

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

THE OFFICIAL INTERDIOCESAN BULLETIN

Vol LXXI, Nos. 790-791

November-December 1995

LETTER TO WOMEN

John Paul H

THE FUTURE OF WOMEN

AFTER BEIJING

Mary Pilar Verzosa, R.G.S.

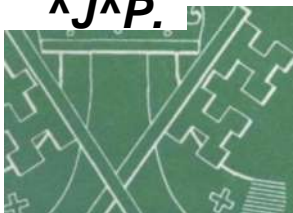
AN OVERVIEW OF THE SEMINARIANS
AT DSHJ FOR SCHOOL YEAR 95-96

Antonio Tobias, D.D.

**KXK[^]
^J^P.**

A PASTORAL LETTER OF THE
HSHOPS OF CAGAYAN VALLEY

Ywsdado Talamayan, D.D.



BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS

The Official Interdiocesan Bulletin

EDITOR	FR. VICENTE CAJILIG, O.P.
ASSOCIATE EDITORS	FR. HONORATO CASTIGADOR, O.P. FR. TAMERLANE LANA, O.P.
EDITORIAL CONSULTANTS	FR. FAUSTO GOMEZ, O.P. FR. JOSE MA. TINOKO, O.P.
BUSINESS MANAGER	FR. DANILOTAG-AT.O.P.
ASST. BUSINESS MANAGER	FR. ROBERTO PINTO, O.P.
PUBLICATION ASSISTANTS	CHRISTINE P. BERMUDEZ RODANTE B. SULTAN
COVER DESIGN	RODOLFO ATIENZA, O.P.

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS, the Official Interdiocesan Organ, is published bi-monthly by the University of Santo Tomas and is printed at UST Press, Manila, Philippines. Entered as Second Class Mail Matter at the Manila Post Office on June 21, 1946.

Unsolicited manuscripts will not be returned. They will, however, be given courteous and scholarly attention. Writers are reminded that the scope of this review is ecclesiastical and broadly archival. While we wish to inform the whole Church, our readership is largely clerical and this should be borne in mind by prospective contributors. Articles herein published do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Editorial Staff. Communications of an editorial nature concerning articles, cases and reviews should be addressed to the Editor.

Advertising and subscription inquiries should be addressed to the Business Manager.

Subscription Rates

	One Year	Per copy
Philippines:	P/200.00	P38.00
Foreign: (Via Sea Mail)	US\$ 30.00	\$ 6.00
(Via Air Mail)	US\$ 40.00	\$ 8.00

Subscriptions are paid in advance. In the Philippines, payments should be made by postal money order, telegraphic transfer or check with *regional bank clearing only*. Orders for renewal or change of address should include both old and new addresses, and go into effect fifteen days after notification.

Address all communications to:

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS
University of Santo Tomas
España, Manila, Philippines
Tel. No. 731-31-01 local 251

Table of Contents

EDITORIAL	612	BIBLIARASAL: PATTERN FOR HOMILETICAL RELECTION
WORDS FOR TODAY		
<i>John Paul II</i>	613	LETTER TO WOMEN
	624	PAPAL APPEAL ON BEHALF OF WOMEN
<i>Jaime Card. Sin</i>	627	MEN AND WOMEN ALIKE
<i>Mary Pillar Verzosa, R.G.S.</i>	630	THE FUTURE OF WOMEN AFTER BEIJING
CONSULTATIVE WORDS		
<i>Excelso Garcia, O.P.</i>	633	ARE ALL PERSONS GUILTY OF ABORTION EQUALLY PUNISHED?
	636	COMMUNION UNDER THE SPECIES OF BREAD
MEDITATIVE WORDS		
<i>Pedro Tejero, O.P.</i>	639	THE PRIEST AT PRAYER
PASTORAL WORDS		
<i>Jaime Card. Sin</i>	641	"PROCLAIMING A YEAR OF FAVOR FROM THE LORD"
<i>Antonio Tobias, DD.</i>	646	AN OVERVIEW OF THE SEMINARIANS AT DSHJ FOR SCHOOL YEAR 95-96
<i>Diosdado Talamayan, DD. et al.</i>	652	A PASTORAL LETTER OF THE BISHOPS OF CAGAYAN VALLEY
<i>Anacleto Asebias, et al.</i>	656	AN OPEN LETTER TO JOSE T. RAMIREZ
WORDS FROM THE PAST		
<i>Charles Bransom</i>	674	PHILIPPINE EPISCOPOLOGY: ADDENDA-CORRIGENDA 1995
GOD'S WORD FOR TOMORROW		
<i>Efren Rivera, O.P.</i>	677	FESTAL HOMILIES FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 1996
INDEX	704	VOLUME LXXI (1995)

BIBLIARASAL: Pattern for Homiletical Reflection

VICENTE CAJILIG, O.P.

BIBLIARASAL (*Mag-ARAL ng BIBLIA upang mag-DASAL at magbago ng ASAL*) is the local adaptation of the general phrase "bible study." It is basically made up of seven steps:

1. Invite the Lord
2. Text Reading
3. Again Look at the Text
4. God Speaks, We Listen
5. Share
6. Search
7. Pray

It is the counterpart of the African biblical study approach of LUMKO which is now quite well known in the different parts of the world.

We propose that the pattern of Bibliarasal be used for homiletical reflection. It is a handy one which can bring out deep evangelical values from human experiences.

Starting January 1996, our magazine will publish homiletical and biblical pointers prepared by the Rev. Fr. Efren Rivera, O.P., Professor of Scriptures at the University of Santo Tomas, and former Editor *olBoletin Ecclesiastico de Filipinos*. We thank him for this contribution to biblical apostolate in the Philippines.

Letter to Women

JOHN PAUL II

*Universal recognition of their dignity
will pave the way for full respect for women everywhere*

I greet you all most cordially, women throughout the world!

1. I am writing this letter to each one of you as a sign of solidarity and gratitude on the eve of the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing this coming September.

Before all else, I wish to express my *deep appreciation* to the United Nations Organization for having sponsored this very significant event. The Church desires for her part to contribute to upholding the dignity, role and rights of women, not only by the specific work of the Holy See's official Delegation to the Conference in Beijing, but also by speaking directly to the heart and mind of every woman. Recently, when *Mrs Gertrude Mongella*, the Secretary General of the Conference, visited me in connection with the Peking meeting, I gave her a written *Message* which stated some basic points of the Church's teaching with regard to women's issues. That message, apart from the specific circumstances of its origin, was concerned with a broader vision of the situation and problems of *women in general*, in an attempt to promote the *cause* of women in the Church and in today's world. For this reason, I arranged to have it

forwarded to every Conference of Bishops, so that it could be circulated as widely as possible.

Taking up the themes I addressed in that document, I would now like to *speak directly to every woman*, to reflect with her on the problems and the prospects of what it means to be a woman in our time. In particular I wish to consider the essential issue of the *dignity and rights* of women, as seen in the light of the word of God.

This "dialogue" really needs to begin with a word of thanks. As I wrote in my Apostolic Letter *Mulieris Dignitatem*, the Church "desires to give thanks to the Most Holy Trinity for the 'mystery of woman' and for every woman — for all that constitutes the eternal measure of her feminine dignity, for the 'great works of God', which throughout human history have been accomplished in and through her" (n. 31).

2. This word of thanks to the Lord for his mysterious plan regarding the vocation and mission of women in the world is at the same time a concrete and direct word of thanks to women, to every woman, for all that they represent in the life of humanity.

Thank you, *women who are mothers!* You have sheltered human beings within yourselves in a unique experience of joy and travail. This experience makes you become God's own smile upon the newborn child, the one who guides your child's first steps, who helps it to grow, and who is the anchor as the child makes its way along the journey of life.

Thank you, *women who are wives!* You irrevocably join your future to that of your husbands, in a relationship of mutual giving, at the service of love and life.

Thank you, *women who are daughters* and *women who are sisters!* Into the heart of the family, and then of all society, you bring the richness of your sensitivity, your intuitiveness, your generosity and fidelity.

Thank you, *women who work?* You are present and active in every area of life — social, economic, cultural, artistic and political. In this way you make an indispensable contribution to the growth of a culture which unites reason and feeling, to a model of life ever open to the sense of "mystery", to the establishment of economic and political structures ever more worthy of humanity.

Thank you, *consecrated women!* Following the example of the greatest of women, the Mother of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, you open yourselves with obedience and fidelity to the gift of God's love. You help the Church and all mankind to experience a "spousal" relationship to God, one which magnificently expresses the fellowship which God wishes to establish with his creatures.

Thank you, *every woman*, for the simple fact of being a *woman!* Through the insight which is so much a part of your womanhood you enrich the world's understanding and help to make human relations more honest and authentic.

3. I know of course that simply saying thank you is not enough. Unfortunately, we are heirs to a history which has conditioned us to a remarkable extent. In every time and place, this conditioning has been an obstacle to the progress of women. Women's dignity has often been unacknowledged and their prerogatives misrepresented; they have often been relegated to the margins of society and even reduced to servitude. This has prevented women from truly being themselves and it has resulted in a spiritual impoverishment of humanity. Certainly it is no easy task to assign the blame for this, considering the many kinds of cultural conditioning which down the centuries have shaped ways of thinking and acting. And if objective blame, especially in particular historical contexts, has belonged to not just a few members of the Church, for this I am truly sorry. May this regret be transformed, on the part of the whole Church, into a renewed commitment of fidelity to the Gospel vision. When It comes to setting women free from every kind of exploitation and domination, the Gospel contains an ever relevant message which goes back to the *attitude of Jesus Christ himself*. Transcending the established norms of his own culture, Jesus treated women with openness, respect, acceptance and tenderness. In this way he honoured the dignity which women have always possessed according to God's plan and in his love. As we look to Christ at the end of this Second Millennium, it is natural to ask ourselves: how much of his message has been heard and acted upon?

Yes, it is time to *examine the past with courage*, to assign responsibility where it is due in a review of the long history of humanity. Women have contributed to that history as much as men and; more often than not, they did so in much more difficult conditions. I think particularly of those women who loved culture and art, and devoted their lives to them

in spite of the fact that they were frequently at a disadvantage from the start, excluded from equal educational opportunities, under-estimated, ignored and not given credit for their intellectual contributions. Sadly, very little of women's achievements in history can be registered by the science of history. But even though time may have buried the documentary evidence of those achievements, their beneficent influence can be felt as a force which has shaped the lives of successive generations, right up to our own. To this great, immense feminine "tradition" humanity owes a debt which can never be repaid. Yet how many women have been and continue to be valued more for their physical appearance than for their skill, their professionalism, their intellectual abilities, their deep sensitivity; in a word, the very dignity of their being!

4. And what shall we say of the obstacles which in so many parts of the world still keep women from being fully integrated into social, political and economic life? We need only to think of how the gift of motherhood is often penalized rather than rewarded, even though humanity owes its very survival to this gift. Certainly, much remains to be done to prevent discrimination against those who have chosen to be wives and mothers. As far as personal rights are concerned, there is an urgent need to achieve *real equality* in every area: equal pay for equal work, protection for working mothers, fairness in career advancements, equality of spouses with regard to family rights and the recognition of everything that is part of the rights and duties of citizens in a democratic State.

This is a matter of justice but also of necessity. Women will increasingly play a part in the solution of the serious problems of the future: leisure time, the quality of life, migration, social services, euthanasia, drugs, health care, the ecology, etc. In all these areas a greater presence of women in society will prove most valuable, for it will help to manifest the contradictions present when society is organized solely according to the criteria of efficiency and productivity, and it will force systems to be redesigned in a way which favours the process of humanization which mark the "civilization of love".

5. Then too, when we look at one of the most sensitive aspects of the situation of women in the world, how can we not mention the long and degrading history, albeit often an "underground" history, of violence against women in the area of sexuality? At the threshold of the Third Millennium we cannot remain indifferent and resigned before this phenom-

enon. The time has come to condemn vigorously the types of *sexual violence* which frequently have women for their object and to pass laws which effectively defend them from such violence. Nor can we fail, in the name of the respect due to the human person, to condemn the widespread hedonistic and commercial culture which encourages the systematic exploitation of sexuality and corrupts even very young girls into letting their bodies be used for profit.

In contrast to these sorts of perversion, what great appreciation must be shown to those women who, with a heroic love for the child they have conceived, proceed with a pregnancy resulting from the injustice of rape. Here we are thinking of atrocities perpetrated not only in situations of war, still so common in the world, but also in societies which are blessed by prosperity and peace and yet are often corrupted by a culture of hedonistic permissiveness which aggravates tendencies to aggressive male behaviour. In these cases the choice to have an abortion always remains a grave sin. But before being something to blame on the woman, it is a crime for which guilt needs to be attributed to men and to the complicity of the general social environment.

6. My word of thanks to women thus becomes a *heartfelt appeal* that everyone, and in a special way States and international institutions, should make every effort to ensure that women regain full respect for their dignity and role. Here I cannot fail to express my admiration for those women of good will who have devoted their lives to defending the dignity of womanhood by fighting for their basic social, economic and political rights, demonstrating courageous initiative at a time when this was considered extremely inappropriate, the sign of a lack of femininity, a manifestation of exhibitionism, and even a sin!

In this year's *World Day of Peace Message*, I noted that when one looks at the great process of women's liberation, "the journey has been a difficult and complicated one and, at times, not without its share of mistakes. But it has been substantially a positive one, even if it is still unfinished, due to the many obstacles which, in various parts of the world, still prevent women from being acknowledged, respected, and appreciated in their own special dignity" (n. 4).

This journey must go on! But I am convinced that the secret of making speedy progress in achieving full respect for women and their

identity involves more than simply the condemnation of discrimination and injustices, necessary though this may be. Such respect must first and foremost be won through an effective and intelligent *campaign for the promotion of women*, concentrating on all areas of women's life and beginning with a *universal recognition of the dignity of women*. Our ability to recognize this dignity, in spite of historical conditioning, comes from the use of reason itself, which is able to understand the law of God written in the heart of every human being. More than anything else, the word of God enables us to grasp clearly the ultimate *anthropological basis* of the dignity of women, making it evident as a part of God's plan for humanity.

7. Dear sisters, together let us reflect anew on the magnificent passage in Scripture which describes the creation of the human race and which has so much to say about your dignity and mission in the world.

The Book of Genesis speaks of creation in summary fashion, in language which is poetic and symbolic, yet profoundly true. "God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; *male and female he created them*" (Gn 1:27). The creative act of God takes place according to precise plan. First of all, we are told that the human being is created "in the image and likeness of God" (cf. Gn 1:26). This expression immediately makes clear *what is distinct about the human being with regard to the rest of creation*.

We are then told that, from the very beginning, man has been created "male and female" (Gn 1:27). Scripture itself provides the interpretation of this fact: even though man is surrounded by the innumerable creatures of the created world, he realizes that *he is alone* (cf. Gn 2:20). God intervenes in order to help him escape from this situation of solitude: "*// is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him*" (Gn 2:18). The creation of woman is thus marked from the outset by the principle of help: a help which is not one-sided but *mutual*. Woman complements man, just as man complements woman: men and women are *complementary*. Womanhood expresses the "human" as much as manhood does, but in a different and complementary way.

When the Book of Genesis speaks of "help", it is not referring merely to *acting*, but also to *being*. Womanhood and manhood are complementary *not only from the physical and psychological points of view*, but also from

the *ontological*. It is only through the duality of the "masculine" and the "feminine" that the "human" finds full realization.

8. After creating man male and female, God says to both: "*Fill the earth and subdue it*" (Gn 1:28). Not only does he give them the power to procreate as a means of perpetuating the human species throughout time, *he also gives them the earth, charging them with the responsible use of its resources*. As a national and free being, man is called to transform the face of the earth. In this task, which is essentially that of culture, *man and woman alike* share equal responsibility from the start. In their fruitful relationship as husband and wife, in their common task of exercising dominion over the earth, woman and man are marked neither by a static and undifferentiated equality nor by an irreconcilable and inexorably conflictual difference. Their most natural relationship, which corresponds to the plan of God, is the "unity of the two," a relational "uni-duality", which enables each to experience their interpersonal and reciprocal relationship as a gift which enriches and which confers responsibility.

To this "unity of the two" God has entrusted not only the work of procreation and family life, but the creation of history itself. *While the 1994 International Year of the Family focused attention on women as mothers*, the Beijing Conference, which has as its theme "Action for Equality, Development and Peace", provides an auspicious occasion for heightening awareness of *the many contributions made by women to the life of whole societies and nations*. This contribution is primarily spiritual and cultural in nature, but socio-political and economic as well. The various sectors of society, nations and states, and the progress of all humanity, are certainly deeply indebted to the contribution of women!

9. Progress usually tends to be measured according to the criteria of science and technology. Nor from this point of view has the contribution of women been negligible. Even so, this is not the only measure of progress, nor in fact is it the principal one. Much more important is *the social and ethical dimension*, which deals with human relations and spiritual values. In this area, which often develops in an inconspicuous way beginning with the daily relationships between people, especially within the family, society certainly owes much to the "*genius of women*".

Here I would like to express particular appreciation to those women who are involved in the various *areas of education* extending well beyond the family: nurseries, schools, universities, social service agencies, parishes, associations and movements. Wherever the work of education is called for, we can note that women are ever ready and willing to give themselves generously to others, especially in serving the weakest and most defenseless. In this work they exhibit a kind of *affective, cultural and spiritual motherhood* which has inestimable value for the development of individuals and the future of society. At this point how can I fail to mention the witness of so many Catholic women and Religious Congregations of women from every continent who have made education, particularly the education of boys and girls, their principal apostolate? How can I not think with gratitude of all the women who have worked and continue to work in the area of health care, not only in highly organized institutions, but also in very precarious circumstances, in the poorest countries of the world, thus demonstrating a spirit of service which not infrequently borders on martyrdom?

10. It is thus my hope, dear sisters, that you will reflect carefully on what it means to speak of the "*genius of women*", not only in order to be able to see in this phrase a specific part of God's plan which needs to be accepted and appreciated, but also in order to let this genius be more fully expressed in the life of society as a whole, as well as in the life of the Church. This subject came up frequently during *the Marian Year* and I myself dwelt on it at length in my Apostolic Letter *Mulieris dignitatem* (1988). In addition, this year in the Letter which I customarily send to priests for Holy Thursday, I invited them to reread *Mulieris dignitatem* and reflect on the important roles which women have played in their lives as mothers, sisters and co-workers in the apostolate. This is another aspect — different from the conjugal aspect, but also important — of that "help" which women according to the Book of Genesis, are called to give to men.

The Church sees in Mary the highest expression of the "feminine genius" and she finds in her a source of constant inspiration. Mary called herself the "handmaid of the Lord" (Lk 1:38). Through obedience to the Word of God she accepted her lofty yet not easy vocation as wife and mother in the family of Nazareth. Putting herself at God's service, she also put herself at the service of others: a *service of love*. Precisely through this service Mary was able to experience in her life a mysterious, but authentic "reign". It is not by chance that she is involved as "Queen

of heaven and earth". The entire community of believers thus invokes her; many nations and peoples call upon her as their "Queen". *For her, "to reign" is to serve! Her service is "to reign"!*

This is the way in which authority needs to be understood, both in the family and in society and the Church. Each person's fundamental vocation is revealed in this "reigning", for each person has been created in the "image" of the One who is Lord of heaven and earth and called to be his adopted son or daughter in Christ. Man is the only creature on earth "which God willed for its own sake", as the Second Vatican Council teaches; it significantly adds that man "cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of self (*Gaudium et spes*, n. 24).

The maternal "reign" of Mary consists in this. She who was, in all her being, a gift for her Son, *has also become a gift for the sons and daughters of the whole human race*, awakening profound trust in those who seek her guidance along the difficult paths of life on the way to their definitive and transcendent destiny. Each one reaches this *final goal* by fidelity to his or her own vocation; this goal provides meaning and direction for the earthly labours of men and women alike.

11. In this perspective of "service" — which, when it is carried out with freedom, reciprocity and love, expresses the truly "royal" nature of mankind — one can also appreciate that the presence of a *certain diversity of roles* is in no way prejudicial to women, provided that this diversity is not the result of an arbitrary imposition, but is rather an expression of what is specific to being male and female. This issue also has a particular application within the Church. If Christ — by his free and sovereign choice, clearly attested to by the Gospel and by the Church's constant Tradition — entrusted only to men the task of being an "*icon of his countenance as "shepherd" and "bridegroom" of the Church through the exercise of the ministerial priesthood*", this in no way detracts from the role of women, or for that matter from the role of the other members of the Church who are not ordained to the sacred ministry, since all share equally in the dignity proper to the "*common priesthood*" based on Baptism. These role distinctions should not be viewed in accordance with the criteria of functionality typical in human societies. Rather they must be understood according to the particular criteria of the *sacramental economy*, i.e. the economy of "signs" which God freely chooses in order to become present in the midst of humanity.

Furthermore, precisely in line with this economy of signs, even if apart from the sacramental sphere, there is great significance to that "womanhood" which was lived in such a sublime way by Mary. In fact, there is present in the "womanhood" of a woman who believes and especially in a woman who is "consecrated", a kind of inherent "prophecy" (cf. *Mulieris dignitatem*, n. 29), a powerfully evocative symbolism, a highly significant "iconic character", which finds its full realization in Mary and which also aptly expresses the very essence of the Church as a community consecrated with the integrity of a "virgin" heart to become the "bride" of Christ and "mother" of believers. When we consider the "iconic" complementarity of male and female roles, two of the Church's essential dimensions are seen in a clearer light: the "Marian" principle and the Apostolic — Petrine principle (cf. *ibid.*, n. 27).

On the other hand — as I wrote to priests in this year's Holy Thursday Letter — the ministerial priesthood, according to Christ's plan, "is an expression not of domination but of service" (n. 7). The Church urgently needs, in her daily self-renewal in the light of the Word of God, to emphasize this fact ever more clearly, both by developing the spirit of communion and by carefully fostering all those means of participation which are properly hers, and also by showing respect for and promoting the diverse personal and communal charisms which the Spirit of God bestows for the building up of the Christian community and the service of humanity.

In this vast domain of service, the Church's two-thousand-year history, for all its historical conditioning, has truly experienced the "genius of woman"; from the heart of the Church there have emerged women of the highest calibre who have left an impressive and beneficial mark in history. I think of the great line of woman martyrs, saints and famous mystics. In a particular way I think of Saint Catherine of Siena and of Saint Teresa of Avila, whom Pope Paul VI of happy memory granted the title of Doctors of the Church. And how can we overlook the many women, inspired by faith, who were responsible for initiatives of extraordinary social importance, especially in serving the poorest of the poor? The life of the Church in the Third Millennium will certainly not be lacking in new and surprising manifestations of "the feminine genius".

12. You can see then, dear sisters, that the Church has many reasons for hoping that the forthcoming United Nations Conference in Beijing *will*

bring out the full truth about women. Necessary emphasis should be placed on the "*genius of women*", not only by considering great and famous women of the past or present, but also those *ordinary* women who reveal the gift of their womanhood by placing themselves at the service of others in their everyday lives. For in giving themselves to others each day women fulfill their deepest vocation. Perhaps more than men, women *acknowledge the person*, because they see persons with their hearts. They see them independently of various ideological or political systems. They see others in their greatness and limitations; they try to go out to them and *help them*. In this way the basic plan of the Creator takes flesh in the history of humanity and there is constantly revealed, in the variety of vocations, that *beauty* — not merely physical, but above all spiritual — which God bestowed from the very beginning on all, and in a particular way on women.

While I commend to the Lord in prayer the success of the important meeting in Beijing, I invite *Ecclesial Communities* to make this year an occasion of heartfelt thanksgiving to the Creator and Redeemer of the world for the gift of *this great treasure* which is womanhood. In all its expressions, womanhood is part of the essential heritage of mankind and of the Church herself.

May Mary, Queen of Love, watch over women and their mission in service of humanity, of peace, of the spread of God's Kingdom!

With my Blessing.

From the Vatican, 29 June 1995, the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul.

Papal Appeal on Behalf of Women

On the eve of the Beijing Conference, the Holy Father calls for investment in care and education of girls

Dear Mrs. Glendon and Members of the Delegation of the Holy See to the Fourth World Conference on Women,

As you prepare to leave for Beijing, I am happy to meet you, the Head of the Delegation of the Holy See to the Fourth World Conference on Women, and the other Members of the Delegation. Through you, I extend my best wishes and prayers to the Secretary General of the Conference, to the participant nations and organizations, as well as to the authorities of the host country, the People's Republic of China.

My wishes are for the success of this Conference in its aim to guarantee all the women of the world "equality, development and peace", through full respect for their equal dignity and for their inalienable human rights, so that they can make their full contribution to the good of society.

**On Tuesday morning, 29 August, the Holy Father received Mrs. Mary Ann Glendon and the members of the Holy See's Delegation to the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing, China, on 4-15 September next. During the audience in Paul VI Auditorium, the Pope gave the following English-language address, in which he expressed his hopes for the Conference's outcome.*

Over the past months, on various occasions, I have drawn attention of the Catholic Church on the dignity, rights and responsibilities of women in today's society: in the family, in the workplace, in public life. I have drawn inspiration from the life and witness of great women within the Church throughout the centuries who have been pioneers within society, as mothers, as workers, as leaders in the social and political fields, in the caring professions and as thinkers and spiritual leaders.

The Secretary General of the United Nations has asked the participating nations at the Beijing Conference to announce concrete commitments for the improvement of the condition of women. Having looked at the various needs of women in today's world, the Holy See wishes to make a specific option regarding such a commitment: an option in favour of girls and young women. Therefore, I call all Catholic caring and educational institutions to adopt a concerted and priority strategy directed to girls and young women, especially to the poorest over the coming years.

It is disheartening to note that in today's world, the simple fact of being a female, rather than a male, can reduce the likelihood of being born or of surviving childhood; it can mean receiving less adequate nutrition and health care, and it can increase the chance of remaining illiterate and having only limited access, or none at all, even to primary education.

Investment in the care and education of girls, as an equal right, is a fundamental key to the advancement of women. It is for this reason that today:

— I appeal to all the educational services linked to the Catholic Church to guarantee equal access for girls, to educate boys to a sense of women's dignity and worth, to provide additional possibilities for girls who have suffered disadvantage, and to identify and remedy the reasons which cause girls to drop out of education at an early stage;

— I appeal to those institutions which are involved in health care, especially primary health care, to make improved basic health care and education for girls a hallmark of their service;

— I appeal to the Church's charitable and development organizations to give priority in the allocation of resources and personnel to the special needs of girls;

— I appeal to Congregations of Religious Sisters, in fidelity to the special charism and mission given to them by their Founders, to identify and reach out to those girls and young women who are most on the fringes of society, who have suffered most, physically and morally, who have the least opportunity. Their work of healing, caring and educating, and of reaching to the poorest is needed in every part of the world today;

— I appeal to Catholic Universities and centres of higher education to ensure that in the preparation of future leaders in society, they acquire a special sensitivity to the concerns of young women;

— I appeal to women and women's organizations within the Church and active in society to establish patterns of solidarity so that their leadership and guidance can be put at the service of girls and young women.

As followers of Jesus Christ, who identifies himself with the least among children, we cannot be insensitive to the needs of disadvantaged girls, especially those who are victims of violence and a lack of respect for their dignity.

In the spirit of those great Christian women who have enlightened the life of the Church throughout the centuries and who have often called the Church back to her essential mission and service. I make an appeal to the women of the Church today to assume new forms of leadership in service and I appeal to all the institutions of the Church to welcome this contribution of women.

I appeal to all men in the Church to undergo, where necessary, a change of heart and to implement, as a demand of their faith, a positive vision of women. I ask them to become more and more aware of the disadvantages to which women, and especially girls, have been exposed and to see where the attitude of men, their lack of sensitivity or lack of responsibility may be at the root.

Once again through you, I wish to express my good wishes to all those who have responsibility for the Beijing Conference and to assure them of my support, as well as that of the Holy See and the institutions of the Catholic Church, for a renewed commitment of all to the good of *the world's women*.

Men and Women Alike

JAIME CARDINAL SIN

I welcome all of you to this informal dialogue on the Fourth World Conference on Women which was arranged through Mrs. Tita de Villa, wherein you will be discussing positions about which the Church is particularly concerned. Needless to say that as a bishop, I share the duty with my brothers in the Episcopate to echo the Holy Father's teachings and the Holy See Delegation's positions as faithfully as we can. In conducting this little consultation, however, we do not wish to pre-empt the official stand of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

While as churchmen, our expertise on women is not extensive, it is intensive in the sense that the God who chose us is the same One who created women and gave them equal dignity with men. It is God who makes the first choice: *"I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit will last"* (Jn 15:16). This is apart from the fact that we actually do pastor women, among other reasons because there are actually more women who come to church than men.

Jesus Christ did not choose only men. He chose women, too, and treated them with particular affection.¹ As only he could, he chose his

•Special Message given on the occasion of a dialogue on the Fourth World Conference on Women, held at Villa San Miguel at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday 08 August 1995.

¹Jn 4:7 -, Mk 5:25, Mt 5:28, Jn 8:3 -, Mt 15:22-, Mk 15:41, Lk 13:10-, Mt 8:14-, Jn 2:1-, Jn 19:25-, Mt 27:55-, Lk 23:27-, Lk 23:54-.

own mother, in whom we find the epitome of Christian Womanhood. It is she whom Pope John Paul II regards as "*the highest expression of the feminine genius*".² In fact, we cannot understand Christian womanhood if we do not try to understand how Jesus regarded his Mother, Mary. The more authentic our devotion is to her, the better it will be for women in the world.

The fact that the World Conference on Women is being held in China is of utmost religious significance. It is crucial.

The position that the members of the Philippine delegation will take in the conference must reflect not the western secular humanist position. It must reflect without shame — in China no less! — the Filipino Christian culture. It is no coincidence that the Quadricentennial Anniversary of the Church in the Philippines is exactly one month ahead of the Beijing conference.

You have come to the house of the Archbishop of Manila whose revered mother is a Filipina, but who finds his paternal roots in China, at a moment in history when the second Christian millennium is drawing to a close. I must remind you — and this I say with conviction — that as members of the Philippine delegation to the Beijing World Conference on Women, you will be gravely answerable to the next generations of Filipinos and to the One God whom we worship for the positions you will be taking. And not just to them, but to all of Asia, and to the rest of the world.

You have to be alert and not naive. You must not be taken by euphemisms and novel expressions whose definitions can be post-dated, and which in the future can be interpreted in a manner that would be detrimental to our oriental culture, and to the culture of God-fearing family life which the majority of Filipinos are committed to, in accordance with our Faith and our Constitution.

If you believe in the God who intervenes in this world, nothing for you can be coincidental. Those who will go to Beijing are not chosen by human instruments alone. Not merely by NGOs, nor by government, and least of all by themselves alone. Ultimately, it is God who disposes.

²Letter to Women, No. 10, par. 2.

That is why it is Him they cannot afford to betray. Never pretend that you do not believe in God and His Commandments. Woe to them who do!

The Acts of the Apostles tells us that "more than ever, believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Ac 5:14). Whoever goes to Beijing from the Philippines has a mission, and it is this: to build and defend our culture instead of destroying and relinquishing it; to share what is incomparable, unique, and edifying in the Filipino woman; to proclaim the message of equality before God of men and women alike; to uphold a culture of life, and to tell the world of His Love!

The Future of Women after Beijing

MARY PILAR VERZOSA, R.G.S.*

After almost a month of "looking at the world through women's eyes", the NGO Forum and UN Fourth World Conference on Women has finally concluded with 149 pages of recommendations for country governments to adopt as they wish. Over and over again, it was clarified that the document was not binding. Among the recommendations that are supposed to give "development, equality and peace" are those that encourage women to stay in the workforce. In other words, liberate the women to do two jobs instead of one. Non-discrimination means everyone, male and female, will work outside the home, but men will do more housework.

That is the solution to poverty. Anything that might demand a genuine realignment of wealth and power was not resolved. Discussions on debt restructuring will have to be opened at some other UN Conference, maybe when there are more men around.

The overall document called the Platform of Action is not bad. Quite the contrary, it addresses numerous legitimate concerns where women are debased and exploited. But certain venomous passages are neatly wrapped in the sweet covering of noble concepts so that they could go unnoticed or unappreciated by the casual, uninitiated observer.

* NGO Forum Delegate

The "compromise language" referred to in the press releases leaves many recommendations to the interpretation and manipulation of the future users, most likely government agencies and NGOs vying for more funds for their women-development programs.

The document pays only token homage to spirituality and the role of culture, ethics and religions in the lives of people. It subtly denigrates the institution of marriage, not in so many words, but by neglecting to recognize its importance in the stability of families.

Along with the paragraphs on "reproductive rights" (which could be interpreted as a right to abortion if one examines the background material of World Health Organization, International-Planned Parenthood, and Women's Health Network), are those that deal with adolescent education. Parental authority is undermined by recognizing the children's rights to confidentiality in sexual activity, free from parental knowledge and control.

The Lesbian Caucus was highly visible, clinging on to keeping "sexual orientation" as among the human rights. Overheard was one lesbian exclaiming "How wonderful it will be when we have all-female cities and they are populated with all-female babies!" One of the major problems with the "sexual orientation" phrasing (a shift from "homosexual orientation") is that it is not a term that is understood in many cultures.

The underlying tension between the First World and the Third World will continue long after all the delegates have returned to their home countries. Charles Colchester, Director of a British organization called Christian Action Research and Education noted that the "tragedy in the conference is the real needs of Third World women are being ignored." Developing countries do not need "all this trendy, permissive, Western stuff and dwelling on it is "directing the scant resources away from the real needs of women." Dr. Margaret Ogola, pediatrician and director of the largest hospice for children with AIDS in Nairobi, Kenya, aptly put such injustice in these words: "We have no clean water and decent housing, government health centers have no antibiotics and medicine for simple sicknesses, but they have an oversupply of condoms and other contraceptives."

There was deep weariness in the eyes and drawn faces of pro-life/family warriors in Beijing, worn out by months of preparation and by the

eleven days of non-stop lobbying, information-sharing, writing, faxing, dealing with frustrating language barriers, and circumventing endless obstacles placed in their paths by the extremists running the conference. They were deeply-saddened by the state of affairs, but still jovial and eager, forming camaraderies and a new-found sense of unity for the next battle. There were never any serious illusions that they would win in this round, and that probably helps to explain the lack of discouragement but the high level commitment and optimism for future victories.

CONSULTATIVE WORDS

Cases and Inquiries

EXCELSO GARCIA, O.P.

ARE ALL PERSONS GUILTY OF ABORTION EQUALLY PUNISHED

Last year 1994 was the Family Year. During the famous and historical gathering of Nations in Cairo, Egypt, the Church voiced strongly and clearly her steadfast defense of the rights of the unborn child. She has done this in opposition to the claims of powerful States that intended to arrogate and assume for themselves the power over human life itself.

In the Church's law, abortion is condemned and sanctioned with a censure. Canon 1398 reads as follows: "A person who successfully procures an abortion incurs a latae sententiae excommunication."

The case I am sending you for clarification is not about abortion itself. The censure of excommunication dealt with in canon 1398 is a penalty inflicted on any member of the Church, which is incurred automatically by the person committing the crime of abortion. No distinction or specification of persons whatsoever is made. They can be lay persons, religious and also members of the clergy. The dignity, office or other personal considerations are not taken into account in canon 1398, as it happens in other laws dealing with penalties. Does it mean that the Church punishes the crime of abortion with the same penalty regardless of any consideration of the condition of the persons committing the crime?

More than once this topic came about in our discussions, but since nothing is said in canon 1398, nobody dares to elaborate on the matter.

Will it be too much for you to write on this topic? It will surely enlighten many of us regarding this matter.

Your former Student

After reading the case I was hesitant to answer it. Though the crime of abortion can be committed by persons endowed with different dignity, distinction or prestige, as the consultant says, it is quite improbable that abortion be resorted to by the persons he mentions, i.e. religious and members of the clergy (deacons and priests). On second thoughts, however, I decided to answer the case and explain the reasons why canon 1398 does not make any distinction of persons who may commit the crime of abortion.

It is true that some Church's penal laws mention the office and dignity of the perpetrators of the crime in question and punish them with different penalties according to their guilt and responsibility. The Church's Code points out as a principle, that persons constituted in some prominent position or dignity or abusing their authority should be punished more severely than others. See, for instance, canon 1326, n. 2.

Hence, penal laws dealing with some particular offenses follow the principle stated in canon 1326. Apostasy, heresy and schism, for instance, are penalized with a *latae sententiae* excommunication for anyone who is guilty of these delicts; but if a cleric is the transgressor, he may be punished with additional penalties (c. 1364). The desecration of the sacramental species is penalized with a *latae sententiae* excommunication reserved to the Holy See; but if the perpetrator of this crime is a cleric, he may be punished with another penalty, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state (c. 1367). Likewise, a person who uses physical force against the Roman Pontiff incurs a *latae sententiae* excommunication reserved to the Holy See; however, if the offender is a cleric, another penalty may be added, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state. The same offense committed against a Bishop is punished with a *latae sententiae* interdict and, if a cleric is the perpetrator, he incurs also a *latae sententiae* suspension (c. 1370).

The Church's law penalizes the crime of abortion with a *latae sententiae* excommunication to "any person who successfully procures abortion" (c. 1398). And this crime is also penalized in other canons of the Church's Code with other penalties, when the law deals with persons

of special dignity by reason of their status of life or rank to which they belong, like religious and members of the clergy.

Thus, canon 695 states: "A religious must be dismissed when he/she is guilty of having procured a successful abortion. In such a case the Major Superior, having collected proofs about the fact and imputability of the offence, makes known the accusation and the proofs to the member who is about to be dismissed, giving him the faculty of defending himself. All the acts, signed by the Major Superior and the notary should be transmitted to the Superior Moderator with the written and signed responses of the member".

Hence, a religious who has committed the crime of abortion incurs the *latae sententiae* excommunication dealt with in canon 1398, as any other member of the Church who has committed the delict of abortion, and he should also be dismissed from the religious Institute to which he belongs. For the dismissal, however, the process quoted in the foregoing paragraph should be followed. The dismissal cannot be effected automatically without having proven first the guilt of the person concerned.

With regards to the members of the clergy, both religious and secular, the Church's Code has the following laws:

a) Canon 1041,4 reads as follows: "The following persons are *irregulars in order to receive sacred orders*:... 4. Those who have procured a successful abortion and all who have positively cooperated to do it". Those are understood to be *cooperators* when without their help abortion would not successfully follow. The irregularity to receive sacred orders which is incurred by the perpetrator of abortion is reserved to the Holy See, according to canon 1047, 2, n. 2.

b) "Those who have committed effectively the delict of abortion are irregulars to exercise the already received orders" (c.1044, 1, n.3). The irregularity to exercise the already received sacred orders is also reserved exclusively to the Holy See, according to canon 1047, 2,n.2 et 3,n.3 et 4. Local Ordinaries may not dispense from it (c. 1047, 4).

"In the more urgent occult cases, however, if ... the S. Penitentiary cannot be approached, and if there is imminent danger of serious harm or loss of reputation, the person who is irregular for the exercise of an order, may exercise the same. There remains, however, the obligation

of having recourse to the S. Penitentiary, without revealing his name or through a Confessor "c. 1048). And canon 1049 makes clear that" in a petition to obtain a dispensation from irregularities ... all irregularities are to be mentioned. However, a general dispensation is valid also for those omitted in good faith, with the exception of the irregularities mentioned in canon 1041" (homicide and *abortion*); "it is not, however, valid for those concealed in bad faith ... If the question of an irregularity arising from a procured abortion is dealt with, for the validity of the dispensation even the number of offenses must be stated."

Summing up what we have explained, canon 1398 establishes the penalty of *latae sententiae* excommunication incurred by anyone who perpetrates the crime of abortion, whether the guilty person be a lay Christian, religious or member of the clergy. The Church punishes more severely religious and members of the clergy. The Church certainly punishes more severely religious persons, deacons and priests, when they are guilty of this crime with additional penalties, that are declared in detail in the Code, i.e. in the laws dealing with their respective state of life. The principle, therefore, that persons constituted in some prominent position or endowed with some dignity or exercising special ministry in the Church should be penalized more severely when found guilty in the commission of abortion, is faithfully and scrupulously followed.

COMMUNION UNDER THE SPECIES OF BREAD

Last April I was helping a parish Priest at a barrio chapel during the Sunday Mass, which was attended by more than two hundred people. As the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass went along, people continued coming and filled every corner of the chapel. While the parish Priest was distributing the Holy Communion, he could easily notice that there were not enough consecrated Hosts for all communicants. Thus, he asked me to take the box of unconsecrated hosts from the Mass kit as well as the chalice from the altar and bring them to him. When all the consecrated Hosts were distributed, he took the chalice which contained some Sanguis and, taking the unconsecrated hosts from the box I was holding, he dipped them one by one into the chalice and distributed to the communicants.

Did he do the correct thing or not?

A Deacon

A similar case was published in the *Boletín*, January-February, 1989, p. 78. So we will summarize here the principles that apply in solving the case canonically.

The parish Priest in question had obviously not consumed the Sacred Blood before distributing the Holy Communion to the faithful, foreseeing that the consecrated Hosts might not be enough. In all probability, this was not the first time he did the same.

Canon 925 reads as follows: "Holy Communion is to be given under the species of bread alone or, in accordance with the liturgical laws, under both species or, in case of necessity, even under the species of wine alone".

The Church's law, therefore, states clearly that Holy Communion, as a rule, is to be given "under the species of bread alone". In the case presented by the consultant the last communicants did not receive a consecrated Host, i.e. the species of bread alone. The unconsecrated hosts, dipped by the parish Priest into the Sanguis contained in the chalice, were not consecrated. Nor can it be said that by dipping them into the Sanguis, such hosts became consecrated. Thus, the communicants did not receive Holy Communion "under the species of bread alone", since the hosts given to them were not consecrated.

The Church has allowed the distribution of Holy Communion under both species in certain occasions only. It was done by the S. Congregation for Divine Worship in the Instructions *Eucharisticum Mysterium*, of May 25, 1967; *Sacramentali Communionem*, of June 29, 1970; and *Inmensae Caritatis*, of January 29, 1973. It may be asked: Does this case fall under the occasions allowed by the Holy See to distribute Holy Communion under both species? Certainly not. Nor can it be said, that the last communicants received Communion under both species. Since the hosts dipped in the Sanguis were not consecrated, as we have said, they did not receive Holy Communion under both species.

Was Holy Communion given them under the species of wine alone? Although an affirmative answer might be given, we have to consider the words used by the Church in the norm contained in canon 925: "...or, in case of necessity, even under the species of wine alone". Was the case presented by the consultant a case of necessity? Commentators, dealing on this matter give as an example of *case of necessity*, the case

of a sick person, who cannot swallow the consecrated Host. In such a case the Sanguis preserved for the purpose or consecrated in the Mass celebrated in the room of the sick person, can be given to him. Therefore, in the case under discussion this necessity was not present.

In our opinion the problem could have easily been solved by the parish Priest by having consecrated a few more hosts, foreseeing the possibility of having more communicants than expected. In any case the parish Priest could afterwards consume himself the few remaining Hosts.

Our answer to the question of the consultant Deacon is: The practise of using non consecrated hosts and dipping them into the Sanguis is not according to the Church's law.

The Priest at Prayer

PEDRO G. TEJERO, O.P.

The priest by virtue of his ordination takes the place of Christ, and consequently he acts in his name, represents him, and is vested with extraordinary powers in the field of the spirit.

1. In order that the priest may become fully aware of his lofty dignity and of the tremendous responsibilities laid upon him, he must constantly meditate and reflect on the mission he has been entrusted.

2. It is quite easy, and at times attractive, to deliver beautiful sermons, homilies and other perorations. But it is very difficult, and at times almost impossible to vouch what is being said and advised with the testimony of a life in close communion with God. The faithful, endowed as they are with a keen perception of the things of God, know very well when the priest is speaking from his experience with God or just from pure lip-service.

3. Without the contemplation of the things of God there can never be fruitful preaching and teaching. When Christ retired to solitude for prayer having spent the whole day attending to people and curing the sick, he was giving this warning to all the priests that apostolic activity without the support of an intense life of prayer would easily lead to fruitless and sterile work.

4. Much is being said today of the urgent need of a new evangelization. To develop and form intelligent Catholics is a most praiseworthy purpose. But we should not forget that the real renewal will come from a large group of men and women rich in prayer life and full of zeal for God's glory and the welfare of the Church.

5. The performance of priestly obligations, particularly in the line of the sacraments can readily turn into pure formalism when the priest has broken off his connection and union with Christ, the principal actor and mover, the High Priest.

6. Priests, like all men of this world, are subjected to different forms of trials, temptations and tribulations. The secret of their strength, enlightenment and courage lies in the intimate and personal relationship with Christ, in a friendly dialogue with him in prayer.

7. When the faithful ask for "a priest," they really mean a man of God. One who can talk to them in a different way from what they are used to, and to give them advice coming from a person who has spent long hours in close communication with the Lord.

8. How could a priest succeed in keeping his celibacy untarnished despite temptations and comply with his total commitment to God's kingdom if he lacks the help and support from Christ obtained in a strong prayer life?

9. In conclusion, the best way to fight back the allurements of our present secularism is to arm oneself with the powerful sword of daily mental prayer together with frequent confession and a tender devotion to and imitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

"Proclaiming a Year of Favor from the Lord" (*Is* 61:2; *Lk* 4:19)*

JAIME L. CARDINAL SIN

My dear People of God in the Archdiocese of Manila:

Four hundred years ago, on August 14, 1595, an edict by Pope Clement Vm established the Archdiocese of Manila. Through the centuries the Church of Manila has travelled the pilgrimage of life and faith secure in the unfailing guidance of the Lord's infinite love and goodness.

Today, therefore, in solemn commemoration of that wondrous and blessed event we raise our hearts and souls in grand thanksgiving and praise for this special gift.

Today heralds the beginning of a jubilee, the great Biblical and Church tradition that allows a sacred pause for a period of celebration, for an examination of what has been and for a preparation of a time that ushers in a new beginning and a renewal of the spirit.

As shepherd of the flock of the Archdiocese of Manila, a ministry entrusted to me by our Lord Jesus Christ, through His Holiness Pope John Paull II, I declare this QUADRICENTENNIAL YEAR OF 1995, A

•Pastoral Letter of His Eminence Jaime L. Cardinal Sin on the Archdiocesan Celebration of the Quadricentennial Year 1995 as a Jubilee, of Thanksgiving, a Year of Pardon. Issued on August 15, 1995, Solemn Feast of the Assumption of our Blessed Mother.

JUBILEE YEAR FOR THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MANILA. I proclaim this year, as a YEAR OF FAVOR FROM THE LORD (*Is* 61:2; *Lk* 4:19).

On this our jubilee, we exult God's goodness, we thank him for his manifold blessings and we humbly beseech his mercy for all our failings as a people.

Thus on this day August 15, the solemn Feast of the Assumption of Mary, our Blessed Mother, until August 15, 1996 is a year dedicated to a jubilee marked by our thanksgiving to God and our plea for his mercy. The culmination of this Jubilee year will be the celebration of the SECOND PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF MANILA from the 15th to the 31st of August 1996.

We thank the Lord for blessing our country and the Church of Manila. God has been with us: in our life, in our history fraught with conflict and pain, poverty, natural and man-made disasters but also animated by joys, by peace, by harmony and our sincere efforts to live up to Christian truth and ideals.

God our loving Father has given us Mary, as gift, to be our own mother, our powerful intercessor through all the times of travail and afflictions. Her maternal protection shows us the way to the heavenly Father. Her wisdom teaches us to discern the will of her Son so that we may fulfill his word for our salvation. We frame our celebration of this jubilee year with her great feasts because it is to the patronage of Mary, our Mother and Mother of the Church that we entrust our entire country, our Archdiocese.

At the same time we look back on the past four hundred years. We acknowledge the innumerable times when we, as individuals and communities of the Lord's disciples, have failed to make proper use of God's gifts. God's graces have never been wanting and it is this assurance that emboldens us to totally entrust ourselves to him and to his divine mercy, aware that he welcomes our reconciliation to his heart. Our jubilee thus celebrates the Lord's gift of unwavering pardon.

We ask the Lord to forgive us our many offenses against our fellowmen, against ourselves, which are real sins against him. We implore his compassion for the times we forgot to love him through our brothers

and sisters, for the hardness of our hearts when we turned away from those in need, for the cruelty of our ways when we violated the rights of others, for our apathy and indifference to his beloved creation, our earth and everything he made to fill- it. We kneel in abject supplication for our pride because we mistakenly believed that our human structures and systems could replace or supplant God's own plan and will.

We ask pardon because we seek to make whole and ever new our relationship with God, our Father. And through this invigorating relationship likewise we hope to renew our bonds with each other as brothers and sisters in the Lord.

We may go through this process of renewal and reconciliation by ourselves. But in this year of jubilee, I exhort the faithful of the Archdiocese of Manila to make this act, an act of the community. I ask you to gather in Churches, in the House of the Lord and there, in oneness and unity, together give praise and thanks and ask pardon.

I have designated special sites, accessible churches in the Archdiocese as centers for these pilgrimages. Here the faithful—the clergy, the Religious and the laity— can all be together in their prayer and desire to obtain sacramental forgiveness. These acts will also gain plenary indulgences both for the living and the dear departed. I have asked our priests to be available for confessions—regularly, frequently, if possible at all times—to absolve even the reserved sins, except those falling under the specific prerogative of the Holy Father.

I encourage all parishes in the Archdiocese, that throughout this Jubilee Year, they may organize groups of pilgrims to hold penitential celebrations with sacramental Confession and Absolution for individual penitents (cf. *Collectio Rituum*, pp. 96-122, 390-417).

These are the different churches of pilgrimages in the Archdiocese during this Quadricentennial Jubilee Year.

a. In the Ecclesiastical District of Manila:

1. the Minor Basilica of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Intramuros;
2. the Basilica of the Black Nazarene in Quiapo; and
3. the Basilica of San Lorenzo Ruiz in Binondo.

b. In the Ecclesiastical District of Quezon City-North:

1. the Church of Our Lady of Mercy in Novaliches; and
2. the Archdiocesan Shrine of the Good Shepherd in Fairview Park.

c. In the Ecclesiastical District of Quezon City-South:

1. the Santo Domingo Church or the Shrine of Our Lady of La Naval along Quezon Avenue;
2. the Shrine of Mary, Queen of Peace or the EDSA Shrine in Ortigas Avenue; and
3. the Immaculate Conception Parish Church in Cubao.

d. In the Ecclesiastical District of Makati:

1. the Immaculate Conception Parish Church in Pasig;
2. the St. John Bosco Parish Church along Pasay Road, Makati City; and
3. the Santuario de Santo Cristo in San Juan.

e. In the Ecclesiastical District of KALMANA:

1. Our Lady of Grace Parish Church, in Grace Park, Kalookan City;
2. the St. Francis of Assisi and Sta. Quiteria Parish Church in Kalookan City
3. San Bartolome Parish Church in Malabon

f. In the Ecclesiastical District of PPLM (Pasay, Parafiaque, Las Pifias and Muntinlupa):

1. the St. Andrew Parish Church in Parafiaque;
2. the Shrine of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, in Baclaran, Parafiaque;
3. the Sta. Clara de Montefalco Parish Church, in Pasay; and
4. Our Lady of the Abandoned Parish Church in Poblacion, Muntinlupa.

As we look forward to the common celebration of the Second Provincial of Manila next year by the ecclesiastical jurisdiction within the Ecclesiastical Province of Manila, I exhort the brother Bishops of the suffragan Dioceses of Malolos, Imus, San Pablo, and Antipolo and the Apostolic Vicariate of Palawan to join us in this celebration and to designate churches of pilgrimages within their own ecclesiastical spheres.

Every month and during the key liturgical seasons of the year, the Archdiocese will be issuing pastoral and liturgical guidelines for catechesis homilies and seminars on how we can better celebrate this year of thanksgiving and pardon.

May the blessing of the Lord and the supplication of the Blessed Virgin Mary accompany us in these celebrations of God's overflowing gifts for the whole Archdiocese.

An Overview of the Seminarians at DSHJ for the School-Year 95-96*

Introduction

The Diocesan Seminary of the Heart of Jesus (DSHJ) is a minor (High School) seminary of the Diocese located in Barrio San Vicente of San Fernando, La Union. This study attempts to give a picture of the present student population of this seminary from the point of view of the parishes where they reside and of the schools where they studied at the time they entered the seminary. The study will make us know the trend in this Diocese where vocation abounds for a better strategy in our vocation promotion.

Present Population

DSHJ has a total population of 66 students for the school-year 1995-96 distributed thus among the different year levels:

1st Yr.	2nd Yr.	3rd Yr.	4th Yr.	Pre-College	Total
17	16	13	16	4	66

This is only 10 students more than last year but the highest so far in the history of **DSHJ**.

•**Published** upon the request of Most Rev. Antonio R. Tobias, Bishop of San Fernando, La Union.

New Programs

This school-year also marks the introduction of some new programs in the seminary:

1) The re-introduction into the seminary of Intern students as distinguished from extern seminarians. The interns after at least a year in the seminary have proved themselves to have a clear motivation for the priesthood and, therefore, stay inside the seminary. The externs are inside the seminary only for studies during school-hours but go home with their family afterwards. The more normal situation for growing boys of their age is to live with their family. Getting them away from their family at the tender age of 11-16 may not be as normal but would need more plus factors to be found in the seminary to justify this early separation from the family. Some of these plus factors may be development of study habits, concentration, and early introduction to prayer. There are five (5) Extern students distributed thus among the various year levels after a year of studying inside the seminary:

IstYr.	2nd Yr.	3rd Yr.	4th Yr.	Pre-College	Total
0	2	2	1	0	5

2) The opening of the Pre-College Program for those who, after high school outside, have thought of studying for the Priesthood. This is actually a year to make up for what they missed studying outside of a seminary: Latin, Religion, and Spirituality. This does not necessarily exclude earning some units in college but the program does not yet include that. There are four such students at DSHJ for the school-year 1995-96.

3) The coming-in of more personnel, mostly sisters, in the minor seminary formation. Two sisters have taken the role of Formation Directress what used to be known as Prefect of Discipline: one (a Benedictine) for the minor seminarians and another (a Pastorelle Sister) for the Pre-College. At this stage of their formation, a mother-image for the seminarians may better perform the function of the one mainly in charge of character formation and deepening of attitudes and values. A Pastoral Coordinator in the person of a seminarian on regency is mainly in charge of the apostolates of the seminarians on vocation promotions and prison ministry and other outside activities of the community. A local congregation, known recently as Diocesan Sisters of St. Benedict, has been tapped to help in

seminary formation. One of them acts as Guidance Counsellor and Assistant Librarian; another works as Procurator/Cashier in the office and two work in the management of the kitchen and the canteen and procures for their needs. This sudden swelling of personnel may have made the handling of the minor seminary a little lighter and less burdensome now but expectedly it will take its toll on the meager budget of the seminary. But we trust in the generosity of our Parents, Teacher-Faculty Association (PTFA) in our efforts to improve the running of the seminary.

Let us now group the 66 students according to the parishes or schools where they come from and let us see what picture we get from doing so.

A) Division of Seminarians by Parishes

Below is the Table of Distribution of the 66 DSHJ Seminarians according to the parish of origin or domicile.

Places	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Pre-Coll.	Total
San Fernando	6	2	2	5	1	16
St. Jude	0	1	1	0	0	2
Pagdalagan	0	0	0	1	0	1
Agoo	1	3	2	2	0	8
Balaoan	2	2	3	1	0	8
Bauang	1	0	0	1	0	2
Luna	0	1	1	0	2	4
Napaset	0	1	0	1	0	2
Naguilian	0	1	2	1	0	4
San Juan	2	0	0	0	0	2
Bangar	1	1	1	3	0	6
Bacnotan	1	0	0	0	0	1
Quirino	0	0	0	0	1	1
Aringay	0	1	0	0	0	1
Rosario	0	1	0	0	0	1
Outside Diocese	3	2	1	1	0	7
	17	16	13	16	4	66

What picture do we get?

1) The majority (1) of our seminarians come from the three parishes in San Fernando, the highest being 16 from the Cathedral-parish. This is not surprising because the seminary is right in the town.

2) The second highest number (8) of minor seminarians come from Agoo and Balaoan, followed closely (6) by Bangar

3) The parishes which have always had a number of seminarians aside from those mentioned above are:

Naguilian	4
Luna	4
Napaset	2
San Juan	2
Buang	2

4) Six parishes have at least one (1) seminarian at DSHJ. This puts into focus the others who have no seminarian at all like: Sto. Tomas, Damortis, Pugo, Tubao, Burgos, San Gabriel, Corro-oy-Santol, Santiago, Sudipen. The majority of these parishes belong to Class-C and, therefore, poverty of the people may explain the lack of vocation in a place. But this is not always so! San Gabriel and Tubao for all their poverty have given priests to the local churches in Northern Luzon but only when the priests in those places look for vocation!

5) There is a significant number (7) of the seminarians at DSHJ who come from outside the Diocese:

Baguio City	3
Manila	1
Cavite	1
Dagupan City	1
Josefina, Zamboanga del Sur	J_
	7

For its survival DSHJ would need to get from outside. But should it continue to do so considering the expenses in training and personnel? This has to be re-studied.

B) Division of Seminarians by Schools

Below again is the Table of Distribution of the 66 DSHJ Seminarians according to the school where they studied immediately before entering the seminary.

Schools	1st Yr.	2nd Yr.	3rd Yr.	4th Yr.	Pre- College	Total
1. CKC	7	3	3	6	1	20
2. Felkris	2	2	1	0	0	5
3. St. Jude Montessori	1	0	0	0	0	1
4. Montessori Schools	0	1	1	1	0	3
5. LORMA	0	1	1	1	0	3
6. St. Christopher A	1	0	0	0	0	1
7. Sta. Catalina A	0	0	0	0	2	2
8. Public Schools	3	8	6	4	0	21
9. Schs Outside Diocese	<u>3</u>	1	1	<u>4</u>	<u>J</u>	10
	17	16	13	16	4	66

What picture do we see again?

1) The Majority (20) of our minor seminarians in the Diocese come from CKC. No other single Catholic Elementary Department in the whole Diocese except St. Christopher Academy in Bangar (1) and St. Jude Montessori Learning Center in Poro Point, San Fernando (1), has even one seminarian at DSHJ. This makes CKC our number one feeder school from among the Catholic Elementary Schools.

2) A slightly higher number (21) comes from various Public Elementary Schools in the Diocese. The Public schools remain a feeder of vocations in our seminaries. They - both the Central Elementary Schools and the Community High Schools - should not be missed in the vocation campaign of the Diocese.

3) Quite a number (11) of the present seminarians at DSHJ comes from 3 Private Non-Sectarian Schools within the Province (Felkris, LORMA, and Montessori by the Sea in Agoo). These schools are to be considered friendly schools and are to be taken care of pastorally both by the parish as well as in our vocation campaigns.

4) An equally good number (10) of the present seminarians at DSHJ come from schools outside the Diocese, even sectarian ones like Brent School in Baguio. Even if they are a significant number yet these schools cannot be included in the vocation promotion of the Diocese. After all, those students are in the seminary merely out of convenience.

5) All of our Pre-College come from Catholic High Schools within or outside of the Diocese:

Sta. Catalina Academy, Luna	2
St. Louis College, San Fernando	1
St. Louis College, Tuguegarao	<u>1</u>
	4

Our Catholic High Schools may be a good feeder for our Pre-College Program while our Catholic Schools and our public schools for our high school seminary.

Conclusion

The scope of this study is indeed limited to this local Church. Conclusions like those given above may be true only to this Province or this Diocese alone. If other Dioceses would make a similar study of their vocation trend, then theories and conclusions may still get a wider base. The Episcopal Commission on Vocations should encourage such studies. At least, this study can give a clue to our local DVP for a more workable strategy on vocation promotion. If only for that, this study would have served its purpose.

Let me make a final note. This Diocesan has other seminarians in various major seminaries outside of its jurisdiction. It has 16 college seminarians in San Pablo Seminary in Baguio City and four in San Carlos Seminary in Makati. It has furthermore 9 seminarians in theology at the Immaculate Conception School of Theology in Vigan and another one in SASMA in Tagaytay City. This still does not include a number of regents who stopped in various stages of their seminary formation. In another later study, it may be interesting to lay bare the panorama of those more than 100 seminarians from one single Diocese alone. Will it give the same picture we seem to be viewing now? Only time will tell!

"I Will Plant My People on the Land I Gave them, and they will not be pulled up again" (*Am 9:15*)*

Dear People of God in Cagayan Valley:

In fulfillment of our responsibility to give a shepherd's care to the flock of God entrusted to us (1 *P* 5:2) and in obedience to the solemn charge given to us to proclaim and insist on the word of God (2 *Tm* 4:2), we wish to share with you our reflections concerning the Casecnan Multipurpose Irrigation and Power Project and its serious challenge to our Christian Faith.

Our Faith

Here are some pertinent elements of our Christian Faith:

1. The God we believe in is the God revealed in Sacred Scriptures. He is a living God who is actively involved in our history, lovingly guiding us to the fullness of his salvation and liberating us from everything that is opposed to his saving plan for us. He sees the plight and hears the cry of those who are enslaved and oppressed. He himself comes down to liberate his people. At the same time, he calls us as he has called Moses to be his partners and instruments in the task of bringing his people to freedom and peace (*Ex* 3:7-8).

*A Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cagayan Valley

2. The Gospel is a message of salvation. At the same time, it is also a message of liberation. Hence, it is a proclamation of justice and truth for without these, there can be no real freedom. Preaching of the gospel includes taking action in behalf of justice and participating in the transformation of the world.

3. The Gospel is pre-eminently a gospel of love. "How in fact can one proclaim the new commandment without promoting in justice and in peace the true, authentic advancement of man? ... It is impossible to accept that in Evangelization one could or should ignore the importance of the problems ... concerning justice, liberation, development and peace in the world. This would be to forget the lesson which comes from the Gospel concerning love of our neighbor who is suffering and in need" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, No. 31).

4. In as much as our God is one on the side of the oppressed and defenseless and our Lord has identified himself with the weak and the needy, "the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ" (*Gaudium et Spes*, No. 1).

The Challenge

1. The Casecnan Multipurpose Irrigation and Power Project is a challenge and a threat to freedom and justice. In view of their dignity as human persons and in view of the fact that it is a constitutional policy that the "State values the dignity of every human person in all phases of national development" (Art. II, Sec. II) the people who are directly and adversely affected by the Project should not be mere spectators but active participants of the government's decision-making process. There should be a genuine consultation with the people. In fact, the people opposed the project during the one and only genuine consultation with them. The so-called consultations from which the government based its decisions to go ahead with the project were dubious and spurious. In effect, the project is being forcibly imposed on the people concerned. This is against justice and human rights.

2. The Project is a challenge and a threat to freedom and truth. The people are asked to accept the Project in the absence of official and authoritative documents concerning the future of their lives. If ever there are documents, these are withheld from the people. And so the people ask in fear and trembling: "Shall we be relocated?" "If so, where?" "If

not, where are the documents that guarantee our continued stay in our present land?" "What is the Watershed Management Plan?" "Where is it?" "What is its long term effect on our lives, poor livelihood, our culture, the future of our children?" And yet the Bill of Rights in our Constitution states: "The right of the people to information on matters of public concern shall be recognized (Art HI, Sec. 7)." Jesus said that the truth will set us free (Jn. 8:32). Conversely, the concealment of the truth from the people imprisons them in uncertainty and anxiety.

3. The Project poses a grave threat to the culture of the indigenous people living within and near the project site. These brothers and sisters of ours have survived through the centuries because of their own distinct culture. Through their culture they were able relate with one another, with their environment, with their past and with the future. The culture of the Bugkalots is intimately connected with the forest where they live and work, socialize and do commerce. Destroy the forest and you will erase the Bugkalots from the face of the earth. If their culture is tampered with or destroyed because of the influx of foreign elements, their very survival as a people will be endangered. Reverence for life means reverence for culture. Any development at the cost of cultural integrity violates the very life that it aims to promote.

4. The project imperils the environment and therefore it poses a grave threat to human life and survival. By constructing a service road from Pantabangan to Pelaway, Castaneda, Nueva Vizcaya right through the heart of the last virgin forest of Nueva Vizcaya, the government is exposing this forest to exploitation and destruction. We know only too well the hell that will come upon because of their ecological mortal sin. Let us remind ourselves that the blessing God gave to the first man and woman to "fill the earth and subject it" is not a license to conquer and destroy but a creative responsibility to tame and make fruitful.

Our Faith Response

In the name of our God who wants all men and women to live in truth, justice, freedom and love and in the name of his Son who has commanded us to love all men and women as he has loved us, we must oppose the Casecnan Multipurpose Irrigation and Power Project. To agree to it or keep quiet about it will make us guilty of violating the dignity and rights of human persons and violating God's plan for the world.

We must be brave and committed enough to carry the cross of being misunderstood or even harassed if this is the price of being faithful to our faith.

Let us in various ways express our solidarity with the Indigenous Communities affected by the Project. Let us help them keep their firm and steadfast resolve to oppose and reject the Project.

Let us use all human means to oppose the project and expose its evil consequences. But above all, let us use spiritual weapons like prayer and fasting.

Let us keep alive our faith in our God who listens to our cries and our hope in God's promise that all things work for the good of those who love Him (Rm 8:28).

+RAMON VILLENA, D.D.
Bishop of Bayombong

+MIGUEL PURUGGANAN, D.D.
Bishop of Ilagan

+DIOSDADO A. TALAMAYAN, D.D.
Archbishop of Tuguegarao

An Open Letter to Jose T. Ramirez

DIOCESAN COMMISSIONS ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH AND THE CLERGY*

1st April 1995

THE HON. JOSE TAN RAMIREZ
Lone District, Eastern Samar
Batasang Pambansa
Manila

Dear Honorable Ramirez:

I

THE CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF THIS OPEN LETTER

It is with deep regret that we have to write this letter to you. We would like to treat a serious issue which a number of Roman Catholics from various parts of the diocese of Borongan have brought to our attention, namely, your numerous onslaughts against the Roman Catholic Church. As guardians of the Catholic faith and of the people we shepherd in the diocese, we consider your public onslaughts upsetting to our faith, and to the people who hold that faith. Of course, this is not the first time that the Catholic Church confronted—and withstood—exactly the same

*Diocese of Borongan, Borongan, Eastern Samar

doctrinal attacks, and we would never have given attention to such assaults of yours had they come from someone who unambiguously does not share the Catholic faith. But in your case, it is entirely different. For, from all that we used to know about you, we did not have a single inkling that you ever renounced your Catholic faith. And in the absence of any such indication, it was only natural that we and those who heard you speak against the Catholic Church and attack its doctrine and practices, should be disconcerted. Clearly in this you have no precedent as far as the diocese of Borongan is concerned. For this reason, we cannot treat your onslaughts lightly. It is incumbent upon us, as diocesan guardians of the Catholic faith, to see to it that our flock is preserved from, and defended against, your onslaughts.

To be sure, when we were first made aware of them, we brushed them aside right away, presuming that they were merely a result of mishearing. But when those who brought your assaults to our notice became numerous, we knew it was no longer a case of misunderstanding of what was heard. Then lately, several copies of your slim volume, *Scriptural Witnessing*, a fruit of your research and compilation, came into our hands, and after reading it, we realized that we were really wrong in our impression all along, and what we were told of your onslaughts, we discovered, turned out to be not without substance. In fact, what you say in that booklet—and we have no reason to doubt, unless you admit to speaking with a forked tongue, that your oral onslaughts could be any different—clearly maligns the faith of your Roman Catholic audience. And it is all the worst because we and your Catholic hearers thought all the while you and we shared the same Catholic faith. Truth to tell, what you say there could be uttered only by someone who has severed himself from, or who has not ever been a member the Church. Indeed, you are no different from many Fundamentalists and Pentecostals who, with massive financial backing from foreign funds, are engaged in an aggressive proselytization of Roman Catholics.

II

SOME OF RAMIREZ' CHARGES AGAINST THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Allow us to mention a few of your onslaughts:

1. You charge that Roman Catholicism is a Satanic counterfeit

religion: *"There may be many reading this (book) who would very easily subscribe to the thought that Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and their companion cults are satanic counterfeit religions—but who would noticeably balk at including our Roman Catholic friends in the same category. Yet, when we apply the same principles of the infinite or finite concept of Christ, we discover that nowhere in Roman Catholic theology is there any teaching about a completed work of Christ"* (p. 25). Similarly, you charge that Roman Catholicism is a satanic system: *"That is the tragedy of Roman Catholicism—so many fine sincere people are so hopelessly blinded by such a satanic system"* (p. 27).

2. You charge that the concept of Christ in the Roman Catholic Church is a counterfeit Satanic Christ: *"[The Roman Catholic] is lost because, as the central fact of his religious experience, he has the counterfeit Satanic concept of a Christ who has not completed the work of salvation"* (p. 30). *"The Christ of the Roman Catholic Church is a finite caricature created by Satan to counterfeit God's Christ"* (p. 63).

3. You charge that Roman Catholicism is a false cult: *"There are many false cults—Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, Christadelphianism, Roman Catholicism, Armstrongism, Seventh Day Adventism, Christian Science, Swedenborgianism, Theosophy, Modernism"* (pp. 17-18).

4. You charge that the Roman Catholic Church is an enemy of the Lord: *"We can realize that part of our inability to bring down the enemies of the Lord has been because, in evangelism, we have argued about the Bible and tradition with our Roman Catholic friends, with the Mormons about the Bible and the book of Mormons..."* (p. 17).

In your attacks against the Roman Catholic Church, of course you do not merely confine yourself to generalizations; you assail various items of Roman Catholicism. Allow us to mention some of your particulars:

5. You charge that the Roman Catholic Church perverts the Scriptures: *"Perversion of scriptures are often used to 'prove' certain false ideas of a cult; ... the addition of the apocryphal (or, as they prefer to call them, deuterocanonical) books by the Roman Catholic Church in the 16th century to provide a text upon which to base their pagan custom of prayers for the dead; or the flagrant mis-translation in Jerome's Latin Vulgate which seemed to put God's stamp of approval on doing penance..."* (p. 18).

6. You charge that Roman Catholic devotions are based on lies and incomplete promises: *"All Roman Catholic devotions supposedly leading toward salvation are based on lies and finite, incomplete promises"* (p. 40).

7. You charge that the Mass is idolatrous and blasphemous: *"The Mass is idolatrous; men are called to worship the Host, a man-made object (J Cor 6:9). The Mass is blasphemous. By stating that it is perpetuating, continuing or making effective the work of Christ, it is supplementing that work and thereby declaring Christ's work to be finite"* (p. 57).

8. You charge that the Roman Catholic Church's teaching authority holds a position superior to the Bible's: *"Tradition has always been a more solid rock for Roman Catholic belief than the Bible, but even this is superseded by the magisterium—the living teaching authority of the Church resident in the pope and the bishops united with the pope (the latter phrase means that the bishops can teach whatever they want as long as they teach what the pope tells them to teach"* (p. 19).

9. You charge that the sacramental salvation of the Roman Catholic Church is not consistent with your scriptural salvation (p. 48); for this reason, you charge, for example, that *"transubstantiation is a foul and foolish doctrine"* (p. 40).

We could go on making a catalogue of your particulars against the Roman Catholic Church, but we think these quotations are more than enough to substantiate the allegation that you are engaged in a quite all-out onslaught against it. As a matter of fact, in publishing your small book, *Scriptural Witnessing*, you never camouflaged your intention. You addressed it to the Roman Catholics (*"All this is introductory to the remaining chapters of this book, which are slanted to reaching Roman Catholics with the Gospel,"* p. 30) with the end in view of evangelizing them (*"May God help us to lovingly, positively, biblically, evangelize our Roman Catholic friends, neighbors and loved ones."* p. 106). All this makes it difficult for us to interpret your onslaughts against the Church as simply fortuitous, or a result of mishearing or a political propaganda. We cannot help suspecting that this forms part of a systematic campaign against it.

in

RAMIREZ' CENTRAL ISSUE AGAINST THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

All these your generalizations and particulars against Roman Catholicism—that it is a counterfeit Satanic religion, that it is a false cult, that it is an enemy of the Lord, etc.—we shall not honor with a response; doing so will only obfuscate rather than clarify the issue. Rather than addressing ourselves to each and every charge you make in that booklet (directed for the most part against the sacramental system, especially the Eucharist)—which is not possible within the limited purpose of this letter—we want to zero in on what you regard as the most central issue, because it is on its basis that you fire your salvos. The issue, as you yourself claim, "is *ALWAYS the contrast between the counterfeit concept of Christ held by the Roman Catholic Church and the biblical revelation of a complete, perfect, infinite Saviour*" (pp. 48-49).

To begin with, allow us to clarify what you consider the heart of the issue. If we understand you correctly, you state that the real issue centers on the concept of Christ. You claim that on the basis of the Bible, Jesus completed the work of salvation (*Jn* 19:30) by suffering and dying in our stead. Thus, you interpret his death as a "*substitutionary atonement for us*" (*Is* 53:5-6; *1 P* 2:24) (pp. 6-8 et passim). Hence, your reference to "*the biblical revelation of the perfect, complete, infinite Christ*" (p. 35 et passim). Because in completing the work of salvation Christ became our substitute, we have no more responsibility to effect salvation (p. 6). On the other hand, you charge that Roman Catholicism presents "*a salvation figure called Jesus Christ, who does part of the work of salvation and then leaves his followers to put the finishing touches on their own redemption*" (p. 22). "*Because the concept of 'Christ' [the Roman Catholic] is trusting has not completed the work, his help is needed*" (p. 29). Hence, according to you, there is need for other features in Roman Catholicism—sacramental system, Mary and the saints, purgatory, etc.—which are "*manifestations of the counterfeit nature of his central religious concept*" (p. 29). Thus, you maintain that whereas you and your fellow Bible Christians are assured of your salvation, the Roman Catholics are not (pp. 33-34): "*The reason for your assurance is that you have embraced the biblical revelation of the perfect, complete, infinite Christ. The reason for [the Roman Catholics'] lack of assurance is that their concept of*

'Christ' is partial, finite" (P. 36—underscored in the original), a concept which you designate as Satanic.

IV

A ROMAN CATHOLIC RESPONSE TO RAMIREZ' CENTRAL ISSUE

The proposition that Christ completed the work of salvation through his substitutionary death is not really a new one. In fact, your argument is redolent of the first Protestant reformers who asserted that Jesus was looked upon as a sinner by God, punished by him on account of our sins, and suffered the punishment of hell. In his commentary on Paul's letter to the Galatians, *Epistolam Sancti Pauli ad Galatas Commentarium*, Martin Luther (1483-1546) explains: "[Christ] himself, certainly, is innocent because he is the immaculate and unspotted Lamb of God, but because he bears the sins of the world, his innocence is loaded with the guilt of all these sins. Whatever sins you or I or all of us have committed and shall commit, they are as much Christ's as though he had committed them himself. In short, we shall perish for eternity if our sin does not become the very sin of Christ."

Another early reformer, John Calvin (1509-1564), in his work, *Institutio Christianae Religionis*, says: "Our absolution consists in this, that the obligation to be punished has been shifted to the Son of God. This compensation is to be kept in mind above all else if we are not to tremble with fear and anxiety throughout our lives, as if we were still threatened by that just vengeance of God which the Son of God took upon himself." He further states: "If Christ had died a bodily death only, this would have contributed nothing to our redemption; on the other hand, it was especially valuable that he should feel simultaneously the severity of the divine vengeance and that in answering for us before God's justice, he should thus satisfy his righteous judgment." In his *Jesu Christi Domini nostri Novum Testamentum*, Theodore of Beza, John Calvin's disciple, saw in the scapegoat (Lv 16:22) the figure of Christ who became a sinner "by the imputation of the guilt of all our sins."

In our time, the theory of penal substitution has become one of the five fundamentals of the fundamentalist faith, enshrined in the twelve-volume work. *The Fundamentals*, underwritten in 1909 by the brothers Milton and Lyman Stewart. And it is a bit of interest that, after the dust

of the Protestant-Catholic controversies had settled, with the mainline Protestants already in agreement with the Catholics on the basic meaning of the redemption wrought by Christ, now we find ourselves confronted with the same ideas long discarded even by mainline Protestants.

Nevertheless, we should like to illustrate to you that even if your proposition appears simple and clear, yet the issue is more complex than what your argument seems to imply. It is difficult in a letter of this nature to analyze the implications it entails, but we would like to cite a few of them, if only to demonstrate its biblical and theological intricacies.

A. *Is Christ our Penal Substitute?*

Like almost all Fundamentalists and Pentecostals, you insist on the substitutionary theory on the meaning of Jesus' death. But allow us to raise various questions:

1. Assuming, for the sake of argument, that the thesis of penal substitution is theologically sound, yet we ask: since the New Testament provides various interpretations of Christ's death, is penal substitution the only legitimate interpretation? Let me cite some of these interpretations: (a) *Victory over evil Powers* ("He cancelled the bond that stood against us with all its claims, snatching it up and nailing it to the cross. Thus did God disarm the principalities and powers. He made a public show of them and, leading them off captive, triumphed in the person of Jesus" [Col 2:14-15]). (b) *Victory over Death* ("He has robbed death of its power" [2 Tm 1:10]). (c) *Passover Sacrifice* ("Christ as Passover has been sacrificed" [1 Co 5:7 b]). (d) *Ransom* ("The man Christ Jesus who gave himself as a ransom for all" [1 Tm 2:5 b-6]). (e) *Expiation* ("Through his blood, God made him the means of expiation for all who believed" [Rm 3:25]). (f) *Justification* ("All men are undeservedly justified by the gift of God, through the redemption wrought in Christ Jesus" [Rm 3:24 b]). (g) *Extreme form of Service to the Community* ("The Son of Man has not come to be served but to serve—to give his life in ransom for the many" [Mk 10:45]).

2. On what basis therefore should you so interpret Jesus' death as penal substitution that the other interpretations should be ignored?

3. But if we accept the thesis of penal substitution, can we bear its theological presupposition—that is to say, is God so sanguinary, so cruel

that he should demand the blood of his Son, allow him to suffer the effect of his wrath? If we can, is not the picture of a sadist God simply at variance with what we know of him—and his grace, mercy and love—in the New Testament?

4. Can we also accept the other theological presupposition, namely, that a person can literally carry the moral guilt of others? Is it possible for the suffering of one conscience to be transferred to another? A guiltless person can only suffer for others or from others, but to carry the guilt which is not his—that is a moral impossibility. Of course, Paul says, "for your sakes God made [Christ] who did not know sin to be sin, so that we might become the very holiness of God" (2 *Co* 5:21); but this text is open to various interpretations. It can mean, for instance, Christ became part of our sinful humanity, though obviously he remained sinless. But for sure it cannot mean that he carried the guilt of others; there is simply no evidence for that.

5. Moreover, must we interpret "substitution" literally? To appreciate the force of this objection, let us refer to your book, in which you claim that we have been ransomed by an infinite price (p.7). The concept of ransom you derive from *Mt* 20:28 and 1 *P* 1:18.10. How do we understand ransom—literally or figuratively? Since in fundamentalism we are made to believe that scriptural text is taken literally, we must ask: if there was really a ransom, to whom was it paid? To the devil—as many early Christians, who read the text literally, thought? If to take ransom literally is preposterous, might not this be said also of "substitutionary atonement"? In Roman Catholicism, these interpretations—ransom, expiation, etc.—are regarded as figurative attempts of the early Jewish and Hellenistic Christians to capture the mysterious meaning of Jesus' death by using their cultural categories in the first century vis-a-vis their experience of Christ as Lord.

6. Also, even the texts (the hyper-formulae: 1 *Co* 11:24; *Mk* 14:24; *Ga* 3:13; 1 *P* 2:21; *Heb* 2:19) which can be adduced in favor of the thesis of penal substitution can be used for other theses: namely, the theory of representation (*Jn* 11:51; *Heb* 9:11-15; cf 4 *M* 17:21-22) or the theory, of solidarity (see *Heb* 2:17; 4:15; 12:2). In these theories, the argument is even more telling. (In fact, very few, if at all, mainline Protestant and Catholic scholars in the present century still hold the idea of penal substitution especially in the sense proposed by the original reformers.)

There are various reasons for these differences in interpretation, among them being that the word hyper (meaning, for) has not a single, but a triple meaning: (a) for our sake; (b) for our good, for our benefit; and (c) in our place or stead. And for Fundamentalists and Pentecostals, it should not be trivial that the phrase "substitutionary atonement for us (p.6)," which they hold on to, does not appear in the Bible. It really comes from Protestant tradition that takes the third meaning of hyper—though they deny the validity of tradition.

B. *The Finished Work of Redemption: A Complete Doctrine of Salvation?*

Like most people of fundamentalist and pentecostal orientation, you likewise insist on the completeness of the work of Christ: *"The work has now been completed by our perfect, infinite Saviour. Once a job is done by a competent person, it does not have to be completed by someone else. If the housewife did the dishes and went into the living room and told her husband, 'the dishes are done,' he would not leap from his chair go into the kitchen and do the dishes. They are done... What we have pictured in Hebrews 10 is a redemptive work infinitely completed by our Saviour, as it goes on to say in verse 14, for by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified"* (pp. 7-8).

To a great degree you must have been misinformed, for surprising as it may seem to you, Roman Catholicism likewise professes that Christ completed the work of redemption: therefore, no one can ever add anything to it. The problem, however, arises because, unlike you, the Fundamentalist and Pentecostals, we do not make this the totality of the doctrine of salvation. We should like to point out few problems if this were made the entire doctrine:

1. If this were the complete doctrine of salvation, how are we to construe the biblical texts which state that salvation, though already begun, is still in the process of being completed? Some examples: (a) "For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved [*sozomenois*] it is the power of God" (1 Co 1:18)? The use of the present participle, rather, than the perfect, tense shows that for Paul Christians are on the way to salvation, rather than already saved, (b) Why does Paul speak of persons "among those who are being saved [*en tois sozomenois*]" in 2 Co 2:15 b? Note again the use of the present participle, rather than the perfect tense, (c) What are we to make of Luke's statement

that "day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved [*tous sozomenous*]?" (Ac 2:47). (d) How do we interpret the statement that the Holy Spirit is "the first payment against the full redemption of a people God has made his own" (Ep 1:14 b), if our redemption is already fully attained? In the face of these texts, it is obvious that only by twisting their grammar and meaning can we contend that we are already saved.

2. If salvation is already complete, why do many New Testament passages testify that our salvation is still in the future? Some examples: (a) Salvation is to be revealed on the last day: "a birth to a salvation which stands ready *to be revealed in the last day*" (1 P 1:5b). (b) Salvation is nearer than when we first believed: "our salvation is closer than when we first accepted the faith" (Rm 13:11c). (c) Christ will save those who eagerly await him: "he will appear a second time not to take away sin but to bring salvation to those who eagerly await him" (Heb 9:28).

3. If salvation is done, as you so claim, we have no more responsibility (p. 6 *et passim*), why does the New Testament lay stress on something to be done? A few instances will suffice: (a) "So then, my dearly beloved, obedient as always to my urging, work with anxious concern to achieve your salvation [*meta phobou kai tromou ten eauton soterian kategazesthe*]" (Ph 2:12). (b) Why does Paul give emphasis to growth unto salvation? "Be eager for milk as newborn babes—pure milk of the spirit to make you grow unto salvation *lauxethete eis soterian*!" (1 P 2:2). (c) To be saved, a Christian must persevere: "The man who *holds out to the end will see salvation*" (Mt 24:13). (d) To receive eternal life, he must be rich in good works: "Charge them to do good, to be rich in good works and generous, sharing what they have. Thus will they build a secure foundation for the future, for receiving that life which is life indeed" (1 Tm 6:18-19). (e) If good deeds have no place in salvation, why does Jesus declare that our resurrection to life has something to do with the good we do? "Those who have done right shall rise to live; the evildoers shall rise to be damned" (Jn 5:29; see also Mt 16:27). And why does Paul teach similarly? "[God] will repay every man for what he has done: eternal life to those who strive for glory, honor, and immortality by patiently doing right; wrath and fury to those who selfishly obey the truth and obey wickedness" (Rm 2:6-8; see also vv 9-11: cf 2 Co 5:10).

4. A theological question may be posed: if the substitutionary death of Jesus were the totality of the doctrine of salvation, would not salvation be reduced to external transaction, a transaction that transpires independent of the believer? And would salvation have nothing to do with our ethical and spiritual life? In your explanation, you hold, *"the concept of substitution is that when a substitute comes on the field of play, the original player leaves. He has no more involvement in the game—he has been staken out"* (p. 6). If one player can take the place of another without the latter's knowledge, for the decision has been made by the coach—similarly, can Christ save a person independent of the latter's knowledge and consent, simply because his salvation has been determined by God? Is our God a God who does not respect human freedom?

C. *Are We Saved Only From Sin?*

The issue becomes even more complicated because you seem merely to define salvation in terms of salvation from sin; your slim volume does not specify any other. If you describe sin as a personal transgression of God's law or will—which is not wrong, yet we ask: are we saved only from this? What is sin, in the first place? You affirm that *"the work of salvation is in the heart, not in the mind... But we are saved when the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, reveals Christ's remedy, the Lord Jesus Christ, to our hearts"* (pp.8-9). Such a view of salvation and sin raises several questions, for instance:

1. If sin and, therefore, salvation are merely in the heart, then, why does Paul refer to sin as a situation, a human condition? "Therefore just as through one man sin entered the world and with sin death, death thus coming to all men inasmuch as all sinned—before the law there was sin in the world, even though sin is not imputed when there is no law" (*Rm* 5:12-13). "For our sakes God made him who did not know sin to be sin" (*2 Co* 5:21b). Should this not imply that if we make mention of salvation from sin, we must include in it the idea of salvation from sinful situation or condition, and therefore not simply of salvation of the heart?

2. If sin is merely in the heart, how come Paul depicts sin as power which commands authority? (a) Sin as power with subjects: "Scripture has locked all things under the constraint of sin [*synekleisen he graphe ta panta hypo hamartian*—literally translated: the scripture shut up all <mankind> under sin]" (*Ga* 3:22). (b) Men serve sin: "we might be slaves

to sin no longer [*tou meketi douleuein kemas te hamartia*—literally, that we should no longer serve sin]" *Rm* 6:6b). (c) Men are slaves of sin: "Thanks be to God, though once you were slaves of sin" (*Rm* 6:17a). In view of this, should we not—in reference to salvation from sin—so widen our conception of salvation as to embrace, for instance, freedom from the forces of evil at work in the world?

3. And equally important, must we delimit the concept of salvation to salvation from sin? If so, why does the New Testament mention various subjects from which we are to be saved? Some examples, by no means exhaustive: (a) Salvation from the corruption of the body: "We ourselves, although we have the Holy Spirit as first fruits, groan inwardly while we await the redemption of our bodies" (*Rm* 8:23). (b) Salvation from external evils, such as enemies of the people: "Salvation from our enemies and from the hands of all who hate us" (*Lk* 1:71; cf *v* 74). (c) The whole universe is also an object of salvation: "Creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but by him who once subjected it, yet not without hope, because the world itself will be freed from its slavery to corruption, and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God" (*Rm* 8:20-21). How is the universe convicted of sin? And how does the universe accept Jesus as its personal savior? Where is the heart of the universe?

D. *Is Jesus Merely a Personal Savior?*

Finally, your assertion that to be saved we need to accept Jesus as personal savior (pp. 4, 5, 7) betrays an individualistic approach to salvation, which is distinctive of American fundamentalism and pentecostalism. But is not salvation social in nature, and if at all it is addressed to the individual, is it not with the end in view of incorporating him into the community? More will be said about this later, when we spell out the Catholic doctrine of salvation; but for the nonce, some New Testament texts are in order; (a) During the annunciation, the angel tells Joseph that Jesus "will save his people [namely the people of Israel] from their sins" (*Mt* 1:21). (b) Peter addresses his community, saying they are "saved by a baptismal bath" (1 *P* 3:21) to mean that salvation is by means of incorporation into the community, which is the meaning of baptismal bath, (c) Christ is the savior of the community called Church: "Christ is the head of his body the Church as well as its savior" (*Ep* 5:23). If salvation is simply personal, what are to make out of these texts?

Your honor: though more could be said, we limit ourselves to these problems involved in your central issue, and we trust that these are enough to demonstrate that the issue you raised about Christ's salvific work is more complex than the simple formula you, together with Fundamentalists and Pentecostals, present. We noted earlier on that your theory has been proposed before by the early reformers, and time and again, individuals professing to be experts in Scriptures would stand to repeat them, and the Church has not been lacking in answers and objections, though in ways always consistent with the theological culture of the time. So, if we raise these questions, it is because we feel that your conclusions hardly give justice to the complexity of the various biblical data on your central issue.

A BIBLICAL PRESENTATION OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC TEACHING ON SALVATION

But taking into account these problems, what precisely—you might ask—what precisely have we in Roman Catholicism to say about the salvific work of Christ? At the risk of oversimplification, we should like—in biblical, not dogmatic, language—to express the Catholic teaching vis-à-vis your onslaughts against it:

1. It is God's will that all men be saved (7 *Tm* 2:4) or share his life: and to accomplish this once and for all, he sent his Son (*Jn* 10:10). Jesus carried out his Father's will through obedience (*Rm* 5:19; *Ph* 2:8-9), which reached its decisive moment in his passion, death and resurrection (*Rm* 4:25). Therefore, we, humans, do not save ourselves—*not even by faith*; if we are saved, it is by God's grace in Jesus Christ (*Rm* 3:24; *Ac* 15:11; *Ep* 2:5b-8). And since he did it once and for all (*Heb* 10:14), nothing then is to be added to it. Hence, like you, we believe that Jesus' work has been completed.

2. This work, which he performed for us, can be depicted in various images; and in the New Testament, its description is found in such metaphorical expressions as salvation (7 *Tm* 2:4), justification (*Rm* 3:26), reconciliation (*Rm* 5:11), expiation (*Rm* 3:24), freedom or liberation (*Ga* 5:1), redemption (*Tt* 2:14), victory over powers (*Col* 2:14-15), new creation (2 *Co* 5:17), transformation (2 *Co* 3:18), and glorification (*Rm* 8:17). Each of these metaphors expresses a distinct and partial aspect of the work of Jesus, but none of them exhausts it. In contemporary parlance, we can state that these are interpretative theological models of the work Jesus

accomplished, each of which cannot be taken literally and rigidly nor be given legalistic interpretation. Rather, each of them is to be regarded as an analogy drawn from the experience and tradition of a particular people to describe the meaning of that work. Consequently, we cannot limit ourselves to the thesis of penal substitution, nor interpret it literally or rigidly; this image is, after all, not even a very good one, though it had its usefulness in its own time.

3. As Jesus died for all (2 Co 5:14; Rm 5:18-19), his work cannot be regarded as merely private or personal; rather, it concerns the community. In other words, the object of his work is not so much the individual as the whole people, the true Israel of God (Ga 6:16), the world (7 Jn 2:2). After all, his purpose is to unite all things, all people (Ep 1:9-10). He died for the "full redemption of a people God has made his own" (Ep 1:14). No wonder, the New Testament portrays his followers in collective images: spiritual temple (7 Co 3:16-17; 2 Co 6:16), living stones built as an edifice of spirit, into a holy priesthood (1 P 2:5a), a chosen race, a holy nation (1 P 2:9a). In many places, the community is designated as the Church: "the Church of God which he has acquired at the price of his own blood" (Ac 20:28). It is for the Church that Christ died (Ep 2:23). Hence, if the individual is saved, he is saved through and in the Church, for apart from it he is dead (Jn 15:4; of 2 Co 2:16).

4. What does all this mean for us? This means that before God man is justified, but we do not agree with Martin Luther who holds that God's justice is external: we are called just, but not really. Rather, we uphold that man is just inwardly, but at the same time, he is still a sinner. Thus, up to a point—but only up to a point, we can adopt Luther's formula to describe man: "*simul Justus et peccator*": he is just, but at the same time a sinner. In other words, despite the completed work of Christ, the residual traces of a manner of life contrary to Christ remains (Ga 5:13-16). "All of us fall short in many respects [polla gar ptaiomēn hapantes—literally, for we all stumble in many respects]" (Jm 3:2), and if we say we have no sin, "we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (7 Jn 1:8).

5. Since the complete work of Christ notwithstanding, we are all "*simul iusti et peccatores*", we do not, and cannot, claim—and here we differ with you—the assurance of salvation. We still have to grow unto salvation (7 P 2:2); the complete appropriation of Christ's completed work

is not assured in each individual. It is for this reason that Peter says: through the death and resurrection of Christ, we are reborn not to a definite glory or salvation, but to the hope of glory (7 P 1:3); and with Paul, we eagerly await the justification we hope for (*Ga* 5:5), even as we race to grasp the price (*Ph* 3:12). We who have the Spirit still wait for our redemption; we are saved in hope (*Rm* 8:23-25). And because we are just and sinners at the same time, we experience a tension between a self that is sinful and a self that is justified (*Rm* 6:11-14; *Ga* 5:16-18).

6. How then is the completed work appropriated by the individual? We have to reiterate that God completed the work in Christ (*Rm* 3:30; *J Co* 1:30). But how the effect of this work is appropriated by us—it is here where we come into play, for the very simple reason that salvation or its equivalent image (redemption, freedom, etc.) is accomplished, takes place not in the air but in us, in man, in the concrete person—otherwise, it will be an extrinsic transaction. Though we are saved by God's grace (*Rm* 3:24), though we achieve nothing, though we do not do any work—not even the commandments (*Ep* 2:8-9; *Ga* 2:6)—yet we have to respond to that grace by faith. Thus with Paul "we hold that man is justified by faith apart from the observance of the law" (*Rm* 3:28; 5:1). By faith we do not simply mean an assent to a truth God proposes, though it ultimately includes that. Primarily, though, by faith we mean our abandonment to God; we abandon ourselves to Christ (*Jn* 6:29).

But how does a man who abandons himself to Christ live? Of course, he follows Jesus (*Jn* 13:1-17); he belongs to him. Hence, his faith is called obedient faith [*hypakoen pisteos*] (*Rm* 1:5; 16:26). and naturally, of course, a person of obedient faith lives a life of good deeds: "It is owing to his favor that salvation is yours through faith. This is not your own doing, it is God's gift; neither is it a reward for anything you have accomplished, so let no one pride in himself on it. We are truly his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to lead the life of good deeds which God prepared for us in advance" (*Ep* 2:9-10). When a man has faith, this finds expression in love: "faith which expresses itself in love" (*Ga* 5:6). Hence, that faith is a living faith, not a dead one: "Be assured that faith without works is dead as a body without breath" (*Jm* 2:26). "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's lead" (*Ga* 5:24). We put to death whatever in our nature "is rooted in earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desires, and that lust which is idolatry" (*Col* 3:5). After all,

if Jesus suffered, it was to give us an example to follow in his footsteps so we can live according to his will (7 *P* 2:21, 24). Hence, we must "share in [Christ's] sufferings by being formed into the pattern of his death. Thus do [we] hope that [we] may arrive at resurrection from the dead" (*Ph* 3:10b-11). Of course—and this is important to keep in mind—the power that fulfills all this work of faith comes from God himself (2 *Th* 1:11).

7. That obedient, living faith is a visible faith—it is visible in the community to which a person is baptized. This is why faith and baptism are connected: "the man who believes in it and accepts baptism will be saved" (*Mk* 16:16). Thus, in the primitive Church, according to Acts, those who accepted the message and faith and accepted baptism devoted themselves to the apostles' instruction and the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and the prayers; those who believed shared all things in common (*Ac* 2:41 -47). For Paul, those who believed and were baptized clothed themselves in Christ and form one community in him (*Ga* 3:26-28). Hence, he teaches that "we are all baptized in one Spirit to form one Body" (7 *Co* 12:13). This community grows into full maturity in Christ (*Ep* 4:16), and becomes the perfect man who is Christ himself (*Ep* 4:13) so that each one becomes complete in Christ (*Col* 1:28).

And, as already noted, this community is also designated as the Church, whose savior is Christ (*Ep* 5:25), which submits to him (*Ep* 5:26). We are grafted to him (*Rm* 6:5), and are rooted in him (*Col* 2:6). The source of its unity is the Holy Spirit (*Ep* 4:3) and its members receive grace (*Ep* 4:7), expressed in various roles—hierarchy, for instance—to build up the body (*Ep* 4:10-12). In the body they commemorate the Lord's Supper (7 *Co* 11:26) to proclaim his saving work, appoint men to lead the community (*Ac* 14:23), heal those who are ill (*Jm* 4:14-15), etc. And the presence of the Spirit in the Church is the pledge of its "inheritance, the first payment against the full redemption of a people God made his own to praise his glory" (*Ep* 1:14; cf 2 *Co* 1:22; 5:5). To be Christian therefore entails one's incorporation to the Church.

VI

CONCLUDING WORDS: THE CATHOLIC FAITHFUL MUST BE INFORMED

Your honor: that, in short, and in biblical language, is how the

is not assured in each individual. It is for this reason that Peter says: through the death and resurrection of Christ, we are reborn not to a definite glory or salvation, but to the hope of glory (7 P 1:3); and with Paul, we eagerly await the justification we hope for (*Ga* 5:5), even as we race to grasp the price (*Ph* 3:12). We who have the Spirit still wait for our redemption; we are saved in hope (*Rm* 8:23-25). And because we are just and sinners at the same time, we experience a tension between a self that is sinful and a self that is justified (*Rm* 6:11-14; *Ga* 5:16-18).

6. How then is the completed work appropriated by the individual? We have to reiterate that God completed the work in Christ (*Rm* 3:30; *I Co* 1:30). But how the effect of this work is appropriated by us—it is here where we come into play, for the very simple reason that salvation or its equivalent image (redemption, freedom, etc) is accomplished, takes place not in the air but in us, in man, in the concrete person—otherwise, it will be an extrinsic transaction. Though we are saved by God's grace (*Rm* 3:24), though we achieve nothing, though we do not do any work—not even the commandments (*Ep* 2:8-9; *Ga* 2:6)—yet we have to respond to that grace by faith. Thus with Paul "we hold that man is justified by faith apart from the observance of the law" (*Rm* 3:28; 5:1). By faith we do not simply mean an assent to a truth God proposes, though it ultimately includes that. Primarily, though, by faith we mean our abandonment to God; we abandon ourselves to Christ (*Jn* 6:29).

But how does a man who abandons himself to Christ live? Of course, he follows Jesus (*Jn* 13:1-17); he belongs to him. Hence, his faith is called obedient faith [*hypakoen pisteos*] (*Rm* 1:5; 16-26). and naturally, of course, a person of obedient faith lives a life of good deeds: "It is owing to his favor that salvation is yours through faith. This is not your own doing, it is God's gift; neither is it a reward for anything you have accomplished, so let no one pride in himself on it. We are truly his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to lead the life of good deeds which God prepared for us in advance" (*Ep* 2:9-10). When a man has faith, this finds expression in love: "faith which expresses itself in love" (*Ga* 5:6). Hence, that faith is a living faith, not a dead one: "Be assured that faith without works is dead as a body without breath" (*Jm* 2:26). "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified their flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's lead" (*Ga* 5:24). We put to death whatever in our nature "is rooted in earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desires, and that lust which is idolatry" (*Col* 3:5). After all,

if Jesus suffered, it was to give us an example to follow in his footsteps so we can live according to his will (7 *P* 2:21, 24). Hence, we must "share in [Christ's] sufferings by being formed into the pattern of his death. Thus do [we] hope that [we] may arrive at resurrection from the dead" (*Ph* 3:10b-11). Of course—and this is important to keep in mind—the power that fulfills all this work of faith comes from God himself (2 *Th* 1:11).

7. That obedient, living faith is a visible faith—it is visible in the community to which a person is baptized. This is why faith and baptism are connected: "the man who believes in it and accepts baptism will be saved" (*Mk* 16:16). Thus, in the primitive Church, according to Acts, those who accepted the message and faith and accepted baptism devoted themselves to the apostles' instruction and the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and the prayers; those who believed shared all things in common (*Ac* 2:41-47). For Paul, those who believed and were baptized cloth themselves in Christ and form one community in him (*Ga* 3:26-28). Hence, he teaches that "we are all baptized in one Spirit to form one Body" (7 *Co* 12:13). This community grows into full maturity in Christ (*Ep* 4:16), and becomes the perfect man who is Christ himself (*Ep* 4:13) so that each one becomes complete in Christ (*Col* 1:28).

And, as already noted, this community is also designated as the Church, whose savior is Christ (*Ep* 5:25), which submits to him (*Ep* 5:26). We are grafted to him (*Rm* 6:5), and are rooted in him (*Col* 2:6). The source of its unity is the Holy Spirit (*Ep* 4:3) and its members receive grace (*Ep* 4:7), expressed in various roles—hierarchy, for instance—to build up the body (*Ep* 4:10-12). In the body they commemorate the Lord's Supper (7 *Co* 11:26) to proclaim his saving work, appoint men to lead the community (*Ac* 14:23), heal those who are ill (*Jm* 4:14-15), etc. And the presence of the Spirit in the Church is the pledge of its "inheritance, the first payment against the full redemption of a people God made his own to praise his glory" (*Ep* 1:14; cf 2 *Co* 1:22; 5:5). To be Christian therefore entails one's incorporation to the Church.

VI

CONCLUDING WORDS: THE CATHOLIC FAITHFUL MUST BE INFORMED

Your honor: that, in short, and in biblical language, is how the

Roman Catholic Church understands the central issue of Christ's work on **behalf of all** men. **And** we are sure that, having read this, you now realize **to what** extent you misread the teaching of the Church, and how off are **your particular** attacks against the mass (pp. 35-57), Mary and the saints (pp. 57-75), sacraments (pp. 77-99) and purgatory (pp. 100-106). If we never bothered to respond to each of them, it is because we feel that by answering the central issue, we at the same time respond to the principle on the basis of which you launched the particulars. Of course, we have to admit—and this is not insignificant; in fact, this is crucial—that the real issue lies deeper, for it involves our often divergent ways of approaching God's revelation and the Scriptures, the religious tradition of the sect you represent, etc. But we cannot deal with all these in this already lengthy letter.

But our purpose in writing this is not simply to respond biblically to your most central onslaught against the Roman Catholic Church. Since the destinataires of your assaults are the very members of the Church, we think it is only fair that they also should be informed that what they have heard from you are incompatible with the Catholic teaching, and why they are such. We therefore feel obliged to share this response to your onslaughts with the people whom we are tasked to lead, and whose faith you disturbed. We are sorry to know that by your own implicit admission, you have severed yourself from the Roman Catholic Church. In your small book, *Scriptural Witnessing*, you clearly make a distinction between Roman Catholics and you: you reserve the term "Christian" for those who are one with you in your onslaughts against Roman Catholicism, and you do not apply the same name to Roman Catholics. On p. 54, for instance, you say: "Aren't you glad you are a Christian? Should you not tell this glorious news of the Gospel to your Catholic friend?" (see also pp. 35, 53, etc). And our people have the right to know this because we feel it anomalous that someone who almost everybody knows to be, or who seems to be, a member of the Church should be engaged in a theological offensive against it, like the Fundamentalists and Pentecostals who for that very purpose received much money drawn out of the funds from abroad. Of course, if one no longer holds the beliefs that make him a part of the community, and instead thinks of them as diabolical, why should he remain in that community? As shepherds of the Roman Catholics in the diocese of Borongan, we cannot allow your onslaughts to malign the faith we share with them.

Rev. Fr. Anacleto S. Asebias, Jr.
Chairman, Diocesan Commission on the Doctrine of the Faith

Rev. Fr. Lesme A. Afable
Chairman, Diocesan Commission on the Clergy

Rev. Fr. Romeo C. Solidon
Rector, Seminario de Jesus Nazareno

Rev. Msgr. Crescente B. Japzon
Vicar General and Rector of Cathedral

Noted by:

Most Rev. Leonardo Y. Medroso, DD
Bishop of Borongan

- cc: 1. All parish priests and religious of the Diocese of Borongan
2. All heads of Catholic schools and major religious organizations

Philippine Episcopology — Addenda-Corrigenda, 1995

CHARLES BRANSOM, ET AL.

The following list updates entries in the "Philippine Episcopology" previously published in the *Boletín* and continues the "Episcopology" with the details of the episcopal ordinations of those bishops consecrated subsequent to the final installment and the previous lists of Addenda-Corrigenda.

- N. 1 **Domingo de Salazar, O.P.** - born at Labastida (Calahorra y La Calzada).

- N. 4 **Miguel de Benavides, O.P.** - consecrated by Alfonso Fernandez Bonilla, Archbishop of Mexico.

- N. 8 **Pedro de Arce, O.S.A.** - bom at Catadiano (Calahorra y La Calzada); died at Cebu.

- N. 13 **Fernando Guerrero, O.S.A.** - his birthplace, Alcaraz, is located within the Archdiocese of Toledo, Spain.

- N. 16 **Fernando Montero Espinosa** - consecrated on 3 February 1640, at Madrid, in the Church of Santa Clara.

- N. 20 **Diego de Aguilar, O.P.** - his birthplace, Medina de Rioseco, is

located within the Archdiocese of Valladolid.

- N. 26 **Diego Camacho y Avila** - born 12 November .1652.
- N. 27 Miguel Bayot, O.F.M.Disc. - his birthplace, Belmonte, is located within the Diocese of Cuenca, Spain.
- N. 121 **Gerard Mongeau**, O.M.O. - died 29 October 1994.
- N. 137 **Odilo Etspueler, S.V.D.** - died 12 September 1995 at Manila.
- N. 145 Pedro Bantigue y Natividad - resigned 12 July 1995.
- N. 147 Leopoldo Arcaira - died 19 November 1994.
- N. 157 Bienvenido M. Lopez - died 27 April 1995.
- N. 162 Carmelo Dominador Morelos y Flores - Archbishop of Zamboanga 7 December 1994.
- N. 167 Francisco Cruces y Raval - resigned as Archbishop of Zamboanga 7 December 1994.
- N. 238 Francisco C. San Diego - Bishop of San Pablo 12 July 1995.
- N. 246 Severino Pelayo - died 26 February 1995 at Manila.
- N. 254 Maximiano Cruz y Tuazon - Bishop of Calbayog 20 December 1994.
- N. 263 Emilio Bataclan y Layon - Bishop of Iligan 3 May 1995.
- N. 267 Brigido Galasgas - died 15 May 1995.
- N. 269 Ramon C. Arguelles - Military Ordinary for the Philippines 25 August 1995.
272. 1994, 12 September, at Naga City, Basilica of Our Lady of Pefiafrancia

Cardinal Jose T. Sanchez, Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy assisted by Msgr. Gian Vincenzo Moreni, Titular Archbishop of Tunis in Mauretania, Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, and by Msgr. Leonardo Legaspi y Zamora, Archbishop of Caceres consecrated Msgr. **Manolo de los Santos y Alarcon**, Bishop of Virac,

born at Basud (Caceres) 5 August 1947; priest 7 May 1974; named 12 August 1994.

273. 1994, 29 December, at Manila, Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception.

Cardinal Jaime Sin y Lachica, Archbishop of Manila, assisted by Msgr. Julio Xavier Labayen, Bishop Prelate of Infanta and by Msgr. Teodoro Buhain, Titular Bishop of Bacanaria consecrated Msgr. Rolando Tria Tirona y Joven, O.C.D., Titular Bishop of Vulturara, Auxiliary of Manila, born at Kawit (Imus) 22 July 1946; priest 21 April 1971; named 15 November 1994.

274. 1995, 6 January, at Rome, Saint Peter's Basilica.
Pope John Paul II, assisted by Msgr. Giovanni Battista Re, Titular Archbishop of Vescovio and by Msgr. Jorge Maria Mejia, Titular Archbishop of Apollonia consecrated Msgr. Zacharias Jimenez, Bishop of Pagadian, bom at Tagbilaran 5 November 1947; priest 17 April 1973; named 2 December 1994.

275. 1995, 12 July, at Cebu City, Metropolitan Cathedral.
Cardinal Ricardo J. Vidal, Archbishop of Cebu, assisted by Msgr. Emilio Bataclan y Layon, Bishop of Iligan and Msgr. Leo M. Drona, Bishop of San Jose consecrated Msgr. Precioso D. Cantillas, S.D.B., Titular Bishop of Vicus Caesaria, Auxiliary of Cebu, bom at Langtag (Caceres) 3 July 1953; priest 7 July 1979; named 31 May 1995.

Homiletic and Bibliarasal Pointers January-February 1996

FR. EFREN RIVERA, O.P.

BIBLIARASAL

"MAG-ARAL NG BIBLIA UPANG MAG-DASAL AT MAGBAGO NG
ASAL."

*Ang pagbabago ng ASAL ay natatamo sa pamamagitan ng
pagbuo ng "BASIC ECCLESIAL COMMUNITY"*

na naitataguyod naman sa pamamagitan ng apat na haligi:

1. SHARING, 2. CARING, 3. AFFIRMATION, 4. FORGIVENESS

at ang mga ito ay nangangattangan ng

*TRUST, SENSITIVITY TO NEEDS, FRIENDLINESS,
HUMANESS*

Seven Steps of Bibliarasal

1. INVITE THE LORD: Any form of opening prayer.
2. TEXT READING: *Gospel for next Sunday*
3. AGAIN LOOK AT THE TEXT
 - 3.1 OBSERVE:
 - > Who is the audience? Crowds? Disciples? Pharisees? etc.
 - > ETC.

3.2 LOOK FOR KEYWORDS

And for Matching Words,

ETC.

4. GOD SPEAKS, WE LISTEN

REMEMBER:

The message of the Bible is the message of God. HE SPEAKS when you reflect on it.

> Identify and reflect on the Focus Points

5. SHARE:

PREPARATION

5.1 DON'T DISCUSS...DON'T PREACH

5.2 DO PICK OUT STRIKING

A>words you want to apply to yourself

B>or words you can connect with

A HAPPENING IN YOUR LIFE.

SHARING

5.3 DO TELL YOUR GROUP:

A>what insight God has given you during your study of the passage

B>or WHAT GOD HAD DONE FOR YOU (the Happening you now recall). Rule: Focus on God, not on yourself.

6. SEARCH

6.1 Can our SHARING be improved?

6.2 Can our CARING be improved?

6.3 Can our AFFIRMATION be improved?

6.4 Reflection on FORGIVENESS

6.5 What is the GOOD NEWS here?

7. PRAY

Our prayer should be for NEEDS WE FELT DURING OUR STUDY, SHARING AND SEARCHING. Conclude by joing hands and singing the OUR FATHER.

Starting with the January - February 1996 issue the Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas will publish integrated pointers for Homilies as well as the now widespread form of Bible Study called "**BIBLIARASAL**" sponsored by the National Catholic Bible Center in Manila. The author of these pointers is **Fr. Efren O. Rivera, O.P., STL, SSL**, professor of Scriptures at the University of Santo Tomas, Director of the National Catholic Bible Center, and Executive Secretary of the Episcopal Commission for the Biblical Apostolate since its organization in 1978.

The "**Seven Steps of BIBLIARASAL**" are outlined in the preceding page. More information on Bibliarasal can be obtained from Fr. Rivera through the BEF. The National Catholic Bible Center offers its services for conducting a three-day "**BIBLIARASAL SEMINAR**".

January 1, 1996

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

LUKE 2:16-21

A. STUDY OF THE TEXT/BIBLIARASAL STEPS 3 & 4

The audience or people for whom, originally, the story was written, consists of the Christian communities outside Palestine at Luke's time.

Correlated words: they saw (v. 20 heard and saw) / they told — hence, they became WITNESSES. **Parallel words:** Mary treasured / reflected. The shepherds glorified / praised.

Five personalities have roles in this story: (1) The shepherds, (2) Mary, (3) Joseph, (4) Jesus, (5) All who heard the shepherds and were astonished — these represent the Christian readers.

The actions of the shepherds are worthy of attention (1) they went in haste; (2) they found, (3) they saw, (4) They understood (NAB) or told (GNB), (5) they glorified (6) and praised.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 4 I Focus Points. (1) The fact that Jesus was found "lying in the manger" (v. 16) just as the angel predicted (v. 12) is the first focus of the story. (2) The second focus is the people's **ASTONISHMENT** at the report of the shepherds. (3) The third focus is on the actions of the shepherds. They represent the actions of the first Christian witnesses who proclaimed the Good News of Jesus Christ. (4)

The fourth focus is on Mary treasuring the words and happenings and reflecting on them. (5) Finally, the fifth focus is on the rite of circumcision to which Jesus submitted, and his pre-announced name.

B. REFLECTION POINTS/BIBLIARASAL STEPS 5 & 6

1. Mary is the woman who was with Jesus when he was found by the shepherds. Jesus was not found as an abandoned child as some fundamentalist preachers and their followers would want. Since this fact cannot be denied, these fundamentalists turn to Mk 3:31-35/Mt 12:46-50/Lk 8:19-21 to claim that at that point in his ministry Jesus repudiated his mother. They fail to realize that, had Jesus really done this, he would not be worthy of people's respect. Jesus himself teaches that repudiating one's father or mother is a sin that cries to heaven, see Mt 15:3-9; Mk 7:9-13.

What is clear in the Marcan passage carelessly interpreted by fundamentalists is that: "whoever does the will of God is brother and sister and mother" to Jesus.. This means that Jesus gives value to a kinship that is not based merely on physical or legal ties.

Did Mary have this kind of kinship toward Jesus? She certainly did. No one can offer any proof that Mary ever disobeyed the will of God. In fact, no other person besides Jesus himself was more obedient to God than she was.

The more the fundamentalists reject the role of Mary in human salvation, the more we should reject them and vigorously assert that without Mary, the shepherds would not have found the "sign" given to them by the angel — the "baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger" (Lk 2:12). For in the first place it was Mary who cooperated with God so that His Son would become a baby. Secondly it was she who "wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in the manger" (Lk 2:7).

2. Mary treasured the words and happenings in her heart and reflected on them. By writing this, Luke again presents Mary as the FIRST CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE. Previous presentations were her "fiat" at the annunciation (Lk 1:38) and her visit to Elizabeth marked by the "MAGNIFICAT" song (Lk 1:39-56).

BIBLIARASAL STEP 5: SHARE your insights on one of the points above or tell a happening in your life related to it.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 6:. SEARCH

1. CAN OUR SHARING BE IMPROVED? The shepherds can serve as our models for sharing inasmuch as they shared with others the Good News they received. This kind of sharing takes the form of **EVANGELIZATION**.

2. CAN OUR CARING BE IMPROVED? Mary and Joseph cared for Jesus by doing for him what he could not do on his own they had him circumcised and named. Do we similarly show our care for needy members of our community or parish?

3. CAN OUR AFFIRMATION BE IMPROVED? The shepherds affirmed Mary and Joseph and helped them grow as parents of Jesus by re-telling the angel's message. Is there any member of our community who will grow into a better if we affirm him or her?

4. ARE WE BEING CALLED UPON TO FORGIVE? Shepherds who rarely, if ever, attended religious rites because they were always busy at work, were looked upon as sinners by the refined Jewish community. God showed his forgiveness to them by choosing them to be the first to find the child lying in the manger. Can we not forgive similar people in our community?

5. WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS HERE? Like the shepherds we can be "astonished" at finding Jesus "lying in a manger" by finding him in poor Christian communities, where he is attended to by Mary and Joseph.

C. STORY: Juanito Encounters a Beautiful Lady

Juan Diego was 57 years old and a widower for already two years when he heard a sweet voice calling him: "Juanito, dear Juan Dieguito." The voice came from the top of a hill and it sounded like a young mother calling a child. Juan Diego quickly made his way to the hilltop. There he saw a beautiful young lady who said, "Juanito, my little son whom I love tenderly like a little child, where are you going?" Juan Diego replied, "My Lady, I am on my way to church."

The beautiful lady then told him to go to Mexico City, to the house of the bishop and tell him that she, **"the perfect and perpetual Virgin Mary, Mother of the True God through Whom everything lives,"** wanted a sanctuary for herself to be built on Tepeyac hill.

The bishop was polite when he granted an audience to Juan Diego but was non-committal. He told Juan Diego to come back in a few days. Crestfallen, Juan Diego went back to the hill where he saw the beautiful lady to tell her he was a failure. He begged the lady to send a better messenger, a person of high and noble rank who will merit respect from the bishop. But the lady said, **"Hear me, my beloved son, and understand that I have many servants who would willingly carry out my wish, but it is necessary that through your intervention my desire shall be fulfilled. I ask you, my son, to go again to the Bishop and to repeat what you have told him before."**

To make a long story short, it was at the fourth apparition that Mary arranged miraculous Castilian roses on the *"tilma"* or cloak of Juan Diego, tied the ends of the cloak in a knot at the back of his neck, and sent him back to the bishop. When the *tilma* was opened in the bishop's presence, aside from the roses, there was a beautiful full-length image of Mary on the cloak. It is this image that is now venerated as **"Holy Mary of Guadalupe,"** the name our Lady herself, made known to Juan Diego's uncle who was favored with the fifth apparition and miraculously cured.

Mothers in Mexico were so impressed by the love showered by Mary on Juan Diego — who is now a canonized saint — that soon after the apparitions in 1531 they would tell their children: **"May God treat you as He did Juan Diego."** We can be sure that if we have Juan Diego's devotion to the Mother of God, this is exactly what will happen to us.

January 7, 1996

EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

MATTHEW 2:1-12

A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEPS 3 & 4

The audience or people for whom, originally, the story was written, were the Christian communities in Palestine and Syria, supervised by the Jerusalem Church. **Correlated words:** **v. 2** newborn king of the Jews/ his star. Jewish tradition speaks of the "star of David" (six-pointed) and

the "star of Solomon" (five pointed). V. 6 ruler (leader) / shepherd. David was a shepherd who became King. He was the Shepherd-King who prefigured the Messiah.

The role-players in this story are: (1) the wise men (plural, but no number is given); (2) the star; (3) Herod; (4) the people of Jerusalem, (5) the chief priests and experts of the Law; (6) Scripture; (7) the child with Mary his mother.

Contrasts. The distress of Herod and the people of Jerusalem (v.3) contrasts with the joyous ring of Scripture (v. 6) and the exultation of the wise men (v. 10).

V. 9. **The star** rises (see v. 2), goes ahead ... stops over the place where the child was. This description of the star immediately indicates that it is not a real one. It "rises and then apparently disappears. When it reappears, it moves to guide the wise men only from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, a distance of a few kilometers for which travelers do not really need a guide. It would have been more logical for the star to guide the wise men over a much greater distance, that is, from the "East" to Jerusalem. When it "stops over the place where the child was" apparently only the wise men and no other people notice the phenomenon. How could that happen if the star were real?

V. II. Gold, frankincense and myrrh. In Matthew's viewpoint gold, frankincense and myrrh did not have a significance beyond the fact that they were the precious products sought by traders who went to the East, and therefore they were fit to be gifts of Easterners travelling to another place. Early Christian commentators, however, see in these gifts the symbols of **royalty (gold), divinity (incense) and the Passion of Christ (myrrh).**

BIBLIARASAL STEP 4 I Focal Points. (1) The first focus of the story **is** the revelation of Jesus to non-Jews who come to offer him gifts and worship. (2) Secondly, importance is given to what guided the wise men, namely a/ the mysterious or miraculous star and b/ **Sacred Scriptures.** (3) Thirdly, it is significant that Jesus is found in a **house** (signifying the Church) **"with Mary, his mother".**

B. REFLECTION POINTS / BIBLIARASAL STEPS 5 & 6

1. The feast of the Epiphany, formerly falling on January 6 but now transferred to the nearest Sunday, can truly be celebrated as "EVANGELIZATION SUNDAY" because it is the story of people guided by a Sign and by words of Scripture who succeed in finding Jesus to offer gifts as they worship him.

We are only 4 years away from the year 2000, which had been proposed as a high water mark for Evangelization. Surely, we should think of a special gift for Christ on his 2000th BIRTHDAY! What better gift can we give him than more commitment and more action on our part to fulfill his command to "make disciples of all nations" (Mt 28:19).

2. Our most reliable guides in our search for Jesus, are, first, THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and second, THE SACRED SCRIPTURES — one cannot do without the other. Throughout Salvation History God has guided his people through "DABAR," usually translated as "WORD-EVENT". This is either a happening that is clarified by a word given to a prophet, or a prophetic word that is proven true by a happening.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 5: SHARE your insights on one of the points above or tell a happening your life related to it.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 6: SEARCH

1. *CAN OUR SHARING BE IMPROVED?* The Israelite leaders, guardians of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, shared God's Word with the wise men from the East. Now we who are Christians must share both the Old Testament (re-read from a Christian perspective) and the New Testament with all who are searching for the truth that will make them free or save them. The wise men shared the best products of their land with the infant King they visited. Why don't we also share the best we have by laying them at the feet of Christ?

2. *CAN OUR CARING BE IMPROVED?* God responded to the wise men's need for guidance by sending them a Sign and his Word. We can do something similar by giving good counsel to those looking for the right path.

3. *CAN OUR AFFIRMATION BE IMPROVED?* The importance of affirmation is shown by the second appearance of the Star which affirmed the wise men in their quest, and by the offering of gifts, which affirmed the Kingship of the infant Jesus. By affirming others we give them joy. Why don't we do it?

4. *FORGIVENESS.* At some point in past human history the gentile nations rejected God. But God has forgiven them, that is, all of us. He calls all of us to offer gifts of reparation at the feet of Jesus.

5. *WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS HERE?* We can rejoice not only at seeing the Messiah's star over his house, we have entered that house (the Church) and have found him with Mary his mother.

C. **STORY** Scripture Changes the Life of Augustine

It was August. A young man named Augustine was trying to make a career for himself in Milan but one day found his heart in deep turmoil. His mother Monica kept pleading with him to change his pagan ways and become a Christian. Ambrose, a preacher he admired, kept inviting him to look at the truths of the Christian faith. Personal problems, including relations with women, gave him no peace. In the hopes of easing his mind, he went to take a walk in a garden.

When he approached one of the walls of the garden, he thought he heard a child at the other side chanting, "Tolle, lege; **tolle, lege**" (Take, **read; take, read**). To his surprise, he saw a Bible under a tree, and he felt impelled to take it and read. His eyes fell on the text of Romans 13:13-14: "Let us live honourably as in daylight; not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual excess and lust, not in quarreling and jealousy. Rather, put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the desires of the flesh."

Convicted by the words of Scripture, Augustine made a 90 degree turn in his life, although, following the custom of the time, it would take him one more year to be baptized a Christian. Just as Scripture, together with the Star, guided the wise men to Christ, so did Scripture guide Augustine to a new life. Today, Scripture can still do the same for us.

January 14, 1996

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, Cycle A

JOHN 1:29-34

A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEPS 3 & 4

The audience is uncertain. Maybe some of John the Baptist's audience were his disciples and some other people. **Co-related words:** **V. 29**, Lamb is the antithesis of sin just as God is the antithesis of the world. **Parallel Words:** **V. 29:** take away the sins of the world / **V. 33:** baptize with the Holy Spirit.

V. 33-34. Jesus is set apart in three ways: (1) he is the one on whom the Spirit descends and rests; (2) he baptizes with the Holy Spirit; (3) he is God's Chosen One.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 4 I Focus Points: (1) The first focus is on the twofold mission of Jesus a/ to be the Lamb of God who will take away the sin (singular) of the world, and b/ to be God's Chosen One on whom the Holy Spirit rests, and who will baptize with the Holy Spirit. (2) The second focus is on the relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. John is of lesser rank and existed later. Jesus is of greater rank and existed before. (3) The third focus is on the inability of John, by his own resources, to pick Christ out of the crowd, and his need to be enlightened in this regard by a vision given by God.

B. REFLECTION POINTS / BIBLIARASAL STEPS 5 & 6

1, The two-fold mission of Jesus presented in our passage consists of a/ taking away the sin (singular) of the world and b/ baptizing with the Holy Spirit. Jesus fulfills his first mission by being a Suffering Servant. There had been prophecies regarding this (for example in Isaiah) but they were generally overlooked because people preferred to think of the Messiah as a conquering, glorious king. Thanks to Vatican II, the importance of Jesus, Suffering Servant is back in the consciousness of Christians who have undergone renewal. Renewed Christian leaders, in particular, are rising up to the challenge of being "Servant-leaders," not masters. In the authentic Christian community, Jesus alone is the Master, the rest — including Bishops, priests and lay leaders — are learners.

Jesus baptized with the Holy Spirit after his resurrection. He did not use water but he "breathed on his disciples" (see *Jn* 20:22). In Matthew 28:19, also after the Resurrection, he commanded his disciples to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." It seems, therefore, that to baptize "with the Spirit" can be done in two ways: (1) Jesus, without using water, can directly give the Holy Spirit as an indwelling reality within the inner depth of a person (see also *Ac* 10:44), or (2) Jesus, through his disciples using water, can bring people to a life of fellowship with Himself, the Father and the Holy Spirit (see also *Ac* 2:38). In practice, the Church baptized with water even after the Spirit had been bestowed without it (see *Ac* 10:47-48).

2. One can meet Jesus without recognizing him, that is, having an inter-personal" encounter with him. The second kind of meeting is what counts. In John's case, a vision did the trick. In present-day cases, it can be done through a cursillo, a Life in the Spirit Seminar (LSS), a Marriage Encounter Weekend, and so forth. It is best if these means of encounter with Christ goes together with encountering him by helping the poor, as explained in *Mt* 25:31-46.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 5: SHARE your insights on one of the points above or tell a happening in your life related to it.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 6: SEARCH

1. CAN OUR SHARING BE IMPROVED? John shared with his disciples his vision of the Spirit descending upon Jesus and thereby became a Witness. We, too, need to share what God has done for us, so that we can give witness to him later.

2. CAN OUR CARING BE IMPROVED? John responded to his disciples' need to know the Messiah by pointing him out. Can we do something similar?

3. CAN OUR AFFIRMATION BE IMPROVED? John affirmed Jesus by making known his twofold mission. Can we similarly affirm someone in our community?

4. FORGIVENESS. Essentially, Christ's mission was to bring forgiveness to mankind after atoning for mankind's sin. We are taken up in this great work when we, too, forgive those who have offended us.

5. *WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS HERE?* Jesus, the Lamb of God and God's Chosen One, has gifted me with the Holy Spirit. Praise the Lord!

C. STORY: The Good-looking Sacristan.

In a certain faraway diocese, the new bishop was small and plain, had a penchant for wearing ordinary clothes and for driving. He used an owner-type jeep to visit his priests in the rural areas. He drove, while his sacristan, who was tall and handsome, sat at the back.

During the bishop's first round of parish visitations, the priests and people did not know him too well, since his picture had not yet been widely circulated. Inevitably, when he and his sacristan stepped down from the jeep, people would mistake the sacristan for the bishop, and the bishop for the driver. With much embarrassment, the sacristan would explain that his good looks were not episcopal.

January 21, 1996

FEAST OF STO. NINO

MATTHEW 18:1-5, 10

A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEPS 3 & 4

The audience in this story were the disciples who came to Jesus with the question: who is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven? This indicates that Christ's teaching on humility is a cornerstone of discipleship.

The actions of Christ in this story are noteworthy. He (1) called a child, (2) had him stand in front of his disciples, and (3) he taught on humility and about the fact that little ones have angels in heaven assigned to them (Guardian Angels).

BIBLIARASAL STEP 4 I Focus Points. (1) Humility is greatness in the Kingdom of heaven. (2) To welcome a child is to welcome Jesus. (3) Little ones have Guardian Angels.

B. REFLECTION POINTS / BIBLIARASAL STEPS 5 & 6

1. The missionaries who came to our land and welcomed the "little ones" thereby welcomed Christ. Christ was already here before

the missionaries arrived, teaching our people all the "little" values that made our people "great:" *pakikisama or bayanihan, utang na loob, awa, hiya, pagsasartti, pakikisama, pagkakaisa, pagkabayani, pakikipagkapwatao*, and so on. Let us preserve all these "little" values with the help of the Sto. Nino.

2. It's time for us to go forth and "welcome" the "little ones" in the neighboring countries. Pope John Paul U reminds us: "Be not afraid." For the Lord will be with us.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 5: SHARE your insights on one of the points above or tell a happening in your life related to it.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 6: SEARCH

1. *CAN OUR SHARING BE IMPROVED?* Christ gives us an example of sharing doctrine with his disciples upon their asking him a question.

2. *CAN OUR CARING BE IMPROVED?* God's care for "little ones" is manifested by giving them "Guardian Angels." We ourselves can be some kind of "Guardian Angels" — on earth — for "little ones" like the poor, the handicapped, the tribal people, and the like.

3. *CAN OUR AFFIRMATION BE IMPROVED?* Jesus affirmed all children when he called one of them and let him stand before his disciples as a model of humility.

4. *FORGIVENESS.* To forgive, one must be humble. If God can forgive me and my sisters and brothers, why can't I, someone much less in dignity than God, also forgive?

5. *WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS HERE?* "Little ones" are the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven.

C. STORY: The Legend of St. Christopher

St. Christopher is a Christian martyr, probably of the third century, of whom nothing is known for certain except the fact of his martyrdom. His name, "Christ-bearer," gave rise to the legend that he was a man of gigantic stature who helped people cross a treacherous river by carry them on his back. One stormy night, the legend relates, Christopher was

awakened by a little child who wanted to cross the river. The sleepy Christopher tried to dissuade the child from crossing, but the child pleaded for his help. Giving in, Christopher put him on his back and started crossing the swollen river.

As giant and child negotiated the treacherous currents, Christopher's burden seemed to grow heavier and heavier until it was only with the greatest difficulty that he reached the other side. As Christopher put the child down, he asked, "Who are you? Why are you so heavy?"

The child answered: "I am Jesus Christ. You have carried me across this river many times before, but you did not recognize me. So, tonight I came to say, 'thank you' by taking the form of a little child and giving you my special blessing." At that, the child disappeared. Christopher crossed the river to go home without any difficulty at all. In fact, after that encounter with the Christ Child, all the people he carried, no matter their size, were light as a feather, and Christopher experienced again and again the joy that filled him when he learned that he had carried the Child who had carried the weight of the world upon his shoulders.

January 28

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, Cycle A

MATTHEW 5:1-12

A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEPS 3 & 4

The audience consists of a big crowd of people and the disciples gathered around Jesus. There are **eight Beatitudes** in Matthew's text (four Beatitudes and four Woes in Luke 6:20-26), although commentators suspect that there were originally only seven since the Beatitude of the meek (v. 5) seems to be a duplication of the first Beatitude (v. 3).

Structurally, all the following are **parallel phrases**: poor in spirit, sorrowing, lowly, those who hunger and thirst for holiness, those who show mercy, the single-hearted, peace-makers, those persecuted for holiness' sake, and also their complements, namely: the reign of God is theirs (v. 3 and 10), they shall be consoled, they shall inherit the land, they shall have their fill, mercy shall be theirs.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 4 I Focus Points. (1) The Kingdom of heaven. This is not a place in the sky, nor is it the Church. Although "Kingdom" is a noun, it denotes God's action of reigning. Hence, "reign of God" might be a better translation. But the important thing is to emphasize God's actions as King. These are: to govern, to legislate, and to judge. When people accept God as King, "the reign of God is theirs." This is a blessedness because God will take special care of them. (2) "Poor in spirit." In Luke "poor" is not qualified but: a/ the beatitude there are in the second person and refer to the actual audience and b/ these beatitudes are matched with contrasting woes, also addressed to people in the audience. Hence in Luke the "poor" are the disciples and others like them in the audience, who are distinguished from the rich Pharisees, who are also in the audience. In Matthew the "poor" are in the third person and therefore more abstract, and the qualification "in spirit" becomes necessary. *It is not enough to be poor to be blessed. One must also accept poverty as a service to God, as the ANAWIM (the poor who served the Lord) did.* (3) Persecution in the 8th beatitude is duplicated. In this duplication, instead of "holiness' sake" we read "because of me (Jesus)." Those who are followers of Jesus are the righteous ones who are persecuted. They are to be glad and rejoice for their reward in the afterlife, that is, in heaven (not to be mistaken for the Kingdom of heaven) is great.

B. REFLECTION POINTS / BIBLIARASAL STEPS 5 & 6

1. Our blessedness consists in our being specially cared for by God since he is our Governor, our Legislator and our Judge. He is our Special Provider who has made a covenant with us: you take care of me and I will take care of you.

2. To have this blessedness, we must be "poor in spirit" like the ANAWIM of old who were disposed when they were brought to exile in Babylon, but accepted their poverty as an atonement for the sins of their people, and in this way they hoped to bring down God's mercy upon them.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 5: SHARE your insights on one of the points above or tell a happening in your life related to it.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 6: SEARCH

1. **CAN OUR SHARING BE IMPROVED?** The "ANAWIM" who **were** the original "poor in spirit" shared their goods not only materially **but** also spiritually. Why don't we take them for our models? Jesus and Mary **are** outstanding examples of "ANAWIM."

2. **CAN OUR CARING BE IMPROVED?** To survive, the "ANAWIM" had to care for one another. Are there, perhaps, people in our community who cannot survive unless we care for them?

3. **CAN OUR AFFIRMATION BE IMPROVED?** It is when someone is persecuted that he or she needs affirmation most. Is there someone in our community who is persecuted?

4. **FORGIVENESS.** To forgive is an outstanding way of showing mercy **and** being a peacemaker. Blessed are we when we forgive.

5. **WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS HERE?** My happiness as a Christian will not only be in heaven. It starts on earth when I feel God's **loving** care **for** me day by day.

C. STORY: Mother Teresa of Calcutta Is Surprised by the Poor

When Mother Teresa of Calcutta was just starting her work of helping the poor, she once gave a bowl of lugaw (rice gruel) to a poor family. To her surprise this family took an empty bowl, put half of the lugaw into it, and give it to their neighbor, also a poor family. Mother Teresa remarked: "Why did you do that? There is not even enough for your family?" Her beneficiaries said, "Our neighbor is just as hungry as we are."

Mother Teresa never forgot this incident. For her, it opened the door to the wealth of spirituality one can find among the poor.

February 4, 1996

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, Cycle A

MATTHEW 5:13-16

A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEPS 3 & 4

The audience consist of the crowd of people and the disciples gathered around Jesus, see Mt 5:1. Corelated words: what salt is for

the earth, light is for the world. Matching words: "salt of the earth" matches "light of the world".

Keywords. V. 15 House, which is implied in v. 13 (thrown out of the house), is a keyword. The salt inside the house is good salt, that thrown outside is bad salt. The light on the lampstand is in the middle of the house and gives light to all who are inside. The Church, that is, the Christian community, is symbolized by this house. One can be inside it or outside. V. 16 The goodness to be seen by others is not to be understood merely individually, but also collectively. It is the goodness of the Christian community that leads people to give praise to the heavenly Father.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 4 I Focus Points. (1) The Message of Christ in these sayings becomes clearer when we take the perspective of community and not just of individuality. (2) However, the Christian Community cannot fulfill its salvific role unless within its "house" individuals are not good.

B. REFLECTION POINTS / BIBLIARSAL STEPS 5 & 6

1. The good salt is kept inside the house. The bad salt is thrown outside. The house is to be understood as the Christian community or the Church. This might seem contrary to the widespread interpretation that Christians are the salt of the earth because a/ they preserve mankind from getting corrupted and b/ they give flavor to human life, making it pleasing to God. Actually such an interpretation can be retained but we should add a communitarian dimension and a hidden exhortation to remain inside the "house" which is the Church. Individually, and specially outside the Church, Christians will be able to do little against the world's corruptive influence and unpalatable ways. Christians must act as a community, as a Church. Hence the thrust of the Philippine Catholic Church after PCP II is for the faithful to form Basic Ecclesial Communities — small societies that give witness to the life of the whole Church.

2. The "goodness" of Christians individually and as a Church has been spelled out in the Sermon on the Mount, Mt 5 to 7, that we will continue taking up for two more Sundays. The Jerusalem Bible calls this the discourse portion of the booklet proclaiming the Kingdom of God (Mt 3 to 4 being the narrative portion). Christian life has to be

different from — and morally superior to worldly life and even to Old Testament life. This can be made possible only through God's help and in particular through the example given by Jesus Christ and his teachings read in the Bible, and the spiritual power coming from the indwelling Holy Spirit.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 5: SHARE your insights on one of the points above or tell a happening in your life related to it.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 6: SEARCH

1. *CAN OUR SHARING BE IMPROVED?* Christian SHARING is not only a sharing of material goods. It is also a sharing of "invisible goods" that belong to human life on earth — our "ICES, FEW, SAW" — or Interests, Concerns, Experiences, Situations; Fears, Expectations, Wants; Strengths, Aspirations, Weaknesses.

2. *CAN OUR CARING BE IMPROVED?* Jesus has taught us to be specially attentive — "SENSITIVE" — to the needs of "little ones." These are not necessarily children, but those who are "little" in the eyes of the world: the powerless, the poor, the marginalized, the disabled, the uneducated, the oppressed, and so on.

3. *CAN OUR AFFIRMATION BE IMPROVED?* In our passage's figurative language, affirmation is "setting a lamp on a stand where it gives light to all in the house."

4. *FORGIVENESS.* Salt never loses its taste but it can become watery or dirty and therefore useless. It is then that it is thrown out of the house. In our dealings with erring Church or community members, our ordinary policy should be forgiveness. We should "throw" people "outside" only as a last resort when everything else has failed.

5. *WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS HERE?* To be the salt of the earth and the light of the world is a collective Christian responsibility, not one person's alone. We should rejoice that in this matter we are helped not only by the Christian community but also by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

C. STORY: The Wisest Son

A businessman who was already getting old and thinking of retirement

had three sons but he did not know who of them should inherit his lucrative business. He thought of a way to test them. He called his three sons and gave each of them five thousand pesos. He said: "You know I have an empty warehouse. I want you to go and buy something — anything — with your five thousand pesos and fill up the warehouse with it."

The first son bought a huge acacia tree which was cut down and hauled to the warehouse. But so much space was left unfilled. The second son thought of buying something cheap in huge quantities — cogon grass — and had it all brought to the warehouse. Still, so much space was unfilled. The third son bought candles and placed them at strategic places in the warehouse. Then he asked his father to come and he had all the candles lit.

The father beamed with satisfaction as he saw every nook and corner of the warehouse filled with light. The third son inherited his father's lucrative business. We will inherit eternal life in heaven if we fill the world with the light of our faith.

February 11, 1996

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, Cycle A

MATTHEW 5:17-37

(Short form: Mt 5:20-22, 27-28, 33-34, 37.)

A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEPS 3 & 4

The audience continues to be the crowd of people
and the disciples gathered around Jesus.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 4 I Focus Points. (1) The first focal point is the Old Testament teaching against MURDER. This is perfected by Christ's teaching against ANGER. (2) The second focal point is the Old Testament teaching against ADULTERY. This is perfected by Christ's teaching against LUST. (3) The third focal point is the teaching of the Old Testament against FALSE OATHS. This is perfected by Christ's teaching NOT TO SWEAR AT ALL but to be totally TRANSPARENT in one's words.

B. REFLECTION POINTS / BIBLIARASAL STEPS 5 & 6

1. We have to say "NO" to murder and anger; to adultery and lust. Destroying someone as a person, or making him lose his self-esteem, is worse than murder. Such destruction is the usual result of anger, which, therefore we must assiduously guard against if we really want to seed the face of Christ in the face of our fellow human beings. When a man commits a sin of lust against a woman, it is not just a question of indulging in a forbidden pleasure. More than anything else, it is a sin of wanting to dominate a fellow human being without caring for personal values.

2. We must say "YES" to TRANSPARENCY. The Old Testament teaching regulated oaths, but Christ does away with anything that is used as a cover-up for wrong-doing. What he wants is TRANSPARENCY. It is a sure sign that Christianity does not have deep roots in Philippine society when everywhere people are used to cover-ups and lack of transparency.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 5: SHARE your insights on one of the points above or tell a happening in your life related to it.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 6: SEARCH

1. *CAN OUR SHARING BE IMPROVED?* Sharing requires trust. A person will share his or her innermost feelings only with another person who can be completely trusted. In this light, the teaching of Jesus on the need for complete TRANSPARENCY is essential to sharing in a Christian community.

2. *CAN OUR CARING BE IMPROVED?* We must not forget that a sense of self-worth is important for anyone's personality development. If we really care for someone's personality growth, we have to begin showing this person his or her own dignity as a child of God. We have to build up the self-esteem of our sisters and brothers and avoid anything, like anger, that can destroy it.

3. *CAN OUR AFFIRMATION BE IMPROVED?* Jesus came not to abolish the law and the prophets but to fulfill them, that is to affirm them and develop them from within. In this light, we help people on the way to self-fulfillment when we affirm them.

4. *FORGIVENESS.* Anger is like a fire that burns not only the angry person but also the one he is angry at. Whenever this fire flares

up, there is need for mutual forgiveness.

5. WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS HERE? Jesus Christ has given us not only a New Law but also a new heart and a new spirit.

C. STORY: The Enemies of the Faith

People who look at Christ without the eyes of faith think that he is asking too much in his Sermon on the Mount. This is one reason they want to destroy Christianity. But it is when their faith is threatened **that** Catholics rally to the little things they usually take for granted.

When the communists took over Catholic Poland, they were determined to take the people from Christ. In 1976 the Communist authorities in Cracow forbade the solemn celebration of the feast of Corpus Christi. Instead of the traditional route along the main street of the capital, they allowed a short procession along secondary streets. At the end, Cardinal Wojtyla (the future Pope John Paul II) presided over the Mass in front of the cathedral where a manmonth crowd had gathered. He spoke with sad forcefulness.

He said: "The Communists want us to forget God. They have effaced his name from the newspaper, from schoolbooks, and from all sectors of social life. A few days ago, a little boy went to class with a little cross around his neck, just as many people in Poland do, both young and old. 'Remove that thing!' he was ordered, 'It is forbidden to wear that in public.' Standing firm, the boy said, 'Never!' He was expelled."

Cardinal Wojtyla continued: "The boy's mother was summoned, and she was informed of her son's 'provocative action.' The mother replied, 'I am very proud of my child.'"

Just twelve years later, Cardinal Wojtyla became Pope John Paul II. As Pope he worked for the downfall of communism in Poland. **It** was the first domino to fall. Not long after, even the mighty Soviet Union abandoned communism.

February 18, 1996

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, Cycle A

MATTHEW 5:38-48

The audience. Since this is till part of the Sermon on the Mount, the audience remains the same as that of last Sunday. V. 39, Not to offer resistance to injury does not mean to actively seek it or to do nothing to avoid it or flee from it. We should simply see here the principle that Mohandas Gandhi in India would build into the praxis of NONVIOLENCE through which Gandhi and his followers obtained the independence of India from the British. We must also accept the fact that there is a time and there are circumstances when the only option left to us is to put our fate in God's hands.

The special, non-worldly character of Christian goodness and generosity is underlined with the expressions, in Vv, 40-42: "... hand him your coat as well ... go with him two miles ... Give to the man who begs from you. Do not turn your back on the borrower." Because Christ has done for us more than we could ever ask for, we should try to show the same goodness and generosity to others.

Parallel phrases: V. 44 "Love your enemies / pray for your persecutors." If someone asks, "How can I love my enemies / persecutors?" The answer is : start by praying for them.

V. 48 "You must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" The perfection pertinent to this saying is not that which is found in God's nature, but in his way of dealing with people. In other words, we are not being asked to aim to have our human nature transformed one day into the divine nature, but to act towards others in the way God has acted towards us, that is, without bearing a grudge against anybody.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 41 Focus Points. (1) Christians must practice "NONVIOLENCE." (2) Christian goodness and generosity must have a special, non-worldly character, motivated by gratitude for what Christ has done for our salvation. (3) God's way of dealing with us, that is, with the goodness and love of a Father, is our model of our way of dealing with others.

B. REFLECTION POINTS / BIBLIARASAL STEPS 5 & 6

1. Christians are torn between the world trying to pull them down to act like worldly people, and Christ pulling them up to act as he himself acted. It is sad that, quite often, it is the world that prevails. Sometimes, it is a noble non-Christian who has to remind Christians to

be more Christian. In India's struggle for independence, it was a Hindu, Mohandas Gandhi, who taught his countrymen the Hindu and Christian principle of NONVIOLENCE (see Mt 5:38-39) whereas the supposedly Christian British were using violence against them.

2. Many of us find it hard to be like our heavenly Father because we have **not** experienced the love and care of a godly earthly Father. Fathers and young men aspiring to the fathers one day, should realize that they face the great challenge of reflecting in their ways of dealing with others, the goodness and love that God has shown in dealing with each one of us.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 5: SHARE your insights on one of the points above or tell a happening in your life related to it.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 6." SEARCH

1. *CAN OUR SHARING BE IMPROVED?* Sharing of material goods is not Christian sharing unless it is marked by generosity beyond worldly standards.

2. *CAN OUR CARING BE IMPROVED?* Caring is best shown by loving, but if we cannot yet love someone, we can try praying for him or her.

3. *CAN OUR AFFIRMATION BE IMPROVED?* Greeting others — not just our brothers and sisters — is a good way of affirming them. It is better if we add a cheery word or a smile.

4. *FORGIVENESS.* We cannot love our enemies unless we first forgive them.

5. *WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS HERE?* Our heavenly Father wants us to be more and more like him — in his way of dealing with others — each day, and in this way we become closer and closer to him.

C. STORY: The EDSA Nonviolent Revolt of 1986

The "People Power" nonviolent revolt of 1986 in the Philippines is a phenomenal outcome of a series of events connected with the bloodless overthrow of the dictatorship imposed by President Ferdinand Marcos that had already lasted 14 years (1972-1986).

The catalyst of the revolt was a failed coup d'etat of reformist military officers and men backed by high ranking allies of the President who had withdrawn their support for him in spite of his claim that he won the "snap" presidential election against Cory Aquino, widow of the oppositionist, former senator Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, slain in 1983. When the plot of the reformists was discovered, they faced the prospect of swift punishment from a vindictive strongman. The beleaguered putschists broadcasted an appeal for the people to protect them by spilling out into the streets and rallying to their cause. The Archbishop of Manila, Cardinal Jaime L. Sin, repeatedly put on the air by Radio Veritas, urged the people to respond and they did so, turning out unarmed not only in the hundreds of thousands but in the millions.

The revolt lasted only 77 hours. Marcos and his family fled and Corazon Cojuangco Aquino was sworn in as the President of the Republic of the Philippines on February 25, 1986 by virtue of the ratification of her election through the popular uprising. The wonder of it all was that, in spite of tanks, planes, helicopters and heavily armed troops swarming all over Manila, only a few drops of blood was shed in the capture of a TV station by reformist soliders.

Perhaps, through the EDSA Nonviolent Revolt of 1986 God is telling the Filipino People that they can truly live up to Christian ideals.

February 25, 1996

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT, Cycle A

MATTHEW 4:1-11

A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEPS 3 & 4

The audience or the original readers of this story were the Christian communities of Palestine and Syria supervised by the Jerusalem Church. **The location** of Christ's temptation is the desert. It was the Holy Spirit who led Jesus there, but the tempter will be the devil (v. 1) or Satan (v. 10), who will tempt him after his fast of forty days (see v. 2).

In Matthew the tempted asks Jesus to turn stones **(plural) into loaves (plural) of bread**. This contrasts with the singular, "stone" bread" used in Lk 4:3. It is an indication that the narrator of the story thinks of Jesus as undergoing the temptations not in a personal capacity but as the

representative of the human race. He is vested with "corporate personality."

The answer of Jesus to the first temptation is short in Luke 4:4: "Not on bread alone is man to live." In Matthew 4:4 a phrase is added, "**but on every utterance that comes from the mouth of God.**" The last temptation in Matthew is the one that takes place on a **very high mountain** (Mt 4:8) whereas in Luke it is the one that takes place in Jerusalem (**Lk 4:9**).

BIBLIARSAL STEP 4 I Focus Points. (1) The temptations of Christ in Matthew involve matters where the human race is usually tempted and fails, whereas Jesus, though tempted, triumphs not only for himself but for the whole human race. The First temptation is about **POWER**, which the devil wants people to use for selfish and material ends and without being guided by God's Word. Jesus triumphs by availing of God's Word in Scripture. (2) The second temptation is about tempting God by going beyond the bounds of **PRUDENCE** while pursuing one's desire to be served by angels for **VAIN GLORY**. There is the added dimension of a **wily misuse of Scripture**. (3) The third temptation is about **FALSE RELIGION**.

B. REFLECTION POINTS / BIBLIARSAL STEPS 5 & 6

1. People in power and with access to wealth must resist the temptation of putting material or visible values over spiritual or invisible ones. For example, people should stop indulging in politics just to become more powerful or more wealthy. Politics, ideally, is for the good governance of the state. Yet, the accepted fact of life in the Philippines is that politicians only want to get rich or richer and more powerful, with access to lots of funds. Filipino Christians should rally behind someone who is willing to make personal sacrifices so that the government could be cleaned up and put at the service of the people.

2. The celebration of the Quadricentennial Year of the Archdiocese of Manila should resist the temptation of Vain Glory or Triumphalism. We should do what we can to make it truly "a year of thanksgiving, a year of pardon. The best way of offering thanks to God is to do something pleasing to him, like helping our poor sisters and brothers experience spiritual and material empowerment.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 5: SHARE your insights on one of the points above or tell a happening in your life related to it.

BIBLIARASAL STEP 6: SEARCH

1. CAN OUR SHARING BE IMPROVED? The human being is **born** selfish. Unless we teach young ones to stop being selfish and start being Christ-centered and to share visible and invisible goods with others, they will always be very vulnerable to the temptations of Satan.

2. CAN OUR CARING BE IMPROVED? Let us learn a lesson from the way Jesus repulsed his second temptation. With St. Francis we should pray: "O Master grant that I may never seek so much to be consoled as to console..." When we organize our lives to get others to care for us, we end up the losers. When we spend our lives caring for others, without asking for it, God will provide us with good people who will really care for us.

3. CAN OUR AFFIRMATION BE IMPROVED? Let us note that Matthew ends his temptation narrative by saying: "Angels came and waited on him." In other words, God sent his angels to affirm Christ after the ordeal of his temptations. Our sisters and brothers need our affirmation to be strong against temptations.

4. FORGIVENESS. In Matthew's presentation of Christ's temptations, Christ underwent them because he represented the human race. Hence, when he triumphed, it was the whole human race that triumphed. The temptations were something that Christ had to experience so that God can forgive us. To thank God for this, on the First Sunday of Lent, let us resolve to be always forgiving towards our sisters and brothers.

5. WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS HERE? The tempter, the Devil, or Satan, has been routed by Jesus Christ. The score is 3-0. Alleluia!

C. STORY: Do Not Be Afraid

At a sharing he did at the UST Central Seminary chapel during the International Youth Forum of January 1995, Pope John Paul II said that he underwent some moments of fear during his first hours and days as Pope. He felt he may not be up to the tremendous tasks of the papacy. Then, an inner voice became stronger and stronger. "Do not be afraid."

So, this became like slogan of his papacy.

He told the young people that it is normal to experience some fear when faced with a tremendous task. Moses himself experienced it when God told him to go to Pharaoh. When Moses voiced out his fear, God said: "Do not be afraid. I will be with you."

The Pope said it is the mission of the youth, especially today, to go and join the efforts being made to evangelize the world. They are badly needed. When they start to take their vocation seriously, they should not be surprised to experience some anxiety and fear. But, like Moses, they should listen to the voice of God: "Do not be afraid, I will be with you."

INDEX

Volume LXXI (1995)

1. Author

AGNES, MARIO

"Pilgrim Cross". 104

APARICIO, ANGEL (O.P.)

Homily for Immaculate Conception of Mary. 600

ASEBIAS, ANACLETO et al.

Open Letter to Jose T. Ramirez. 656

BRANSOM, CHARLES

Philippine Episcopology: Addenda-Corrigenda 1995 674

CAJILIG, VICENTE (O.P.)

Bibliarasal: Pattern for Homiletical Reflection (ed.) 612

Ethics in the Year of Women (ed.) 535

Homily for Christmas 1995. 606

Homily for the Second Sunday of Advent. 598

That They All May be One (ed.) 392

CASTIGADOR, HONORATO (O.P.)

Editorial for January-February 1995 issue. 3

Editorial for March-April 1995 issue. 116

Editorial for May-June 1995 issue. 248

CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES

A Call to Christian Participation in the Elections. 155

Elections 1995 - A Challenge to the Young. 152

Pastoral Letter on Filipino Migrant Workers. 541

Pastoral Statement on the 4th International Conference
on Women in the Beijing. 537

CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION, et al.

The Presence of the Church in the University

CORTES, REGINO (O.P.)

Festal Homilies for:

Ascension of the Lord.	224
Easter Sunday.	200
Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	486
Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	378
Fifth Sunday in Lent.	195
Fifth Sunday of Easter.	215
First Sunday in Lent.	182
Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	375
Fourth Sunday in Lent.	192
Fourth Sunday of Easter.	212
Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	490
Palm Sunday.	198
Pentecost Sunday.	230
Second Sunday in Lent.	185
Second Sunday of Easter.	205
Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	385
Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	382
Sixth Sunday of Easter.	219
Solemnity of Christ, King of the Universe.	531
Seomnity of the Body and Blood of Christ.	239
Third Sunday in Lent.	189
Third Sunday of Easter.	208
Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	371
Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	520
Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time.	523
Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time.	525
Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time.	528
Trinity Sunday.	235
Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	243
Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	493
Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	515
Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	506
Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time.	496
Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	505
Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	517

Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time.	500
Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time.	512
Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	509
Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time.	502
CRUZ, OSCAR (D.D.)	
Marriage Nullity Declaration on Psychical Grounds: Its Implications in the Family Apostolate.	547
DE LA ROSA, ROLANDO (O.P.)	
International Youth Forum, Welcome Address.	5
Rector's Welcome Address (at UST).	36
FEDERATION OF ASIAN BISHOPS' CONFERENCE	
Message for the Sixth FABC Plenary Assembly.	149
FIFTH IYF DELEGATES	
Message to the Youth of the World.	20
GARCIA, EXCELSO (O.P.)	
Admission of Aglipayan Adults to Catholic Church	558
Appointment of a Hospital Chaplain.	561
Are All Persons Guilty of Abortion Equally Punished? . . .	633
Communion Under the Species of Bread.	636
Guest Priests' Remuneration.	480
What Does the Term Laity Mean?.	175
GOMEZ, FAUSTO (O.P.)	
Homily for the Fourth Sunday of Advent.	604
IYF: Telling the World of Christ's Love.	106
The Catechism of the Catholic Church:	
Social Ethics and the Priority of the Poor.	564
GONZALEZ, JOSE MA. (O.P.)	
Homily for the First Sunday of Advent (A).	595
JOHN PAUL H	
Angelus Domini at Rizal Park.	82
Evangelium Vitae.	249

Extemporaneous Remarks to FABC.	98
Farewell Ceremony (at NAIA).	101
Farewell to Young People at Rizal Park.	84
Holy Mass at Rizal Park.	76
Holy Mass for Forum Delegates (at UST Central Seminary)..	32
Holy Mass for the Fourth Centenary (at PICC Esplanade) .	44
Letter to Women.	613
Meeting with Bishops' Conference (Manila).	50
Meeting with Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference . . .	89
Meeting with Students (at UST Parade Ground)	38
Message for Lent 1995.	138
Message for the Third World Day of the Sick.	142
Papal Appeal on Behalf of Women.	624
Prayer Vigil (at Rizal Park).	63
Radio Message to Chinese Catholics.	60
Stations of the Cross (Video Message).	41
Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of Radio Veritas Asia	56
Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of Radio Vetits Asia	56
Ut Unum Sint	394
Video Message before the Pastoral Visit	18
Welcome Ceremony (at NAIA).	29

LEGASPI, LEONARDO (O.P., D.D.)

In the Authority of Service.	160
--------------------------------------	-----

PAN-ASIAN CONSULTATION ON INCULTURATION AND LITURGY

Asian Worship in Spirit and Truth.	471
--	-----

PIRONIO, EDUARDO (CARD.)

Introduction to the 5th International Forum.	8
--	---

PONTIFICIO CONSILIUM PRO DIALOGO INTER RELIGIONES

Message on the Occasion of Id-Al-Fitr at the End of Ramadan.	146
---	-----

REBOLLO, MAXIMILIANO (O.P.)

Anthropology According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church.	582
--	-----

RELIGIOUS ALLIANCE AGAINST PORNOGRAPHY

The Manila Declaration on Pornography.	167
--	-----

RIVERA, EFREN (O.P.)

Homiletic and Bibliarasal Pointers:

Epiphany of the Lord.	682
Feast of Santo Nino.	688
Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A).	692
First Sunday in Lent (A).	700
Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A).	690
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (A).	686
Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (A).	697
Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A).	695
Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.	679

SIN, JAIME (CARD.)

Men and Women Alike.	627
Opening Remarks.	74
Proclaiming a Year of Favor from the Lord.	641
World Youth Day Opens.	24

TALAMAYAN, DIOSDADO (D.D.), et. al.

A Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cagayan Valley	652
--	-----

TEJERO, PEDRO (O.P.)

Homily for the Third Sunday of Advent.	603
Humility and Obedience in Priestly Ministry.	135
The Priest at Prayer.	639

TOBIAS, ANTONIO (D.D.)

An Overview of the Seminarians at DSHJ for SY 95-96	646
---	-----

VERZOSA, MARY PILAR (R.G.S.)

The Future of Women After Beijing.	630
--	-----

Sections and Topics

ASIAN WORSHIP

Asian Worship in Spirit and Truth.	471
--	-----

BIBLIARASAL

Bibliarasal: Pattern for Homiletical Reflection.	652
--	-----

CACERES

In the Authority of Service.	160
--------------------------------------	-----

CASECNAN MULTIPURPOSDE IRRIGATION AND POWER PROJECT

A Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cagayan Valley	652
--	-----

CASES AND INQUIRIES

Admission of Aglipayan Adults to Catholic Church	558
Appointment of a Hospital Chaplain.	561
Are All Persons Guilty of Abortion Equally Punished? . . .	633
Communion Under the Species of Bread.	636
Guest Priests' Remuneration.	480
What Does the Term Laity Mean?.	175

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Anthropology According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church.	582
The Catechism of the Catholic Church: Social Ethics and the Priority of the Poor.	564

CHINESE CATHOLICS

Radio Message to Chinese Catholics.	60
---	----

EDITORIAL

Bibliarasal: Pattern for Homiletical Reflection (ed.)	612
Editorial for January-February 1995 issue.	3
Editorial for March-April 1995 issue.	116
Editorial for May-June 1995 issue.	248
Ethics in the Year of Women (ed.).	535
That They All May be One (ed.).	392

ELECTIONS

A Call to Christian Participation in the Elections.	155
Elections 1995 - A Challenge to the Young.	152

ENCYCLICALS

Evangelium Vitae.	249
Ut Unum Sint.	394

EPISCOPOLOGY

Philippine Episcopology: Addenda-Corrigenda 1995	674
--	-----

FEDERATION OF ASIAN BISHOPS' CONFERENCE

Extemporaneous Remarks to FABC.	98
Meeting with Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference	89
Message for the Sixth FABC Plenary Assembly.	149

HOMILIES

Ascension of the Lord	224
Christmas 1995.	606
Easter Sunday.	200
Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	486
Epiphany of the Lord.	682
Feast of Santo Nifio.	688
Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	378
Fifth Sunday in Easter.	215
Fifth Sunday in Lent	195
Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A).	692
First Sunday in Advent (A).	595
First Sunday in Lent (A)	700
First Sunday in Lent	182
Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	375
Fourth Sunday in Advent	604
Fourth Sunday in Easter.	212
Fourth Sunday in Lent.	192
Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A).	690
Immaculate Conception of Mary.	600
Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	490
Palm Sunday.	198
Pentecost Sunday.	230
Second Sunday in Advent.	598
Second Sunday in Easter.	205
Second Sunday in Lent	185
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (A).	686

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	385
Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (A).	697
Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	382
Sixth Sunday in Easter.	219
Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A).	695
Solemnity of Christ, King of the Universe.	531
Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.	679
Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ.	239
Third Sunday in Advent.	603
Third Sunday in Easter.	208
Third Sunday in Lent.	189
Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	371
Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	520
Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time.	523
Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time.	525
Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time.	528
Trinity Sunday.	235
Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	243
Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	493
Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	515
Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	506
Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time.	496
Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	505
Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	517
Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time.	500
Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time.	512
Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time.	509
Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time.	502

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FORUM 1995

See Papal Visit and International Youth Forum 1995

LENT

Message for Lent 1995.	138
--------------------------------	-----

MANILA, ARCHDIOCESE OF

Proclaiming a Year of Favor from the Lord.	641
--	-----

MARRIAGE NULLITY

Marriage Nullity Declaration on Psychical Grounds:

Its Implications in the Family Apostolate.	547
--	-----

PAPAL VISIT AND INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FORUM 1995

Angelus Domini at Rizal Park	82
Extemporaneous Remarks to FABC.	98
Farewell Ceremony (at NAIA).	101
Farewell to Young People at Rizal Park.	84
Holy Mass at Rizal Park	76
Holy Mass for Forum Delegates (at UST Central Seminary)..	32
Holy Mass for the Fourth Centenary (at PICC Esplanade) . .	44
International Youth Forum, Welcome Address.	5
Introduction to the 5th International Forum	8
IYF: Telling the World of Christ's Love.	106
Meeting with Bishops' Conference (Manila).	50
Meeting with Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference . . .	89
Meeting with Students (at UST Parade Ground).	38
Message to the Youth of the World.	20
Opening Remarks.	74
Pilgrim Cross.	104
Prayer Vigil (at Rizal Park).	63
Radio Message to Chinese Catholics.	60
Rector's Welcome Address (at UST).	36
Stations of the Cross (Video Message).	41
Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of Radio Veritas Asia	56
Video Message before the Pastoral Visit	18
Welcome Ceremony (at NAIA).	29
World Youth Day Opens.	24

PASTORAL LETTERS

A Call to Christian Participation in the Elections.	155
A Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of Cagayan Valley	
Elections 1995 - A Challenge to the Young.	152
Pastoral Letter on Filipino Migrant Workers.	541
Pastoral Statement on the 4th International Conference on Women in Beijing	537
Proclaiming a Year of Favor from the Lord.	641

PORNOGRPAHY

The Manila Declaration on Pornography.	167
--	-----

PRIESTLY MINISTRY

Humility and Obedience in Priestly Ministry.	135
The Priest at Prayer.	639

RADIO VERITAS ASIA

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of Radio Veritas Asia	56
--	----

RAMADAN

Message on the Occasion of 'Id Al-Fitr at the End of Ramadan	146
---	-----

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Open Letter to Jose T. Ramirez.	656
---	-----

SEMINARIANS

The Presence of the Church in the University and in University Culture.	117
--	-----

UT UNUM SINT

That They All May be One (ed.).	392
Ut Unum Sint.	394

WOMEN

Ethics in the Year of Women (ed.).	535
Letter to Women.	613
Men and Women Alike.	627
Papal Appeal on Behalf of Women.	624
Pastoral Statement on the 4th International Conference on Women in Beijing.	537
Proclaiming a Year of Favor from the Lord.	641
The Future of Women After Beijing.	630

WORKERS

Pastoral Letter on Filipino Migrant Workers.	541
--	-----

WORLD DAY OF THE SICK

Message for the Third World Day of the Sick.	142
--	-----