

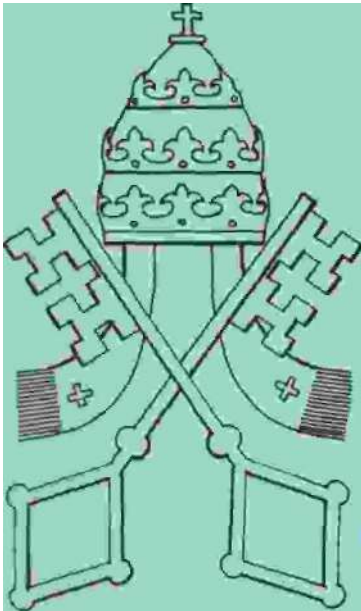
# BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

THE OFFICIAL INTERDIOCESAN BULLETIN

VoL LXXV, No. 813

July-August 1999

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INTER MUNERA ACADEMIARUM

*John Paul II*

REGULATIONS FOR DOCTRINAL  
EXAMINATION

*Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*

NEW BISHOPS OF THE PHILIPPINES:

MOST REV. JOEL Z. BAYLON

MOST REV. ANGELITO R. LAMPON

*CBCP*

THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE  
INDULGENCE

*John McDermott, SJ*

# **BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS**

## **The Official Interdiocesan Bulletin**

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## **Western in Lifestyle... but, Asian at Heart**

**VICENTE CAJILIG, OP**

Acquaintance with compatriots who have returned to the Philippines and with those who still live abroad, leads us to make the following observation: our immigrants to other countries have familiarized and have acquired for themselves a lifestyle of the cities they live: a style in their clothes, their food, their language, etc. We deem it should be so.

When it comes to the language, Filipinos in the Western countries have been influenced by straight and frank style of communication and confrontation. We suppose this is the outcome of free ambiance and democratic spirit.

However, in spirit and at heart, they remain to be sensitive in their embodiment. It is very difficult to inculturate the heart. Frank language, specially during individual or group confrontation, affects the Asian sensitivity. People hurt one another. Hurts prevail in families of immigrants. One observer says that it may take three generations before immigrants will be able to adjust at heart to the surrounding environment and culture.

We invite our readers who are familiar with our compatriot immigrants and check the value and truth of this observation. Maybe they can invent and propose approaches whenever aforesaid actuation prevails.

The article *Message for the 85th World Migration Day*, hopefully, enables the reader to have a glance of the mind of the Pope on how a local church (parish, diocese, etc.) should welcome immigrants in a manner fitting for a community that professes faith and love of Jesus.

## Inter munera Academicarum

JOHN PAUL II

1. Among the tasks of the academies founded over the centuries by the Roman Pontiffs, research in philosophy and theology holds pride of place.

In my recent Encyclical Letter *Fides et ratio*, I put great importance on the dialogue between theology and philosophy and clearly expressed my appreciation of the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas, recognizing its enduring originality (cf. nn. 43-44).

St. Thomas can rightly be called "an apostle of the truth" (n. 44). In fact, the insight of the Angelic Doctor consists in the certainty that there is a basic harmony between faith and reason (cf. n. 43). "It is necessary therefore that the mind of the believer acquire a natural, consistent and true knowledge of created realities —^ the world and man himself — which are also the object of divine Revelation. Still more, reason must be able to articulate this knowledge in concept and argument" (n. 66).

2. At the dawn of the third millenium, many cultural conditions have changed. Very significant progress has been made in

the field of anthropology, but above all substantial changes have occurred in the very way of understanding the human being's condition in relation to God, to other human beings and to all creation. First of all, the greatest challenge of our age comes from a growing separation between faith and reason, between the Gospel and culture. The studies dedicated to this immense area are increasing day by day in the context of the new evangelization. Indeed, the message of salvation encounters many obstacles stemming from erroneous concepts and a serious lack of adequate formation.

3. A century after the promulgation of the Encyclical Letter *Aeterni Patris* of my Predecessor Leo XIII, which marked the beginning of a new development in the renewal of philosophical and theological studies and in the relationship between faith and reason, I would like to give a new impetus to the Pontifical Academies working in this area, in accordance with the thought and tendencies of the present day as well as the pastoral needs of the Church,

Therefore, recognizing the work carried out for centuries by the members of the Pontifical Roman Theological Academy and the Pontifical Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas and the Catholic Religion, I have decided to renew the attached Statutes of these Pontifical Academies, so that with greater effectiveness they can increase their involvement in the philosophical and theological field, in order to further the pastoral mission of the Successor of Peter and of the universal Church.

#### **4. The Pontifical Academy of St Thomas Aquinas.**

*"Doctor Humanitatis"* is the name we give St Thomas Aquinas because he was always ready to receive the values of all cultures (*Address to the Participants in the VIII International Thomistic Congress*, 13 September 1980; *Insegnamenti*, III, 2



[1980] 609). In the cultural conditions of our time, it seems truly appropriate to develop further this part of Thomistic doctrine which deals with humanity, given that his assertions on the dignity of the human person and the use of his reason, in perfect harmony with the faith, make St Thomas a teacher for our time. Human beings, especially in the contemporary world, are concerned with this question: What is man? In employing this epithet, "Doctor Humanitatis", I am following in the footsteps of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council regarding the use of the teaching of Aquinas' writings, both in the philosophical and theological training of priests (Decree *Optatam totius*, n. 16), and in deepening the harmony and agreement between faith and reason in universities (Declaration *Gravissimum educationis*, n. 10).

In my recently published Letter *Fides et ratio*, I wished to recall the enthusiasm of my Predecessor Leo XIII in promulgating the Encyclical Letter which began with the words *Aeterni Patris* (4 August 1879; ASS 11 [1878-1879] 97-115): "The great Pope revisited and developed the First Vatican Council's teaching on the relationship between faith and reason, showing how philosophical thinking contributes in fundamental ways to faith and theological learning. More than a century later, many of the insights of his Encyclical Letter have lost none of their interest from either a practical or pedagogical point of view — most particularly, his insistence upon the incomparable value of the philosophy of St Thomas. A renewed insistence upon the thought of the Angelic Doctor seemed to Pope Leo XIII the best way to recover the practice of a philosophy consonant with the demands of faith" (*Fides et ratio*, n. 57). This truly memorable Letter was entitled *Epistula Encyclica de Philosophia Christiana ad mentem Sancti Thomae Aquinatis Doctoris Angelici in Scholis Catholicis instauranda*.

The same Leo XIII created the Roman Academy of St Thomas Aquinas (Apostolic Letter *Iam pridem ad Em.mum Card. Antoninum*

*De Luca*, 15 October 1879), so that the recommendations of this Encyclical would be put into practice. The following year, delighted with the work begun, he wrote to the Cardinals responsible for the new Academy (Apost. Let., 21 November 1880). Fifteen years later he approved the Statutes and established further norms (Apost. Brief *Quod iam inde*, 9 May 1895). With the Apostolic Letter *In praecipuis laudibus*, 23 January 1904, St Pius X confirmed the Academy's privileges and regulations. The Statutes were amended and completed with the approval of the Roman Pontiffs Benedict XV (11 February 1916) and Pius XI, who on 10 January 1934 combined this Academy with the Pontifical Academy of the Catholic Religion, which, in circumstances that were then different, had been founded in 1801 by Fr Giovanni Fortunato Zamboni. I am pleased to recall Achille Ratti (1882) and especially Giovanni Battista Montini (1922), who, as young priests, obtained their doctorates in Thomistic philosophy at this Roman Academy of St Thomas and were later called to the Supreme Pontificate, taking the names of Pius XI and Paul VI.

To carry out the wishes expressed in my Encyclical Letter, I considered it opportune to revise the Statutes of the Pontifical Academy of St Thomas, in order to make it an effective instrument for the Church and for all humanity. In the cultural circumstances of the present day described above, it seems appropriate, indeed necessary, for this Academy to serve as a central and international *forum* for studying St Thomas' teaching better and more carefully, so that the metaphysical realism of *actus essendi* which pervades all the Angelic Doctor's philosophy and theology can enter into dialogue with the many directions in today's research and doctrine.

Therefore, with knowledge and mature deliberation, and the fullness of my Apostolic authority, by virtue of this Letter I approve *in perpetuum* the Statutes of the Pontifical Academy of St Thomas Aquinas, duly drawn up and newly revised, granting them the force of Apostolic approval.

## 5. The Pontifical Theological Academy.

The Church, teacher of truth, has ceaselessly encouraged the study of theology and seen that both the clergy and faithful, especially those called to the service of theology, have been properly trained. At the beginning of the 18th century, under the auspices of my Predecessor Clement XII, the Theological Academy was founded in Rome as a centre for the sacred disciplines and an enrichment for noble spirits, so that it might serve as a source of abundant fruits for the Catholic cause. Therefore, the above-mentioned Supreme Pontiff, with his Letter of 23 April 1718, canonically established a study centre and endowed it with privileges. Benedict XIII, another of my Predecessors, attended the meetings and activities of this Academy while he was a Cardinal "summa cum animi... iucunditate" (cf. Apost. Let., 6 May 1726), and reflected on "how much splendour and prestige it would bring not only to the beloved city of Rome, but to the whole Christian world, if this same Academy were strengthened with new and more effective support, so that it might be consolidated and make ever greater progress" (cf. *ibid.*). Thus, not only did he approve the Academy which Clement XI had established, but also bestowed his favour and generosity upon it. Therefore, recognizing the satisfying and very abundant fruits produced by the Theological Academy, Clement XIV continued to assist it with no less favour and generosity. This work was taken up and completed by my Predecessor Gregory XVI, who, on 26 October 1838, approved the wisely drafted Statutes with his Apostolic authority. It has now seemed necessary to me to revise these laws so that they may be better suited to the requirements of our time. The principal mission of theology today consists in promoting dialogue between Revelation and the doctrine of the faith, and in offering an ever deeper understanding of it. Graciously acceding to the requests I received to approve these new laws, and desiring that this distinguished study centre continue to grow in stature, therefore, by virtue of this Letter, I approve *in perpetuum* the Statutes of the Pontifical

Theological Academy, duly drawn up and newly revised, granting them the force of Apostolic approval.

6. Everything I have decreed in this Letter given *motu propria* I order to be established and ratified, all things to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given in Rome, at St Peter's, on 28 January, the memorial of St Thomas Aquinas, in the year 1999, the twenty first of my Pontificate.

# Message for the 85th World Migration Day

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JOHN PAUL II

*"The importance of the parish in welcoming the stranger, in integrating baptized persons from different cultures and in dialoguing with believers of other religions stems from the mission of every parish community and its significance within society. This is not an optional, supplementary role for the parish community, but a duty inherent in its task as an institution", the Holy Father said in his Message for the 85th World Migration Day. The Pope stressed that catholicity "is not only expressed in the fraternal communion of the baptized, but also in the hospitality extended to the stranger, whatever his religious belief, in the rejection of all racial exclusion or discrimination, in the recognition of the personal dignity of every man and woman". Here is a translation of the Holy Father's Message, which was written in Italian and dated 2 February.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. The Jubilee which we are rapidly approaching is an extraordinary moment of grace and reconciliation. In a very particular way it also involves the world of migrants, because of the close similarities between their condition and that of believers: "The whole of the Christian life", I wrote in the Apostolic Letter *Tertio millennio adveniente*, "is like a great pilgrimage to the house of the Father" (n. 49). On this World Migration Day, which falls in the third year of preparation for the Jubilee, I would like to

develop several thoughts in the light of this observation, thereby helping to "broaden the horizons of believers, so that they will see things in the perspective of Christ: in the perspective of the 'Father who is in heaven'... from whom the Lord was sent and to whom he has returned" (ibid.).

2. "The land is mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with me" (Lv 25:23). These words of the Lord, recorded in the Book of Leviticus, contain the fundamental reason for the biblical Jubilee, which, for Abraham's descendants, corresponds to their awareness of being guests and pilgrims in the promise land.

The New Testament extends this conviction to every disciple of Christ who, as a citizen of the heavenly homeland and a fellow citizen of the saints (cf. Eph 2:19), has no lasting dwelling-place on this earth and lives as a wanderer (cf. 1 Pt 2:11), constantly seeking a final destination.

These biblical categories have become significant again in the present historical context, which is strongly marked by substantial migratory flows and a growing ethnic and cultural pluralism. They also underscore that the Church, present in every clime, is not identified with any particular race or culture since, as the *Epistle to Diognetus* recalls, Christians "live in their homeland, but as guests; as citizens they participate in all things, but are detached from all things as strangers. Every foreign country is a homeland to them and every homeland a foreign country... They dwell on earth but are citizens of heaven" (5, 1).

By her nature, the Church is in solidarity with the world of migrants who, with their variety of languages, races, cultures and customs, remind her of her own condition as a people on pilgrimage from every part of the earth to their final homeland. This vision helps Christians to reject all nationalistic thinking and to avoid

narrow ideological categories. It reminds them that the Gospel should be incarnated in life in order to become its leaven and soul, also through a constant effort to free it from the cultural incrustations that inhibit its inner dynamism.

3. God reveals himself in the Old Testament as the One who takes the side of the stranger, the side, that is, of the people of Israel enslaved in Egypt. In the New Law he reveals himself in Jesus, born in a stable on the outskirts of town, "because there was no place for them in the inn" (Lk 2:7), and who had nowhere to lay his head throughout his public ministry (cf. Mt 8:20; Lk 9:58). The Cross, the centre of Christian Revelation, is the culminating moment of this radical condition as a stranger: Christ dies "outside the gate" (Heb 13:12), rejected by his own people. However, John the Evangelist recalls Jesus' prophetic words: "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself (12:32), and stresses that precisely by his death he will begin to "gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad" (Jn 11:52). In following the Master's example, the Church too lives as he did in the world with the attitude of a pilgrim, working to create communion, a welcoming home where the dignity conferred by the Creator is recognized in each human being.

4. The ethnic and cultural differences found within the Church could be a source of division or disunity, if she did not have the cohesive strength of charity, a virtue all Christians are invited to practice, particularly during this final year of immediate preparation for the Jubilee. In the Apostolic Letter *Tertio millennio adveniente*, I wrote: "It will therefore be necessary, especially during this year, to emphasize the theological virtue of charity, recalling the significant lapidary words of the First Letter of John: 'God is love' (4:8, 16). Charity, in its twofold reality as love of God and neighbour, is the summing up of the moral life of the believer. It has in God its source and its goal" (n. 50).

"You shall love your neighbour as yourself (Lv 19:18). In the Book of Leviticus this commandment occurs in a series of precepts which forbid injustice. One of them warns: "When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger who sojourns with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God" (19:33-44).

The reason, "for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" which constantly accompanies the command to respect and love the migrant, is not only meant to remind the chosen people of their former condition; it also calls their attention to God's action: on his own initiative he generously delivered them from slavery and freely gave them a land. "You were a slave and God intervened to set you free; you have seen, then, how God treated migrants; you must treat them in the same way": this is the implicit thought underlying the precept.

5. In the New Testament all distinctions between human beings vanish when Christ breaks down the dividing wall between the chosen people and the pagans. "For he", St Paul writes, "is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility" (Eph 2:14). With Christ's paschal mystery there is no near or far, no Jew or pagan, no accepted or rejected.

For the Christian, every human being is a "neighbour" to be loved. He should not ask himself whom he should love, because to ask "who is my neighbour?" is already to set limits and conditions. One day Jesus was asked this question and he responded by turning it around: it is not "and who is my neighbour?", but "to whom should I become a neighbour?" that is the right question. And the answer is: "anyone in need, even if he is a stranger to me, becomes a neighbour I must help". The parable of the Good



Samaritan (cf. Lk 10:30-37) invites everyone to reach out beyond the bounds of justice in the perspective of gratuitous and unlimited love.

For the believer, moreover, charity is God's gift, a charism which, like faith and hope, is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 5:5): as God's gift, it is not Utopian but concrete; it is the Good News, the Gospel.

6. The presence of migrants challenges the responsibility of believers as individuals and as a community. Moreover, the parish is a privileged expression of community. As the Second Vatican Council recalls, the parish "offers aii outstanding example of community apostolate, for it gathers into a unity all the human diversities that are found there and inserts them into the universality of the Church" (*Apostolicam actuositatem*, n. 10). The parish is the place where all the members of the community come together and interact. It makes visible and sociologically identifiable God's plan to call all people to the covenant established in Christ, without any exception or exclusion.

The parish, which etymologically means a house where the guest feels at ease, welcomes all and discriminates against none, for no one there is an outsider. It combines the stability and security people feel in their own home with the movement or transience of those who are passing through. Wherever there is a living sense of parish, differences between locals and strangers fade or disappear in the overriding awareness that all belong to God the one Father.

The importance of the parish in welcoming the stranger, in integrating baptized persons from different cultures and in dialoguing with believers of other religions stems from the mission of every parish community and its significance within society. This is not an optional, supplementary role for the parish community, but a duty inherent in its task as an institution.

Catholicity is not only expressed in the fraternal communion of the baptized, but also in the hospitality extended to the stranger, whatever his religious belief, in the rejection of all racial exclusion or discrimination, in the recognition of the personal dignity of every man and woman and, consequently, in the commitment to furthering their inalienable rights.

Priests, called to be ministers of unity in the parish community, have an important role in this regard. They "are given the grace by God to be the ministers of Jesus Christ among the nations, fulfilling the sacred task of the Gospel, that the oblation of the Gentiles may be made acceptable and sanctified in the Holy Spirit" (*Presbyterorum ordinis*, n. 2).

Priests encounter the mystery of Jesus, who gave his life to gather into one his scattered children, in their daily celebration of the divine sacrifice and are called to devote themselves with ever new zeal to serving the unity of all the children of the one Father in heaven, striving to see that each has his place in fraternal communion.

7. "If we recall that Jesus came to 'preach the Good News to the poor'... how can we fail to lay greater emphasis on the Church's preferential option for the poor and the outcast?" (*Tertio miUennio adveniente*, n. 51). This question, which challenges every Christian community, highlights the praiseworthy efforts of so many parishes in neighbourhoods where phenomena exist such as unemployment, the concentration in inadequate spaces of men and women from different regions, and the degradation connected with poverty, the lack of services and insecurity. Parishes are frequently visible reference-points, easily identifiable and accessible, a sign of hope and brotherhood among the glaring divisions, tensions and outbreaks of violence in society. Listening to the same word of God, celebrating the same liturgies and sharing the same religious

feasts and traditions help Christians of the area and those who are recent immigrants to feel they are all members of the same people.

In an environment which has been leveled and flattened by anonymity, the parish is a place of sharing, fellowship and mutual recognition. Instead of insecurity, it offers a place of trust where we learn to overcome our own fears; in the absence of reference-points from which to draw light and encouragement for living together, it offers a path of brotherhood and reconciliation based on Christ's Gospel. Situated at the centre of a reality marked by precariousness, the parish can become a true sign of hope. By channeling the neighbourhood's best energies, it can help the residents to move beyond a fatalistic vision of poverty to active, joint efforts aimed at changing living conditions.

Many members of parish communities are also actively involved in structures and associations for improving people's living conditions. As I express my deep appreciation of these significant achievements, I urge parish communities to persevere courageously in the work they are doing for migrants, to help promote a quality of life that is worthier of man and of his spiritual vocation.

8. When speaking of migrants, we must take into account the social conditions in their countries of origin. They are nations where people generally live in conditions of great poverty, which the external debt tends to aggravate. In my Apostolic Letter *Tertio millennio adveniente*, I recalled that "in the spirit of the Book of Leviticus (25:8-12), Christians will have to raise their voice on behalf of all the poor of the world, proposing the Jubilee as an appropriate time to give thought, among other things, to reducing substantially, if not canceling outright, the international debt which seriously threatens the future of many nations" (n. 51). This is one of the aspects which most directly link migration with the Jubilee,

not only because migration is more intense in these countries, but especially because the Jubilee, in offering a vision of the earth's goods that condemns the exclusive possession of them (cf. Lv 25:23), leads the believer to open himself to the poor and the stranger.

In the past, the growing gap between rich and poor, which makes social harmony impossible, required that the balance be periodically restored to allow for an orderly renewal of social life. Thus a new form of equality was established by abolishing the mortgage on persons reduced to slavery because of their debts. The ordinances of the biblical Jubilee are one of the many remedies for the social imbalance caused by the perverse spiral ensnaring those who are forced into indebtedness for their own survival.

This phenomenon, which once concerned relations between citizens of the same nation, is made more critical by the current globalization of trade and the economy, involving relations between the world's States and regions. Lest the imbalance between rich and poor nations become irreversible, with tragic consequences for all humanity, the biblical precept must be translated today into concrete and effective forms leading to an appropriate review of the poor countries' indebtedness to wealthy nations.

I hope that the forthcoming Jubilee, as many people wish, will be a fitting occasion to find appropriate solutions and to offer the poor countries new conditions of dignity and orderly development.

9. "The Jubilee can also offer an opportunity for reflecting on other challenges ..., such as the difficulties of dialogue between different cultures" (*Tertio millennio adveniente*, n. 51).

The Christian is called to evangelize by reaching out to people wherever they may be, to meet them with warmth and love, to shoulder their problems, to know and appreciate their culture, to help them overcome prejudices. This concrete form of outreach to so many of our needy brothers and sisters will prepare them to encounter the light of the Gospel and, by forging bonds of sincere esteem and friendship, will lead them to ask: "we wish to see Jesus" (Jn 12:21). Dialogue is essential for a peaceful and productive society.

In view of the ever more pressing challenges of indifferentism and secularization, the Jubilee requires that this dialogue be intensified. In their everyday relationships, believers are called to show the face of a Church which is open to everyone, attentive to social realities and to whatever enables the human person to affirm his dignity. In particular, Christians, conscious of the heavenly Father's love, will heighten their concern for migrants, in order to develop a sincere and respectful dialogue aimed at building the "civilization of love".

Against this vast horizon of commitments, may believers always keep their gaze fixed on Blessed Mary, "who accompanies the Church with her motherly love and protects her on her journey homeward until the glorious day of the Lord" (*Roman Missal*, Italian edition, Preface of the Blessed Virgin Mary III)!

With these hopes, I affectionately impart my Blessings to all.

From the Vatican, 2 February 1999.

# **Regulations for Doctrinal Examination**

## **CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH**

*Art. 1.* The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has the function of promoting and safeguarding doctrine on faith and morals throughout the Catholic world.<sup>1</sup> In accomplishing this purpose, it renders a service to the truth, by protecting the right of the People of God to receive the Gospel message in its purity and entirety. Therefore, in order that faith and morals not be harmed by errors however disseminated, it also has the duty of examining writings and opinions which appear contrary to correct faith or dangerous.<sup>2</sup>

*Art. 2.* This fundamental pastoral responsibility concerns all the pastors of the Church, who have the duty and the right to exercise vigilance, whether individually or gathered in particular Councils or Episcopal Conferences, in order that the faith and morals of the members of the faithful entrusted to their care not suffer harm.<sup>3</sup> To this end, they can also be served by Doctrinal

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ap. Const. *Pastor Bonus*, art. 48: *MS* 80 (1988) 873,

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, art. 51, 2° and *Regolamento proprio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede*, art. 4b).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *CIC*, can. 823, §§1-2; *CCEO*, can. 652, §2.

Commissions, institutionalized consultative bodies which assist Episcopal Conferences and individual Bishops in their solicitude for the doctrine of the faith.<sup>4</sup> The principle remains, however, that the Holy See can always intervene and, as a rule, does so when the influence of a publication exceeds the boundaries of an individual Episcopal Conference, or when the danger to the faith is particularly grave.<sup>5</sup> In such cases, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith uses the following procedures:

## **I. Preliminary Examination**

*Art. 3.* The indicated writings or teachings, in whatever way they are disseminated, are given attention by the competent Office, which submits them to the examination of the *Congresso*. \* After a preliminary evaluation of the gravity of the question, the *Congresso* decides whether or not to undertake a study by the Office.

## **H. Office Study**

*Art. 4.* Once the authenticity of the writing has been verified, it is carefully examined with the collaboration of one or more Consultants, or other experts in the particular area.<sup>6</sup>

*Art. 5.* The outcome of this examination is then presented to the *Congresso*, which decides whether this is sufficient for an intervention with the local authorities, or whether the examination

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Letter on Doctrinal Commissions*, 23 November 1990, n. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ap. Const. *Pastor Bonus*, art. 48: AAS 80 (1988) 873.

\* The *Congresso* is the weekly meeting of the Superiors and Officials of the Congregation.

\* Cf. *Regolamento propria della Congregazione per la Dottrina delta Fede*, art. 74.

needs to proceed further by one of two established procedures: ordinary examination or examination in cases of urgency.<sup>7</sup>

*Art. 6.* The criteria for this decision are the potential errors which have been noted, taking into consideration their prominence, seriousness, dissemination, influence and the danger of harm to the faithful.

*Art. 7.* Should the *Congresso* judge that the study undertaken was sufficient, it can entrust the case directly to the author's Ordinary<sup>8</sup> and, through him, bring the doctrinal problems presented in the text to the author's attention. In such a case, the Ordinary is invited to deepen the study of the question and ask the author to provide the needed clarifications for submission to the judgement of the Congregation.

### **III. Ordinary Procedure of Examination**

*Art. 8.* An ordinary examination is used when a writing appears to contain grave doctrinal error, the identification of which requires attentive discernment, and the possible negative influence on the faithful does not seem to involve particular urgency. The examination is structured in two phases: an internal phase of preliminary investigation undertaken within the Congregation<sup>9</sup> and an external phase involving the presentation of objections to the author and subsequent dialogue.<sup>10</sup>

*Art. 9.* The *Congresso* designates two or more experts who examine the text in question, give their opinions, and evaluate whether it is in conformity with the doctrine of the Church.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, art. 66, §2.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *CIC*, cann. 134, §§1 and 2; 295, §1; *CCEO*, can. 984, §§1-3.

\* Cf. nn. 8-15.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. nn. 16-22.



*Art. 10.* The same *Congresso* appoints a *relator pro auctore*, who has the task of illustrating, in a spirit of truth, the positive aspects of the teaching and the merits of the author, of cooperating in the authentic interpretation of his thought within the overall theological context, and of expressing a judgement regarding the influence of the author's opinions. For this purpose, the *relator pro auctore* has the right to examine all the acts relative to the case.

*Art. 11.* The Office Report, which contains all the information relevant to the examination of the case (including the antecedent elements), the opinions of the experts and the presentation of the *relator pro auctore*, is distributed to those who will take in the *Consulta*.\*\*

*Art. 12.* The experts who had submitted opinions on the text can also be invited to participate in the *Consulta*, in addition to the Consultors themselves, the *relator pro auctore* and the author's Ordinary (who cannot be substituted by another and is bound to secrecy).<sup>11</sup> The discussion begins with an exposition by the *relator pro auctore*, who makes a comprehensive presentation of the case. After him, the author's Ordinary, the experts, and each of the Consultors express their own opinion, orally and in writing, on the content of the text under examination. The *relator pro auctore* and the experts may respond to the observations and offer clarifications.

*Art. 13.* When the discussion has finished, the Consultors alone remain in the room for the general vote on the outcome of the examination, aimed at determining whether doctrinal errors or

\*\* The *Consulta* is the regular meeting of the Consultors of the Congregation presided over by the Secretary.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Ap. Const. *Pastor Bonus*, art. 12: *MS* 80 (1988) 855.

dangerous opinions have been found in the text, and specifically identifying these in light of the different categories of truth-propositions found in the *Professio fidei*.<sup>12</sup>

*Art. 14.* The entire file, including the minutes of the discussion, the general vote and the opinions of the Consultors, is submitted to the examination of the *Sessione Ordinaria*\*\*\* of the Congregation, which decides whether to present objections to the author and, if so, on which points.

*Art. 15.* The decisions of the *Sessione Ordinaria* are submitted to the consideration of the Supreme Pontiff.<sup>13</sup>

*Art. 16.* If, in the prior phase, it was decided to proceed to a presentation of objections, the author's Ordinary or other concerned Ordinaries, as well as the competent Dicasteries of the Holy See, are informed.

*Art. 17.* The list of erroneous or dangerous propositions at issue, together with an explanatory argumentation and the documentation (*reticito nomine*) necessary for the defence, are communicated through the Ordinary to the author and his advisor, whom the author has the right to nominate, with the approval of the aforementioned Ordinary, to assist him. The author must present a written response within three canonical months. It is appropriate that, together with the author's written response, the Ordinary also forward his own opinion to the Congregation.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. AAS 81 (1989) 104ff.

\*\*\* The *Sessione Ordinaria* is the regular meeting of the Members of the Congregation presided over by the Cardinal Prefect.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *Regolamento proprio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede*, art. 16, §2 and art. 77.

*Art. 18.* The possibility is also foreseen of a personal meeting between the author, assisted by his advisor (who takes an active part in the discussion), and delegates of the Congregation. In this eventuality, the Congregation's delegates, who are appointed by the *Congresso*, are to keep minutes of the meeting, the text of which is to be signed by them, by the author and by his advisor.

*Art. 19.* Should the author not send the written response, as is always requested, the *Sessione Ordinaria* of the Congregation takes the appropriate decisions.

*Art. 20.* The *Congresso* examines the written response of the author as well as the minutes of any meeting that has taken place. If this examination reveals truly new doctrinal elements requiring further evaluation, it is then decided whether the question should again be presented to the *Consulta*, which may be expanded to include additional experts, among these the author's advisor, appointed in accordance with art. 17. Otherwise, the written response of the author and the minutes of any meeting are submitted directly to the judgement of the *Sessione Ordinaria*.

*Art. 21.* If the *Sessione Ordinaria* decides that the question has been resolved positively and that the response is sufficient, the process does not go further. Should this not be the case, adequate measures are then taken, also for the good of the faithful. Moreover, the *Sessione Ordinaria* decides whether and in what way the results of the examination are to be made public.

*Art. 22.* The decisions of the *Sessione Ordinaria* are submitted for the approval of the Supreme Pontiff and then communicated to the author's Ordinary, to the Episcopal Conference and to concerned Dicasteries.

#### IV. Examination in Cases of Urgency

*Art. 23.* An urgent examination is employed when the writing is clearly and certainly erroneous and, at the same time, its dissemination could cause or already has caused grave harm to the faithful. In this case, the Ordinary of the concerned Ordinaries an\* immediately informed, together with the competent Dicasteries of the Holy See.

*Art. 24.* The *Congresso* appoints a Commission which is especially entrusted with promptly determining the erroneous or dangerous propositions.

*Art. 25.* The propositions identified by the Commission, together with the relative documentation, are submitted to the *Sessione Ordinaria*, which will give priority to the examination of the question.

*Art. 26.* If the *Sessione Ordinaria* judges that the above-mentioned propositions are in fact erroneous and dangerous, after the approval of the Holy Father, they are transmitted to the author, through his Ordinary, with the request that they be corrected within two canonical months.

*Art. 27.* If the Ordinary, having heard the author, believes it is necessary to ask him also for a written explanation, this text must be forwarded to the Congregation together with the opinion of the Ordinary. Such an explanation is then presented to the *Sessione Ordinaria* for the appropriate decisions.

#### V. Disciplinary Measures

*Art. 28.* If the author has not corrected the indicated errors in a satisfactory way and with adequate publicity, and the *Sessione*

*Ordinaria* has concluded that he has committed the offence of heresy, apostasy or schism,<sup>14</sup> the Congregation proceeds to declare the *latae sententiae* penalties incurred;<sup>15</sup> against such a declaration no recourse is admitted.

*Art. 29.* If the *Sessione Ordinaria* ascertains the existence of doctrinal errors which do not involve *latae sententiae* penalties,<sup>16</sup> the Congregation proceeds according to the norm of law, whether universal<sup>17</sup> or proper to the Congregation.<sup>18</sup>

**The Sovereign Pontiff John Paul II, at the Audience granted to the undersigned Cardinal Prefect on 30 May 1997, confirmed these Regulations, adopted in the *Sessione Ordinaria* of this Congregation, approving at the same time *in forma specifica* articles 28-29, *contrariis quibus Ubi non obstannbus*, and ordered their publication.**

Rome, from the Offices of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 29 June 1997, the Solemnity of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.

**\* Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger**  
*Prefect*

**STarcisio Bertone, S.D.B.**  
*Archbishop emeritus of Vercelli*  
*Secretary*

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *CIC*, can. 751.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *CIC*, can. 1364. §1; *CCEO*, cann. 1436, §1 and 1437.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *CIC*, 752; *CCEO*, can. 599.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *CIC*, can. 1371, n. 1; *CCEO*, can. 1436, §2.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Ap. Const. *Pastor Bonus*, art. 52: *MS* 80 (1988) 874.

## ***DOCUMENTATION***

# **New Bishops of the Philippines: Most Rev. Joel Z. Baylon Most Rev. Angelito R. Lampon**

**CBCP**

**MOST REV. JOEL ZAMUDIO BAYLON, D.D.**

### **Curriculum Vitae**

Name	: JOEL ZAMUDIO BAYLON
Home Residence	: POLANGUI, ALBAY
Parents	: VICENTE BAYLON, SR. (+) NATIVITAS ZAMUDIO (Eldest of 10 children)
Date of Birth	: 29 JANUARY 1954 (44 YEARS OLD)
Place of Birth	: MILAOR, CAMARINES SUR
Priestly Ordination	: 18 OCTOBER 1978 (19 years in the priesthood)
Investiture	: 29 JUNE 1994 (Papal Chaplain)
Studies:	
Grade School	: ST. PETER'S ACADEMY (1959-1965) Polangui, Albay
High School	: ST GREGORY THE GREAT SEMINARY (1966-1970) Panal, Tabaco, Albay
College	: VIANNEY HALL (formation residence) (1970-1975) Cathedral Rectory, Legazpi City DIVINE WORD COLLEGE (studies) Legazpi City

Theologate	I TAHANAN NG MABUTING PASTOL (1975-1979) (formation residence) Tagaytay City DIVINE WORD SEMINARY (studies)
Further Studies:	INSTITUTE OF FORMATIVE SPIRITUALITY Duquesne University (1983-1984) Pittsburgh, PA, USA (Earning an M.A. Degree in Formative Spirituality)
Assignments:	
1979-1983	INSTRUCTOR-SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR St. Gregory the Great Seminary Panal, Tabaco, Albay
1985-1988	PROFESSOR-SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR Holy Rosary Major Seminary Concepcion Heights, Naga City
1988-1990	ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL Catholic Bishop's Conference of the Phil. Intramuros, Manila
1991-1995	SECRETARY TO THE NUNCIO Apostolic Nunciature Taft Avenue, Manila
1995-present	PASTOR St. Vincent Ferrer Parish Bigaa, Legazpi City DIOCESAN FAMILY LIFE COMMISSION DIRECTOR Diocese of Legazpi BETHLEHEM INTER-DIOCESAN PASTORAL CENTER DIRECTOR Sogod, Bacacay, Albay DIOCESAN BEC COMMISSION CHAIRMAN Diocese of Legazpi
February 14, 1998	Appointed Bishop of Masbate
March 25, 1998	Ordained Bishop of the Diocese of Masbate
April 2, 1998	Canonically Installed as Second Bishop of Masbate

## Pontifical Bull

**Joannes Paulus Episcopus Servus Servorum Dei** dilecto Filio **Joeli Baylon**, presbytero diocesis Legazpiensis parchoque item in loco Bigaa, ad Antistitis Masbatensis officium ac ministerium destinato, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Cum gubernandae munus ecclesiae Masbatensis Venerabilis Frater deposuisset Porphyrius Iligan, carissimum suum gregem quern triginta ferme adsiduus sedulusque curaverat annos notissimo suo destituit pastore. Ne vero eiusdem sedis vacatio diuturnior aliquid eidem communitati inferat spiritalis pastoralisve detrimenti, nihil dubitamus hodie apta capere consilia quibus illi consulatur necessitati. Ad te vero, dilecte Fili, maxima convertimur cum fiducia quippe qui necessarias animi sacerdotalis in te comprobaveris virtutes ingenique ad hanc rem dotes variis procurandis pro Ecclesia Dei gravioris apostolatus officiis. De consilio itaque Congregationis pro Episcopis auctoritate Nos usi potestate rite temet constituimus Episcopum **Masbatensem**, cui una concedimus iura et privilegia omnia, cui una iniungimus obligationes quae cum Episcopi in Ecclesia statione necnon Ordinarii loci administratione secundum sacros canones coniunguntur. Cum singula emiseris iuramenta legibus praescripta, episcopalem percipies ordinationem ad regulas liturgicas extra Romanam Urbem. Consentaneo praeterea modo docebis clerum ac populum Masbatensem Nostra voluntate missum te esse ad eos spiritalem ipsorum in posterum ducem et magistrum. Dum amatos illos filios filiasque hortamur ut benevolentissimi te complectantur pastorem suum, graviter item te, dilecte Fili, in Christo monemus ut omnes tuas spectatas virtutes et dotes in quam amantissimam gregis Masbatensis procuracionem conferas diligentissimamque aedificationem, uni semper omnipotenti Deo confisus qui pro viribus operantem te numquam deseret cotidieque suprema postulantem adiumenta. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die decimo quarto mensis Februarii, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo nonagesimo octavo, Pontificatus Nostri vicesimo.





MOST REV. JOEL Z. BAYLON, D.D.



MOST REV. ANGELITO RENDON LAMPON, OMI, DD

**MOST REVEREND ANGELITO RENDON LAMPON, OMI, DD**  
**FIFTH APOSTOLIC VICAR OF SULU AND TAWITAWI**

**Curriculum Vitae**

DATE OF BIRTH	<i>t</i>	March 01, 1950
PLACE OF BIRTH	<i>i</i>	Mlang, Cotabato
Father's Name	:	Cludo Lampon (Deceased)
Mother's Name	:	Pelagia Rendon (Deceased)

- Youngest in the brood of nine. (Five sisters and Three brothers)
- Entered the **OMI JUNIORATE SEMINARY** at Notre Dame University, Cotabato City on July 1966 and the **NOVITIATE** at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Novitiate, Tamontaka, Maguindanao on May 21, 1968. He received his **FIRST VOWS** as **an OBLATE** on June 15, 1969. Completed his Philosophy Studies at the Ateneo de Manila University in 1972 and obtained his degree in Theology from the Loyola School of Theology in 1977.
- He received his **PERPETUAL VOWS** on June 01, 1975, **DIACONATE** on November 04, 1976, Manila Cathedral by Archbishop Oscar V. Cruz, DD and was **ORDAINED TO THE PRIESTHOOD** on March 26, 1977, Mlang, Cotabato (Kidapawan Diocese) by Bishop Federico O. Escaler, SJ, DD.
- April 1977 took over Queenship of Mary Parish, Salaman, Lebak, Sultan Kudarat and became the OIC of Notre Dame Salaman for six months.
- November 1977 as Assistant Parish Priest of the Our Lady of Immaculate Conception Cathedral, Cotabato City.
- May 1978, Bursar and Spiritual Director at the OMI Juniorate.
- Summer 1981 went to Summer Institute of Spirituality (SIS) at Mother of Life in Novaliches then proceeded with the nine month course at Southeast Asian Interdisciplinary Institute (SAIDI) in Intramuros, Manila.

1982, After SAIDI, In-charge of the Postulancy Program for Young Professionals as well as Director of Scholastics in Philosophy in Tamontaka. While in the job, appointed as District Superior of Cotabato in 1985 until 1988, prior to the appointment as Provincial of the OMI Philippine Province.

1988 to September 1992, Provincial Superior of the OMI Philippine Province.

September 1992, elected member of the OMI General Administration as General Councilor for the Asia-Oceania region (Australia, Bangladesh, Hongkong, India, Indonesia, Japan and Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand) which should end September 1998.

December 08, 1997, appointed as the FIFTH BISHOP OF THE APOSTOLIC VICARIATE OF SULU AND TAWI-TAWI by Pope John Paul II.

January 06, 1998, EPISCOPAL ORDINATION as the FIFTH Apostolic Vicar of Sulu and Tawi-Tawi at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

February 17, 1998, INSTALLATION AND THANKSGIVING MASS as the Fifth Apostolic Vicar of Sulu and Tawi-Tawi at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Cathedral, Jolo.

## Pontifical Bull

**Joannes Paulus Episcopus Servus Servorum Dei** dilecto Filio **Angelo Lampon**, Congregationis Missionariorum Oblatorum B.M.V Immaculatae solidali, Vicario Apostolico Joloensi constitute atque Episcopo titulo insignito Vallispostano salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Omnes per terrarum orbem disseminatae Ecclesiae ob oculos Nostros usque versantur, quibus attentam curam et stadium convertimus opem laturo. Nunc potissimum de Joloensi Vicariatu Apostolico cogitamus, quern desertum a Pastore scimus, postquam de hoc mundo discessit Venerabilis Frater Beniaminus de Jesus. Ad te, dilecte Fili, fidenti sane animo decurrimus, quern prorsus parem iudicamus muneri illi sustinendo et magno cum cliristianorum emolumento explendo. Te namque apostolico usu ac pastoralis labore instructum congruisque virtutibus ornatum putamus et censemus bonum Pastoris opus efficaciter acturum. Itaque, consilium excipientes Congregationis pro Gentium Evangelizatione, Apostolica Nostra pro auctoritate, te renuntiamus Vicarium Apostolicum Joloensem, titulum addentes **Vallispostanum**, cunctis adiunctis iuribus et officiis impositis quae tibi sacrorum canonum praescripta tribuunt. Insigne benevolentiae Nostrae veluti documentum, Sollemnitate occurrente Epiphaniae Domini, Nos Ipsi episcopalem consecrationem tibi conferemus. Sed antea fidei professionem facias oportet necnon fidelitatis ius iurandum nuncupes in Nos et Successores Nostros, secundum statutas formulas, quas sigillo munitas riteque subsignatas ad Congregationem pro Gentium Evangelizatione mittendas curabis. Ceterum, dilecte Fili, tua ex religiosa familia solidam adeptus es disciplinam et Evangelii nuntiandi fervorem. His igitur locupletatus rebus, operam tuam et virtutes in magni ponderis munus sollicito posthac conferre festinabis, unde communitas haec ecclesialis mature adolescat uberesque fundat fructus. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die primo et vicesimo mensis Novembris, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo nonagesimo septimo, Pontificatus Nostri vicesimo.

# **Filipino Values, Christian Virtues**

**JAIME CARD. SIN, DD**

Circular No. 98-53  
24 July 1998

I am worried about our country. I know that I am not alone in this. Many of our respectable friends in the Church, in business and in the private sector have expressed to me their apprehension about what is going on in the country. I agree that it is too soon to judge matters. I also believe that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. A stitch in time saves nine.

I am worried about the ease that accompanies our dealing with the former plunderers of our nation. Money is not the end of everything. Friendship and *utang na hob* cannot be the sole criteria for our decisions and actions. There are more important things than money. There are higher values than friendship. Truth, justice, and integrity are values that should rule supreme. We may have the money to satisfy our stomachs. We may have a few select friends to sing praises for us now, but what about the values of fair play and honesty? What about the values of discipline and hard work? Love without justice is weakness. Mercy without discipline is frailty. It is a liability. It is a defect.

I am worried about the values that we are transmitting to our youth and children. Has our nation become so poor in spiritual and moral values that we want people of doubtful character to take on positions of leadership? Leaders are not only executives and decision makers. Leaders are also essentially models. Is integrity and uprightness being sacrificed for friendship and gratitude? I am worried. Our children and youth are confused.

It is too soon to judge. However, I believe it is not too early to remind one another that values are values and we need to safeguard them.

I am praying that our worries may be proven unfounded soon. Let us not lose the values of hardwork, honesty, integrity, morality and justice. These values are what our heroes died for. These values are what our children are looking for.

# **Some Guidelines on the Sacrament of Confirmation**

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JAIME CARD. SIN, DD

Circular No. 98-52  
22 July 1998

Due to several inquiries received with regard to the Sacrament of Confirmation, I have deemed it necessary to circularize and clarify certain provisions of the Code of Canon Law and clarify some of our Archdiocesan policies,

1. **On the Place of Confirmation:** Canon 881 states that it is desirable that the sacrament of confirmation be celebrated in a church and indeed during Mass. Confirmation is one of the sacraments of initiation. The confirmer is being enriched by the gift of the Holy Spirit and is being more closely linked to the Church. Thus, this identification with the Church must be kept and for this reason, I encourage schools to hold confirmations in the parish churches where they are geographically located. Only for a just and reasonable cause, may it be celebrated apart from mass and in a fitting place.
2. **On the Proof and Registration of Confirmation:** Proof of Confirmation has the same requirement as of baptism. If there



is no conflict of interest, it is sufficient to have either one unexceptionable witness or if the baptism was conferred upon an adult, the sworn testimony of the confirmed person is enough (cf: Canon 876). However, an authentic confirmation certificate issued by the parish (where the confirmation was registered) is highly preferred.

3. **The Confirmation Register:** Another reason why it is important to coordinate with the parish regarding confirmation is because of Canon 895: "The names of those confirmed, the minister, the parents, the sponsor and the place and date of confirmation are to be recorded in the confirmation register of the diocesan curia or in the register to be kept in the parochial archive. The PARISH PRIEST (where the confirmation took place) MUST NOTIFY THE PARISH PRIEST of the place of baptism that the confirmation was conferred, so that it can be recorded in the baptismal register in accordance with Canon 535 § 2. I am directing the parish priests to see to it that before any confirmation is to take place in their parish, all documents are in proper order. Heads of school from which due to a very special reason, permission has been granted to hold a confirmation in their chapels, are bound to properly coordinate with the parish priest. Those schools or other institutions which have held confirmations in their chapels or other premises are requested to forward their respective parishes the lists and the corresponding data of those confirmed, if they have not yet done so, for registration. All confirmation certificates are to be issued from the parish of the place of confirmation with the book number, page number and line number indicated in the confirmation certificate together with the signature of the parish priest or parochial vicar and the seal of the parish.

### **On the Persons to be Confirmed:**

- a) Canon 899 states that only non-confirmed persons are capable of receiving confirmation. Those tasked with preparing for the confirmation of the baptized persons are to check the baptismal certificates and assess if they were validly baptized.
- b) Parents, pastors and parish priests are to see to it that the faithful are properly instructed to receive the sacrament and come to it at the opportune time (Canon 890).
- c) The age of discretion of confirmation unless in danger of death or grave reasons shall be according to the Manila Synod of 1979: 1) "Confirmation of children to whom religious instruction is imparted only in schools, particularly through catechesis in public or non-sectarian schools, should be more conveniently administered some time before their graduation from elementary school, instead of at the age of seven as allowed in the Philippines" (4th Manila Synod, 67, 2) and 2) "Out-of-school children may receive Confirmation around the age of twelve, after the proper preparation" (4th Manila Synod, 67, 3).

### **On the Minister of Confirmation:**

- a) For ordinary circumstances, the Ordinary Minister of Confirmation is a Bishop. In the Archdiocese of Manila, my humble self and our Auxiliary Bishops may be requested to confirm: Most Rev. Teodoro Buhain, Jr., Most Rev. Teodoro Bacani, Jr., Most Rev. Crisostomo Yalung, Most Rev. Jesse Mercado and Most Rev. Leoncio Lat (cf: Canon 884 § 1).

- b| All Vicars General can also confirm in ordinary situations: Msgr. Jose Abriol, Msgr. Josefino Ramirez and Msgr. Socrates Villegas (Cf: Canon 884 § 1).
- c) I have also given a special delegation to the following Episcopal Vicars who have faculty to administer confirmation in ordinary situations: Msgr. Marcelino Montemayor, Msgr. Francisco Tantoco, Jr. And Msgr. Clemente Ignacio (cf: Canon 884 § 1).
- d) In cases where parishioners preparing for marriage in their parishes have not been confirmed, I have delegated parish priests to confirm such specific cases provided that all provisions of the code with regard to the celebration of the sacrament of confirmation are followed (Canon 879-896).
- ej In cases of adult baptism, the priest who baptizes can administer the Sacrament of Confirmation on the adult, provided that all provisions with regard to the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation are followed (Canon 883 § 2, 880-881).
- f) In danger of death, any priest may confirm (Canon 883 § 3).

Hoping that the above may clarify your questions about our Archdiocesan practices.

# **International Interfaith Conference on the Family\***

**CBCP-ECFL**

## **THE MANILA DECLARATION ON THE FAMILY**

### **A. THE FAMILY IN A CULTURE OF DEATH**

We the delegates to this International Interfaith Conference on the Family, while professing different faiths, are united in our belief that God calls everyone to work for the family as the center of human development.

A global crisis confronts the family. The 'culture of death' has become the most serious threat to the development of the human person and the family. This is characterized by:

- attempts to replace the traditional or natural family with new "family forms;"

\* Adopted at the International Interfaith Conference on the Family in Manila on the 28th day of March 1999. Philippine International Conference Center, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City, Metro Manila.

- attempts to propose new gender forms to include homosexuals, lesbians, and so-called transsexuals, and same sex "marriage;"
- introduction of the most violent forms of population control such as sterilization, abortion and euthanasia;
- the downgrading of motherhood in the name of "women's rights;"
- the rejection and denial of ethical and moral considerations in favor of the economic in resolving family-related issues.

We recognize that the real problem of the world is not "overpopulation" but rather "depopulation," which has become irreversible in many rich countries. Nevertheless, pursuing their long-held position, powerful global forces continue to shout "population explosion" and to prescribe as a cure to poverty the same failed policies that have brought about a sterile and shrinking population in all those rich countries.

These failed policies have brought about a pervasive climate of materialism, hedonism, sexual permissiveness, moral and religious indifferentism, which have in turn brought about, among others, *large and* increasing numbers of divorce, broken homes adulterous unions, illegitimate or single-parent children, teenage pregnancies, teenage suicide, child abuse, and widespread use of illegal and dangerous substances.

We cannot remain idle and passive. We must address this global emergency promptly adequately with appropriate actions and policies.

## **B. THE FAMILY IN NEED OF A CULTURE OF LIFE**

United in faith in the one loving and merciful God, we the delegates affirm the supreme value of life in every human person. At the center of each person's development is the family. Amidst

the various influences that confronts the family, we must promote a culture of life. We hereby declare that:

- 1) The family is the first and most important unit of society and the primary resource of every nation. As such, it is sacred and inviolate. It is based on the marriage of one man and one woman, open to the transmission of human life and dedicated to the rearing and education of children;
- 2) The family precedes the State and any social institution, political and economic organizations and other man-made constructions. It enjoys a plenitude and primary of rights which no political authority, national or global, may suppress, supersede or abridge;
- 3) Family life thrives on the core values of marriage, the rearing and education of children, caring for the sick, the disabled and the elderly;
- 4) The State should give full encouragement protection and support in the promotion of family life. It should guarantee to every head of the family a living wage or an adequate source of livelihood for the entire family;
- 5) As we enter into the next century, developed countries should be concerned more with the rapid and increasing depopulation of the North rather than the normal population growth of developing countries which provide adequate supply of qualified manpower for human development. The vast resources used to fund programs in developing countries could be directed more meaningfully and productively to provide homes, education, training, jobs and health care for the homeless and the jobless;

- 6) The United Nations Organization which was originally founded to unite the family of nations should work out its programs for the promotion and development of the family, which is the basic unit of any nation. UN members need to review the legislative procedures being implemented especially those affecting human life, marriage, the family and other related issues.

### **C, FAMILIES, ARISE AND MOVE ONE**

We raise our voices for the family. And in God, and with God, we need to rise and move up together as one big family. We ask that our call be heard and needed:

- 1) We call on the leaders of the developed countries to respect the cultures and traditions of the developing countries, particularly in the area of the family, marriage, sex education and population policy. We call on the UN to harness its resources for this end.
- 2) We call on the government leaders of developing nations to promote family life through legislations that promote the well being and development of their peoples, and not simply enhance the economic and political positions of their governments.
- 3) We call on all the families of the world to join hands and work together in creating appropriate legal structures to counteract forces destructive to family life and marriage and enhance its authentic development and growth. Every member of the family has a significant role to play; one voice alone can make a difference if it is in the service of truth.

As delegates to this conference, we commit ourselves to the effort to achieve the goal of authentic human development for the family, wholeheartedly and without any reservations.



## **Servant of God for the Church of Capiz**

VICENTE HILATA, P.A.

Today, May 27, 1999, His Excellency, **Most Rev. Onesimo C. Gordoncillo, DD, Archbishop of Capiz**, celebrates his Episcopal Silver Jubilee. He is now 25 years as a bishop of the Catholic Church.

Together with him, as one Church we proudly demonstrate our happiness. As one ecclesial family we proclaim our jubilation and thanksgiving.

At this moment, on my part, as a grateful son I rise to salute my spiritual father. I stand to declare my admiration and my appreciation. I speak to express my love and my devotion.

A brief historical record tells us that Onesimo Cadiz Gordoncillo was appointed titular bishop of Gunugo and Auxiliary Bishop of Dumaguete, Negros Oriental, on March 14, 1974. HE WAS ORDAINED BISHOP ON MAY 27, 1974. After two years as an Auxiliary of Dumaguete, he was appointed Bishop of Tagbilaran, Bohol, on July 3, 1976. Ten years later, he was appointed Archbishop of Capiz on June 18, 1986. Then, on August 27, 1986, he was installed Archbishop of Capiz.

My role this morning is not to tell the bishop what to do. I cannot give consent to this temptation. Or I will be guilty of presumption. And, no less, insubordination! I rather believe that my privileged portion is only to tell about what the bishop has done, and also to tell about who the bishop is to me and all of us, his children.

For almost thirteen years now, and more than one half of his twenty-five years as a bishop, Onesimo Cadiz Gordoncillo has served the faithful of Capiz in his office and capacity as a spiritual servant-leader. He has unselfishly shared the fullness of his priesthood with all of us. We are the most fortunate. We are the most grateful. This is the reason for the seven days of testimonial and prayerful celebrations in his honor. Everybody likes to remember him; the seminarians and the priests, the religious sisters, the faithful of our basic ecclesial communities and the religious organizations, the civil government officials, the PNP, the military, the schools, the youth, the poor. Everybody loves him. Very dearly, we hold our Archbishop closest to our hearts.

I continue to reflect with the inspiration of our liturgical readings. Their importance is not at all a matter of chance or a matter of random choice. These scriptural passages are very closely identified with the life and mission of our celebrant. They are intimately linked with the person of our jubilarian. They speak appropriately of the man who deserves our honor and our respect.

Isaiah the prophet (Is. 61:1-3) portrays a beautiful image assumed by the very person of Archbishop Gordoncillo himself. There is no doubt that he is an *"anointed"* of the Lord. He lives out this dignity as a faithful son of GOD, as a faithful priest, as a faithful bishop. Archbishop Gordoncillo has been bringing, proclaiming, announcing *"favors"* from the Lord for the benefit of the people. *"In season and out of season"*, he continues to

present the message of Christ. Unafraid, he echoes a definitive voice - the principle of his priestly episcopal mandate; "**VERITATEM TUAM ANNUNTIABO... I SHALL PROCLAIM YOUR TRUTH!**" In the announcement of his motto, Archbishop Gordoncillo does not only walk behind the shadows of his scholastic mentor, St. Thomas Aquinas. He truly follows the footsteps of his priestly master, the Lord Jesus Christ. Rightly, then, in the words of Paul VI in his apostolic letter "*Lumen Ecclesiae*", like the angelic doctor, Archbishop Gordoncillo also deserves to be called an "*apostle of truth*". (*Fides et Ratio*, 44, par. 3).

Our Archbishop is named **ONESIMO**. What an interesting name. I imagine this is an appropriate biblical portrayal of his parents' and family's devotion and faith. And so we give corresponding attention to the Letter of St. Paul to Philemon (4-18). This is now being eloquently illustrated in his Coat of Arms by a "*Crown of Chains*"\*. Henceforth, it is to be known that the "*chain*" stands for "*Onesimus*", a former slave of Philemon. St. Paul writes: "At one time he was of no use to you, but now he is useful both to you and to me" (Phil. 10:13). Onesimus became the bearer of St. Paul's letter to the Colossians. In a manner of speaking, Onesimus became a "*vinculum*" - a **BOND** of love to the first Christians (Col. 2:22). The "*crown of chains*" then depicts the **ZEAL** with which Archbishop Onesimo Gordoncillo would like to manifest to all those whom he intends to serve. His vocation, like any other committed apostles of Jesus Christ, is **LOVE**.

We are grateful and we are proud that Onesimo Cadiz Gordoncillo was sent to the Church of Capiz. Without any equivocation, we now say that Onesimo Cadiz Gordoncillo is truly a "*useful*" servant of the Church. In the words also of St. Peter, he is really a "*slave of GOD*" for the people entrusted to his pastoral care. (Peter 2:16).

Yes, the vocation of Onesimo, our Archbishop, like any other committed apostles of Jesus Christ, is *LOVE*. And this is portrayed in the Gospel of St. John with a precise and vivid description of the Good Shepherd. "The sheep hear his voice as he calls his own by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all those that are his, he walks in front of them, and the sheep follow him because they recognize his voice" (Jn. 10: 3-4),

On this occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> Episcopal Anniversary of Archbishop Gordoncillo, I believe the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, is complementing him with paternal words on the identity of his own priesthood in the fullness of his episcopal mandate. "In the Church and on behalf of the Church, priests are a sacramental representation of Jesus Christ, the Head and Shepherd, authoritatively proclaiming his words, repeating his acts of forgiveness and his offer of salvation, particularly in Baptism, Penance and the Eucharist, sharing his loving concern to the point of a total gift of self for the flock, which they gather into unity and lead to the Father through Christ and in the Spirit. In a word, priests exist and act in order to proclaim the Gospel to the world and to build up the Church in the name and person of Christ the Head and Shepherd" (PDV 15, par 4).

This is also the very task - the same program of life - of Archbishop Gordoncillo, our true good shepherd.

Archbishop Gordoncillo is our "*pastor*" who is "concerned with all the christian faithful who are committed to his care" (Can. 383). He is our "*teacher*" who is "bound to present and explain to the faithful the truths which are to be believed and applied to moral issues" (Can. 386). He is our "*sanctifier*" who is "mindful that he is obliged to set a personal example of holiness, in charity, humility and simplicity of life" (Can. 387).

In my personal association with Archbishop Gordoncillo, sharing responsibilities with me as his vicar, I find in him the quality and the character of being a man of faith and a man of prayer. This is his strength. This is his joy. As close as he is to GOD, he gets much closer to the people.

Archbishop Gordoncillo is a dreamer. He dreams a lot. But it does not stop there. He is a doer. And he does much. That he is the founder and father of BEC in Capiz is not at all mere platitude anymore. He has been very persistent and very insistent on this particular ecclesial task. And we have responded, the clergy, the religious, the lay. Maybe not with the same pace at the same time. But we are moving. Really moving. With him.

Because he loves the Church, and he loves the priesthood, Archbishop Gordoncillo dreamed again. He dreamed to build a College Seminary. And this is now up on a solid foundation. Believe it or not, the philosophers are moving in there in June. Just imagine, Archbishop Gordoncillo introduced the "*signature campaign*" at PhP 10.00 per signature. Only to have a good start. So everybody may become aware. But now the rate has gone up a little. TWELVE THOUSAND per room. That is, for interested prospective donor!

There are other revelations more that bespeak of Archbishop Gordoncillo's attachment to the Church and to his priesthood. There is the missionary spirit in him. This is evident in how he has responded to the needs of his brother-bishops calling for priest-assistance. He has not only answered the requests of a couple of bishops in the region. Even St. Patrick's Cathedral of New York City has become a beneficiary of his love for the Church and its mission. In fact, at one time he himself wanted to be a missionary. We are thankful with him that we are blessed to have an increasing number of our priest in the Archdiocese.

There is one final and beautiful thought I would not miss to share with you. The flame of Archbishop Gordoncillo's pastoral love cannot easily be put out. It is, in truth, burning more and consuming. It just cannot die out. He gives a fitting confirmation of this mystery with a humble confession that he has become a "*victim*" looking back at the activities of the seven days celebration of his 25<sup>th</sup> Episcopal Anniversary. He was denied the pleasures of his "*siesta*" time. Yet he has submitted to the desire and decision of his priests and people who were anxious to honor him. All he could say was: "I follow. It is my turn to obey".

If I were to be interviewed over and over again, I still will say-

Archbishop Gordoncillo is a shepherd to his flock. He is a "*brother and friend*" to his priests (CD, 16). He is a father to all.

The Church of Capiz rejoice in the fullness of the priesthood lived and served by the person of Archbishop Gordoncillo.

In gratitude, the Church of Capiz honors Archbishop Gordoncillo as a man of pastoral charity. Truly he is our "*good shepherd*".

**CONGRATULATIONS MSGR. ONIE. AD MULTOS  
ANNOS. WE LOVE YOU. WE ARE PROUD OF YOU.**

# **Holy Year 2000: Biblical Origins of Jubilee**

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**JOHN SAMAHA**

The Book of Leviticus is hardly one of the more popular books of the Holy Bible. Its pages of laws are a little numbing to read, and not exactly inspiring for Biblical students and readers.

In the Roman Catholic Lectionary's three-year cycle of Sunday readings, selections from Leviticus appear only twice. In the two-year weekday cycle, Leviticus is used just three times.

## **Significance of Leviticus**

This third book of the Pentateuch (the Torah or Law) is concerned mainly with laws and rubrics. The story of the Chosen People is interrupted.

Leviticus taught the Israelites the necessity of holiness in every aspect of their lives. For example, Lev 19:8-19 is a clear lesson on justice.

But presently the Book of Leviticus is receiving new attention. In Lev 25, especially verses 10-13, Pope John Paul II has found

a major source of information and inspiration for his letter on the Church's preparation for what he calls the Great Jubilee 2000, the Holy Year to mark the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ. *Tertio Millenio Adveniente* (TMA), *As the Third Millennium Draws Near*, concentrates on ancient Israel's observance of the jubilee described in Leviticus 25.

## **Meaning of Jubilee**

The concept of the jubilee year is detailed in Leviticus 25:8-31.

The word jubilee comes to us through the Greek form of the Hebrew *yobel*, which means horn. The beginning of a jubilee year was proclaimed by the blast of a horn.

The law prescribed that after 49 years each man shall return to his landed property. The soil is not to be cultivated in the 50th year. Property sold between jubilee years was considered leased rather than sold. In the ideal and tradition of ancient Israel God was the true owner of the land and all the Israelites, his tenants. His land should be shared by all members of His people equally. Should an Israelite be forced to part with his land, it should return to him or his family in the jubilee year. Land monopoly in the hands of a few was considered contrary to God's will. Land monopoly was among the social evils denounced by the prophets (Is 5:8-10).

## **Similar Situation Today**

The jubilee was a unique Israelite social and economic institution, and is difficult to comprehend in terms of our society. Their social conventions were nothing like ours.



The roots of the jubilee were imbedded in ancient Israel's agricultural economy and in the kinship or family relationship structure of that society. The value of the ancient jubilee is one that peoples of every age and culture can appreciate: the family and its economic viability.

## **The Concept of Family**

The Old Testament's idea of family is not the modern nuclear family comprised of parents and their children.

The Hebrew expression *bet ab* (and similar expressions in other Semitic languages), usually translated as "family," literally means "the father's house." The "house of the father" was an extended family including all the descendants of a single living ancestor in a single line, excluding married daughters, who joined their husbands' families.

The *bet ab*, the father's household, comprised the head of the house, his wife or wives, his sons and their wives, all unmarried sons and daughters, and unrealed dependents such as resident laborers and slaves.

The clan was a larger grouping of several families living in the same region. The tribe was a grouping clans.

The people of ancient Israel identified themselves by family, clan, and tribe.

## **The Importance of Land**

The idea of jubilee developed as an economic strategy to protect the family. Like all nations of the world at that time, Israel

had an agricultural economy. Ownership of land was the chief means of production, the difference between wealth and poverty.

In most ancient countries, the land was owned by kings and nobles. The rest of the population were simply tenant farmers. In Egypt, for example, the temples and their priests controlled about 80% of the arable land. Most Egyptians were like serfs who worked the temple holdings. When the Israelite tribes occupied Canaan, they broke with that pattern of land distribution which stratified societies economically.

Israel aspired to be a community of brothers and sisters under God, people who had equal access to the means of production, arable land. This new economy was based on two principles: the land was to be distributed equitably and the land owned by families was inalienable.

The Israelite tribes divided the land of Canaan among their clans and families. The amount each received was based on its size. The Book of Numbers explains the details.

To maintain the system of equitable distribution, Israelite law did not allow the land to be bought and sold as a commercial asset. Each family was to maintain its land as an inheritance from God as Deuteronomy directed. One function of the clan was to guard that the land holdings of the families remained intact.

## **Problems with Property**

Land was a family value. The story of Naboth's vineyard in 1 Kings 21 illustrates this. Human avarice provoked problems concerning the ownership of land. Farming was difficult in ancient Israel as elsewhere. Setbacks and disaster were always threatening the small landowners who were subsistence farmers. Crops were

not always sufficient. Raiding nomads, wartime incursions, oppressive taxation by despots, and natural disasters were regular occurrences. Some small landowners were tempted to sell in times of difficulty, and the greedy were ready to take advantage of such a predicament. People without land in an agricultural economy were faced with destitution.

In principle no one was to be poor in Israel (DT 15:4). All families were to have sufficient land to support themselves. But it was not always possible for each family to maintain its hold on its land. In critical situations the unprincipled acted unscrupulously in buying small farms to amass wealth for themselves, something Isaiah condemned (5:8).

To take advantage of another family's misfortune by buying its land undermined the unique economic system of ancient Israel. Then as now, an economy could be controlled by a few powerful landowners who could subject others to tenant farming.

## **Saved by the Sabbath**

In Leviticus 25 we find the economic plan for maintaining the values of equitable land distribution and inalienable ownership of land. Verses 1-7 describe the law of the Sabbatical year. This is a development of the law in Exodus 23:10-11 that required Israelite farmers to give their land a Sabbath rest every seventh year to benefit the poor. In that season the natural produce of the land was free for the taking. Deuteronomy 15:1-2 elaborates on this law by requiring forgiveness of debts during the Sabbath year.

The next verses (Lev 25:8-12) explain the jubilee, which is the 50th year, the year following the seventh sabbatical year. The twofold theme concerns liberty and return. "This 50th year you

shall make sacred by proclaiming liberty in the land for all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, when every one of you shall return to his own property, every one to his own family estate" (25:10).

The jubilee freed every poor family from the burden of debt. Family members sold into slavery to relieve their family's indebtedness were freed to return and any land that was sold reverted to the family who had mortgaged it. The intention of this law was to prevent a permanent underclass in Israelite society.

Leviticus makes it clear that it is impossible to sell land. The landowner was merely selling the use of his land for a time. In the jubilee year land was restored to the original owners to enable them to make a fresh start.

Since the Israelites were the descendants of the Hebrew slaves, it was not appropriate for them to claim another Israelite as their property. The jubilee offered a means of freeing those held as slaves to settle their debts.

### **Considering Land as "Sacrament"**

If families found it necessary to sell their land to alleviate severe circumstances, the sale could not be permanent. A family's separation from its land could last only until the next jubilee, not more than a generation.

But in addition to the jubilee's economic principle, the jubilee is also an expression of Israel's faith. It was a fundamental belief that land belonged to God (Ex 15:13, 17).

Possession of the land was for the ancient Israelites a "sacrament," enabling an authentic experience of God. The land

was a tangible witness to Israel's relationship with God and its moral consequences. An Israelite family working its land was expressing its experience of God's goodness, bounty, and providence. Loss of land cut off people from God's influence in their lives.

Leviticus taught Israel to consider the Jubilee as a holy event, a practical demonstrations of faith.

The jubilee affirmed God's sovereignty. The land of Israel belonged to God not to Israel. The jubilee acknowledged that the land was a gift, not a right.

Like the Hebrew slaves delivered from Egyptian bondage, all Israel was once in the position of helplessness. The jubilee provided people of means an opportunity to do for their compatriots in need what God had done for them. The jubilee reminded them that all people are in God's debt.

Leviticus mandated that the jubilee begin with the blowing of horn on the Day of Atonement, the day on which all Israel fast and pray for forgiveness. The jubilee presented an opportunity for Israel to experience God's forgiveness by pardoning debts and restoring all bond slaves to their families.

Isaiah had criticized Israel for being a society of elaborate ceremonies but without social justice. He called for the fulfillment of the obligations of kinship (58:6-7).

The first Christians were committed to the ideal of jubilee. The mutual economic support they gave each other was inspired by the final jubilee, which they believed began with the public ministry of Jesus. Acts 4:34 paraphrases Deuteronomy 15:4 when it declares that no one in the Christian community was in need because those who believed shared their goods with one another.

## Call for a New Jubilee

The social and economic values embodied in the jubilee year remain basic to Christianity. They are a significant part of our heritage from religion of ancient Israel. Although the social conventions and economic institutions of the first millennium before Christ are not the same as those of today, they do exemplify for those who are approaching the third millennium after Christ the values of Leviticus which passed into the Good News. Those values ought to help shape the Christian presence in our world.

The Holy Father directs our attention to the jubilee of the Old Testament to demonstrate that the jubilee is still a powerful model for Christian social ethics. In *Tertio Millenio Adveniente* Pope John Paul II recalls that the "jubilee year was meant to restore equality among all the children of Israel, offering new possibilities to families which had lost their property and even their personal freedom" (TMA 13). He explains how the jubilee critiques an economic system that accumulates land and wealth and concentrates them in the hands of a few, how it challenges any form of totalitarianism that destroys personal freedom and responsibility (TMA 35).

The Holy Father considers the Church's teaching on social justice an ideal preparation for the new millennium (TMA 22). Then he challenges all Catholics to raise "their voice on behalf of all the poor of the world, proposing the jubilee as an appropriate time to give thought, among other things, to reducing substantially, if not canceling outright, the international debt which seriously threatens the future of many nations" (TMA 51).

A special concern shared by the pope, American society, and many nations is the family, the focus of identity and the means of exercising responsibility and achieving security. The jubilee

protected families. What good were "family values" if families were being destroyed by economic pressures?

To prevent the total economic collapse of the family and the impoverishment of its members, the jubilee restored the family's dignity by giving back its economic viability. Today Christians are called to develop a means to help families as the jubilee did.

In anticipating the Third Christian Millennium the emphasis is the Christian hope for the future, for the restoration of humanity and nature to their original purpose by assisting families to reclaim their inheritance and restore the equitable distribution of land according to God's intention.

To accomplish this, Christians are invited to a life of integrity that will acknowledge God's sovereignty, and providence, experience God's forgiveness, practice God's justice, and strive for the final and complete restoration of this world according to God's will.

The Book of Leviticus provides a springboard for "the Great Jubilee" (TMA 17) proclaimed by the Holy Father. It is a wellspring of the family values and social justice that will help shape the manner in which we Christians will celebrate our Great Jubilee.

The year 2000 is not meant to be a continuous party. We are called to renew and intensify our acceptance of Jesus Christ as God made man. It heralds a new beginning.

## **Conclusion**

We want the world to be a better place. We want to be better people. This calls for the reawakening and the revitalization of the spiritual instinct within each person.

Faith in Jesus Christ today means tomorrow must be different for me and for society. We are called to make a new start. This is the message of the Third Millenium.



# **Relevance of Philosophy in Priestly Formation According to "Fides Et Ratio"**

**MAXIMILIANO REBOLLO, OP**

Last October John Paul II issued the Encyclical Letter *"Fides et Ratio"* where he discussed the relevance of philosophy and the relationship of philosophy and theology. In this short reflection it is not our scope to analyze the whole encyclical letter but to focus our attention on the point which the Pope brought out in relation to priestly and theological formation. Our study will cover two vital points; first, the need of philosophy for a good priestly formation and second, the kind of philosophy which the pope is referring to.

## **Reason for the lack of interest in philosophical studies.**

The Pope acknowledges that there are some misgiving in the pursuit of philosophical inquiry. According to him, the "displeasure and lack of interest" to study philosophy shown by some theologians and priestly formators, are due to the following:

1) The first is "the distrust of reason found in much contemporary philosophy which has abandoned metaphysical study of the ultimate human question." (61) In the Philippine setting

there is no distrust of reason but in some instances and in some schools of philosophy and seminaries the study of metaphysics has been relegated to a secondary subject or it has been totally abolished. This may be due to the second reason that the pope gives, the preponderance given to the "human science."

%)'. The pope complains that "the invitation... to engage the human sciences and apply them properly should not be interpreted as an implicit authorization to marginalize philosophy..." (Ibid.) It seems that when the subject matter invites the students to rise over and above the empirical and concrete sciences they find it difficult. Thus, following the principle of least resistance the speculative sciences are forsaken. At times, the urgency or more visible application to the pastoral needs of a pastor may lead the formators to discard or minimize the philosophical formation. Oftentimes, we have heard priests complaining about the impracticability of metaphysics and other philosophical knowledge and advocate the teaching of other sciences or subjects which are more obviously practical. It is like disregarding the solid foundation of a building in favor of the decorative aspect because the foundation is not visible. Human sciences are vital in the priestly formation, but their relevance should not be an occasion to put aside the formative aspect of philosophy.

3) The third reason is "the renewed interest in the inculturation of faith." The pope does not deny the tremendous and "genuine cultural wealth of traditions." (61) In several passages the pope refers to the value of inculturation, and how the Christian message should permeate the indigenous culture. But inculturation does not mean to abandon all Christian Tradition in which we find also the word of God. For this reason he affirms that "the study of traditional ways must go hand in hand with philosophical inquiry which allows the positive traits of popular wisdom to emerge and forge the necessary link with the proclamation of the Gospel." (61)

It is by applying the critical philosophical analysis that we can discover the rich cultural values, sublimate those superstitious elements in which the old traditions are wrapped and become signs of Christian faith.

### **Need of philosophy in priestly formation.**

The first argument given by the pope, to establish the relevancy and the need of philosophy for the true priestly formation is historical. He asserts that from the Fifth Lateran Council the Church has always emphasized the importance of philosophical studies in connection with the priestly formation. Here are his words,

I wish to repeat clearly that the study of philosophy is fundamental and indispensable to the structure of theological studies and to the formation of candidates for the priesthood. It is not by chance that the curriculum of theological studies is preceded by a time of special study of philosophy. This decision confirmed by the Fifth Lateran Council, is rooted in the experience which matured through the Middle ages, when importance of a constructive harmony of philosophical and theological learning emerged.

The pope going back to the Encyclical Letter, *Aeterni Patris*, (11) of Leo XIII reaffirms the doctrine that "philosophical thinking contributes in fundamental ways to faith and theological learning." (57) Later on he brings the authority of Vatican II to strengthen his thesis, "The Second Vatican Council, - he says - "for its part, offers a rich and fruitful teaching concerning philosophy." (60)

The Second argument is taken from the different documents of the Church. He refers explicitly to Vatican II in these words,

The Council also with the study of philosophy required for the priesthood... these are the Council's words: 'the philosophical disciples should be taught in such a way that students acquire in the first place a solid and harmonious knowledge of human being, of the world and of God, based upon the philosophical heritage which is enduringly valid, yet taking into account currents of modern philosophy.' (60)

Although in the text of the Encyclical Letter the pope only gives us the words taken from the document *On Priestly Formation* of Vatican II, there are several documents listed in the footnote 84, especially, the Apostolic Constitution *Sapientia Christiana*, the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, and finally the Decree *Sacra Theologia* (January 20, 1972). Space constraints do not allow us to bring up those texts here.

But the most important are the insights that Pope John Paul II brings forth to stress the » ed of philosophy in the priestly formation.

a) First, the "intimate bond which ties theological work to the philosophical search for truth." (63) Bases on these ties and close relationship of doing theology with the philosophical investigation it is the "Magisterium's duty to discern and promote philosophical thinking which is not at odds with faith." (Ibid).

b) Second, "Philosophy contributes specially to theology in preparing for correct *auditus fidei* with its study of the structure of knowledge and personal communication." (65) But the philosophical training will also help the *intellectus fidei*." He gives the following reasons:

(1) The pope affirms the intelligibility of the revealed truth and that the whole teaching of faith constitutes an organic and systematic body of knowledge. "The divine Truth as proposed to us in the Sacred Scriptures and rightly interpreted by the Church's teaching enjoys an innate intelligibility, so logically consistent that it stands as an authentic body of knowledge." (66)

(2) The *intellectus fidei* develops and "expounds this truth, not only in grasping the logical and conceptual structure of the propositions in which the Church's teaching is framed, but also... in bringing to light the salvific, among of these propositions for the individual and for humanity." (66) In the following paragraphs the pope discusses how the different branches of theology are in need of a solid philosophical foundation. (66-67)

c) Third, philosophy is the best tool to help in the dialogue of faith and culture, because "cultures share the dynamics which the human experience of life reveals." (71) The openness of philosophy and of being serves as a background on which we can perceive that capacity of culture to receive divine revelation, (cf 71). While the universality of philosophy drives the seminarians and theologians "beyond the particular and concrete (aspect of culture), lest the prime task of demonstrating the universality of faith's content be abandoned." The pope, quoting St. Thomas, adds the sapiential aspect of philosophical inquiry, namely, "to discern in different world-views and different cultures 'not what people think but what the objective truth is.'" It is not an array of human opinion but truth alone which can be of help in theology." (69)

### **Kind of Philosophy to be taught in the seminaries.**

The true humanistic formation of the future priest requires a profound philosophical foundation. But we may ask: What kind of philosophy is the pope recommending? Is he endorsing any particular system?

The pope challenges philosophers as well as teachers of philosophy "to have courage to recover, in the flow of an enduringly valid philosophical tradition, the range of authentic wisdom and truth - metaphysical included - which is proper to philosophical inquiry." (106)

These words of the pope transcend any closed system and direct themselves to the wide range of philosophical tradition which genuinely dedicates itself to the search for truth which is proper to philosophical inquiry.

Certainly those philosophical system which "have lured people into believing that they are their own absolute master, able to decide their own destiny and future in complete autonomy, trusting only in themselves and their own powers," (107) are excluded from the priestly formation. They should be studied to point out their erroneous principles and consequences and how these theories have influenced our modern society. This is the role of the History of Philosophy.

The pope does not single out any system in particular. Yes he points to St. Thomas as the authentic model in the dialogue between faith and reason, but this does not mean that every thesis of St. Thomas has to be taken dogmatically. "This has not been in order to take a position on properly philosophical questions nor to demand adherence to particular thesis. The Magisterium's intention has always been to show how St. Thomas is an authentic model for all who seek the truth." (78)

The characteristics of the genuine philosophy are elaborated by the pope in section VII of the Encyclical Letter. They are wide and far reaching principles, full of implications and references to the present state of affairs of philosophy. As a form of presentation let us enumerate them in the words of the pope.

1) "To be consonant with the word of God, philosophy needs first of all to recover its sapiential dimension as a search for the ultimate and overarching meaning of life." (81) The Encyclical elaborates this sapiential dimension of philosophy by recalling that:

a) First, this search for the ultimate constitutes the true nature of philosophy. Philosophy is about the ultimate. (Cf. Ibid.)

b) Second, the critical function of philosophy by which the "foundations and limits of the different fields of scientific learning" are determined. This critical function of philosophy extends to "the ultimate framework of the unity of human knowledge and action." (Ibid.)

c) Third, the sapiential function of philosophy requires from philosophy "true and authentic knowledge," "total and definitive truth." (Ibid.)

2) The second requirement of philosophy is, "that philosophy verify the human capacity to know the truth, to come to a knowledge which can reach object truth by means of that *adaequatio rei et intellectus*." (82)

c) The third requirement of philosophy is "the need for a philosophy of genuinely metaphysical range, capable of transcending empirical data in order to attain something absolute, ultimate and foundation in its search for truth " (83) What does it mean?

(a) The pope does not "speak of metaphysics in the sense of a specific school or a particular historical current of thought." (Ibid.)

(b) The metaphysical inquiry goes beyond the factual and empirical and reaches the universal and immaterial reality. (Cf. Ibid.)

(c) "To vindicate the human being's capacity to know this transcendent and metaphysical dimension in a way that is *true and certain*." (Emphasis ours) (Ibid.)

(d) The "metaphysical dimension of reality opens up before them (men and women): in truth, in beauty, in moral values, in other persons, in being itself, in God." (Ibid.)

(e) "Philosophy without metaphysics would be radically unsuited to the task of mediation in the understanding of revelation." Thus "a theology without a metaphysical horizon could not move beyond an analysis of religious experience, nor would it allow the *intellectus fidei* to give a coherent account of the universal and transcendent value of revealed truth." (Ibid.)

### **Christian philosophy.**

The pope does not make any reference to the controversy about the possibility of a Christian philosophy. What he does, is to clarify in what sense we can talk about Christian philosophy.

Christian philosophy does not mean an official philosophy or official system of philosophy of the Church; because "in no way there is an official philosophy of the Church, since faith as such is not a philosophy." (76) The words are clear the Church does not have an official philosophy, even though previously he categorically affirmed "that the Church's Magisterium can and must authoritatively exercise a critical discernment of opinions and philosophies which contradict Christian doctrine." (50) Neither does it mean the philosopher who are Christians. (Cf. 76)

Christian philosophy means "a Christian way of philosophizing, a philosophical speculation conceived in dynamic union with faith." This union of philosophy and faith should not be



understood as union in which philosophy loses its autonomy, its methods of inquiry, and identity. Christian philosophy is primarily philosophy and therefore an activity of the human reason with its proper way of attaining truth, but in the exercise of philosophical research the philosopher strives "not to contradict the faith." (Ibid.) It is the critical reference and negative dependence of philosophy on faith. It is based on a simple critical principle. Faith, which is the acceptance of the revelation made by God, commands absolute certitude; while philosophy which is a human activity is liable to err. Thus when a philosophical conclusion contradicts a truth revealed by God, it indicates that the philosophical conclusion has failed in some way. This is what John Paul II calls the subjective aspect of Christian philosophy, because "faith purifies reason." (76) Aside from this subjective aspect, negative epistemological dependence, there is the objective aspect of Christian philosophy, which is the positive influence of faith in the content of philosophical speculation. It refers to "those important developments of philosophical thinking which would not have happened without the direct or indirect contribution of Christian faith." (76)

# Theological Significance of the Indulgence

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JOHN MCDERMOTT, SJ

*"Indulgences emphasize the gravity of sin  
as well as the Church's mediation of Christ's salvation"*

The promulgation of the plenary indulgence in *Incartionis mysterium* binds the Great Jubilee 2000 to a long tradition in the Western Catholic Church. Given such a strong anchoring in the past, it would be unwise for the barque of Peter to cast itself loose from such a time-honoured mooring. It cannot be overlooked, however, that the practice of indulgences provided the occasion for the Reformation. Not their abuse but their very existence furnishes a stone of scandal for Protestants. Since many of the intellectual presuppositions undergirding the Protestant world-view, like individualism and egalitarianism, have been generally accepted in Western culture and, through the mass media, widely diffused throughout the world, it is hardly surprising that contemporary culture does not readily appreciate the traditional doctrine of indulgences. Despite John XXIIIFs call for the adaptation of the Christian message to modern forms of expression, it must be recognized that hasty adaptation often involves a risk to Catholic faith. Heresies invariably accept unquestioned, but erroneous,

presuppositions from the surrounding culture. To ignore or downplay the doctrine of indulgences in the year of the Great Jubilee would weaken the full splendour of truth and deprive the contemporary Church and culture of a sane counterbalance to one-sided egalitarianism and individualism. The Church lives from her tradition, and the retrieval of that tradition can contribute mightily to the evangelization of the third millennium.

### **Subjectivist perspective raises many questions**

Luther's attempt to place the individual sinner directly before God doubtless was heavily influenced by the nominalism of late medieval Scholastics, who stressed the uniqueness of each individual and the consequent inadequacy of abstract, universal concepts to provide a coherent vision of reality. Subsequent Western culture did not follow Luther in appealing to the Bible alone as the source of security and truth in a confusing world. Even before the Wars of Religion convinced Europe that theological truth is attained neither from the pulpit nor on the battlefield, the recourse to a neutral human reason was being prepared. Medieval nominalism laid the groundwork for Galileo-Newtonian science insofar as it stressed the perceptible, accidental traits of worldly realities and their coordination in terms of external relations, especially efficient causality, which could be measured and "mathematicized". The success of mathematical analysis induced Descartes to transpose its abstract clarity into the realm of philosophy, grounding epistemological certitude in the *Cogito*. This move to the subject was brought to completion by Immanuel Kant's effort to synthesize Cartesian idealism and English empiricism. He accomplished his revolution by considering primarily not objective reality but the subjective conditions of human knowing. Aware of the limitations of finite knowledge, he distinguished the *phenomena*, which are objectified and universalized through conceptual categories, from the *noumenon*, the unknowable infinite to which are consigned

material singularity, freedom, God and the ego. As the laws of objective Newtonian physics derive from the human mind, so also the human intellect creates for itself universal moral laws as categorical imperatives. After the metaphysical systems of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel failed to overcome the gap between the infinite and the finite by seeing reality from God's perspective, other philosophers accentuated the opposition between the infinity of actual concrete reality and the limitations of the knowing subject. With the breakdown of Newtonian physics, it became harder to insist on the validity of universal intellectual laws, and subjects were increasingly referred to their own experience as the touchstone of truth.

The modern movement toward subjectivity entered Catholic thought through certain thinkers, generally called transcendental Thomists, who sought to overcome the Kantian dichotomy between finite and infinite, abstractions and reality, by appealing to those elements of St Thomas' synthesis which stressed the dynamic movement of mind revealed in judgement. Not in the concept but in judgement is truth attained. The dynamic movement of the mind, not the passive reception of abstract concepts, gives man access to reality. Objectivity is attained only over subjectivity. Though the more profound thinkers of the school tried to maintain the balance between concept and judgement, objectivity and subjectivity, many less cautious disciples stress the human subjectivity which is oriented to the infinite God through the natural intellectual movement of judgement transcending all finite concepts and structures. From their perspective man's opening to God is completed by God's self-offering in grace to each individual according to his eternal plan of salvation.

Within the subjective perspective the notion of indulgences gives rise to many questions. If God's pardoning grace is offered to all, what need is there for the Church to grant indulgences? How

does someone else supply for my deficiencies before God? Insofar as temporal punishment due to sin derives from the purification of selfish habits, how can the Church by some external act dispense with the need of full interior purification? Indeed, if the Church can grant plenary indulgences, why does she bother with partial indulgences?

### **Solidarity in salvation**

Fortunately, Catholic doctrine does not depend upon any one theology or philosophy. The richness of revealed truth serves as the norm to judge all theologies and philosophies, and that richness cannot be narrowed to the compass of any single system. For the Revelation of Jesus Christ does not consist in the mere fulfillment of man's longing for meaning and his natural desire for truth. The Son of God entered the world to carry a cross and demand conversion, calling his disciples to follow him to the end. Salvation then consists not in the unimpeded achievement of an individual's intellectual dynamism, but in the union of love established between Jesus and his disciples and over Jesus with the Father. From the beginning salvation has been historically mediated through the humanity of Jesus and, after the Resurrection, through the Eucharist and through the community of believers, the ecclesial Body of Christ, created by the Eucharist and assembled to celebrate and proclaim Jesus eucharistically present in their midst. God's plan of salvation is sacramental, i.e., he renders himself present in a finite figure, e.g. Jesus' humanity, the Church's sacramental signs, to call for man's total response of love, and upon man's response depends his eternal salvation or damnation (Lk 12:8f; 1 Cor 11:27-32).

After original sin had shattered the primordial unity of love among men and between God and man, the initiative for its restoration had to come from God. That restoration through God's

self-revelation began early, as the Old Testament witnesses, and culminated in Jesus Christ. God become man. No higher revelation can be expected than the personal union of the Second Person of the Trinity with human nature. This hypostatic union gives men an intelligible sign of a love which sacrifices itself entirely and in losing itself finds itself. As the Son lives eternally and entirely in total self-abandonment to the Father, so on earth he sacrifices himself to the utmost on the cross and on Easter manifests the victory of the mutual love that unites Father and Son. That victorious, divine love is strong enough to overcome the selfishness of human hearts, offering itself and causing a free response. Those who accept Jesus, uniting themselves to him in freedom and living from his prevenient love, form henceforth the community of salvation, the Body of Christ. Divine love penetrates their hearts and lets them live the divine life, reborn through Baptism as God's children in Christ. Where they are most themselves, in their freedom, they are most one with Christ, and because Christ's love unites, they are one with each other.

Solidarity in salvation as well as damnation was manifested in the Old Testament notion of corporate personality whereby an individual is a representative as well as a constitutive member of the community with whom he shares a common fate. The Suffering Servant songs, especially Is 53, prefigure Christ's vicarious salvific sufferings and are so interpreted by the New Testament (Mk 10:45; Mt 8:17; 12:17-21; Lk 22:37; 23-33; Acts 8:26-35; 1 Cor 15:3-5; etc.). Insofar as Christians are called to share Christ's lot, their solidarity with him finds various expressions in Scripture. The Pauline notion of *koinonia* well details the characteristics of this new salvific union. Previous to Paul the word signified a participation in a common reality and a community. While retaining those senses, Paul was forced by the Christian mystery to expand the word's meaning in various directions. In Paul's writings for the first time the word signifies *communion*, i.e., the receiving of

Christ's Body and Blood (1 Cor 10:16), which is the expression and cause of unity in Christ. For the first time also it indicates participation in a personal reality: Christ (1 Cor 1:9) and the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 13:13). *Koinonia* designates not just passive reception or sharing; it involves also giving a share (Gal 6:6; Phil 1:15; *koinonein* with a personal subject and the dative of thing is used for the first time in Greek: Rom 12:13; Phil 4:14). What is shared goes beyond a merely spiritual blessing, for Paul designated the monetary collection for Jerusalem's poor a *koinonia*. As other Christians participate in the spiritual riches of the Jerusalem Church, so they are called upon to supply the material needs of that Church (Rom 15:26f.). Clearly *koinonia* involves a union, both spiritual and material, between the Triune God and man and among Christians; manifested and grounded in the Eucharist, it lets believers share in the divine life; this communitarian participation comprises both passive and active sharing.

### **Church's norm is God's self-sacrificial love**

What Christians do affects each other. "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together" (1 Cor 12:26; Col 1:24). All are called to grow together in charity to the fullness of Christ, who is the source and goal of the Christian life (Eph 1:22f.; 4:15f.; Col 1:18-20). Any sin against Christ and the Father simultaneously wounds the members of Christ's Body; for all who should be contributing to mutual growth in love. Since sin not only is a disorder but also causes disorder in the lives of others, a conversion should involve the setting right of what has been disordered. Insofar as the new order of Redemption has been irrevocably established in Christ and in the Virgin Mary's total, free response — she could have sinned but did not — no sin can frustrate God's definitive plan for mankind's salvation. But sin does disrupt the order of charity in Christ's Body, and in justice the sinner is bound to make good what he damaged. Basic justice

demands that. Fortunately human justice, which presupposes a commutative tit-for-tat measure, does not supply the ultimate norm for morality. God's justice, one with his love, is justifying (Rom 3:21-26). Not that human justice is destroyed, but it is surpassed. Indeed human justice sways between commutative and distributive justice, and the proper application of the just measure in concrete circumstances depends upon a deeper insight of love. The love of God alone converts hearts and illuminates the mind to perceive the demands of human justice.

Justice demands recompense for man's sin as an offence against God and the Church. But just as God has not insisted upon strict satisfaction in sending his Son to die for sinners (Rom 5:7f.), the Church, wounded by sin, does not insist upon strict expiatory justice from the sinner. The Church's norm is the self-sacrificial love of God revealed in Christ. Precisely to show whence she derives her life and norm of acting, she offers to believing sinners an indulgence.

In her penitential discipline the Church demands penance for sins committed. For acts have consequences and justice requires that the consequences of such acts be repaired as much as possible by the sinner. Penance imposed for sin not only corresponds to the sinner's need to be detached from his sin and to eradicate evil habits, it also marks the Church's public disapproval of sin, manifests the deleterious consequences of sin, and upholds a salutary external order. The Church must insist publicly on the evil of sin, yet she condemns sin not to denigrate the sinner but to facilitate his conversion. Traditionally, the rigorous temporal punishment imposed on sinners had been mitigated on account of the prayers of the martyrs and confessors and later by the application of the "treasure of the Church", the merits of Christ, his Blessed Mother and the saints. The communion of saints, the Christian *koinonia*, stretches beyond death and embraces the Church triumphant.



phant and suffering as well as the Church militant. By the application of the merits of others, the Church maintains her public discipline condemning sin, and simultaneously, lest a rigorous discipline keep sinners at a distance from her care, she offers a mitigation of the temporal punishment ordinarily assigned to the sin. Thus her charity, imitating Christ's, reconciles justice and mercy, demanding conversion, yet richly bestowing forgiveness.

### **Results of sin must be purged by fire of love**

The "treasury of the Church" should not be imagined as something alongside and added to Christ's salvific love. Insofar as all the good actions of Christians, which produce merit, are only the obedient response to the love of Christ which motivates them, the merits of the saints flow from the omnipotence of Christ's love and exist only in dependence upon it. The entire remission of sin and temporal punishment is God's work. Nonetheless, to emphasize the internal relations existing among Christians and the ways in which they help each other through the proper use of freedom, which earns a "reward" in proportion as the love of God penetrates the heart of the agent, the Church employs the image of the treasury of merit that is applied to others. For every good work performed under grace merits a reward (cf. Mt 16:27; Rom 2:6-10; Rv 22:12), and the ultimate reward consists in the sharing in God's eternal life of tripersonal love. The application of one Christian's merit to another means that the divine life shared among Christians is intensified and expanded. Love is both the motivation that produces an increase of charity in human freedom and the reward given, for as, the human heart opens itself ever more to God's love, the more it is permeated by that love and the more profoundly it participates in the divine life. No greater reward can be imagined than the sharing in God's eternal life with all the members of the Body of Christ, and that is the purpose of the application of the merits of Christ and the saints to others.

The remission of temporal punishment does not occur mechanically. The results of sin, man's inordinate attachments to creatures, have to be purged or burned away by the fire of love, and it usually takes time to effect a thorough conversion. The Church's penances aim at the profound conversion of a sinner to Christ and his Church. There should be a correspondence between the severity of the sin and the penance imposed in order that the latter might overcome the ingrained selfishness manifested in the sin and lead to full communion with Christ and his Church. The correspondence presupposes the connection between body and soul, the external penance and the interior renewal. But God's grace can directly touch the heart and effect a perfect act of charity which wipes away all sin and its consequences. Internal and external do not always reflect each other perfectly. For this reason the Church, relying on Christ's superabundant grace, can remit the external penance imposed. The Church's proffered indulgence is effective in proportion to the profundity of the sinner's conversion to God. As long as that conversion is not complete, the remaining selfishness impedes unrestricted communion with Christ and the Church, and this selfishness has to be overcome in this world or the next. So temporal punishment may remain despite the Church's indulgence. However generous the offer, the indulgence remits the punishment only in proportion to the sinner's attitude. Conversion to God and conversion to Christ's Body are correlative.

### **The pilgrimage to Rome**

The pilgrimage to Rome manifests in a special way that conversion to God and conversion to his Church occur together. The indulgence is granted by Peter to all believers, and their journey to Peter shows their willingness to accept the Church's mediation of salvation, as Christ intended. The pilgrimage to Rome also involves a sacrifice of time, effort, and money, and the very disposition to sacrifice these material goods for the sake of union

with God is due to grace's purification of the human heart. When the heart has been opened to grace the great witness to Christ by so many martyrs and saints who lived and died in Rome speaks all the more powerfully. The grave of Peter offers a point of historical continuity joining mankind to its Saviour and marks a centre for the concrete dedication required by authentic love.

Given the necessity of the penitent sinner's interior conversion to receive the full benefits of the entire remission of temporal punishment, the reason for the Church's limitation of indulgences emerges clearly. What is too liberally offered is often ignored or disdained. So partial indulgences may be better applied to specific prayers and acts of mercy, teaching Christians the value of indulgences and preparing them for greater gifts. Similarly plenary indulgences are limited to particular places, times and conditions in order that their very infrequency may encourage sinners to esteem and take advantage of them. A too frequent indulgence could weaken the Church's public discipline.

The indulgences offered by the Church are applied first and foremost to the penitent sinner performing the pre-requisite good works. For his freedom is engaged in the works and thereby purified. The indulgences may also be applied *per suffragium* to others, both living and dead, in the communion of saints. We pray that God's benevolence apply to others the merits that our good works entail. The union of believers in Christ works to the good of all, each contributing to the growth in charity of others. Even though the mutual influence cannot be exactly measured - freedom and grace do not let themselves be quantified - Scripture and tradition assure us of the efficacy of prayer and good works offered for others.

In a world torn apart by materialism, which isolates individuals and leads them to consider as real only what is sensibly

perceptible, the Church's preaching of indulgences can help to offset the narrow limits of the modern world's spiritual vision. Charity joins believers among themselves. Each should be responsible for the others. This basic solidarity realized in the Body of Christ embraces the dead as well as the living. Besides expanding the spiritual horizon of believers, indulgences also serve to emphasize the gravity of sin as an offence against God and his Church as well as the Church's mediation of Christ's salvation to all sinners. Hence the proper preaching of the Jubilee Year indulgence can contribute greatly to the Church's renewal, effecting under God's grace the conversion of sinners, a greater growth of solidarity in charity, and a deeper love and appreciation of the Church as mediator of salvation.

## CONSULTATIVE WORDS

### Cases & Inquiries

EXCELSO GARCIA, OP

#### REVIVAL AND CONVALIDATION OF MARRIAGE

*Last month I invited a priest, a Doctor in Canon Law to give a talk to a group of married people and prospective couples, my parishioners. I was present listening too. I think he explained well some important matters concerning marriage. In passing, he mentioned how marriage, being valid, does not give, sometimes, to the contracting parties the grace it should grant, due to the unworthiness of the persons concerned. He also explained how, at times, marriage is invalid, due to the existence of an impediment which hinders its validity. He added how these marriages may revive or convalidated, as the case may be. On these two points of revival and convalidation I myself did not understand well what he said.*

*May I ask you to write in the Boletín Eclesiástico on both things.*

*A young Parish Priest*

Two anomalous things can happen in the celebration of marriage, namely: a) that both contracting parties being free from all impediments and giving their consent according to the canonical form, one of them or both do not receive the sacramental grace; or b) an impediment can exist in any of them or there is a defect in the consent mutually given, rendering null and void the marriage celebration.

In the first case, their *valid* marriage *may revive* when the hindrance to the reception of grace (mortal sin) is removed. In the second case their *invalid* marriage can be *convalidated*.

### **A. Sacramental revival**

In Sacramental Theology that term *revival* means the production or conferment of grace by a sacrament which was *validly* received without giving to the recipient the sacramental grace, due to an obstacle existing at the time of its reception. For instance, marriage is contracted by persons free from all impediments and give their mutual consent according to the canonical form established by law, but one of the contracting parties is in mortal sin. Such marriage is undoubtedly *valid*, but it does not grant divine grace to the party who is unworthy. Such *valid* marriage *may revive*. It will confer the sacramental grace to the party who contracted in mortal sin is forgiven. Once the obstacle to grace is removed, marriage produces the sacramental grace not received at the marriage celebration. Obviously such marriage *revives only* in the party who has mortal sin. The other party, being in state of grace, received the sacramental grace at the celebration itself. For that person marriage does not need to revive.

Valid marriage is indissoluble. This indissoluble union existing in both husband and wife is the basis on which the sacramental grace is produced once the obstacle (mortal sin) is removed.

Otherwise, the concerned party would be deprived, as long as their marriage subsists, of the spiritual help he/she needs to fulfill the marital obligations. Confession gives him/her the sanctifying grace *with the sacramental grace of marriage*.

St. Thomas Aquinas considers marriage, by reason of its indissoluble bond, similar to the sacraments that imprint character on the soul. In those sacraments, he says, wherein a character is imprinted, power is given to perform spiritual actions; but in matrimony, to perform bodily actions. Wherefore matrimony by reason of the power which man and wife receive over one another agrees with sacraments in which a character is imprinted, and from this it derives its inseparability...; yet it differs from them in so far as the power regards bodily actions; hence it does not confer a spiritual character" (Suppl. q. 49, a. 3, ad 5<sup>um</sup>).

From this similarity of marriage to the sacraments that imprint character, Theologians conclude that marriage *revives* too. Otherwise, spouses who have contracted their marriage in mortal sin, would be deprived during the whole life from sacramental grace to properly fulfill their marital duties, which does not seem to conform to the merciful divine Providence (See Prummer, *Manuale Theologiae Moralis*, **III**, c. **III**, § 3, n. 42, c).

## **Conclusions:**

1. No *invalid* marriage may revive, even if the obstacle to its validity disappears. What never existed cannot revive.
2. A *valid* marriage, which due to mortal sin did not confer divine grace to the person in state of mortal sin, may revive when the mortal sin is forgiven in confession or through an act of perfect contrition.

## B. Convalidation of marriage

A marriage which seemed to be validly contracted, may be discovered afterwards to be affected by an obstacle which hindered its valid celebration. This discovery may create great anxiety and concern to the parish priest who solemnized the marriage. It may cause also public scandal to the faithful, if the marriage nullity becomes known to the parishioners.

If only a renewal of consent, which was not properly given before, be required, its convalidation would be relatively easy. But if an impediment has to be dispensed, the process is more complicated. A greater difficulty is involved When the convalidation requires a new celebration of marriage in the form prescribed by law. Sometimes the parties refuse to go through the canonical ceremony again and prefer to live in concubinage. Then the only way is to convalidate the marriage "in radice".

### I. Simple convalidation

1. a) A marriage which was *invalid* due to a *diriment impediment* is simply convalidated when the impediment is dispensed. The party aware of the impediment must renew his/her consent (c. 1156). This renewal of consent must be a new act of the will ratifying the marriage invalidly contracted before (1157).

b) If the impediment is *occult* and known only to the party affected, it is enough that he/she will renew the consent privately, provided that the other party's consent continues; if the impediment is known by both parties, the consent must be renewed by both in secret (c. 1158, § 2).

When the impediment is *public*, the consent must be renewed by both parties in the form prescribed by law (c. 1158, § 1).



2. A marriage which was *invalid for lack of consent* is revalidated if the party who had not consented, does consent, provided that the other party's consent continues. When the want of consent was *only internal*, the new consent should be internal too; if the want of consent was *external*, the new consent must be given in the form prescribed by law (c. 1159).

3. A marriage *invalid for lack of form* is revalidated by celebrating marriage again according to the prescribed form (c. 1160).

## II. Convalidation 'in radice'

Convalidation "in radice" of a marriage is its revalidation granted by the competent Church's authority. It implies: a) the dispensation of renewing the consent; b) dispensation of the impediment (if there is any); c) dispensation from the canonical form (if it was not observed), and d) retroaction as regards the canonical effects (c. 1161, § 1).

This convalidation takes effect at the moment the Church's concession is granted. Thus marriage will be regarded as valid from the day the petition is approved (c. 1161, § 1). Only the fourth element contained in the convalidation, i.e. the retroaction of the canonical effects is to take effect at the *moment the marriage was invalidly celebrated*, unless it is otherwise expressly provided in the concession (c. 1161, § 1).

"A convalidation of marriage *in radice* is not granted, unless it is probable that the parties intend to persevere in conjugal life (c. 1161, § 3).

"If the consent was not given by one or both parties, marriage cannot be convalidated *in radice*, whether consent was absent from

the beginning or it was subsequently revoked. If the consent was indeed absent from the beginning, but it was subsequently given, convalidation can be given from the moment the consent was given" (c. 1162).

"A convalidation may be validly granted even if one or both parties are unaware; it is not, however, to be granted, except for a grave reason" (c. 1164).

Convalidation "*in radice*" can be granted by the Apostolic See. It can also be granted by the diocesan Bishop in individual cases (c. 1165).

Summing up what we have tried to explain:

1. A *valid* marriage can *revive* when the obstacle (mortal sin), existing at the time of its celebration, is removed in confession or through an act of perfect contrition.

2. a) An *invalid* marriage can be *simply convalidated*: a) when the party who did not consent, gives his/her consent privately; b) when the impediment existing at the celebration disappears and the party concerned gives consent in secret; c) if the invalidity was caused for lack of canonical form, marriage has to be celebrated again according to the prescribed form.

b) An *invalid* marriage due to an existing impediment at its celebration or due to lack of canonical form can be convalidated *in radice*, provided the consent of both parties exists.

If the impediment flows from the natural law or divine positive law, it is necessary that the impediment ceases first, before the convalidation.

Convalidation *in radice* may be granted, even if both parties are unaware of it.

At present diocesan Bishop may grant this convalidation *in radice* in individual cases only. Ordinarily it is the Roman Pontiff who grants convalidation.

## **Homiletic and Bibliarasal Pointers September - October 1999**

EFREN RIVERA, O.R

SEPTEMBER 5, 1999

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, A

*EZEKIEL 33:7-9*

*TRY TO SAVE THE WICKED MAN*

MATTHEW 18:15-20

SAVE YOUR BROTHER

### **A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEP 3**

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines has a Commission for the Welfare of Prisoners. Lately, this Commission has been very busy trying to get a reprieve or a pardon or a commutation of the death penalty for prisoners — mostly Catholic Christians — on death row. Such a mission is very commendable, especially in the light of the Pope's teaching that the death penalty should be abolished. But today's First and Gospel readings remind Christians that their fundamental duty towards erring brothers and sisters is to get them to repent of their sins.

**Focus Points. (1) Ezekiel 33:7-9** You, son of man, I have appointed watchman for the house of Israel; when you hear me say anything, you shall warn them for me. If I tell the wicked man that he shall surely die, and you do not speak out to dissuade the wicked man from his way, he [the wicked man] shall die for his guilt, but I will hold you responsible for his death. But if you warn the wicked man, trying to turn him from his way, and he refuses to turn from his way, he shall die for his guilt, but you shall save yourself. The wickedness treated in this pericope is what moralists call a grave social sin, like cheating people from their just wages, rape, or murder. The heinous crimes for which the death penalty is still imposed by some modern states like the Philippines, fall under this category. The message of the pericope is that a leader appointed by God, like the prophet Ezekiel, has the duty to get the sinner to repent from his sin. He must try his best to achieve this. If he does not try, then he, too, (and the people) will be punished by God. If he tries his best but the sinner does not repent, the sinner alone will be punished. Here we see a balance between a leader's accountability for an erring member of society, on one hand, and an individual sinner's personal accountability on the other hand.

**(2) Matthew 18: 15b** If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. If, in the Old Testament, a leader has the responsibility of correcting an erring member of the community, in the New Testament this is made the responsibility of a fellow member, that is, any brother or sister. Thus, the *koinonia* or fellowship of Christians is more thorough-going than the one practiced in the Old Testament. The basis for this is the fact that in the New Testament, God is more a Father to Christians than he was to the people of Israel, and Christians are more truly brothers and sisters than people ever were before.

## B. REFLECTION POINTS

### BIBLIARASAL STEPS 4 & 5: GOD SPEAKS, WE LISTEN AND SHARE

1. The Catholic Church Catechism (n. 1916) says that "the participation of all in realizing the common good calls for a continually renewed *conversion* of the social partners. Fraud and other subterfuges, by which some people evade the constraints of the law and the prescriptions of societal obligation, must be firmly condemned because they are incompatible with the requirements of justice." Everyone must be vigilant in these matters, but leaders, in the first place, must exercise this vigilance.

**1.1 Pointer for sharing:** What happens when a leader is *vigilant* in keeping the members of a community in the path of righteousness? What happens when a leader is *not vigilant* in this matter? Answer these questions drawing from your experience, and share your answers with your small group.

2. Fraternal correction is necessary for the building up of a community since the members of a community are frail human beings who, sooner or later, make mistakes and even commit sins (like fraud) that will affect the community. Such lapses must be remedied at once.

**2.1 Pointer for sharing:** Have you ever tried to practice fraternal correction? What insight did you gain from the experience? Share your answer with your small group.

### FAILED CORRECTION

The two American High School boys who killed their schoolmates at Columbine High School had previously been arrested for a misdemeanor and punished by being obliged to attend

a correctional seminar. After a few sessions, they were dispensed from taking the full seminar. The official in charge said that they proved to be very intelligent, and that's why their punishment was cut short.

Big mistake. It is not people's intelligence that makes them good or bad. Besides, when social behavior is concerned, one has to look for emotional balance. That was lacking to the two boys. Their correction should have been handled more competently.

**SEPTEMBER 12, 1999**

**TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, A**

***SIRACH 27:30 - 28:7 (Hebrew 27:33-289)***  
***NO FORGIVENESS, NO HEALING***

**MATTHEW 18:21-35**  
**FORGIVE 70 X 7**

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### **A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEP 3**

The four pillars of any community are: Caring (responding to needs), Sharing (opening one's heart), Affirmation (if you're OK, tell others they're OK too), and Forgiveness (inner healing of hurts). Today's First and Gospel Readings are about the fourth pillar

**Focus Points.** (1) **Sirach 28:3 Should a man nourish anger against his fellows and expect healing from the Lord?** Modern psychologists confirm this insight of Sirach. When persons entertain anger against anyone, they cannot attain inner healing from their inner hurts. On the contrary, their anger becomes the root cause of mysterious illnesses.

**(2) Matthew 18:21-22 Peter came up and asked Jesus, "Lord, when my brother wrongs me, how often must I forgive him? Seven times?" "No," Jesus replied, "not seven times; I say, seventy times seven times..."** For Jews, seven is a perfect number. Peter, a Jew, thinks that if a person forgives another person seven times, that's already being perfect. But Jesus demands that a Christian should be super-perfect. Any follower of his must forgive wrongs beyond any limit (not just 490 times).

## **B. REFLECTION POINTS**

### **BIBLIARASAL STEPS 4 & 5: GOD SPEAKS, WE LISTEN AND SHARE**

**1.** In a charismatic healing session, the healer prepares those seeking healing by exhorting them to take away all negative thoughts and feelings like anger, jealousy, greed, etc. In the prayer for healing the healer invokes the Holy Spirit because he is the one who can turn injury into compassion and purifies the memory in transforming hurt into intercession (see CCC 2843). The principle is that we must first pray for inner healing before asking for physical healing.

**1.1 Pointer for sharing:** Have you ever joined a charismatic healing session? Did the healer aim after physical healing immediately, or did he or she aim for inner healing first? Share your answer with your small group.

**2.** The Catholic Church Catechism (n. 982) says: "There is no offense, however serious, that the Church cannot forgive. There is no one, however wicked and guilty, who may not confidently hope for forgiveness, provided his repentance is honest. Christ who died for all men desires that in his Church the gates of forgiveness should always be open to anyone who turns away from sin."



**2.1 Pointer for sharing:** What answer will you give to a person if he or she tells you that his sin is so horrible that he or she cannot be forgiven? Share your answer with your small group.

### **Masonic Puzzle**

Once, when I was in the U.S.A., a man offered to drive me home one evening after a social gathering. As soon as we were inside his car, he told me, "Father, I offered to drive you home so that I can ask you about something that is bothering me."

"What's it?" I asked him.

"Well, Father, I have been a Mason secretly for many years now, although I am also a member of our Parish's Legion of Mary."

"It's the first time I get to know such a situation. You have to make a choice between Masonry and the Legion of Mary."

"You see, Father, I think it is OK to be a Mason and a good Catholic. I find nothing in the teachings of the Masons that is against Jesus Christ."

"Masons are against the Catholic Church. They want to destroy the Catholic Church. Anyone who is against the Church is also against Jesus Christ. When Saul persecuted the Church, Jesus told him, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting" (Acts 9:5).

"It will not be long now before I get you to your door. Tell me what to do. Just this morning I got this booklet through the mail." He shows me a booklet bearing the title: "How To Destroy The Catholic Church — The Basic Strategy."

Before getting off the car I told the perplexed Mason-Legionary of Mary: "Do what Saul did in Acts ch. 9. Get off your horse. Humble yourself. Abjure Masonry. Ask forgiveness from the Church."

**SEPTEMBER 19, 1999**

**TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, A**

***BAIAH 55:6-9***

***MY THOUGHTS ARE NOT YOUR THOUGHTS***

**MATTHEW 20:1-6**

**WHY BE ENVIOUS BECAUSE I AM GENEROUS?**

**San Lorenzo Ruiz no vena starts today;**

**Santisimo Rosario novena starts on Friday, Sept. 24**

### **A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEP 3**

Professors teaching Introduction to Theology tell their students that when we talk about God, we use *analogous terms*. This means that when we say that God loves us, there is a similarity in his loving and our loving, but the difference is greater than the similarity. There is similarity because God and human beings love what is good. But human beings love something AFTER they recognize that it is good — they do not create the good thing that they love. God's love, on the other hand, is creative; his love PRODUCES the thing that is good. God is the TOTALLY OTHER. When we pray to him as Jesus taught us, we say, "holy be your name" — that is, we acknowledge that there is an INSUPERABLE DIFFERENCE between him and us and therefore we bow down and adore him.

**Focus Points. (1) Isaiah 55:8-9 For my thoughts are not your thoughts / nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. / As high as the heavens are above the earth, / so high are my ways above your ways / and my thoughts above your thoughts.** God finds a way of making himself near to us (see v. 6), but normally he should be infinitely far from us. We somehow bridge the gap when we avail ourselves of the opportunities he offers us to experience his mercy and generosity. For many people, God's generosity is a puzzle. Why is it shown to one and not to another? Why is it sometimes shown and sometimes withdrawn? The answer is that God's attributes, like his self, are mysteries that we cannot fully grasp. We should be content in having access to SYMBOLS that are WINDOWS to the immense and inexhaustible mystery to which they open up.

**(2) Matthew 20:15b Are you envious because I am generous?** God's generosity (some would say laxity) in forgiving sinners is clarified, to some extent, by the parable of the Workers Who Got Equal Pay For Most, More, Less, Lesser and Least Work.

## **B. REFLECTION POINTS**

### **BIBLIARASAL STEPS 4 & 5: GOD SPEAKS, WE LISTEN AND SHARE**

**1.** Two persons reacted very differently when they heard that a man who committed the heinous crime of raping a thirteen year old girl reformed himself and his death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. One said: "It's unfair to the victim!" The other said, "Praise the Lord for touching this man's heart."

**1.1 Pointer for sharing:** What would be your reaction if a heinous crime perpetrator is spared from death by lethal injection? Share your answer with your small group.

2. The parable in today's Gospel Reading does not fully satisfy some people who raise the question: why does God make it easy for some people to be saved by pardoning them on their deathbeds, but he asks some people to serve him for seventy, eighty or even ninety years, before taking them to heaven? The answer, to put it simply, is that IT IS NOT A HUMAN RIGHT TO GET TO HEAVEN. We get there as a GIFT from God through Jesus Christ. The gift is greater or lesser according to one's capacity. That capacity does not depend on how long or how short one has served God. It depends on God's plan. In any case, whatever may be a person's capacity, it will be filled to the brim in heaven. In eternity, time is not everything.

**2.1 Pointer for sharing:** If given a choice, would you rather turn to God only at your deathbed, or would you like to serve him throughout your life of maybe sixty, seventy or eighty years? Share your answer with your small group.

### **The Bishop's Jeep**

A bishop was called to heaven soon after the golden jubilee of his priesthood. As he was being welcomed by St. Peter at heaven's pearly gates, he saw his sacristan drive by in an army jeep.

"That's wonderdul!" the bishop exclaimed. "That man served God only one week before he died, and now he has a jeep for his reward! Maybe I'll get a Rolls Royce for serving God as a priest for more than 50 years."

"I'm sorry, bishop," St. Peter said. "No Rolls Royce. Only an army jeep. You see, heaven is still in a state of war against satan. Even generals get only a jeep. Even the President of the Philippines, if he makes it to heaven, will get only a jeep."

Disappointed but still hopeful, the bishop said: "Oh, well, a jeep will do for now. But when the war is over, I hope I get at least a Rolls Royce."

**SEPTEMBER 26, 1999**

**TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, A**

***EZEKIEL 18:25-28***

***THE VIRTUOUS AND THE WICKED CAN CHANGE***

**MATTHEW 21: 28-32**

**CHANGING ONE'S MIND**

**Sept. 26 - Oct. 3 is National Catechetical Week**

**San Lorenzo Ruiz feast on Tues. Sept 28;**

**Ssmo. Rosario feast next Sun. Oct 3**

### **A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BD3LIARASAL STEP 3**

From the time of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, the proclamation of the Good News of the Kingdom of God has always begun with the call to repentance or METANOIA, a thoroughgoing change of mind, heart and lifestyle. This is confirmed by the renewal movements in our days like the Cursillo, the Charismatic Movement, the New Catechumenate, the Couples for Christ, etc. They, too, invite prospective members to first undergo METANOIA.

**Focus Points. (1) Ezekiel 18:26-27** When a virtuous man turns away from virtue to commit iniquity, and dies, it is because of the iniquity he committed that he must die. But if a wicked man, turning from the wickedness he has committed, does what is right and just, he shall preserve his life... Verse 26 is like a commentary on the life of King Solomon. He was

virtuous in his youth, but became degenerate in his old age (see Sirach 47:12-20). Verse 27, in turn, is like a commentary on the life of King Josiah: "he grieved over our betrayals, and destroyed the abominable idols. He turned to God with his whole heart, and, though times were evil, he practiced virtue" (Sirach 49:2-3).

**(2) Matthew 21: 31b-32: Jesus said to (the chief priests and elders of the people), "Let me make it clear that tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you. When John came preaching a way of holiness, you put no faith in him; but the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe in him. Yet even when you saw this, you did not repent and believe in him."** One must be careful about choosing one's "way of holiness." The common people who listened to John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, including the prostitutes and the tax collectors, had not made any choice except that made for them by their parents, that of belonging to the People of God, bound by a covenant to the Lord. It was easier for them to repent and believe in the Good News. On the other hand, the chief priests and the elders had deliberately chosen the "traditions of the ancestors" guarded by the rabbis as their "way of holiness." This made it difficult for them to change and accept Jesus as the Way.

## **B. REFLECTION POINTS**

### **BIBLIARASAL STEPS 4 & 5: GOD SPEAKS, WE LISTEN AND SHARE**

**L** The Cursillos in Christianity were planned to be a movement to train lay leaders for more active involvement in the apostolate. Soon, however, in the Philippines, wives and mothers were sending their husbands and grown children to the Cursillo to be reformed. That's because the movement invited would be leaders to first repent and surrender to Jesus Christ. All renewal movements do the same.

**1.1 Pointer for sharing:** Did you experience METANOIA or conversion at the start of your more active participation in the life of the Church? Share your answer with your small group.

2. Jesus is our WAY OF HOLINESS. It is not just his teaching but his person that is our way. When we are baptized we are INCORPORATED to Jesus Christ. In some mysterious manner we become parts of his glorious body now in heaven.

**2.1 Pointer for sharing.** Are you following a "way of holiness?" Share your answer with your small group.

### **President Clinton's Dream**

Soon after the American Senate voted to let President Clinton keep his job in spite of his affair with Monica Lewinsky, Clinton had a dream. He found himself at the pearly gates of heaven.

St. Peter told him, "I'm sorry, Bill, but you can't come in."

"Why?" Clinton asked. "I did a lot of good things on earth. The surveys say so."

"But you also had that affair with Monica Lewinsky," St. Peter said.

"I repented about it already," Clinton answered.

"Maybe," St. Peter answered. "But that's not real METANOIA. You repented only because you were pressured by Congress and the American people. Besides, you repented only so that you could keep your job."

"But I repented, just the same," Clinton said.

"Okay," St. Peter said. "But now, you go to Purgatory first."

**OCTOBER 3, 1999**

**(Santisimo Rosario fiesta: First Sunday of the month)**

**TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, A**

***ISAIAH 5:1-7***

***GOOD VINEYARD, BAD PRODUCT***

**MATTHEW 21:33-43**

**YIELD A RICH HARVEST**

### **A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEP 3**

Sometimes parents do all they can so that their children will turn out to be good persons and yet a child or two turn out to be bad eggs or black sheep. For this, some people blame the environment and in particular the media and in our days the *Internet*. Some people say its what the children learn from their peers, their *barkada*, that have a greater influence on them than their parents or their church. Hopefully, reflection on today's First and Gospel Readings can give us insights to help us understand what is really happening.

**Focus Points. (1) Isaiah 5:4 What more was there to do for my vineyard that I had not done? / Why, when I looked for the crop of grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes?** We learn from v. 7 that the expected grapes symbolize "judgment" and "justice"; the wild grapes symbolize "bloodshed" and "outrcy (against injustice),"

**(2) Matthew 21:43 The kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that will yield a rich harvest.** That means that God will stop being king or at least stop showing



favor to those who have stagnated in the Mosaic and rabbinical traditions. He will instead show his special favor to a new family formed from Jews and Gentiles. They are expected to produce the 'fruits of the Spirit' (some of which are mentioned by St. Paul: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self control, Gal 5:23).

## **B. REFLECTION POINTS**

### **BIBLIARASAL STEPS 4 & 5: GOD SPEAKS, WE LISTEN AND SHARE**

**1.** Doing good goes beyond doing duties at home, in school, at church and in society. It requires a conversion of heart to God. It requires cultivating one's spirituality. This is something that parents and teachers sometimes neglect. When they do, they should not be surprised when their children or pupils go astray in later life.

**7.7 Pointer for sharing:** Do you stress internal values rather than mere external behavior (do's and don'ts) when teaching children? Share your answer with your small group.

**2\*** The Church and Christian society must produce righteous people (see Phil 1:11). Unfortunately, Christian schools, colleges and universities sometimes concentrate in producing doctors, lawyers, businessmen and the like who are more successful in their careers than in being righteous.

**2.1 Pointer for sharing:** If you are a parent or a teacher, would you take more pride in a rich, "successful" son, daughter or pupil who has lost his Christian moral sense, or in a son, daughter or pupil who is a righteous person who has just enough to make both ends meet? Share your answer with your small group.

## **British and French Mistake**

When the Allies, that is, the British and the French, wrested the Middle East from the Turkish Ottoman Empire in World War I, they were greatly helped by the Arabs. When it was time to divide the spoils, the French and the British took the big cities and countries for themselves like Cairo, Jerusalem, Beirut, Damascus, Baghdad and so on. They gave the desert lands to the Arabs.

Unknown to everybody, beneath the desert sand was oil, which in the 1950's and 1960's became true "black gold." This made the arabs rich and gave them pohtical power that the older powers have to reckon with in the modern world.

**OCTOBER 10, 1999**

**TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, A**

***ISAIAH 25: 6-10***

***THE LORD WILL PREPARE A BANQUET***

**MATTHEW 22:1-14**

**INVITE EVERYONE TO THE WEDDING**

### **A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEP 3**

"Jesus' invitation to enter his kingdom comes in the form of *parables*, a characteristic feature of his teaching... The parables are like mirrors for man... Jesus and the presence of the kingdom in this world are secretly at the heart of the parables..." (CCC 546). Jesus continued and perfected a long tradition of using symbols that the prophets of old also used.

**Focus Points. (1) Isaiah 25:6 On this mountain (Zion) the Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples / A feast of rich food**

**and choice wines, /juicy, rich food and pure, choice wines.** This poetic text is rich in symbols that Filipinos can easily understand: Yahweh is a "shelter from the rain, shade from the heat" (see v. 4). There are, however, some symbols that need to be explained. For example, why should rejoicing be done on a mountain? The answer, first of all, is that the Lord's Temple is in a Mountain (ancient Mount Moriah) in Jerusalem. Secondly, the ancestors of the Jews (the family of Abraham) as well as the Semitic people around them worshipped mountain gods and when they rejoiced they celebrated with food, wine, dancing in mountain shrines. When pagan idolaters turn away from their religious errors, they are required to abandon their false gods but not necessarily their manifestations of rejoicing. They can still eat rich food, drink choice wine and dance to their hearts' content — but now this is to be done in the presence of Yahweh.

**(2) Matthew 22:8 The king said to his servants, "The feast is ready but those who were invited were not worthy to come. Go out, therefore, into the main roads and invite to the feast whomever you find.** Jews and Gentiles are tested differently by God's invitation to his banquet. For the Jews the test is whether they will come or not. For the Gentiles the test is whether they will prove themselves worthy of the king's company or not. For them the symbolic test is whether or not they have taken the trouble to use a party garment (see vv. 11-13).

## **B. REFLECTION POINTS**

### **BIBLIARASAL STEPS 4 & 5: GOD SPEAKS, WE LISTEN AND SHARE**

**1.** Faith in God is not contrary to true joy; not even to the joy that finds expression in eating, drinking and dancing.

**1.1 Pointer for sharing:** Is the Filipino practice of a *fiesta* for the Lord to be praised or condemned? Share your answer with your small group.

2, Most Christians are Gentiles invited to the King's banquet. They should take the trouble to wear the appropriate party garment in the presence of the King, and not just eat, drink and dance without offering homage.

**2.1 Pointer for sharing:** In plain language, what do you think Christians should do to live up to their privilege of having been admitted to God's banquet hall (the Church)? Share your answer with your small group.

### **The Beggar in the Parish**

I know a parish in the USA where they have a problem with a homeless beggar. He is not really a troublemaker, and that is perhaps why the parishioners tolerate him. **But** he is a real nuisance.

He would appropriate lockers in the sacristy and other parts of the church and keep his things there. He would hide in the confessional or some other nook before the church is locked up for the night and then he would spend the night inside the church. If Church associations have clothes to be distributed, he would be the first to make a choice. If there are receptions in the parish hall, you will find him there helping himself to the food.

The parish priest and the parishioners have not had the heart to drive this beggar away. But if we stand by the biblical story of the man who was thrown out of the banquet hall because he did not have wedding party garments, this beggar will have to go.

**OCTOBER 17, 1999**

**World Mission Sunday**

**TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, A**

***ISAIAH 45:1. 4-6***

***GOD ACTED THROUGH KING CYRUS***

**MATTHEW 22:15-21**

**CAESAR, TOO, IS GOD'S SERVANT**

### **A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEP 3**

**In** some Asian countries with an islamic culture today, Christians use the name Allah to designate the one true God. This is an expression of the belief, based on biblical teaching, that in reality there is only ONE GOD. We should not think that there is a Christian God distinct from a Jewish God or an Islamic God and so on.

**Focus Points.** (1) **Isaiah 45:4-6** **For the sake of Jacob, my servant, of Israel my chosen one, / I have called you (king Cyrus) by your name, giving you a title, though you knew me not. / I am the Lord and there is no other, there is no God besides me. / It is I who arm you, though you know me not, / so that toward the rising and the setting of the sun / men may know that there is none besides me. I am the Lord, there is no other.** Monotheism reaches its peak in this text of Isaiah. Yahweh does not exist beside lower gods or the gods of the pagans. Whether the pagan worshipper knows it or not, Yahweh is the one being worshipped when the worship comes from the heart. Similarly, when world leaders like king Cyrus, who destroyed the Babylonian empire and inaugurated the Persian empire, do what is right, they are serving Yahweh, the one true God. Through such leaders, God gives benefits to his people.

**(2) Matthew 22:21b Jesus said to them, "Then repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.** Jesus supports the paying of taxes to the state because these taxes are used by the state for the good of the people, for example by providing them with roads, aqueducts, seaports, etc. In the last analysis, these good works of the state are also blessings from God. Even without Caesar knowing it, God can make him an instrument for bringing benefits to his people.

**B. REFLECTION POINTS**  
**BIBLIARASAL STEPS 4 & 5: GOD SPEAKS,**  
**WE LISTEN AND SHARE**

**1-** In the past, some students of religious beliefs and practices thought that humanity started off with the idea that there are many gods, and later this was purified by the monotheistic religions that affirmed the reality of just one God. Modern investigations indicate a different trend. It seems that humanity started with the belief in One God who manifested himself through different attributes and forms. In the course of time, the attributes were given symbolic expressions which were mistakenly worshipped as idols. Today, Christian visitors to Buddhist or Hindu temples are cautioned from making the erroneous conclusion that all the statues they see are idols or false gods. They are, instead, expressions of the different attributes of one mysterious reality that is beyond the grasp of the human mind. That reality purified from human misrepresentations and inaccuracies is what we Christians call the ONE GOD. Christians, Hindus, Buddhists Muslims and people of other religions may not use the same terms and symbols and may even have different theologies or spiritualities but the ULTIMATE REALITY they seek is in fact the ONE AND ONLY TRUE GOD.

**1.1 Pointer for sharing:** Why should Christians today engage in DIALOGUE with people of other faith? Share your answer with your small group.

2. The famous words of Jesus about Caesar are often misused to assert the "separation of Church and State." In the context of the New Testament, however, the implied teaching of Christ is that Church and State should cooperate in providing people with the benefits of a good life. The explicit teaching of Christ, is of course, that the Pharisees and Herodians should concern themselves more with rendering to God what belongs to God than in trying to trap him into making a political blunder.

*2.1 Pointer for sharing:* Have you sorted out your priorities in life so that you will render to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's? Share your answer with your small group.

### **Legacy of Deng Ziao Ping**

Deng Ziao Ping, the Chinese Communist leader who succeeded Mao Zedong, will never qualify to be beatified and much less canonized by the Catholic Church. Even the Chinese students who demonstrated at Tiananmen Square will never hail him as a hero and indeed condemn him instead as a villain. For these reasons, he is very much like king Cyrus, the founder of the biblical Persian Empire. Yet, in today's First Reading, Cyrus is called the "Servant of Yahweh." That's because he destroyed the Babylonian Empire and sent the Jews exiled in Babylon back to Jerusalem and Judaea. Hence, it is not anathema to call Deng Ziao Ping also a Servant of God.

The legacy for which Deng Ziao Ping could be praised is his policy, still being followed today, to open China to the so-called "market economy" and thus bring a measure of prosperity to eastern China. He said that the Chinese people, who have already suffered for so long, now deserve to live a better life.

**OCTOBER 24, 1999**  
**THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, A**

***EXODUS 22:20-26***  
***BE COMPASSIONATE***

**MATTHEW 22:34-40**  
**LOVE GOD AND NEIGHBOR**

### **A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEP 3**

Love, it is said, is a "many splendored thing." Evidently, this refers to romantic love or erotic love, which makes the self feel splendid. The love that Jesus recommends is different, by far, from this. It makes the self disappear from the center of one's concerns. Compassionate love (Old Testament HESED) and Christian love (New Testament AGAPE) are both self-effacing. The first is based on the liberating love that Yahweh showed to his people when they were slaves in Egypt. The second is based on the example given by Christ during his public ministry and especially through his redeeming death on the cross,

**Focus Points. (1) Exodus 22: 26b If (a poor, oppressed man) cries out to me, I will hear him; for I am compassionate.** No matter how laws or institutions try to distribute wealth and material benefits equitably to all, human society has its disadvantaged members. This may be due to the death or sickness of the breadwinners, accident, calamities, war, and other misfortunes. Yet, it is never the will of God that the disadvantaged be abandoned or further oppressed. They still belong to the people with whom God made a covenant, and the covenant requires that members of that people who are in a better position are to show compassion.



**(2) Matthew 22: 34-40** When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them [a scholar of the law] tested him by asking, "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments." The two commandments of love are ALIKE not because of their formulation or because the intensity of the love that is required is the same for both, but because they require THE SAME KIND of love, namely, AGAPE, which is a self-effacing love. Whenever self-love lurks as the reason for love and service to God and neighbor, the whole thing is spoiled.

## **B. REFLECTION POINTS**

### **BIBLIARASAL STEPS 4 & 5: GOD SPEAKS, WE LISTEN AND SHARE**

1. It is easy enough to be compassionate once in a while. But what, if, at almost every corner you turn, there is a man, woman or child begging for your help? It becomes a social problem and it can be solved only by everybody pitching in to help. Most of all it is solved by the society's commitment to share wealth equitably with all members.

*/./ Pointer for sharing:* Do you think the Church is doing enough to achieve a "compassionate society" where wealth is shared equitably? Share your answer with your small group.

2. The great Christian ideal for love of God and neighbor is no other than Christ himself. St. Paul described his mission as the emptying (KENOSIS) of his self. This is what we, too,

must try to achieve, as Christian mystics (like St. Paul) and saints (like Mo. Teresa of Calcutta) have emphasized.

**2,1 Pointer for sharing:** If Mo. Teresa of Calcutta were not a self-effacing person, could she have loved and served God and neighbor as she did? Share your answer with your small group.

### **Modern Compassion**

Compassion in the modern world means treating people as human beings and not just as items or numbers in a list. This is illustrated by the story of Beverley Lancaster from Birmingham, England.

Beverley was a clerical officer in the Birmingham City Council. She was given a promotion, but it was against her will. She was given a more challenging job, which she felt she could not do well because she lacked the experience and qualifications for it. The Council promised to offer her training and support but these did not materialize.

Soon, Beverley was often sick because of job-related stress. Finally, after four years, she retired and asked for compensation for her psychiatric illness. After she was awarded a compensation of .67,000 pounds (\$ 105,600) by a judge, Beverley said: "I should still be working. My employers should have listened to me but I was treated like a number not a human being."

**OCTOBER 31, 1999**

**THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, A**

***MALACHI 1:14-2:2.8-10***

***YOU HAVE TURNED ASIDE FROM THE WAY***

**MATTHEW 23:1-12**

**MANY WORDS, FEW DEEDS**

**All Saints Day, Nov.1, is on Monday this week.**

### **A. STUDY OF THE TEXT / BIBLIARASAL STEP 3**

The Christian religion is a WAY and a Christian community must be journeying in it and making progress. However, a community can stagnate. A sure sign of stagnation is when the priests and preachers or the leaders of the community do not know how to be its servants.

**Focus Points. (1) Malachi 2:8 You (priests who have returned from the Babylonian exile) have turned aside from the way, and have caused many to falter by your instructions.** The Jewish exiles returned from a foreign land to the holy land of their ancestors, but that did not make them more faithful to Yahweh. Their priests, who were supposed to lead the way to holiness, were indifferent and did not care much about serving the Lord. They are singled out for reprimand.

**(2) Matthew 23: 3b. 8.11 (The scribes and the Pharisees) preach but they do not practice... As for you... the greatest among you must be your servant.** For Jesus, any preaching which is not a witnessing to an inner holiness might be of some help to the listener but of no use to the spiritual development of the

preacher. Christian preachers must be more concerned about what they learn from serving their community of brothers and sisters, than about the perks they can get from their ministry.

**B. REFLECTION POINTS**  
**BIBLIARASAL STEPS 4 & S: GOD SPEAKS,**  
**WE LISTEN AND SHARE**

1. Christian priests are expected to be leaders in holiness, which is an inner righteousness of the heart, soul and mind more than an outward behavior. More is demanded from them than from the priests of the Jerusalem Temple.

*1.1 Pointer for sharing:* What happens when the priests of a Christian community are holy? What happens when they are lacking in holiness? Share your answer with your small group.

2. Christian preachers must see themselves as servants of the Christian community in which they exercise their ministry. They are not to lord over others or demand perks for themselves. It should be good enough for them to be like Jesus, who came to his brothers and sisters not to be served but to serve.

*2.1 Pointer for sharing:* What happens to a Christian community when its preachers and teachers put on airs? Share your answer with your small group.

**Wrong Strategy**

Critics of the Catholic Church in the Philippines keep blaming the Church for the government's failure to stem the excessive growth of population in the Philippines. Actually, the government should only blame itself. How much aid does the government give to the Church to make the Church's own population control programs successful? None.

Yet, the government spends money to distribute 12 to 14 million condoms annually (40 % of the 30 to 35 million supplied to the public annually). Even if each condom costs only 10 pesos, that would mean 120 to 140 million pesos. It supplies majority (51% ?) of nearly 15 million cycles of pills — one cycle covers one month's dose — sold nationwide each year. At 100 pesos per cycle that would be 765 million pesos annually.

If only 80% of that money is given to the population control program of the Catholic Church (of which more than 80% of Filipinos are members), there would be no need to complain of a very high population growth in this country. We should explode the myth that the Catholic Church is against population control. It is not, but it wants it done by following God's laws. If the Catholic Church is not effective in controlling population growth, it is because the government has not been providing it with the funds to succeed. Instead, the money goes to companies that manufacture and sell condoms and contraceptive (abortive?) pills. Who is fooling whom?

## **ERRATA**

**Document: THE GREAT JUBILEE OF THE YEAR 2000:  
JURIDICO-PASTORAL ASPECTS OF ITS  
CELEBRATION**

**Issue: May-June 1999, vol. LXXV, no. 812**

Second Paragraph of page 350 should read:

>>, The closing of the Jubilee year will occur on the Epiphany of our Lord Jesus Christ on the 6th of January 2001.

Number 3, second paragraph of page 352 should read:

... Nevertheless, it is fitting that the faithful should frequently receive the grace of the sacrament of Penance in order to grow in conversion and purity of heart.