translation of the Hail Mary is not correct. We say: “Aba Ginoong Maria...” Obviously, she says, the term “Ginoo,” applied to Mary, is inaccurate. It refers only to men, not to women. The word used for women is “Ginang.” I don’t know really what to say about this. I was always taught to say: “Aba Ginoong Maria...” and everybody does the same. Somebody has told me to write you and ask what is the correct Tagalog translation of the “Hail Mary...”

A Member of the UST Pax Romana

In order to clarify the problem posed by the member of the UST Pax Romana, let us start by saying that the first part of our *Hail Mary* — *Aba Ginoong Maria* is the greeting addressed by the Angel to the Blessed Mother, when he announced to her that she was chosen by God to be the Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ. The second portion is the greeting of St. Elizabeth to the Blessed Virgin during the Visitation.

With regards to the first part of the *Hail Mary* the Vulgate Latin translation gives us the following version: "*Ave, gratia plena...*" The name of Our Lady was not even mentioned at this point by the Angel. The English translation has: "*Greetings, favoured one...*" The Spanish translation is: "*Dios te salve, llena de gracia...*" The Tagalog version of Mons. Abriol is: "*Aba, puspos ka ng biyaya...*"

As we can see, none of the various Bible translations of the angelic greeting to the Virgin Mary, above mentioned, has a term equivalent to the Tagalog word *Ginoo* used in our prayer to the Blessed Mother.

So much for the biblical basis of the angelic prayer *Hail Mary* — *Aba Ginoong Maria*. The question now is: How and when the word *Ginoo* was introduced in our Tagalog prayer? Was it already used by the first Spanish Missionaries or was it inserted later on? Although its origin is not clear, one thing, however, is certain. All the catechisms and prayer books we have come across have the word *Ginoo*. *The Doctrina Christiana, en lengua española y tagala*, printed in Manila in 1593, which probably is the oldest edition containing the angelic prayer, gives us the following translation:

"*Aba guinoo Maria matoua cana, napopono ca nang gracia, ang panginoon dios, ae, nasayyo. Bucod cang pinagpala sa babaying lahat.*"

Likewise we have done some research about the word *guinoo* itself and discovered the following:

A manuscript of the *Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala*, which is supposed to have been started by the famous Dominican Tagalist, Fr. Blancas de S. José (†1614), and continued by others, gives us the meaning of the word *Ginoo*, as follows:

"*Guinoo. pp. Principalia, naggiginoo, p.c. averse como principal como por tener esclavos y dineros aunque no lo sea. ginoo es la principal hablando con ella, pero hablando la muger al varon es maginoo hablando en general ang mga maginoo entiendese hombres y mugeres pero no los alaba*

tanto como *maginoo*, hablando en particular *maginoo* entien-
dese *lalacqi*, y *ginoo babayi*; en la de Manila es comun de
dos el *maginoo* explicando *maginoong lalacqi* y *maginoong
babayi*, pero este termino no es comun en todas partes."

This *Vocabulario* does not contain the word *Ginang*.

The *Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala* of Juan de Nozaleda
y Pedro Sanlucar, printed in 1832 and reprinted in 1860, says:

"*Guinoo*. pp. Principal Señora: a las mugeres en su lengua
llaman *ginoo*. A los varones *maginoo*. En el comintan
a ambos *ginoo*. En realidad *maginoo* es comun a hombres
y mugeres, pero si habla con un hombre *maginoo*, si es una
muger *ginoo*."

The word *Ginang* does not appear in this *Vocabulario* either.

The *Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala* written by Fray Do-
mingo de los Santos, Franciscan, reprinted in 1835, says in its
first part:

"Señora. *Guinoo*. (pp.). Así llaman a las que son Prin-
cipales. Aba po *Guinoo*? Pues Señora. Pero cerca de Manila
dicen: *Maguinoong babayi*. Pasasaan ang *maguinoong ba-
bayi*. Donde va vuestra merced? Houag mong *guinoohin*
ang di *guinoo*. No llares señora a la que no lo es. Y de
aquí dicen en todas partes. Ang *Guinoong Virgen Maria*. La
Virgen Santa Maria. Ang *Guinoong Santa Ana*. La Señora
Santa Ana. Aunque de las Santas más común es decir.
Ang *poon*, pero de Nuestra Señora, la Reina de los Angeles.
Ang *Guinoong Santa Maria*."

And in its second part the *Vocabulario* says:

"*Guinoo*. (pp.) Señora."

The booklet written by Don T. H. Pardo de Tavera, prin-
ted in Paris, 1887, whose title is *El Sánscrito en la Lengua Ta-
gala*, has this to say:

"*Ginoo*, señora principal, muger de rango. Me parece que
esta voz está compuesta del radical Sans. *go*, que significa
en el Veda, todo lo que es bueno, la tierra, la nube, el sacri-

ficio, la madre, y del interfijo Tag. *in*... El interfijo *in* da aquí a la raíz la significacion de "llegar a ser", "transformarse en".

The *Diccionario Tagalog-Hispano* published by Pedro Serrano Laktao, 1914, says:

Ginoo; *maginoo*. Noble, principal, adj. — magnate, m. — Señor, *ra m. y f.*

The word *Ginang* does not appear yet in this *Diccionario*.

The Institute of National Language, Commonwealth of the Philippines, published the *Tagalog-English Vocabulary* in Manila, Bureau of Printing, in 1940, which has substantial differences. For the first time the term *Ginang* appears:

"*Ginang*, in elegant and respectful language, a term used in addressing a young unmarried woman, Miss; a married woman or a widow, Mrs."

"*Ginoo*, sir, Mister, gentlemen." No reference to woman.

The *Diksyunaryo-Tesaurus Pilipino-Ingles* of Jose Villa Panganiban published in 1972, has the following observation to the term *Ginoo*:

"Note: Noceda & Sanlucar report in 1860 that *ginoo* referred to 'a lady of rank,' while *maginoo* was 'a gentleman of rank.' The Tg. version of Ave Maria (Hail Mary) starts with *Aba, Ginoong Maria*. But today both *ginoo* and *maginoo* are masculine."

The term *Ginang* is also included.

From what we have said it follows that the phrasing of our *Aba Ginoong Maria* was perfectly done by our Spanish Missionaries. The term *Ginoo* joined to the name Mary is theologically and philologically perfect. Being the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary is more than qualified to be given the honor and nobility that the word *Ginoo* meant in the past. Whether it should be now still retained, or it should be changed or deleted due to the different popular use of this word, is the prerogative of the proper ecclesiastical authority to decide.

The consultant asks for our own Tagalog translation of the *Aba Ginoong Maria*. We are a little reluctant to do it for obvious reasons. Our Tagalog is far from being correct. There are experts who can do it without much difficulty. However, to please her, we offer a translation which we think could help to eliminate some unnecessary words in our present *Aba Ginoong Maria*. We repeat, however, that it is only the proper ecclesiastical authority who may decide whether a change is necessary or not, and give us the official wording of the angelic prayer in order to keep uniformity in reciting it.

New Translation:

Aba! Marya, puno ka ng grasya, ang Panginoon ay nasa-iyong, pinakapala-pala ka sa mga babae, at pinagpala rin ang Anak mong si Jesus.

Justification:

The term *ginoo* is omitted, because it applies in its actual use to gentlemen. In the original Latin of "Ave Maria" there is no word equivalent to *ginoo*.

"Napupuno" is incorrect. It conveys the concept that the Blessed Virgin was not yet full of grace. "*Puno ka ng grasya*" will be better.

"Sumasa-iyong" conveys the meaning that the Lord is not firmly and definitely with the Blessed Virgin. "*Nasa-iyong*" indicates the Lord's habitual and permanent dwelling in the Virgin's soul.

"Pinagpala ka" makes reference to time, while "*pinakapala-pala ka*" conveys the same meaning and makes unnecessary the term "*bukod*" which precedes "*kang pinagpala*."

"Sa mga babae," without "*lahat*." The term "*pinakapala-pala*" makes it unnecessary.

"At pinagpala rin." *Din* is similar in meaning to *naman*, and it avoids the cacophony with the words that follow.

"*Mong*" simplifies the diction, making unnecessary the particle *na*.

New translation:

Santa Marya, Ina ng Diyos, ipanalangin mo kaming makasalanan, ngayon at sa oras ng aming kamatayan. Siya nawa.

Justification:

"*Ngayon at sa oras ng aming kamatayan.*" In this way the present and the future are expressed in similar grammatical construction. The word *aming* can be omitted also.

Exhumation of Cadavers

In this town there was a notorious criminal. He committed crimes ranging from murder to stealing his neighbor's chickens. He had children by several women. It seemed that he showed no sign of inner conversion. Then he was stabbed several times by a companion.

His sister decided to bury his body the day following his death. The parish priest was absent on vacation. The sacristan decided to grant permission for the criminal's burial in the Catholic cemetery. When the parish priest returned he ordered that the remains of the dead criminal be exhumed and transferred to a place outside the cemetery. The people were scandalized by the priest's decision. The priest said he was following the Church's laws.

Questions:

- 1. Is the case of this criminal included in the list of those to be denied Christian burial?*
- 2. Was the priest's decision right or wrong?*

A Seminarian

Two different things are to be considered in the case proposed by our consultant, namely, Christian burial and the exhumation of the remains. Concerning Christian burial, canon 1184 of the new Code says: "Church funeral rites are to be denied to the following, unless they gave some signs of repentance before death: . . . 3. other manifest sinners to whom a Church funeral could not be granted without public scandal to the faithful."

From the wording of the case the notorious criminal falls within this category. Probably he *could be denied Christian burial*, since there was no sign of repentance given by him before he died. The consultant says: "*It seemed.*" Assuming therefore that he did not manifest any sign of conversion, he could be denied Christian burial.

Concerning the exhumation of the remains of a person already buried, the present Codex is silent. The 1917 Code established in canon 1242 that only the remains of a person who has been excommunicated as "*vitandus*" (to be avoided), buried against the law in a sacred place, should be exhumed, if it could be done without serious inconvenience, and be transferred to a profane place. The present Code has abolished this prescription since no mention of it is made. It is obvious, therefore, that the priest's decision to exhume the remains of the notorious criminal of our case and to transfer them to a place outside the Catholic cemetery did not conform to the Church's laws.

Though his original burial could have been denied according to the new Codex, the exhumation of the remains is not prescribed by any law.

Dominican Towns in Cavite and Laguna

Santa Cruz de Malabon (Today Tanza, Cavite)

SANTA CRUZ USED TO be — from time immemorial — a barrio or *visita* of the town of San Francisco de Malabon, the latter known today as “General Trias.” There is no known document that gives the date of the foundation of Tanza as a town. It was made a parish in 1780, according to one chronicler.¹ But its first Dominican Parish Priest, Fr. Alberto Planas, took possession of it only on 6 May 1860. This is according to Fr. Hilario Ocio, who gives dates more accurately than his confreres.²

The first six pastors of Santa Cruz de Malabon were: (1) the above-mentioned Fr. Planas who stayed here a little over three years; (2) Fr. Domingo del Rosario, a native Filipino; (3) Fr. Manuel Rivas, O.P. (25 July 1866 to 6 May 1868); (4)

¹ Fray Rafael Fajol, “Descripción de Santa Cruz, Cavite, 1888.” MS in APSR, sección “Cavite” (pueblos), fols. 80-2, or, in the typescript compilation of the Rev. Pablo Fernández, O.P., pp. 10-2.

² See Hilario Ma. Ocio, *Monumento Dominicano*, MS in APSR, sección “Ministerios,” vol. 1, no. 52.

Fr. Salustiano Marcos, O.P. (three years); (5) Fr. Jose Trobat, O.P. (two years); and (6) Fr. Rafael Fajol, O.P.³ While the sources describe all of them as exemplary and zealous, Fr. Alberto Planas towers above all, in the words of Fr. Ocio, as "a model of parish priests."⁴

Indang and Mendez-Nuñez

Formerly a Jesuit parish, Indang began to be administered by the Dominicans when, in 1859, their provincial chapter appointed Fr. Benito Rivas as parish priest and his brother, Fray Francisco, as his companion.⁵ "This town," writes Hilario Ocio, "has a church and a convent, both spacious, both made of strong materials. Its terrain is level. It stands along the banks of a river that runs eastward and near another one that runs westward."⁶

Mendez-Nuñez was formerly a barrio of Indang. It was made a town by a decree of the colonial government (*superior gobierno*) dated 6 September 1875. It was raised to a parish by a royal decree dated 17 December 1881 and was accepted by the Dominican provincial chapter that same year.⁷ Adds Fr. Ocio: "Méndez has a wooden church. Its convent, also made of wood, was designed by the talented Fr. Roy. It has 3,595 souls and 1,607 taxpayers."⁸

In 1891, the Order of Preachers left the parishes of Indang, Méndez and Alfonso, and took over the Laguna towns of Biñan and Calamba⁹ instead.

³ Fajol, *ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*; and Ocio, no. 43. Lack of space makes it impossible to give interesting details found in Fr. Fajol's chronicle in this essay.

⁵ Ocio, *ibid.*, no. 44.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 45.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

Alfonso

On 10 May 1859, Governor-General Fernando de Norzagaray issued a decree declaring the separation of Barrios Alasas and Simalio from Indang, and their creation as a new town to be thenceforth known as "Alfonso," in honor, perhaps, of the then crown prince of Spain, the future Alfonso XII. This was in answer to a previous request of the inhabitants of the said barrios to become autonomous, both in the civil and in the ecclesiastical fora. The decree, however, did not raise Alfonso to a parish because the archbishop of Manila had required that the people first build a church and a convent, as they had promised.¹⁰ It became a parish when it was officially accepted as such by the Dominican provincial chapter of 1863, although, since its becoming a town, the Order had been attending to it.¹¹

The first pastor of Alfonso was Fray José de Santa Teresa, O.P., a native Filipino.¹² His incumbency covered the period from 20 January 1861 to 24 June 1871, when his successor, Fr. Perfecto Valles, took over.¹³

Laguna

In the province of Laguna, the first town administered by the Dominicans was San Policarpo de Cabuyao or, as it was known in earlier times, Tabuco. They were given charge of it by the governor-general and by Archbishop Felipe Pardo, O.P., on 23 November 1686, with the exception of three Tabuco bar-

¹⁰ *Colección de Autos Acordados de la Real Audiencia Chancillería de Filipinas* (Manila: Superior Tribunal, 1865), tomo IV, pp. 50-1.

¹¹ Fray Tomás Monforte, "Estadística del Pueblo de Alfonso, mandada por N. P. Provincial, año de 1877." MS in APSR, sección "Cavite" (pueblos), folio 50.

¹² Ocio (*Ibid.*, no. 44) refers to him as "*indígena*."

¹³ *Ibid.*, fol. 44-5; and Monforte, *ibid.* Lack of space prevents this writer from mentioning interesting details about Alfonso given by Monforte, fols. 50-1.

ries: Biñan, San Pedro Tunasan, and Muntinlupa. The provincial chapter of 1688 accepted Cabuyao as a vicariate (that is, a parish). The Dominicans, however, stayed here for only a short time, for upon the death of Archbishop Pardo in December of the following year they had to give it back to the secular clergy. In the year 1879 Alfonso, although officially accepted many years before but not yet taken possession of, was exchanged for Cabuyao, till then a ministry of the secular clergy. Father Paulino Valles began ministering to it at this date. It was accepted by the Provincial Chapter of 1881. Cabuyao, as well as the ministries of Cavite and Laguna, were relinquished by the Dominican Order after the Philippine Revolution. However, at intervals a Dominican took charge of Santa Rosa during the first three decades of the present century.¹⁴

San Juan Bautista de Calamba was given to the administration of the Dominicans together with San Isidro Labrador de Biñan in 1891 in exchange for Indang, Alfonso and Mendez-Núñez, which were given to the native clergy. Calamba and Biñan were accepted by the Dominican provincial council of 1894, although, as early as 20 June 1891, the Dominican Fr. Cándido García Valles, pastor of Alfonso, had been appointed first vicar of Calamba, where he built a large convent.¹⁵

Santa Rosa was just a small, isolated part of Biñan, itself only a poor barrio of the old town of Cabuyao when the Dominican Order bought the lands falling under the jurisdiction of those towns. The friars boosted farming in the populated areas, thereby attracting more and more people to settle there. At its own expense, the Order built a beautiful church in Biñan and maintained a chaplain who, very frequently was a Dominican, to govern and teach the people until it was erected into a parish and was given to a native secular priest.

¹⁴ Pablo Fernández, O.P., *Dominicos donde nace el Sol*, Barcelona, 1958, p. 69.

¹⁵ Ocio, *ibid.*, nos. 49-50.

Soon afterwards, as the number of settlers grew rapidly, the Order divided the original hacienda of Biñan into two areas, the principal area retaining the name of Biñan and other area being called Santa Rosa, which was the name of a well-known barrio not far from the first.

The populated area of Santa Rosa hacienda developed rapidly as a result of the incentives and improvements brought by the agricultural activities there. It therefore became imperative to give local autonomy to the barrio of Santa Rosa by making it an independent and separate town with its own local official and its own life. It was then that the people of this barrio approached the governor-general and the archbishop, and requested them to entrust the spiritual administration of the new town to the Dominican Fathers. The petitioners met no objection and their request was easily granted. The Dominicans, during their provincial chapter held in 1794, agreed to take charge of Santa Rosa.¹⁶

¹⁶ Juan Ferrando and Joaquín Fonseca, *Historia de los PP. Dominicos en las Islas Filipinas*, Tomo V, Madrid: Imprenta y Estereotipia de R. Rivadeneyra, 1871, pp. 310-3.

Given below are the excerpts from the acts of the Dominican provincial chapters accepting some towns of Cavite and Laguna:

"Acceptamus ministeria in populis S. Francisci de Malabon, Stae. Crucis de Malabon, Indan et Naic in provincia de Cavite, quae quidem juxta regiam dispositionem datam Matriti die 9 mensis Martii anni 1849 huic nostrae Provinciae committuntur (*Acta Capitulorum Provincialium Provinciae Sanctissimi Rosarii Philippinarum... ab anno 1802 ad annum 1878*. Tomus Tertius, Manilae, Typis Collegii Sancti Thomae, 1878).

"Acceptamus in domus nostrae Provinciae domos Sti. Isidori Agricola de Biñan, et Sancti Joannis Baptistae de Calamba, in provincia de la Laguna, quae nobis in commutationem datae fuerunt pro domibus Sti. Gragorii Magni de Indan, Sti. Joannis Nepomuceni de Alfonso et Sti. Angustini de Méndez Núñez, in provincia de Cavite, quas dereliquimus," (*Acta Capituli Provinciae Sanctissimi Rosarii Philippinarum... anni 1894*, Manilae Typis Collegii Sancti Thomae, 1894)

"Acceptamus domos... S. Joannis Nepomuceni de Alfonso in provincia de Cavite..." (*Ibid.*, p. 314. [Accepted by the Chapter of 1863]. Both Malabons, Indan nad Naic were accepted by the Chapter of 1851).

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Here ends the first series of articles on the towns administered by the Order of Friars Preachers in the Philippines. The area covered by them was Central and Southern Luzon. There is to be a second series, covering Northern towns which will appear first in the form of articles and in the future — hopefully — as a book.

“Acceptamus domum nostram Immaculatae Conceptionis de Naic in Provincia de Cavite...” (*Ibid.*, p. 383). Accepted by the Chapter of 1867).

“Acceptamus domum S. Polycarpi Ep. et Mart. de Cabuyao in natione Tagala” (*Acta Capituli Provinciae Sanctissimi Rosarii Philippinarum... anni 1881...*, Manillae, Typis Collegii Sancti Thomae, 1882, p. 9).

“Acceptamus domum S. Augustini Ep. de Méndez Núñez in eadem natione Tagala” (*Ibid.*).

The Third Group of Filipino Priests (1723-1728)

General Discussion

In my proposal for a chronological grouping of the eighteenth century Filipino clergy, I defined the third group as those ordained by the suffragan bishops during the *sede vacante* in the Archdiocese of Manila after the departure of Archbishop Cuesta in 1723 up to the arrival of the next Archbishop Bermudes de Castro in 1728.¹ The central figure in this period was Fray Sebastián de Foronda, OESA, Titular Bishop of Calidonia and Ecclesiastical Governor of Cebu. How he came to minister this diocese was an offshoot of a peculiar case in the combined annals of Church and state jurisprudence which is important to review briefly.²

¹ Luciano P.R. Santiago, "A Chronological Grouping of the 18th Century Filipino Clergy." For publication at Phil. Studies (PS).

² Domingo Abella. "The Succession of Bishops of Cebu." *PS* 8 (1960): 535-43; *Hierarchia Catholica Medii et Recentioris Aevi* (HCMRA). (Patavii: OFM conv., 1952) 5: 291; Elviro Perez *Catalogo Bio-Bibliografico de los Religiosos Agustinos*... (Manila: UST, 1901) p. 161.

The Case of Bishop Sanz

In 1704, the king presented Pedro Sanz de la Vega, a Mercedarian, to succeed the deceased Bishop Miguel Bayot, OFM (1696-1700) in the Diocese of Cebu. The Pope confirmed his appointment in 1705 and he was subsequently consecrated in Mexico. However, he fiercely refused to embark for the Philippines under various pretexts and rationalizations despite vigorous admonitions and measures from both Madrid and Rome including major excommunication.

While Sanz' case dragged on, the king sought to remedy the unusual situation by nominating Foronda as the Auxiliary Bishop of Cebu in 1717. Foronda, who was then the prior of the Augustinian convent in Manila received and accepted his nomination the following year and at once took possession of his bishopric which had been vacant in effect for eighteen years. Because of Sanz' pending case, however, it was not until 1721 that the king presented Foronda to the Pope who then promoted him in a consistory the next year as Titular Bishop of Calidonia and Ecclesiastical Administrator of Cebu "in the absence of its residential bishop."

When Archbishop Cuesta of Manila departed for his next bishopric in Valladolid de Mechoacan in Mexico on 22 July 1723, the Philippines was left without a single consecrated prelate since the dioceses of Nueva Caceres and Nueva Segovia were also then vacant. Since Foronda received his papal appointment after Cuesta's departure, he had to seek consecration outside the colony. He, therefore, sailed for the next nearest bishopric of Macao where he was raised to the episcopal dignity by the Portuguese Bishop Juan de Casal. In 1726, Foronda consecrated in the Cebu Cathedral the bishop-elect of Nueva Caceres Dr. Phelipe de Molina who, in turn, also consecrated the bishop-elect of Nueva Segovia Don Geronimo de Herrera in 1727 at the Manila Cathedral.³ These are the other two prelates who could

³ Ibid; Domingo Abella. *Bikol Annals*. (Manila: 1954) pp. 96-99.

ordain Filipino priests during the present interregnum in Manila. Both of them, it will be recalled, were faithful subordinates of Archbishop Cuesta.

Probably because of his enlightening experience in working with the natives particularly as pastor of various parishes in Pampanga for almost three decades, Foronda continued Cuesta's program of ordaining Filipino priests without compunction. We have the complete list of his initial ordinations in 1724 but we can infer only two more of his native ordainees in the next four years because, unfortunately, most of the documents from 1725 to 1728 are missing at the Archives of the Archdiocese of Manila.

Soon after Foronda's consecration, the cathedral chapter or ecclesiastical council of Manila in *sede vacante* sent him dismissories and granted him on 7 May 1724 the "faculty to impart blessings, celebrate ordinations (of Manila clerics) and exercise jurisdiction over those who desire to live in the Diocese of Cebu." Two weeks later, on 20 May, the chapter despatched him "the license and goodwill" to grant the Holy Orders in Cebu to the following aspirants from the Archdiocese:⁴

1. Mro. Martin de Endaya — from the first tonsure to the diaconate with the title of *patrimonio*.
2. Mro. Miguel de Espeleta — ditto with title of *capellán*. (He was later to become Bishop of Cebu.)
3. Mro. Manuel de Ochoa y Sarate — ditto with the title of *capellán*.
4. Mro. Francisco Xavier de Abalos — from the first tonsure to the priesthood with the title of *capellán*.
5. Br. Pedro Peres de Bustos — ditto with the title of *suficiencia*.
6. Br. Joseph Tandino y Rodel — ditto with the title of *capellán*.

⁴ Archives of the Archdiocese of Manila (AAM). *Libro de Gobierno Ecclesiastico* (LGE) (1723-24) Docs. 54 & 55.

7. Br. Juan de la Torre — ditto with the title of *capellán*.
8. Br. Joseph Nuñez — ditto with the title of *operario*.
9. Br. Vizente Esguerra — from the subdiaconate to the diaconate (title unspecified).
10. Br. Joseph Barrios — for the priesthood (title unspecified).
11. Br. Vizente Mauleon — for the first tonsure (title unspecified).

Among the foregoing ordainees, Br. Joseph Nuñez was identified in later documents as an Indio Pampango. From the cathedral chapter, he received his license to offer his "first and other Masses" on 30 June.⁵

The two other possible native priests in the list were Bres. Joseph Barrios and Pedro Peres de Bustos, the latter having only received the simple title of competence. But we do not have any other data about them at present. The rest were almost all identified as Spaniards in contemporary records.

The following week, Foronda sailed to Manila to ordain more seminarians on the Ember Saturday after Pentecost, 26 May 1724.⁶ They are:

1. Br. Cayetano Morante — from the first tonsure to the priesthood with the title of *lengua*.
2. Br. Ignacio Gonzales de Pareja — ditto with the title of *capellán*.
3. Br. Hipolito Nicolas de San Bernardo — ditto with the title of *lengua tagala*.
4. Br. Thomas de Sulueta — from the subdiaconate to the diaconate (title unspecified).
5. Mro. Pablo de Ituralde — from the first tonsure to the diaconate with the title of *patrimonio*.

⁵ *Ibid.* Doc. 63.

⁶ *Ibid.* Doc. 56.

6. Don Pedro Martines de Tejada — from the first tonsure to the minor orders (title unspecified).
7. Pedro de San Buenaventura — ditto with the title of *capellán*.
8. Balthazar Banta — ditto (title unspecified).
9. Mro. Francisco Vallique — from the subdiaconate to the diaconate (title unspecified) ; ordained for the Diocese of Cebu.
10. Br. Fernando Guerrero — from the first tonsure to the subdiaconate (title unspecified) ; also ordained for Cebu.

Bishop-elect Herrera of Nueva Segovia likewise sent dimissories for the cathedral chapter to examine one of his subjects who was probably a native, Br. Estevan de los Angeles for ordination to the priesthood by Foronda. However, it is not clear if he was approved for ordination.⁷ His name does not appear in available early eighteenth century documents in the Diocese of Nueva Segovia.

At least three ordainees in the above list were Filipinos. Pedro de San Buenaventura was a Chinese mestizo who later transferred to Cebu after his ordination to the priesthood most probably by Foronda also. His title of chaplain was apparently an error since subsequent catalogues consistently show him as an "*operario*" and there is no record of his *capellanía* elsewhere.⁸ Balthazar Banta, on the other hand, was a poor Indio Pampango who was not raised to the priesthood until 1730 when he acquired his priestly means of support in the form of a chaplaincy.⁹ He became one of the first Filipino plebeian presbyters. Bd. Hipolito Nicolas de San Bernardo was most probably either an Indio or a Chinese mestizo, judging from his "saintly" surname and ordination title in Tagalog. However, we do not have any other information about him.

⁷ *Ibid.* Doc. 57.

⁸ Archivo General de Indias (AGI). "Clerecia del Abpdo. de Manila" (1760) *Fil. leg.* 304; AAM. *Catalogos del Clero Secular (CCS)* (1762).

⁹ AAM. "Recaudos de una Capellanía de missas fundada a favor de Lic. do Dn. Balthazar Vanta, Clerigo de menores ordenes. *Capellanias de Missas.* (CM) (1700-1913) B.

On 1 June 1724, three more clerics were approved by the cathedral chapter for ordination by Foronda but none of their titles was specified.¹⁰

1. Br. Pedro de San Lucas — from the first tonsure to the minor orders.
2. Br. Manuel Barba — ditto
3. Br. Bartholome Zapanta — from the first tonsure to the diaconate.

Another Spaniard, Br. Hermenegildo Elioraga was also recommended on 3 June for elevation from the first tonsure to the priesthood.

The first ordainee probably refers to the Jesuit lexicographer, Padre Pedro de San Lucar whereas Zapanta or Sapanta was an Indio Pampango.

"For the benefit of the entire archipelago," Bishop Foronda's next ordinations and confirmations were announced by the cathedral chapter on 28 June 1724.¹¹

The following were further granted the license for ordination on 10 July with unspecified titles:¹²

1. Br. Miguel Florencio Escudero — from the first tonsure to the diaconate.
2. Mro. Manuel de Ochoa y Zarate — for the priesthood.
3. Br. Joseph Aurelio de Osio — for the priesthood.
4. Br. Francisco Ferrer — from the first tonsure to the priesthood; with transfer of residence to Nueva Caceres.
5. Br. Bartholome Sapanta y Silva — for the priesthood.

Lastly, two Spanish aspirants were also cleared for ordination on 17 July.¹³

¹⁰ AAM. LGE (1723-24) Docs. 58 & 59.

¹¹ *Ibid.* Doc. 64.

¹² *Ibid.* Doc. 65.

¹³ *Ibid.* Doc. 67.

6. Br. Vizente Esguerra — for the priesthood with dispensation for his age.
7. Don Ignacio Alarcon — from the first tonsure to the minor orders although he had applied for elevation up to the diaconate.

These seven clerics were apparently ordained on the September Ember Days. The Indio Sapanta or Zapanta received his license to celebrate his "first and other Masses" on 29 September 1724. Before this, his father had founded a chaplaincy for him which is the fifth to be established by Filipinos for a Filipino presbyter.¹⁴ The only other native priest we can definitely identify in the last group was Bd. Francisco Ferrer who worked in the Diocese of Nueva Caceres.

Later Ordinations

Foronda returned to his diocese for the season of Advent. He must have ordained more Filipino priests in the next four years but unfortunately, most of their records have perished with the destruction of the diocesan archives. We can infer only two more native priests who were later ordained by him most probably at about the same time since they were almost exact contemporaries and they both transferred to Foronda's diocese. They were Bd. Pedro de San Buenaventura who had been ordained by him to the minor orders in 1724 and Bd. Manuel Pasqual, another Chinese mestizo, who had graduated from the University of Santo Tomas with a BA degree in 1722 together with Bd. Francisco Ferrer.¹⁵

Since Sanz, the nominal Bishop of Cebu died in 1727 just a year before Foronda himself died, the latter never got the opportunity to become a proprietary bishop.¹⁶

¹⁴ *Ibid.* ff. 256v & 266; "Año de 1820. Capellania de Don Diego Zapanta (con testimonio de la fundacion en 1724)." CM 1672-1906) A.

¹⁵ AGI. "Clerecia del Abpdo (1760)"; AAM. CCS (1762); USTAA. *Graduate Listing* 1611-1971 (Manila: UST, 1972) p. 2b.

¹⁶ Abella. "Bishops of Cebu." p. 540.

Bishop Monila of Nueva Caceres (cons. 1726-1738) is known to have ordained eight secular priests but most of his native ordinations appear to have occurred in the later part of his twelve-year episcopate. On the other hand, Bishop Herrera of Nueva Segovia was consecrated only in 1727 as mentioned earlier. Most probably, he had not ordained any priest yet during the period under consideration.

We have biographical materials for five native ordainees of Foronda which follow.

BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILES

1. *Bachiller Don Joseph Nuñez*

He was born in the province of Pampanga in 1700. As a *capista*, he graduated as a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Santo Tomas in 1720. He initially took his sacerdotal training under Archbishop Cuesta but was not ordained by the latter before he left Manila in 1723 apparently because he was then still under-age for the priesthood. Thus, a year later, he was one of the first clerics to be raised from the first tonsure to the priesthood by Bishop Foronda on 20 May 1724 in Cebu. When he returned to Manila, the cathedral chapter in *sede vacante* gave him the privilege to celebrate his "first and other Masses" in the archdiocese on 30 June. From 1722 to 1724, he was the attorney-in-fact in Manila of Bd. Nicolas Manalo, the acting priest-sacristan of the cathedral of Cebu who belonged to the second group of Filipino priests.¹⁸

Having been ordained with the title of *operario*, he worked as the coadjutor of Balayan, Batangas in charge of the *visitas* of the Estancias of Lian and Nasugbu for eight years. When Bd. Blas Sta. Rosa, the first Indio pastor, died in 1733, Nuñez competed in the synodal examinations for his vacant post in

¹⁷ Abella, *Bikol Annals* p. 97.

¹⁸ USTAA, *Graduate Listing* p. 2b; AAM, *LGE* (1723-24) Docs. 55 & 63. *Estipendios Ecclesiasticos (EE)* (1722-24); *EPC* (1729-34).

Tabuco (now Cabuyao, Laguna) on 22 September and he emerged as the topnotcher in it. He obtained the score of "dos grados" in Moral Theology, Latin and Tagalog. The two other successful examinees who constituted the rest of the *terna* were: Bd. Francisco Nayto, second placer, a Chinese mestizo who scored 1 point in Theology, 2 in Latin and 3 in Tagalog; and Bd. Matheo Gaña, third placer, another Indio Pampango who was the acting pastor of Tabuco. The latter earned 1 point in Theology and Latin and 3 in Tagalog. He remained as Nuñez' coadjutor in Tabuco.¹⁹

Unfortunately, after only a few years, Nuñez apparently died in his thirties. In 1736 at the latest, he was succeeded as the pastor of Tabuco by a Spanish priest Bd. Joseph Lopes.²⁰

2. *Bachiller Don Bartholome Sapanta y Silva*

Sapanta, or sometimes his surname is spelled Zapanta, belonged to the old nobility of Bacolor, Pampanga where he was born in about 1700. His parents were the *principales* Don Diego Sapanta and Doña Ines Pinili (which means "the chosen"). He must have acquired his second surname from a godfather. He had two sisters Doña Maria Rosa and Doña Ana Segui Sapanta. His father had a brother Don Andres Sapanta who was married to Doña Isabel Pangulo (which means "leader") whose lands bordered with those of his *capellanía*.²¹

It is not known where he obtained his bachelor's degree, but most probably it was from the University of Santo Tomas. He apparently trained for the priesthood with Nuñez and Ferrer under Archbishop Cuesta. To pave the way for his ordination, his parents offered on 22 May 1724, 40 *cabalitas* of their sugarcane (*pabatan*) plantation in barrio Cabetican worth ₱2,000 to form a *capellanía* in his favor. They designated the archbishop or in *sede vacante* the cathedral chapter as its patron.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ AAM. LGE (1737-42) Doc. 298.

²¹ AAM. CM (1672-1906) A; LGE (1723-24) f. 256v.

Upon the death of Sapanta, the trust fund would devolve on their nearest relative in the Holy Orders, or in his absence, to any poor but deserving Pampango student in any of the college in Manila. The chaplain's duty was to celebrate twenty masses annually for the souls of the founders and their parents and relatives.²² As cited earlier, this was the fifth *capellanía* to be established by Indios for an Indio priest in Manila.

On the same day that Sapanta's parents presented the documents of their foundation, the archdeacon and judge provisor, Dr. Don Manuel Antonio de Ossio y Ocampo (who was to become bishop of Nueva Caçeres) ordered its verification and assessment of its lands in the capital town of Bacolor. The process was completed on 29 May and the chaplaincy was formally erected by the chapter the following day. Sapanta was granted the title of *capellán* on 1 June, thus becoming the seventh Indio chaplain. On the same day, his application for ordination from the first tonsure to the diaconate with the title of *capellán* was approved by the chapter and he was ordained by Bishop Foronda a few days later. In fact, the prelate appears to be a beloved patron of his family, having served as pastor of Bacolor from 1692 to 1699 and having just been reappointed to the same parish in 1717 when he received his royal nomination as auxiliary bishop of Cebu.²³

On 10 July 1724, the ecclesiastical council further bestowed on him the license for ordination to the priesthood by Bishop Foronda who carried this out on the September Ember Week. He was given the privilege to offer his "first and other masses" on 29 September 1724.²⁴

His first parish assignment is not known. In 1739, he served briefly as acting pastor of Santo Tomas, Batangas before this curacy was filled by Bd. Felix Flores in 1740. As the curacoadjutor of the Dominican hacienda of Calamba in 1748, he

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.* doc. 58; Perez, *Catalogo* p. 161.

²⁴ AAM. LGE (1723-24) Doc. 65 & f. 266.

generously donated more than 142 pesos — a huge sum in those days — apparently as an *obra pía* for the maintenance of its church.²⁵ A few years later, he died in February 1751 in the twenty-fourth year of his priesthood. His *capellanía* was declared vacant on 6 March 1751 by Archbishop Martines. He was succeeded in it on 24 January 1752 by the Pampango-Spanish mestizo priest Bd. Joseph de Ordoñez who had been ordained before him in about 1720.²⁶

3. *Bachiller Don Francisco Ferrer*

In 1722, he graduated as a *capista* with a BA degree from the University of Santo Tomas together with Bd. Manuel Pasqual. Two years later, he applied to the ecclesiastical council for ordination from the first tonsure to the priesthood by Bishop Foronda as well as for transfer of residence to the Diocese of Nueva Caceres under Bishop-elect Molina. This was approved on 10 July and he was apparently ordained in the September Ember Days by the Cebu prelate.²⁷

Because of missing records, we do not hear about him for almost three decades until 17 February 1752 when the diocese of Nueva Caceres had become vacant and its Vicar General Don Lorenzo Clemente submitted a roll of the diocesan clergy to Archbishop Martines as its ecclesiastical administrator. Ferrer was then the acting pastor of Abuyon in the Bondoc peninsula of Tayabas (now Quezon Province). This indicates that in his fifties, he had not advanced too far in his career which was not uncommon among native priests. On 18 September 1752, he took the synodal examinations for the vacant parish of Simandig, Donsol and Capalonga in his diocese but without success.²⁸ This is the last available information we have of him at present.

²⁵ AAM. "Lista de Curas Antigos de Sto. Tomas, Batangas por P.D. Jose Garcia. (1855) "*Planes de Almas* (1855); "Año de 1748. Recaudos de capellanias de missas. DD. Juan de la Fuente Yepes, Dean de Santa Iglesia Cathedral. no. 5." *Capellanias de Candaba* (1910-15) F. (This is a misplaced document.)

²⁶ AAM. *LGE* (1751-52) Docs. 42 & 240.

²⁷ USTAA. *Graduate Listing* p. 2b; AAM. *LGE* (1723-24) Doc. 65.

²⁸ AAM. *LGE* (*Oficios*) (1747-55). Docs. 63 & 81. Cartas del Provisor Lorenzo Clemente de Nueva Caceres.

4. *Bachiller Don Pedro de San Buenaventura*

A Chinese mestizo cleric of Manila, he was ordained from the first tonsure to the minor orders by Bishop Foronda in Cebu on 26 May 1724. His ordination title was erroneously recorded as "chaplain," it was supposed to be "*operario*."²⁹ He was also most probably raised to the priesthood by the same prelate a few years later. At this point, he evidently transferred to the Diocese of Cebu.

More than two decades later, he became the acting parish priest of Villa de Arevalo in Ilo-ilo when this curacy was vacated by Bd. Raphael de Figueroa. His services in this parish was certified on 24 March 1751 by Bd. Eugenio de Sta. Cruz, the first Indio vicar general of Cebu so that he could secure the corresponding stipend for it.³⁰ Later in the same year, following the example of his colleague, Bd. Manuel Pasqual, he sought to re-establish his residency in Manila which was temporarily granted to him like a gift by Archbishop Martines two days before Christmas of 1751. He reiterated his petition to this effect a year later on New Year's Day 1753 but the archbishop disapproved it, extending his stay in Manila for only two more months. When he re-appealed on 20 March, however, the prelate relented and re-admitted him to the archdiocese.³¹

He was later appointed chaplain of the Royal Hospital in Manila and it was in this post that he was included in the oldest surviving catalogue of the Manila clergy in 1760. He was then noted to be fifty-six years old, an *operario* and a confessor. On 13 August of the same year his license to celebrate Masses was reduced to six months and that to hear confessions was limited to men only for the same duration. He received exactly the same licenses on 26 February 1761. The next year, the clergy list shows that he had retired from the hospital chaplaincy at the age

²⁹ AAM. LGE (1723-24) Doc. 55. CCS (1762); AGI. "Clerecia del Abpdo (1760)."

³⁰ AAM. EE (1747-55).

³¹ AAM. LGE (1751-52) Doc. 187; LGE (1753-55) ff. 4 & 31.

of fifty-eight, but he was still a competent worker (*operario suficiente*). His privilege to say Masses was prolonged to one year on 7 September 1762.³² Unfortunately, two weeks later, Manila was overrun by surprise by the British who occupied the colony for the next two years (1762-64). He was not heard of again in the records after this suggesting that he might have died during the upheaval.

5. *Bachiller Don Manuel Pasqual*

He must have been a close relative of Bachilleres Don Pedro Pasqual and Don Andres Pasqual who belonged, respectively, to the first and second groups of Filipino priests.³³

According to the eighteenth century catalogues of the Manila clergy, Pasqual was an almost exact contemporary of Bd. Pedro de San Buenaventura who like him was a *mestizo de sangley*. Also like the latter, he had transferred to the diocese of Cebu upon ordination but moved back to Manila more than two decades later. Further, at the University of Santo Tomas, he had graduated as a *capista* with a BA degree in 1722 together with Bd. Francisco Ferrer, another native ordainee of Bishop Foranda.³⁴ Therefore, in the absence of his ordination records, we can reasonably assume that it was also this prelate who, later in his term, ordained Pasqual to the priesthood most probably with San Buenaventura.

When he personally applied to return to the archdiocese in 1750, his petition was initially disapproved by Archbishop Martinez who granted him on 23 September the privilege to celebrate Masses in Manila only while waiting for a means of trans-

³² AGI. "Clerecia del Abpdo (1760)"; AAM. *LGE* (1759-64) ff. 61v, 98 & 169v; *CCS* (1762).

³³ Luciano P.R. Santiago. "The First Group of Filipino Priests (1698-1706)" *Phil. Quarterly of Culture and Society*. 12 (1984): 1-24; "the Second Group of Filipino Priests (1707-1723)" *PQCS* 12 (1984): 128-181.

³⁴ AGI. "Clerecia del Abpdo (1760)"; AAM. *CCS* (1762); *USTAA. Graduate Listing* p. 2b.

portation back to Cebu. Ominously, however, on 15 December Bishop Cabezas of Cebu reported to the Archbishop that Pasqual's return voyage was driven off-course probably by a typhoon to a place called San Juan de Dios de Buenavista where he was stranded for some time. The following year, he was finally permitted to come back to the archdiocese and on 26 September 1751, he was appointed coadjutor of Batangas, Batangas in charge of the *visitas* of the estates of Lian and Calatagan at the request of Mro. Don Francisco Xavier Abalos, pastor of the parish and vicar forane of the province.³⁵

He must have retired by 1760 at the age of fifty-six since he appears as an "unemployed priest" but still a "competent worker" in the clergy roll of that year. The last record we have of him is that of the subsequent catalogue of 1762 where he was still noted to be a "competent worker" though his race was mistakenly classified as Spanish mestizo.³⁶ He might have also died during the British Occupation which soon laid the colony in waste.

³⁵ AAM. LGE (1737-50) Doc. 475; (1751-52) Doc. 135; (1747-55) *Oficios*. Doc. 26. Carta del Obpo Cabezas.

³⁶ AGI. "Clerecia del Abpdo (1760)"; AAM. CCB (1762).

**John Paul II
receives in official visit
H.E. the President
of the Republic of the Philippines***

Holy Father's discourse

MADAME PRESIDENT,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Vatican. Your presence here bears witness, in fact, to the close and friendly ties that exist between the Filipino people, whom you represent, and the Bishop of Rome, charged with a universal ministry of service to the Church in every land. In the course of my Pontificate I have had many opportunities to experience the strength of that relationship, especially on the occasion of my visit to your country in 1981, and in my frequent meetings with the numerous pilgrims from the Philippines who visit the City of the Apostles Peter and Paul. I thank you for the kind words of goodwill which you have expressed on their behalf.

The recent history of your country is filled with important events which continue to have a profound effect on the collective life of the nation. The new way of governing the country is positively encouraged by those who look to this process as a better way of meeting some of the most pressing problems affecting the well-being of the Filipino people. Many of your fellow citizens are convinced that the good of the country can best be served along the path of a greater participation by all in national life and by a negotiated settlement of the major issues touching upon the unity and structure of the nation, including the important question of relations between the central Government and groups or movements claiming autonomy. The agrarian reform which is a no less important part of your Government's programme can help to meet at the deepest levels the challenge of building a more just society. The efforts made so far, in order to ensure improvements in many sectors of public and private life, offer encouragement to all to continue with ever greater determination in the service of the common good.

In fact these improvements invite the Government and the Filipino people not to diminish their efforts to uphold and strengthen the values for which your country is rightly esteemed throughout the world. With particular emphasis I mention the values of human dignity and family life, on which the whole good of the nation depends directly and immediately. The Philippines cannot survive as a peace-loving, just and humane society unless Filipino families preserve their unity and resist the breakdown of the moral and ethical values which are society's support. This is a time to call upon the traditional Filipino commitment to the family and to the community, and the ethos of solidarity which so deeply mark the Filipino character. In your tradition there exists a spontaneous sense of certain aspects which I underlined in my recent Encyclical on the Church's Social Doctrine: the centrality of the human person in every process of development, and the need for a constant overcoming of the moral obstacles to development, obstacles such as an unbridled desire for profit or power, which is diametrically opposed to the Gospel invitation "to 'lose oneself' for the sake of the other 'instead of exploiting him, and to 'serve him' instead of oppressing him for

one's own advantage" (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 38). The Filipino people, Madame President, possess those traditional qualities called *pagkakaisa* and *bayanihan* which can contribute to promoting social justice and to ensuring that each person's dignity and rights are respected and defended.

The Church has no specific political programmes to offer, but by pursuing her own mission, in a context of religious freedom, she makes present in every area of life the religious truths and values which strengthen the resolve to serve the common good with wholehearted dedication and unfailing honesty. She teaches a special love for the neediest and most deprived members of society, and she thereby fosters effective works of charity and justice which greatly "humanize" society. Her teachings on faith and morality are not remote from daily life, but rather call for unfailing coherence between belief and behaviour. The Church's social doctrine is a permanent appeal to conscience both for the followers of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and for men and women of good will everywhere who recognize the welfare of the human person as the appropriate criterion of all progress. Filipino Catholics, as well as their Muslim brothers and sisters, can find in their respective religious traditions the motivation and moral energy needed for a concerted effort to lead their country forward, out of present tensions, to a period of harmony, characterized by hard work in the cause of development and a high morality in all spheres of private and public life.

The tasks that history has set Your Excellency in the service of your country are by no means light. I would assure you that I remember you and your fellow citizens in my prayers. In this Marian Year I entrust you and your family and the entire Filipino people to the loving protection of the Mother of God, Mary Most Holy. Filipinos are proud to call themselves a "*pueblo amante de Maria*." May her spiritual presence continue to comfort and sustain Filipino families in responding to the demands of the present challenging hour of your history!

God bless the Philippines.

President's greeting to the Pope

President Aquino then gave the following address.

I am especially happy on the occasion of this visit. For I stand here both as Chief of State and as the leader of a people of faith, who won back their freedom through the power of that faith. It is faith also that sustained me in all my trials, and which continues to hold me up under the pressures of high office and in the face of those who continue to oppose the humane, and essentially Christian, principles and democratic aspirations of my people.

I bring with me the love and gratitude of the Filipino people: for His Holiness' visit to the Philippines in 1981, for the canonization of St. Lorenzo Ruiz last year, and for his prayers during the February Revolution, when God's hand, working through the multitude of men, women and children, snatched my country from the edge of calamity and gently set it down in peace and freedom.

I thank the Church for sending so many missionaries over the centuries who laboured to save souls, enrich our art and culture, foster learning among our young. And, with our Muslim brothers, they gave shape to the general character of the Filipino nation.

I also thank the Holy Father for championing the cause of poor nations. He has spoken eloquently of their plight and of the need for measures to lift their peoples to their proper dignity as God's children. He has shed his wisdom equally on the great issues of the world today: on the international debt, on human rights, on the self-determination of peoples, nuclear arms, social justice and economic development. We have listened to his words with great profit and he shall find them reflected in the policies of our government.

Thus, in reviewing our accomplishments since the Revolution, we have adhered to the following principles:

First, that development must enhance the well-being and dignity of Filipinos from every walk of life, so that the nation's material progress must be matched by the Filipino's spiritual development.

Second, development must promote the unity of the nation and solidarity among the people. We will not follow a developmental path that accepts exploitation and class hatred as a necessary price. It must be fair to all, yet lean in favour of the poor who need to be helped.

Third, development must restore and preserve the values that distinguish the Filipino nation: faith in God and in the power of prayer, industry and honesty, love of country, and respect for the unity of the family.

Fourth, development must increase our capability to stand on our own, to be self-reliant and autonomous in the world, so that we can be useful and helpful members of the community of nations.

Fifth, development must promote private enterprise and initiative, consistent with the common good and our democratic institutions. Government will play a complementary and supporting role to ensure that our development goals are met in accordance with these development principles.

In conclusion I believe that peace will come only through authentic development that fosters justice and solidarity. Development by any other path will lead only to violence and tyranny, of the left or of the right.

In the midst of great difficulties, we tread our way to the future with a certain assurance drawn from our conviction that God walks with us, and guides us in the darkness with the teachings of his Church.

Thank you.

Homily during Mass of Canonization of the 117 Martyrs of Vietnam*

*Martyrs of Vietnam,
you have shared in Christ's cross
may you also share
in the salvation of the world*

1. "WE PREACH CHRIST crucified" (1 Cor 1:23).

With these words from the Apostle Paul the Church of Rome greets the Church in Vietnam, which, though geographically far, is so near to our heart. We greet, at the same time, the entire Vietnamese nation, to whom we send our warmest good wishes.

My first cordial and loving thought goes to my dear brother, Cardinal Joseph Marie Trinh Van Can, Archbishop of Ha Noi, and to the entire episcopal college of the Vietnamese Church. I am happy to have you gathered around me spiritually

* On Sunday, 19 June, the Holy Father canonized 117 martyrs of Vietnam during the Mass which he celebrated in St. Peter's Square. We give here a translation of the Pope's homily on that occasion. *L'Osservatore Romano*, N. 26, 27 June 1988.

at this time. Along with them I greet the priests, religious, the laity involved in missionary activity, and all the faithful Christians of that nation, to whom I feel deeply and particularly close at this moment.

I also greet my dear brothers in the episcopate, as well as the faithful, from Spain, France and the Philippines, countries united since the evangelization of those lands three centuries ago. They have come here to remember their many missionary brothers from their respective countries.

A warm welcome also to the Dominican Fathers of the Province of the Holy Rosary, founded four hundred years ago, and to the Institute of Foreign Missions of Paris; to these two religious families belong a great number of the bishops and priests that we venerate today as martyrs for their faith and for their preaching.

Thousands of martyrs

2. In the great community of the Church, I especially greet my dear Vietnamese brothers and sisters who have come here from all parts of the world, from America and Asia, from Australia and from all the countries of Europe. I know that you are animated by the desire to honour your martyrs, but also to build up around them the fraternity, friendship and affection that fill your hearts because you all come from the same country. You who live in the diaspora, as you remember Vietnam you turn to it with love and longing, with the desire to experience here a time of communion full of hope.

Proclaiming with you Christ crucified, we all want to thank God today for the particular witness given to him by the holy martyrs of your Church, whether they be the numerous sons and daughters of Vietnam or the missionaries who came from countries where faith in Christ had already taken root.

Your tradition reminds us that the history of martyrdom in the Vietnamese Church, from its very beginnings, is even

more vast and complex. Since 1533, that is, since the beginning of Christian preaching in Southeast Asia, throughout three centuries with some periods of tranquility, the Church in Vietnam has undergone persecutions like those which affected the Church in the West during the first three centuries. There have been thousands of Christians martyred, and many who died in the mountains, in the forests, in the unhealthy regions where they had been banished and exiled.

How can we possibly remember them all? Even if we limit ourselves to the martyrs canonized today, we cannot stop at each one of them. There are one hundred and seventeen of them, of whom eight are bishops, fifty are priests, and fifty-nine are lay persons, among whom is one woman, Agnes Le Thi Thanh, mother of six.

It is enough to recall one or two figures, like Father Vincent Liem, Dominican, martyred in 1773; he is the first of the ninety-six martyrs of Vietnamese nationality. Another priest was Andre Dung-Lac, whose pagan parents were very poor; he was entrusted to a catechist from his youth, became a priest in 1823, and was a pastor and missionary in various parts of the country. Saved from prison more than once by the ransoms generously paid by the faithful, he ardently desired martyrdom. "Those who die for the faith — he used to say — go to heaven; on the other hand, we who continually hide ourselves pay out our money in order to avoid our persecutors! It would be better to let ourselves be arrested and die." Sustained by an intense zeal and by the grace of the Lord, he suffered martyrdom by being beheaded in Hanoi 21 December 1839.

A liberating dialogue

3. The Gospel today reminds us of the words in which Jesus announced the persecutions that his disciples would have to undergo: "They will hand you over to the courts and flog you in their synagogues. You will be dragged before rulers

and kings because of me: there you will give witness before them and the pagans" (Mt 10:17-18). Jesus spoke to his Apostles and to his disciples of all times; he spoke very frankly! He did not hold before them any false promises but, in the fullness of the truth that always accompanies his words: "Brother will hand over brother to death, and the father his child; children will turn against parents and have them put to death. You will be hated by all on account of me. But whoever holds out till the end will be saved" (Mt 10:21-22).

4. Nevertheless, the divine Master did not leave his disciples and followers defenceless in the face of the great persecutions. "When they hand you over, do not worry about what you will say or how you will say it. When the hour comes, you will be given what you are to say. You yourselves will not be the speakers; the Spirit of your Father will be speaking in you" (Mt 10:19-20).

The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, he will be the strength in your weakness. With his power you will give witness.

The very fact that you are to give witness to Christ crucified, does it not demand a strength greater than human powers?

Is it not Christ whom the Apostle describes as "a stumbling block for the Jews and foolishness for the Greeks" (1 Cor 1:23) ?

That is what happened in the apostolic times. That is what has been repeated in the different ages of history, in various times and places. That is also what happened in the time of the religious persecutions of the Vietnamese Christians.

The power and wisdom of God was necessary to proclaim this mystery of the Love of God, that is, the redemption of the world through the cross: the greatest mystery, and at the same time, humanly inconceivable.

"For God's folly is wiser than men; and his weakness is more powerful than men" (1 Cor 1:25).

For this reason the Apostle writes: "We preach Christ crucified;" Christ who — concretely in his paschal mystery — is "the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor 1:23-24).

5. Therefore, we hold before our eyes today the Vietnamese martyrs as those harvesters of God to whom the psalm refers:

"those who sow with tears will sing when they reap.

they go out, full of tears, carrying their seed;

they come back full of song, carrying their sheaves" (Ps 126 [125]:5-6).

In the light of these mysterious words we can understand the real meaning of the historic witness of the martyrs of the Vietnamese Church. With their tears that sowing of the Gospel and grace took place, from which the gift of faith abundantly sprang forth: "If the grain of wheat does not fall to the earth and die, it remains just a grain of wheat. But if it dies, it produces much fruit" (Jn. 12:24).

The Vietnamese martyrs "sowing in tears," in reality initiated a profound and liberating dialogue with the people and culture of their nation, proclaiming above all the truth and universality of faith in God and proposing, moreover, a hierarchy of values and duties particularly suited to the religious culture of the entire Oriental world. Under the guidance of the first Vietnamese catechism they gave testimony that it is necessary to adore the one Lord as the one, personal God who made heaven and earth. Faced with the coercive impositions of the authorities with regard to the practice of the faith, they affirmed their freedom to believe, holding with humble courage that the Christian religion was the only thing that they could not abandon, that they could not disobey the supreme Sovereign: the Lord. Moreover, they vigorously affirmed their desire to remain loyal to the authorities of the country, observing all that is just and right; they also taught that one should respect and venerate one's ancestors, according to the customs of their land, in the light of the mystery of the resurrection. The Vietnamese Church, with its martyrs and its witness, has been able to pro-

claim its desire and resolve not to reject the cultural tradition and the legal institutions of the country; rather, it has declared and demonstrated that it wants to incarnate them in itself, in order to contribute faithfully to the true building up of the country.

Then the political conflicts and tensions that arose in the relations of the Christians with the authorities, the interests of the other religious confessions, the economic and social reasons, the incomprehension over the transcendence and universality of the faith, all formed that earthly crucible in which the purity and power of that extraordinary witness offered itself and spread.

6. Yet from the long procession of martyrs, their sufferings and their tears, burst for the "harvest of greatness of the Vietnamese Church, its vigour, its patience, its ability to face difficulties of every kind and to proclaim Christ. Let us give thanks to the Lord of all good for what the Spirit so abundantly works in our midst!

Once again, we can say that the blood of the martyrs is for you Christians of Vietnam, a wellspring of grace to make progress in the faith. In you, the faith of our fathers continues and is carried on to new generations. This faith remains the foundation of the perseverance of all those who, considering themselves authentically Vietnamese, faithful to their land, also want to continue to be true disciples of Christ. Every Christian knows that the call of the Gospel demands that he should be subject to human institutions for the love of the Lord, that he should do good, behave as a free agent, respect everyone, love his neighbour, fear God, honour the authorities and public institutions (cf. 1 Pt 2:13-17). The search for the common good of the country is, then, a sincere duty for the Christian citizen, in the freedom to proclaim God's truth, in communion with his pastors and his brothers in the faith, in the desire to live in peace with others in order to work conscientiously for the good of all.

In trials and self-sacrifice

7. "*Sanguis martyrum, semen christianorum.*"

Semen Christianorum. Besides the thousands of faithful who, in past centuries, have walked in the steps of Christ, there are still today those who work, sometimes in trials and self-sacrifice, with the sole ambition to persevere in the vineyard of the Lord as faithful stewards of the goods of the Kingdom of God.

Semen christianorum are those who, even today, for God's sake and in the midst of their compatriots, strive to understand the sense of the Gospel of Christ and the Cross, with the concomitant duty of praying for the coming of our Father's kingdom in all souls, and particularly in the country where the Lord has called them to live.

This duty, this constant and rigorous activity, demands patience and the confident expectation of those who know that the Providence of God is working through them to make their efforts and even their sufferings effective.

Vocation to immortality!

8. "The souls of the just are in the hands of God" (Wis 3:1).

The Book of Wisdom proclaims this splendid truth, which floods with light the event that we celebrate today.

Yes. "The souls of the just are in the hands of God and no torment shall touch them." It could seem that these words do not correspond to the historical reality: truly, the martyrs did suffer torments, and to what a degree!

The inspired author goes on to develop his thought:

"They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction, and their going forth from us, utter destruction; but they are in peace. For

if before men, indeed, they be punished, yet is their hope full of immortality" (Wis 3:2-4).

Holy Martyrs! Vietnamese martyrs! Witnesses to the victory of Christ over death! Witnesses of man's vocation to immortality!

The Book of Wisdom continues: "Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace, he proved them and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself" (Wis 3:5-6).

Yes. As sacrificial offerings, united to the sacrifice of the cross of Christ. You, martyrs of Vietnam, you proclaimed to the very end Christ crucified, the wisdom and power of God; Christ, through whom we attain salvation in God.

9. "Those who trust in him — in Christ crucified and risen — shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are with his holy ones" (cf. Wis 3:9).

You, the martyred! You, the elect!

Hear in full what the Book of Wisdom says about you: "On the day of their judgment they shall shine, and shall dart about as sparks through stubble" (3:7).

Like sparks, like flames of a light that brightens and catches fire... Hear in full what the Book of Wisdom has to say about you: "They shall judge nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord shall be their king forever" (3:8). The Lord... Christ crucified and risen. He who came into the world — "not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him" (Jn 3:17). This Christ!

As you have shared in his suffering and his cross, may you also share in the salvation of the world, won by him. May your harvest last in joy!

Dear Catholics of Vietnam, I welcome all of you who have come here to Rome from the four corners of the world to celebrate today the feast of the martyrs, the glory of your Church. May the Lord bless you; my wish for you is that you continue to live worthily, following the example of your ancestors, Christ's heroes.

Homilies for January and February 1989

A New Year with Mother Mary

LUKE 2:16-21

*Solemnity of Mary,
Mother of God
January 1, 1989*

A brand new book of 1989 God gives you today. This book 1989 has 365 pages, all of which are blank and clean. On its every page you yourself will have to write with your works and deeds.

Review and scan a little your book 1988. There are pages that are very neatly written, while some are filled with erasures.

The new book 1989 begins being written today. Let us hope that this will not be a second edition of 1988. Let its first page begin with "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" and let its last page close with "Amen. Jesus."

Today you are twenty, thirty, fifty years old. The same number of volumes as of years are in the library of your life. Would you like to read these volumes, or would you rather that they be thrown into the fire?

This year 1989 you are going to complete the twenty-fifth, the forty-fifth, the sixty-fifth year of your life. This means one more year is added to your life, or, shall we say, one more year is being taken away from your life.

If you are asked how much money you have in your wallet, you take a quick look and say: fifty pesos. It does not occur to you to tell or count the money you have spent but what you still have.

Yet when asked for your age you tell the questioner the years spent, saying: "I now am twenty-five years old." You do not have the years anymore, you have spent them, you have lived them through. What you still have is the balance left to you until death. You really do not know how many years there are or will be.

New Year, New Life. So they usually say. New Year, yes, but new life?... Let's hope! Nobody ever becomes good or bad overnight. Like growing, that requires time.

In the process of adding, if you are mistaken in the subtotal, it would be utterly foolish for you to go ahead. You must erase the mistake, correct the error and proceed totalling until the end.

The year 1988 is one very long total, of three hundred sixty six quantities if you count days — by the way, 1988 was a leap year — fifty-two quantities of weeks, twelve of months. Some-

times we make a mistake, and we fall, and we fail. Let us not be so stupid as to go on. Erase the mistake and start anew.

Your small son, when he is mistaken, erases the mistake with a gum or rubber or liquid eraser. In the leaf of the book of your life mistakes are rubbed out with the eraser of repentance and with the sacrament of reconciliation or penance.

There is no better eraser than this sacrament. It is within your reach. Use it frequently. Thus the sum total of three hundred sixty-five days, fifty-two weeks and twelve months will come out right and well.

Let us all pray that, a year from now, when you fill out the last page of this book 1989, there will be nothing you will be ashamed of, or at least that every wrong shall have been corrected on time.

Now, January 1, that is today, is the feast of Mary, Mother of God. "Mother of God" is the most preferred title of the Blessed Virgin Mary in evangelic tradition.

Jesus Christ is true God and true man, and as he was born of Mary she is truly the Mother of God. The Second Person of the Blessed Trinity was born of her according to the humanity he derived from her. She is not a goddess, for God did not take his divine being from her. But she is the Mother of God since the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity was truly born of her in his human nature.

In the bosom of a mother the child is conceived a man and from her is born man. Therefore, the woman who begets and gives birth is the real mother of the man. On the other hand, only indirectly will she be the mother of the "doctor," or of the "general," etc. The son is not begotten as doctor or general. It is only later that he may become doctor or general. Thus, indirectly he turns his mother into the mother of the doctor, of the general, etc.

Mary is truly Mother of God. Jesus did not enter as man into her bosom and later on be elevated or promoted to become

God. He was conceived God and was born God from the bosom of Mary.

The actual term "Mother of God" does not appear in the Gospel, but it is explicitly stated that Mary is the Mother of Jesus (Mt 2:11; Lk 2:1; Acts 1:14). And since Christ is true God, it follows that all texts which refer to Mary as his Mother are God's revelations to us of Mary's divine motherhood. St. Paul puts it this way in his Epistle to the Galatians: "But when the fullness of time came, God sent his Son, born of a man" (4:4).

Our Catholic Church has always recognized Mary as the Mother of God. And statements of this belief may be found in prayers composed in the early Church, for example, the Apostle's Creed.

"Mother of God" is Mary's most significant title, because her divine motherhood is the source of her great dignity and magnificent privileges. As Mother of Christ, in whom all men are sons of God and brothers, Mary is said also to be mother of all men.

And Mary fulfills her maternal duty towards us. The Second Vatican Council has this to say: "By her maternal love, she cares for the brethren of her Son, who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties, until they are led into the happiness of their true home" (Lumen Gentium, n. 62).

As we have today to fill out the first page of this new book 1989 and then every other page every other day, let us put ourselves under the maternal care of Mary, the Mother of God and our mother. Let us pray with more attention and devotion when we say: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

Gold for the Church, the poor, your own self

MATTHEW 2:1-12

*The Epiphany of the Lord,
January 8, 1989*

"Signs of the times" is a phrase many a mouth has spoken since the Second Vatican Council. The truth of the matter is that "Signs of the Times" is a phrase, an idiomatic expression, of Jesus Christ. By this phrase Christ wants to tell us that we have to know God by means of day-to-day events and occurrences, just as we would know if it is going to rain by the colour of the sky. God does not send letters or telegrams; he does not call by phone or radio. God calls us by the events in our lives.

The incident that determined your course in life is the "star of God," just like the "star" of the wise men in today's Gospel. Let us follow our star just as the Magi followed theirs.

But we must know that there are at times days or nights without stars. Yet we should not be discouraged. As happened to the three wise men, your star will come back to shine again, to let certainty and joy gush forth from your soul.

The Gospel tells us the three men from the East presented gifts to the Child Jesus. They brought out "gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh."

Now, what did the Holy Family — Jesus, Mary and Joseph — do with the gold given by the Magi? Pious authors say that the gold was divided into three parts: the first part was for the Temple; the second was given to the poor; the last portion was kept by the Holy Family for their needs.

Some people do not like to hear about the share given to the temple... especially those who think that the priests are

asking too much. Perhaps they think that priests ask for their own pocket. Every centavo collected in the church is for the church. And God wants it to be used to help the church and the priests working in the church.

St. Gregory the Great wrote long ago: Christians should try to offer something to the Lord during Mass, remembering what God said to Moses: 'Do not present yourself empty before me.' "

Every establishment has expenses. And your church is quite a big establishment. How much do you think the expenses are for this Mass now? For instance, the light... the electric power needed... the wear and tear on the bulbs, the starter, the ballasts of our fluorescent lamps... the deterioration of the electrical wires and switches... or the sound... electric power, depreciation of our amplifier, microphone, etc... the hosts and Mass wine... the altar linens and the priests' vestments... the chalices, cruets... what do they cost?

You can now ask yourself: How much of your riches or poverty do you give for the worship of the Lord?

And speaking of the poor, almsgiving is not a solution. Of course, almsgiving is necessary and cannot be totally put aside. Consider the Chinese proverb: "You give me a fish and you save me from hunger all my life long." And the Carpenter of Nazareth said: "I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me drink" (Mt 25:36).

You can now ask yourself what portion of your money do you give to Christ's favorites, the poor?

How about the share of the gold that goes to you? Is money the tyrant in your house? All for money! To have more money! Or do you convert money into pleasures or comforts of life?

How much do you spend for what is essential and necessary? How much is superfluous and extravagant? And how much is used for what is immoral and sinful?

It is a great sin to rob your children and your wife of what you spend on something shameful. And it is a big sin to spend money for the fanciful whims and capricious pranks of your children in an effort to stifle their rebellion caused by your lack of authority and good example. Giving a car to your son so he will be "good" to your "No. 2" is sinful.

Another gift of the Magi was incense. The Holy Book says that incense is the symbol of our prayers (Rev 5:8).

There are thousands of Saints who have not done any miracle, who have not converted a large crowd by their fiery oratory, who have not even been recognized as Saints in their obscure lives. Yet there is not a single Saint who has not been devoted to prayer.

Prayer is a loving conversation with God, our loving Father. The mere thought of God is not prayer: devils think of God, but devils do not pray.

God not only permits but commands us to pray. Prayer is indeed a privilege and a duty. Prayer includes every kind of divine worship: reception of the sacraments, offering Mass, attending sermons, processions. All devotions of the Church are prayers.

Prayer is a means by which we obtain God's help and protection. It is a means of holiness. No one who does not pray can be just and holy. To say that one who does not pray can fulfill his obligations is like making believe that one who does not eat can work diligently and well. Spiritual writers assert that a Christian needs prayer just as a fish needs water.

Myrrh is the symbol of mortification. But why mortify ourselves? Because there are things that cannot be obtained without mortification. "Yet only prayer and fasting can drive out this kind of spirit" (Mt 17:21). Only "violent" and forceful people can seize the kingdom of God (Mt 11:12).

Let us imitate the Three Wise Men by presenting our own gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to Jesus who is sacramentally in our altar.

Wrong company for your children

LUKE 2:41-52

*Feast of the Santo Niño,
January 15, 1989*

Every year tourists flock to Cebu on April 27 to witness the reenactment of the Battle of Mactan where the great discoverer Ferdinand Magellan, met his tragic death at the hands of the Cebuano chieftain, Lapu-lapu, in the year 1521.

On April 27, 1565 Fray Andres de Urdaneta in the company of four other Agustiniens reached Cebu with the mission to christianize the Islands. Cebu's King Tupas, thinking that the Spanish galleons came to avenge Magellan's death, resisted the Spaniards. Miguel Lopez de Legaspi, commander of the expedition, ordered the ship's artillery to fire. Tupas with his men retreated to the hills, leaving his kingdom in flames.

Legaspi's soldiers set ashore. In the house-to-house inspection, soldier Juan Camus found the wooden image of the Holy Child Jesus in a box given by Magellan to the Christian Queen of Cebu in 1521.

This image popularly known as the "Santo Niño" and reputed to possess miraculous powers, is now enshrined in the side chapel of the Basilica Minore del Santo Niño in Cebu City. It has played a very important role in the conversion of the Filipinos to the Catholic Faith, prompting us to celebrate today the feast of the Santo Niño.

Today's Gospel (Lk 2:41-52) tells us about the Fifth Joyful Mystery of the Holy Rosary — The Finding of Jesus in the Temple. Let us consider a few points for reflection.

Mary and Joseph lost the divine Child, though not by any fault of theirs. They travel a whole day's journey back to

Jerusalem, wander through all the streets, asking every one they meet if he has not seen their lost son Jesus, describing him most minutely; they seek him for three long days without rest or repose, till at last they are so fortunate as to find him in the temple. Mary cannot help exclaiming: "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been terribly worried trying to find you."

Christian parents, take an example from Mary and Joseph; be careful of and solicitous for your children, that they may not suffer the loss of their innocence and virtue. Above all, do not allow them to keep company with frivolous or corrupt persons.

If you wish your children to remain pious and innocent, you must forbid them, no matter whether they be young or of more mature age, to be intimate with frivolous or corrupt persons, because such intimacy could act as the rock on which virtue would almost necessarily be wrecked.

Let experience speak. As long as children do not cross the threshold of their parents' house, if they otherwise enjoy a good education, they are polite, pious, simple, modest, and reserved. But as soon as they keep company with bad children or bad grown up persons, many ugly traits come to the surface. They use wicked words, the meaning of which they do not perhaps understand. They become stubborn and vain, and they have no longer any love for prayer.

It often happens that even young children, in consequence of bad company, fall into grievous sin. Parents often imagine their children to be innocent angels, when alas, they are already initiated into the mysteries of vice!

Do not permit your children to spend all their time in the streets. Street children are generally the worst, and even in childhood make much mischief. If you learn that your children have been in bad company, reprove them with patience, but with earnestness, and if necessary, be severe. Never allow your

servants to say double-meaning words in the presence of your children.

Let us all pray that parents spare neither labor nor pains to avert every danger that threatens their souls from their children so that they may grow "in wisdom and age and grace with God and men."

Our Sunday Liturgy

LUKE 1:1-4, 4:14-21

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time
January 22, 1989

Three weeks have gone by since we brought to a close the Year 1988 and we have already written off 21 pages of the New Book of Year 1989.

Let us stop for a while to make an evaluation of our Sunday liturgical celebrations. Here are some outstanding negative points:

1 — they are *long*, although we cannot hide the terrible irony of this appraisal, since those who complain like this do not hesitate to spend three, four or five times more time watching television.

2 — they are *boring*: what is being discussed has no connection at all with our day-to-day living.

3 — they are *monotonous*: we always pray the same prayers and we always hear the same preachers, and we already know before they say it what they are going to say.

Given all the sincerity of those responsible for our Sunday celebrations we have to admit:

- 1 — that much of what has been said is true;
- 2 — that much or at least some of the fault is ours, the preachers';
- 3 — that we have a very poor, low standard; for instance that we do not equip ourselves with a professional sound system.

But, all this being true, it is not the whole truth. We have not completed our evaluation. We have not seen the other side of truth, the positive points. And this other face of the truth is what the word of God gives us today.

Today's first reading gives us a celebration, the Liturgy of the Word, and has this to say: "And they all listened attentively... they all kept their eyes fixed on him... when the people heard what the Law required, they were so moved that they began to cry."

We have the description of another liturgical celebration, another Liturgy of the Word, in today's Gospel (Lk 1:1-4; 4:14-21) which took place in the synagogue of Nazareth with a homily delivered by Jesus, about whom "news was spread throughout all that territory" but who was, at the same time, the Great Unknown.

This positive aspect is what we should keep in mind a little bit more by demanding not only from the preachers of the Word but also from the listeners the precise attitudes needed for listening to this Word, which definitely are not the same as those required for listening to a lecture or conference.

These attitudes flow from the following realities:

A) It is not man, it is God who speaks to men. God is not an isolated character, unconcerned with man. God is interested in twentieth century man, the concrete man who comes

to the celebration, and to him as a sign of friendship God addresses his word. "When the scriptures are read in the church, God himself speaks to his people, and it is Christ, present in his word, who proclaims the Gospel. The readings should be listened to with respect; they are a principal element of the liturgy. In the biblical readings God's word is addressed to all men of every era and is understandable in itself, but a homily, as a living explanation of the word, increases its effectiveness and is an integral part of the service" (General Instruction, *Roman Missal*, n. 9).

A first attitude of a believer is, then, the attitude of hearkening or listening to God. This is an attitude not of curiosity, not of desire for novelty, which are passive attitudes, but of catching the message of a person who interests me and is speaking to me. And this is already an attitude of spiritual liveliness or activity.

B) God speaks through a man. Although God has infinite ways of speaking, when he gathers the people in an assembly, he uses human words. The Gospel event at Nazareth is repeated: God is speaking to the Nazarenes through the town's carpenter. And God goes on talking to his people through one of the people, not necessarily the wisest or the best, whose family, origin, occupation are known to all.

C) What does God say to man? What parents may to their children, the spouses and friends to one another:

a — that God truly loves man. And this message has to be repeated in one way or the other because man finds it hard to believe. Deep in man there is an element of fear, of distrust sometimes, of protest, of sadness, of resentment... towards God, whom many a time man looks at and considers as a rival and not as friend.

b — that God seeks, in consequence, for the welfare of man. Man may be very bad and may perhaps think that nothing can

be done about this, but God thinks that man's condition can still be remedied.

c — that God brings this good to man by means of the one he sent: Jesus Christ and his Church.

d — The Word of God does not only speak but acts. It acts here and now. In my daily task, in my joys and sorrows... God is continually saving me, he is attracting me all the time to himself.

In the face of this reality of the Word of God, our response should be:

a — to hear it again and again until it penetrates deeply into us;

b — like the people in the synagogue of Nazareth, to be struck with admiration at the words of wisdom which God speaks through his Incarnate Son;

c — to give thanks to God and to praise the Lord, because we have discovered the marvels of God in our life.

d — to keep this discovery in our heart in order to savor it and be able to transmit it.

To kill God or banish Him

LUKE 4:21-30

*4th Sunday in Ordinary Time
January 29, 1989*

The Gospel (Lk 4:21-30) brings us these facts: Jesus had been living in Nazareth until he reached thirty years of age. He spent all these long years in the anonymity of silence. There

Jesus spent his infancy and childhood without giving any sign by which people could guess he was the Messiah.

When the hour came, Jesus leaves town, preaches throughout all Judea and Galilee and confirms with miracles whatever he preached. After some time he returns to the town where he had grown up.

He enters the synagogue, asks for the sacred scriptures, he reads them and comments on them. His commentary was marvellous and heart-rending, but there were adverse reactions.

Jesus has also been living with us for many years now and to many he is almost unknown.

The people of Nazareth approved of what Jesus was saying: since the truth was clear and evident, they could not help but admit it.

And for the moment, while they were listening, they admired him for what he was saying and for the very wonderful way of explaining it. He spoke in a much better way than that of the doctors of the law at that time.

"But" — this "but" is much louder in some — he who is talking is the son of Joseph the carpenter; and with this "but" they reject both his doctrine and his person. What he is saying may be the truth... but because he is the son of the carpenter, we do not admit it, neither will we put it in practice.

The origin or source of the "but" in some is envy, in others it is the doctrine itself which contradicts their actions.

What happens to us is something similar. The doctrine, his Gospel, nobody or almost nobody rejects. They find it reasonable and clear... "But" to put it into practice... Then we too put our own *buts*: "But Christ is not of these times." "But it goes against modern civilization." But it has to be adapted to the twentieth century..."

Christ expounds the truth with clarity. Clarity ilke light enlightens those who wish to be guided by it, but it dazzles and blinds those who confront it and wish to reject it.

When the truth is evident, there is no need for miracles to support or confirm it. But like the neighbors of Jesus, some people do not want to accept the truth, they demand miracles.

Miracles do not overcome stubbornness, they do not enlighten the obstinate. That is why the pharisees saw and touched many miracles, but they are not converted, nor did they want to be convinced.

Miracles help men of good will to accept the truth, to believe.

The same thing happens to us. We do not demand miracles to support the mystery of the Holy Trinity; but when the Gospel truth is hard to live, we demand a miracle, with the thought that, if there is no miracle, we can reject the truth.

The Gospel is certainly not for the proud or for the obstinate, but for simple people, for men of good will.

Using the testimonies of Elijah and Elisha which they could not reject, Christ tells them that "a prophet is never welcomed in his hometown" because of the stubbornness of its inhabitants. And their reaction is "to throw him over the cliff," to kill him.

Seeing the perverse reception of his townmen, Jesus moves on to other towns better disposed to receive the word of God. No evangelist mentions that Jesus ever came back to preach in Nazareth.

During almost thirty years living with Jesus the people of Nazareth did not learn to recognize him, and when he introduces himself in the open, they reject him.

Actually history repeats itself. Some people reject the teachings of Christ with a rotund "no" without further explanations. Others reject it because of motives which are not valid reasons but rather accommodations. Others adulterate the

doctrine of Christ and conform it to their situations and opportunities. They disguise with the cloak of Christianity the putrid corruption of their deeds.

The three great crimes men have committed are: 1 — to make gods; 2 — to make themselves gods; and 3 — to want to kill God.

Some have invented gods fitted to their whims and caprices. Of these gods you can find a very long list in the course of history.

Others make their very own selves gods, but they are little gods who endure only for a few days; afterwards they die and are buried like the rest.

Others want to kill God, but man has not yet succeeded in his attempt, to kill God or to banish him from History.

Jesus majestically comes out unscathed, just as in Nazareth where "he walked through the crowd and went his way."

Let us be vigilant and earnestly pray that what happened at Nazareth will not happen to us, lest Jesus go his way leaving us behind without ever coming back.

It's zero without Christ

LUKE 5:1-11

*5th Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 5, 1989*

This is what today's Gospel (Lk 5:1-11) tells us:

Peter and his companions, expert and experienced fishermen, acquainted with the hours most apt for fishing, familiar

with the best places for it at the given time, sadly had to admit: "Master, we worked hard all night long and caught nothing."

And when Jesus orders Peter to let down the nets it is after so many times in which he has let them down uselessly. Peter obeys solely because it is Jesus who so orders; only in Jesus' name does Peter let down the nets. "They let them down and caught such a large number of fish that the nets were about to break."

The skill of the men of the sea did not work; the obedience to the command of Jesus did it all.

It was necessary to instill this into the minds of Peter and the apostles: that it's zero without Christ, with Christ everything is possible.

And so Peter knows where the efficacy of his preaching comes from when in his sermons thousands flock to his nets converted (Acts 2:11); and when he performs miracles, as when "a man who had been lame all his life" begged something from him, Peter said to him, "I have no money at all, but I give you what I have: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth I order you to get up and walk" (Acts 3:6).

It usually occurs to us that our efforts in honest and necessary works appear to be useless; our labors to promote peace, justice, human rights seem all to end in vain.

We all have bad moments, failures, difficulties: the student in his course, the mature man in his profession, the father with his child, the son with his father who fails to understand him...

"There is nothing we can do" is one great temptation. Then comes the act of abandoning what was nicely begun. We are extremists by nature. If we do not get the ideal of our best dreams, we raise our arms in despair and surrender.

The fact is that one was thinking that he could do everything, when without God nothing can be done. When the hour

of discouragement strikes tempting us to abandon everything because "there is nothing we can do," it is just the hour to think of Christ as Peter did, and say: "In your name I am going to start from zero." And if this phrase "in your name" is more than just words, if we feel it and we lean upon and rest on Jesus, we can expect results.

How do we have to cooperate with God? Just as Peter did.

With promptness, as when he immediately cast the net into the the sea.

With humility, as when he submitted his judgment and his will to that of Jesus.

With determination, since he did not decline to do what seemed to be an exercise in futility, but with courage he executed the command, without being afraid of "what-will-people-say."

Some people, as we have said before, base everything on their own efforts and they are bound to fail; others say that they place all their trust in God but they do nothing themselves, and they, too, are bound to fail.

Hitting the nail right on the head is the formula of St. Benedict: "*Ora et labora*," pray and work. The Spaniards say: "*A Dios rogando y con el mazo dando*," praying to God and striking with the sledge-hammer. The English-speaking has: "Heaven helps those who help themselves." "*Sa tao ang gawa; sa Dios ang awa*," is how we say it.

St. Ignatius Loyola expresses it this way: "In such a manner should we exert ourselves as if every success depended only on our efforts; and at this same time in such a manner should we trust in God as if every success depended exclusively on him."

The aforementioned formulas certainly exclude all discouragement, dismay, dejection and depression.

The grand key is to see God always at our side and to be aware always that with him we can do everything; without him we can do nothing.

The grand error is to organize one's life single-handedly, with one's back turned to God. To work without God is to condemn our efforts to ending up fruitless, without success.

Penance and temptation

LUKE 4:1-13

*1st Sunday In Lent,
February 12, 1989*

Penance and Temptation are two unpleasant and disturbing words; but what they indicate is what this time or season for serious and Christian reflection begins with. As you know, today is the First Sunday in Lent. Penance, in the understanding of Christians, does not consist only and principally in the few deprivations or in certain pious practices proper to Lent.

Penance is principally the conversion of the heart of man to God. From time to time, and perhaps with not a little frequency, we must convert our souls towards God, because the daily cares and concerns or the tempest of our passions turn us away toward other routes.

The same thing happens to us in our human and Christian life; we have to look to God, our polar star, to rectify our course. And this Holy Season of Lent is a very appropriate time for this.

It is normal for every undertaking to have obstacles, difficulties: it is natural then for a Christian to encounter obstacles, temptations and even downfalls in his life and in his relations with God and with the rest of men.

If someone says he has no temptations, no difficulties, either he is unconscious and does not see them, or what he does is evil and consequently he finds no obstacles, or he is permanently in a temptation or difficulty he does not want to come out of.

Well known is the declaration of Job that the life of man is a warfare, a continuous struggle, which demands from man the tactic of a persevering training for the time of a battle. We want to win without fighting, and that is impossible.

And Christ confirms all this in the Gospel of today (Lk 4:1-13).

Christ, after so many days of fasting, became hungry. The Devil proposes to him a very extraordinary remedy. Christ conveniently retorts him: "Man cannot live on bread alone."

Man needs bread, material things, but man does not live on bread alone. Those who are full of material goods also have their problems. These problems of the soul are solved only by the Word of God.

The divine Word is like oxygen to the Christian soul. Not wanting to listen to the Word of God is depriving oneself of oxygen and getting asphyxiated.

The Devil tempts Jesus with boastfulness and pride.

There are Christians who overcome the temptation of the bread, but easily succumb to pride and vain glory. We like to be somebody; we want to show off.

It is difficult to conquer this temptation. Look at what is real, at who you are and not what you believe yourself to be. Do not look at yourself with a magnifying glass. Look at your-

self from the inside. As the sun sets out a duck views its very long shadow and believes itself to be an ostrich. We also confuse our shadow with our real self.

The Devil displays before the imagination of Jesus all the kingdoms of the earth and the whole world with all its riches. He offers it all to Christ, if falling down on his knees Jesus would worship him. This is the temptation of idolatry, against the First Commandment of God. Jesus answers: "Worship the Lord your God and serve only him!"

To us the Devil can present another idol, another god to adore: Money. With money we want to buy everything: comforts, pleasures, amusements, fame, lies, flattery...

But with money one cannot buy honesty or integrity or truth, much less heaven.

Money is not for worshipping; it is to be put under your feet; thus you crush it, it does not crush you. If you carry it in your hands, it will tie them down, and if you carry it in your heart, it will drown you.

Now, how do we overcome temptations? We have:

1 — to run away from the occasions of sin. The first remedy in avoiding getting sick is staying away from contagion. Some people think that to flee only belongs to the coward. Now, to retreat for a better position is a wise strategy.

2 — not to put oneself in the occasion of sin. Temptation is attractive. To put one's head inside the mouth of a lion is not an act of bravery, but of rashness and stupidity, which usually has to be paid for very dearly.

3 — to get out of the occasions of sin. He who plays with fire will get burned.

4 — to fight. We all have temptations; if you can avoid it, run away from it. You alone are not able, but with the help of God you can. This help can be the frequent reception

of the sacraments, the counsel of a prudent person whom you can approach and who can advise and encourage you, or of your parents who care for you very much, or of a circle of good friends...

5 — to think and reflect on what you are and what you do. Do you at times withdraw from worldly cares in order to encounter your own self and see the need you have of God? And to know how to give importance to what is really important to a Christian?

What are the temptations that bombard your spirit most frequently? Are they of power, of abusing or exploiting your fellowman, of pride, of seeking what is your own of laziness and indolence?...

The right examination of conscience

LUKE 9:28b-36

*2nd Sunday In Lent,
February 19, 1989*

Today, the Second Sunday in Lent, the Gospel (Lk 9:28b-36) tells us that Jesus is transfigured before his three Apostles: Peter, John and James. "His face changed its appearance, and his clothes became dazzling white."

During this Holy Season of Lent, a transfiguration, in a spiritual sense, must come to us; our soul must be cleansed from all stains of sin and be adorned with sanctifying grace, so that

it may become beautiful and glorious before God and God may take pleasure in it.

This transfiguration of our soul is accomplished especially in the Holy Sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation which all should receive at Easter, according to the precept of the Church. To worthily receive this sacrament, in other words to make a truly good Confession, we have to make a good Examination of Conscience. Now let consider the following questions:

I. How must we begin the examination of conscience?

II. In what manner should we examine our conscience?

III. Against what faults must we guard in the examination of conscience?

We must begin the examination of conscience by imploring the help of the Holy Spirit. The assistance of Holy Spirit is necessary —

1 — *that we may rightly know our sins.* If there is no light, our eyes are not of much use, we see nothing with them. Objects become visible only when light shines upon them. The same is the case with our understanding; we cannot see our sins as they are, unless a supernatural light is cast upon them. This light comes from the Holy Spirit, who must enlighten our interior, before we can see what is amiss and sinful in us, before we can see it at least in such a way as to be able to make a thoroughly good confession.

2 — *that we may truly and supernaturally repent of our sins, and make a firm purpose not to sin any more.* With only our natural talents we are not capable of doing or even thinking anything meritorious for eternal life. We therefore can neither be sorry for our sins in a supernatural manner nor make a good resolution of amendment based upon supernatural motives. Only the Holy Spirit can enable us to do this, who in the words of the Prophet Ezekiel, “shall remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh” (36:26). Only the Holy

Spirit can move us to true repentance, and give us courage and strength to make a firm resolution not to offend our God any more.

3 — *that we may sincerely confess our sins.* We must sincerely confess all our sins, be they so base and shameful. This demands humiliation and self-denial which surpass the powers of human nature unaided. Without the Holy Spirit governing our tongues and thoughts, and encouraging us to a sincere repentance, we would hide the very sins that should not be hidden, and we would come out of the confessional greater sinners than when we entered it.

4 — *that we may be excited to a true spirit of penance.* We must have the earnest will to make satisfaction to the divine justice for our sins. For this end we must repent again and again of our sins for as long as we live, humble ourselves before God, perform various penitential works, and in particular accept with patience all the trials of life.

On the manner of examining our conscience, we should call to mind —

(a) when it was that we last made a good confession, and whether we performed the penance then given to us. We must mention our last good confession, as the confessor has to form an approximately correct judgment of the state of our soul.

(b) that we should examine ourselves in regard to:

- the commandments of God,
- the precepts of the Church, and
- the obligations of our state of life.

(c) that we must carefully ascertain *in what way* and *how often* we have offended God in —

- thought,
- word

— deed, and

— omission.

(d) that we must remember the number and the circumstances of all mortal sins.

In the examination of conscience we must guard against the following faults:

A — We must not examine ourselves too hastily and superficially. We must employ the necessary time and diligence. The examination of conscience is an important matter, because on it depends the completeness, and, consequently, the validity of our confession. We must employ as much diligence in this as in other important matters.

B — We must not hide our favorite sins from our own selves. All have faults to which they are particularly inclined, and therefore they frequently commit them. Now, if such persons examine their conscience, their favorite sin occurs to their mind, but their self-love endeavors to palliate, to soften, to mitigate or excuse it in every possible way. Nay, self-love goes so far as to strip such favorite sins of their evil nature; and to represent them as praiseworthy actions. Thus it calls pride and ambition, self-respect; avarice, prudent economy; unchaste love, friendship. This self-love frequently so deceives men that they either do not accuse themselves at all of the sin to which they are most addicted, or if they do, they confess it without sorrow. In spite of the sermons they hear, in spite of what all the confessor may say, they will not bring themselves to think it serious. Long habit, coupled with the machinations of Satan, has brought upon them a perversity of the mind, so that they cannot see themselves in regard to that particular sin as the angels and even their fellow men see them. Such persons are in desperate need of the light of the Holy Spirit. They are in imminent danger of making bad confessions.

C — We must avoid becoming too scrupulous. He who examines his conscience as well as he can before every confes-

sion, has no reason to be scrupulous. If he forgets some grievous sin, it is considered as included in the confession, and is forgiven with the sins confessed. If he remembers it afterwards, he has only to confess this particular sin, without repeating the whole confession.

However, you will make this important business of examination of conscience easy if you examine your conscience daily and do not delay confession too long.

Follow these rules, and you will always receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily.

The hot iron that arrests infection

LUKE 13:1-9

*3rd Sunday in Lent
February 26, 1989*

Not all the misfortunes that befall us are caused by our personal faults.

For this purpose let us recall the story of that small boy who on a Sunday, instead of going to Mass, went out to play with some of his friends who themselves were also missing the Sunday Mass.

During the game somebody stole the boy's wallet.

Upon reaching home, his mother reprimanded him very severely and even knocked his head shouting: "That was God's punishment for having missed Mass!"

"But, Mama," the robbery-victim boy replied, "why did God reward him who beside having missed Mass, also committed theft?"

The Gospel of this Sunday, the Third in Lent (Lk 13:1-9), dwells on this theological problem in the face of two recent events in the time of Jesus: "the Galileans whom Pilate had killed while they were offering sacrifices to God" and "eighteen people in Siloam who were killed when the tower fell on them."

Jesus was preaching when some Jews who were coming from Jerusalem broke onto the scene and started to narrate how Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, had ordered the massacre of a number of Galileans whose blood was mingled with the blood of their sacrifices which at the time they were offering in the temple.

In accordance with the superstitious belief of those times, that physical evil is always an effect of sin, the narrators of the sad event commented that perhaps such atrocious punishment was a penalty imposed by God to take revenge for the sins committed by those unfortunate Galileans.

Jesus disapproved such an unjust assumption, because physical evil is never the fruit and product of moral evil, nor is there any proportion between a misfortune, whatever it may be and no matter how big it could be, and the moral disorder of the will, nor is this earthly life the common place of God's justice.

"Do you think," Jesus asks, "that those Galileans were worse sinners than all the others because they were killed in that way?"

And, to give more force to his argument, he reminds them of another mournful event, also recent, that of eighteen people whom the tower of Siloam fell upon and killed. And he says to them: "Do you suppose that they were worse than all the other people living in Jerusalem? No indeed! And I tell you

that if you do not turn from your sins, you will all die as they did."

As you can see, Jesus rejects the supposition, the opinion that those deaths could be the product and punishment of sin, and at the same time he exhorts to penance as the best and surer way to avoid this and other similar punishments.

Here you can conclude that you have to discard the idea that God condemns the evil-doer for one single sin as if he were in a certain way lying in ambush, waiting for our lapses in order to immediately take revenge.

Of course, it is a dogma of faith that any grievous fault committed with full knowledge and full consent, separates man from the friendship of God and exposes him to suffer, if death surprises him in that state, an eternal punishment.

But it is not a dogma of faith that God watches, in anxious and somber ambush, the followers of his law, waiting only for the hour of passing fall in order to throw them into the abyss of everlasting death.

On the contrary, all the Scriptures are full of declarations which manifest the undefatigable patience of God in waiting up to the last minute even for the greatest sinners to come to him. And there is nobody who at certain times of his life has not experienced within himself the effects of those patient waits of God.

It is true that watchfulness, vigilance is constantly advised, because the day of the Lord will come like the thief in the night who never forewarns. It is also true that penance is frequently recommended, and Jesus recommends it today, but as a means to atone for our offenses and to preserve ourselves from possible relapses.

In opposition to the good which always strengthens and perfects, every evil, above all moral evil, harms the creature, at times in its very physical being; it also harms its soul by

detaching from it the liking for good and by corrupting, by perverting the intellect in as much as it introduces in there the disorder and renders impotent the search for truth.

There is no sin that does not inflict wounds, sprains and losses of strength on our wretched human nature; at the same time it increases our debt with God, who made us to be good and to do good and whom we offend when, instead of the good, it is the evil we do.

It is clear that the penalty, alone by itself, does not expiate anything; it atones for nothing, because it does not change anything in the heart; but yes, a penalty voluntarily suffered does expiate, the compensation offered to the divine honor by a penitential, free and voluntary acceptance of the punishment has expiatory effects.

The intimate being of God does not suffer any loss whatsoever with our faults. But every sin of ours is an attempt against the public life of God and against his glory.

Now, since that dishonor was done to God at the cost of an enjoyment of the will or sensual pleasure, prohibited by law, the amendment should be performed also at the cost of an enjoyment, which one wilfully deprives himself of, through a second act that satisfies God, since the first act was done to satisfy oneself. This second act shall be a penalty and a punishment since the first was enjoyment and pleasure.

Every penalty, on the other hand, afflicts or mortifies the concupiscence or the inordinate desire and renders it more timid and faint-hearted in its assaults. Every penalty is a whip that tames the fierceness of the animal that is within all of us. Every penalty is a hot iron that burns the rotten flesh to arrest the infection, and thus humbles the body and fortifies the spirit of man.

The great lesson which these two sad incidents as well as the parable of the barren fig-tree can give us is that we must convert ourselves if we do not want to perish.

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Press Releases

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) has received official information from the Apostolic Nunciature that His Holiness, John Paul II, has accepted the resignation of His Excellency, Most Reverend Oscar V. Cruz, D.D., J.C.D., from the pastoral governance of the Archdiocese of San Fernando (Pampanga). The official announcement of this news was made on 24 October 1988, Monday, at 12:00 noon in Rome, 7:00 p.m. in the Philippines.

Earlier this month, the CBCP was also informed by the Apostolic Nunciature that the Holy Father has approved the holding of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines, or PCP II. (The first was in 1953). Archbishop Cruz, a renowned canon lawyer, was unanimously elected by the Bishops of the Philippines as National Coordinator of said Plenary Council. He is very busy now preparing for the celebration of this very important event in the Philippine Church.

Archbishop Cruz is also the Vice-President of the CBCP, Judicial Vicar of the National Matrimonial Appellate Tribunal, and — very recently — was appointed by the Apostolic Nuncio, with approval from the Holy See, "Apostolic Visitor to the Daughters of Mary of the Assumption."

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines has received official notification from the Apostolic Nunciature that the Holy Father has appointed the Most Reverend Cesar C. Raval, S.V.D., D.D., presently Administrator of the Diocese of Bangued, Bishop of that Diocese. Bishop Raval was born in Laoag, Ilocos Norte and is a member of the Society of the Divine Word. Ordained priest in 1952, he served as Missionary for many years in Flores Island, Indonesia, then as District Superior of the SVD Fathers in Cagayan. He served as Parish Priest, then Vicar General in Bangued, Abra. Ordained Bishop in 1982, he succeeds retired Bishop Odillo Estpueler, S.V.D., D.D.

25 November 1988.

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The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines today received official announcement from the Apostolic Nunciature that His Holiness, John Paul II, has created the new Diocese of Naval, from the territory of the Archdiocese of Palo, appointing as its first Bishop, His Excellency the Most Reverend Filomeno Bactol, presently Auxiliary Bishop of Palo and Pastor of the Sto. Niño Parish in Tacloban, Leyte.

Bishop Bactol was born on 29 November 1939 at Carigara, Leyte, studied at the Sacred Heart Seminary in Palo (of which he later served as its Rector for a long time) and at the San Carlos Major Seminary in Cebu. He was ordained priest on 6 April 1968. Bishop Bactol has also served as Dioecesan Consultor and as Director of Vocations. Appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Palo in July 1981, his episcopal ordination took place on 14 October 1981.

29 November 1988