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NEW WIND WILL BLOW

Vicente Cajilig, OP

INAUGURATION MASS: HOMILY

Pope Benedict XVI

SHORT BIOGRAPHY: HIS HOLINESS

JOHN PAUL II

Holy See Press Office



REMEMBERING THE NATIONAL 1ST FILIPINO YOUTH

IN ITALY SUMMER CAMP AND PILGRIMAGE AT THE

OUR LADY OF LORETO, IN ANCONA

Ruperto Santos

MALACANANG ASSURES CBCP PRESIDENT

OF PRO-ENVIRONMENT, PRO-PEOPLE ACTION ON MINING

CBCP

ALIENATION OF CHURCH PROPERTY:

WHY AND HOW?

Javier Gonzalez, OP



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Habemus Papam
Benedictvm XVI
19 Aprilis 2005

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EDITORIAL

New Wind Will Blow

VICENTE CAJILIG, O.P.

The news about the death of John Paul II moved the world: heads of states have good words to say; leaders of religious groups have lessons to impart coming from their encounter with the Pope; ordinary faithful shed tears; and many flocked to churches and oratories. There seems to be no reason to stay unaffected by death of such a human being: a religious leader, a statesman, a philosopher, a theologian, an inspirer for dialogue, a man with deep reading of past and present realities. He was a man full of vision. He was as dynamic in older age as in his youthful days. All see in him a "Papa" - a Father of contemporary men and women.

Young people have all reason to cry. He was a model for them. He was a humanist for them. He was a sports man for them. He was all that they can aspire for. If only they can inherit a speck of his greatness.

The demise of a good man is a loss for those who are left. The goodness of John Paul II is better seen in his volumes of works not only on religious issues, but also on those areas which belong to the deepest segment of human heart. He had a lot to say about state and society. He had vision for the development of culture truly rooted on persons.

The providence of God placed him in time and situation as concrete as in the last eight decades. At first he struggled for the interest and good of Poland. But later he had to face a global community, he being the leader of the Catholic world. He saw the undesirable aspects of both communism and capitalism. But above all he had a clear reading and vision what a Christian world should be.

His death reminds us of another death three months ago: that Sr. Lucia dos Santos of Fatima. Both the Pope and the good sister lived in the different world. The former battled with the *ad extra*, and, the latter lived in the *ad intra*, she being cloistered for several decades. But both guided the second portion of the last century with wisdom.

Both have served as two wings for the contemporary times. Both have told the world to start, to move on, to pause, and to restart again. While they were expert of the inner spiritual world, they knew how to decipher what should be done in society: both religious and civil.

The legacies of both John Paul II and Sr. Lucia are still here to remain. Scholars, analysts, visionaries, philosophers, sociologist and others would go back to their writings and

messages so valid for the world today, if the world is to survive: and the world will only survive if it walks along the pathway of the merciful God.

May the spirits of the two mortals which have passed to the world of the immortals blow a new wind, spark a new light, rain down more intercessions upon humanity, almost lost but struggles to survive the many quests of life.

Short Biography: His Holiness John Paul II

HOLY SEE PRESS OFFICE

Karol Jozef Wojtyla, known as John Paul II since his October 1978 election to the papacy, was born in Wadowice, a small city 50 kilometres from Cracow, on May 18, 1920. He was the second of two sons born to Karol Wojtyla and Emilia Kaczorowska. His mother died in 1929. His eldest brother Edmund, a doctor, died in 1932 and his father, a non-commissioned army officer died in 1941.

He made his First Holy Communion at age 9 and was confirmed at 18. Upon graduation from *Marcin Wadowita* high school in Wadowice, he enrolled in Cracow's Jagiellonian University in 1938 and in a school for drama.

The Nazi occupation forces closed the university in 1939 and young Karol had to work in a quarry (1940-1944) and then in the *Solvay* chemical factory to earn his living and to avoid being deported to Germany.

In 1942, aware of his call to the priesthood, he began courses in the clandestine seminary of Cracow, run by Cardinal Adam Stefan Sapieha, archbishop of Cracow. At the same time, Karol Wojtyla was one of the pioneers of the "Rhapsodic Theatre," also clandestine.

After the Second World War, he continued his studies in the major seminary of Cracow, once it had re-opened, and in the faculty of theology of the Jagiellonian University, until his priestly ordination in Cracow on November 1, 1946.

Soon after, Cardinal Sapieha sent him to Rome where he worked under the guidance of the French Dominican, Garrigou-Lagrange. He finished his doctorate in theology in 1948 with a thesis on the topic of faith in the works of St. John of the Cross. At that time, during his vacations, he exercised his pastoral ministry among the Polish immigrants of France, Belgium and Holland.

In 1948 he returned to Poland and was vicar of various parishes in Cracow as well as chaplain for the university students until 1951, when he took up again his studies on philosophy and theology. In 1953 he defended a thesis on "evaluation of the possibility of founding a Catholic ethic on the ethical system of Max Scheler" at Lublin Catholic University. Later he became professor of moral theology and social ethics in the major seminary of Cracow and in the Faculty of Theology of Lublin.

On July 4, 1958, he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Cracow by Pope Pius XII, and was consecrated September 28, 1958, in Wawel Cathedral, Cracow, by Archbishop Baziak.

On January 13, 1964, he was nominated Archbishop of Cracow by Pope Paul VI, who made him a cardinal June 26, 1967.

Besides taking part in Vatican Council II with an important contribution to the elaboration of the Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, Cardinal Wojtyla participated in all the assemblies of the Synod of Bishops.

Since the start of his Pontificate on October 16, 1978, Pope John Paul II has completed **104 pastoral visits outside of Italy** and **146 within Italy**. As Bishop of Rome he has visited **317** of the **333 parishes**.

His principal documents include **14 encyclicals**, **15 apostolic exhortations**, **11 apostolic constitutions** and **45 apostolic letters**. The Pope has also published **five books**: "Crossing the Threshold of Hope" (October 1994); "Gift and Mystery: On the 50th Anniversary of My Priestly Ordination" (November 1996); "Roman Triptych - Meditations", a book of poems (March 2003); "Rise, Let Us Be On Our Way" (May 2004) and "Memory and Identity" (publication spring 2005).

John Paul II has presided at **147 beatification ceremonies (1,338 Blesseds proclaimed)** and **51 canonization ceremonies (482 Saints)** during his pontificate. He has held 9 **consistories** in which he created **231 (+ 1 *in pectore*) cardinals**. He has also convened **six plenary meetings of the College of Cardinals**.

From 1978 to today the Holy Father has presided at **15 Synods of Bishops**: six ordinary (1980, 1983, 1987, 1990, 1994, 2001), one extraordinary (1985) and eight special (1980, 1991, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998 [2] and 1999).

No other Pope has encountered so many individuals like John Paul II: to date, more than **17,600,000 pilgrims have participated in the General Audiences** held on Wednesdays (more than 1,160). Such figure is without counting all other special audiences and religious ceremonies held [more than 8 million pilgrims during the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 alone] and the millions of faithful met during pastoral visits made in Italy and throughout the world. It must also be remembered the numerous government personalities encountered during **38 official visits** and in the **738 audiences and meetings held with Heads of State**, and even the **246 audiences and meetings with Prime Ministers**.

Message on the Death of His Holiness Pope John Paul II

ARCHBISHOP GAUDENCIO ROSALES, D.D.

I ask all our countrymen to pray for our beloved Pope John Paul II, who has peacefully returned home to the Father. With the rest of the world, we mourn the loss of a shepherd and father, who led, guided and accompanied us in our journey through life. As Filipinos, we especially recall the times he was physically present with us, being amongst us and blessing us. And at this moment of grief, we find comfort in prayer for our Holy Father, whose zeal for service is incomparable.

Pope John Paul II was an extraordinary leader, an extraordinary person. He was truly a special man of God, who gave himself completely. *Totus Tuus* (I'm All Yours) - that was his motto, the one he lived out to the end of his days.

This was a different man. He spoke on issues he believed in, especially on life, truth, justice, compassion and love. He became the conscience of mankind.

That is why the entire world is grieving. Prayers had been offered by millions of people all over the world since the days when his health began to fail. Many times, in answer to our prayers, our dear Holy Father was restored back to health. It seems now that our Lord took him away, but slowly, to prepare us for the day when we will never see the man again. His once booming voice was not abruptly silenced, but gradually lowered down to hardly a whisper. It was perhaps to ease our pain of loss - for the Pope had already established his legacy even as God was withdrawing him from the scene.

Let us join the entire Christendom in this grief for our loss. But in our sorrow, we continue to have hope. We thank God for giving us Pope John Paul II who has for a long time served the Church. Let us also pray for the Church, for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the choice of a new pastor for the Church and the flock of believers. Let us pray for a new pastor who will continue the leadership of Pope John Paul II, who we love and who has loved so much.

Message After the Mass for His Holiness John Paul II at the Manila Cathedral

ARCHBISHOP GAUDENCIO ROSALES, D.D.

In the spirit of unity with Catholics all over the world, the Archdiocese of Manila salutes this exceptional man who in life understood grievance, hunger and the struggle to be free, to be one. We celebrate the life of this man who knew God and loved Him with Jesus Christ His Son, encouraging us to love God and to serve Him as image in our fellow humans. We acclaim this shepherd who serve the Church so faithfully and lived for us so endearingly. That when he departed from this world he left the people of different persuasion, the hope, that if only we desire as passionately as he did then, truth, harmony, brotherhood, love and peace are still attainable. Together we talk these as believers, we thank God for gifting the Church at its most appropriate time, the shepherding of this man. Deep in him as our guide and making him speak as the conscience of men.

Pope John Paul, a special father, a brother, a friend. Loved us, continue loving us from where you are with the Father. We thank you, we bless you and ask the Lord to love and bless you and may He grant you peace. Amen

We have a peaceful custom in the Philippines. When somebody leaves our home, we have what we call giving the person a *pabaon*. In our Philippine culture it's called a "**send-off gift**." But when he returns he brings a *pasalubong* which means a welcome or homecoming gift, our culture spirit. But if he does not return, we have what we call a *padala*, something sent. It's part of the culture. Usually what we give the person is something he loves and he treasures. We will do that. In the name of all Philippines, we will treat the Holy Father to a *pabaon*. Something he loves because in our country *kapag wala kang pabaon, wala kang pasalubong. Kapag wala kang pabaon, wala kang padala*.

And you know what, from the roots of it we are dealing here with a saint. It's everyone's perception that the man was not just a shepherd. The man was not just a leader. This man maybe is a saint. If he is, its good to sent him off with a **pabaon**. If he becomes a saint, *marami siyang padala*.

We will give what he wants. You know that man, side by side with the Virgin Mary, he is totally Marian. The world does not talk of it so well, the television had not told this yet just as devotion, but he is totally Marian. And he took that motto, *Totus Tuus*, in Latin, totally yours. It was not his originally. *Totus Tuus* is imbedded in the Theology of the Fiat in Luke 1. Theology of the Fiat, when the angel explained to Mary that "you're going to be the Mother of the Son of

God." Mary completely surrendered. Totaliter to a fiat, that the meaning of it. Freedom means the act of Mary.

Then there was a saint ahead of him, John Paul, who took the Theology of the Fiat and root in devotion. The name of the saint is Saint Marie Louie de Monfort, a French princess. And girls who are in this cathedral could remember, that the Legion of Mary, the spirituality of the Monfort, when you renew your commitment to serve your ultimate and you make the pronouncement "I am kind, my queen, my mother and my whole desire." "Totally yours" that is the meaning of Totus Tuus. John Paul took that. Deep devotion and deeper theology.

We'll give him what he likes as our *pabaon*. I ask you to stand please, everybody stand. Our first gift to him is something he likes. We recite the Hail Mary for him.

*Hail Mary full of grace the Lord is with you,
blessed are you among women
and blessed is the fruit of your womb Jesus.
Holy Mary Mother of God, pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

And before we give him the second gift, also, Marian, you may not be aware that when the Holy Father was shot 1981, the 13th of May, that was the feast day of Our Lady of Fatima. The first apparition of our Blessed Mother, when you're shot at St. Peter's square. You know what, you go to Fatima, the statue and you'll see at the top of that crown. Not a jewel but the bullet that stuck the body of John Paul II was hanging there inside the crown. Not this one. The man is a "totaliter, Maria", totally man, totally God's.

Our second gift is our song for our Blessed Mother
which everybody loves, Immaculate Mother.

*Immaculate Mother we come at thy call.
And thou at thy altar before thee we for.
Ave, Ave, Ave Maria
Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.*

*In grief and temptation
In joy and in pain.
We seek thee our Mother
Nor seek thee in pain.
Ave, Ave, Ave Maria
Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.*

Message on the Death of Pope John Paul II

JAIME CARDINAL SIN, D.D.

With profound grief, I join the whole of Christendom and all the peoples of the world in mourning the passing of our beloved Pope John Paul II. He has gone back to the Father. He has returned to the loving embrace of Mary. He is now our intercessor in heaven.

Pope John Paul II will forever be in the hearts of Filipinos. His two visits were moments of grace for us as a people. He went all over the country to make us feel his paternal love and pastoral concern. He canonized the first Filipino saint - San Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila and beatified Blessed Pedro Calungsod. During the dark house of martial law, he rallied the Philippine bishops in pursuing justice and promoting the dignity of the human person. He chose to be with young people all over the world, here in Manila. And it was here in our country where he celebrated the largest attended Holy Mass in history. He considered Filipinos as a phenomenal people!

We love him because we share a lot of concern with him. The Pope and Filipinos know how it is to rise from the ashes of war and atrocities. We both understand the struggle for justice, good governance and genuine economic development. And above all, we share with him a deep love for the Blessed Mother. The sweet name of Mary is always in his lips and ours. We can very much identify with him. Truly he is our father and we are his children!

While the whole Church lost a father and shepherd, I lost a brother and a dear friend. I would never forget the conclave of 1978 which elected him Supreme Pontiff. We were lodged together because we were among the youngest. From there blossomed a warm friendship and fraternal bonding. Later on, defending the move of the Philippine bishops, he would tell me that EDSA 1 is part of the mission of the Church, that it was our duty to pursue freedom, restore justice and defend the poor and the oppressed. Everytime we meet, he would always mention his great love for the Filipino people.

Farewell Holy Father! You have passed to eternal life with Jesus and Mary. May His Divine Mercy and her maternal care accompany you to the Kingdom.

John Paul II we love you!

God be with you!

Statement on the Death of Pope John Paul II

RICARDO CARDINAL VIDAL, D.D.

On the eve of the Feast of the Divine Mercy in Rome, the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II passed into eternal life. I ask all the people of the Archdiocese of Cebu to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.'

The Holy Father's death came at a time when the whole Christian world is celebrating the season of Easter. Today is also the Feast of the Divine Mercy which the Pope himself instituted on the Second Sunday of Easter. It is therefore with great hope that we meet the news of his death, firmly believing in the resurrection of the Lord who told his disciples: "I am the resurrection. Anyone who believes in me, even though that person dies, will live, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die" (Jn 11:24-26)

We thank the Lord for having given us a shepherd who is truly after his own heart. Pope John Paul II has loyally and courageously brought the Church into the threshold of

the new millennium, and he has set us firmly on a course towards meeting the challenges of the modern world with faith and trust in the Lord who is our true Shepherd.

We will treasure the teachings of Pope John Paul II, who did not only teach with intellectual authority but also gave powerful witness by the circumstances of his life. He was a man who bridged many differences but also drew the line where the integrity of the Christian message was at stake. In life and in death, he taught us the dignity of human life, the splendor of truth, and the power of faith.

At the inauguration of his pontificate in 1978, Pope John Paul II assured the Church with the words of the Lord: "Do not be afraid." His death should not cause us any reason to be afraid, for as he has championed the cause of the Church while still on earth, so does he even more become our advocate in the afterlife.

As we pray for the eternal repose of his soul, let us also pray for the Church, that the Lord will always guide us according to His holy will.

*April 3, 2005
Feast of the Divine Mercy*

Mass for Pope John Paul II on the Feast of the Annunciation, Day of the Unborn*

HERNANDO CORONEL

We are in deep sorrow. We continue mourning for His Holiness Pope John Paul II who has gone to his rest in the Lord. We fervently pray for his eternal repose. We also pay tribute to him today as the promoter and defender of the culture of life. He was a fierce advocate of the sanctity and inviolability of the life of each human being. We entrust on this feast of the Annunciation our deceased pontiff unto the care of the Blessed Mother.

His motto TOTUS TUUS, I am all yours is an entrustment and commendation unto the love of Mary. Pope John Paul II is a very Marian pope and on this feast of the Annunciation our beloved pope helps us meditate on the Incar-

** Homily delivered by Msgr. Hernando Coronel, CBCP Secretary General at Quiapo Church in a Mass for Pope John Paul II on the feast of the Annunciation, Day of the Unborn April 4, 2005 at 5:30 pm.*

nation. "And she conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit." Through the committed FIAT of our Lady, the human existence of Jesus began at conception in the womb of the handmaid of the Lord. Even at his death, our dear Pontiff desires that we celebrate the Gospel of Life (*Evangelium Vitae*) on this very important day in the Church's liturgical life. Death is not the end. The risen Lord has conquered the sting of death. Mary said yes to be a mother, indeed an honor to be *Theotokos*, Mother of God; her reply has been awaited through the ages and her answer in the affirmative made possible, made into reality the redemption of humanity. Mary chose life. The archangel Gabriel carried the good news to Mary. This celestial being was the messenger of the Gospel of life - life for Jesus, life in the fullest and redemptive sense for us. "Be it done to me according to Thy Word." Mary consented to be the living vessel of the Incarnate Word. We are eternally grateful for Mary's decision. His humble handmaid is the highest honor of humanity. With Mary, we fervently pray for the beginning of new life, the start of eternal life of this pope who worked so hard in the vineyard of the Lord.

The announcement of the pope's death is naturally filled with tears but there is also a joy and glory of God's embrace for him. There will be soon an announcement of a new pope, a fresh beginning for the church...

Pope John Paul II has left us a legacy in his encyclical letter, *Evangelium Vitae*. I believe even in death, he proclaims life especially this day. The pope wrote: "Even more so the value of the person from the moment of conception is celebrated in the meeting between the Virgin Mary and Elizabeth and between the two children whom they are carrying in the

womb." Mother Teresa of Calcutta has a beautiful reflection on this: The very first person to greet Jesus was an unborn child. This was when John the Baptist leapt for joy in the womb of Elizabeth. We pray for the unborn on this Solemnity of the Annunciation. The Church is the guardian of the defenseless, those whose voice is weak because Christ precisely humbled himself becoming weak when He assumed our human nature. Mary's word of FIAT was translated into charitable action when she visited Elizabeth who was with child, a sign given her by the Archangel Gabriel. The bond between precursor and Messiah was already established in the womb. "For lo, as soon as the voice of the salvation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy!" Pope John Paul II wrote: "The human being is to be respected and treated as a person from the moment of conception; and therefore from that same moment his rights as a person must be recognized among which in the first place is the inviolable right of every innocent human being to life.

To love one's neighbor is to promote life. Human society in order to remain human, to stay civilized is for the protection of its members, especially its weakest. The soul of society is lost when this duty to uphold life is reneged. The culture of death is pervasive. It is a dark force seeking a utilitarian solution where members stay as long as they are able, which advocates abortion, contraception and euthanasia that destroys the very fabric of family and life. Our beloved pope compared the sins against life, abortion and euthanasia to the killing of Abel by his brother Cain. "The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground." The blood of every other human being who has been killed since Abel is also a voice

raised to the Lord. There is also the blood, which flows from the pierced side of Christ on the Cross which "speaks more graciously" than the blood of Abel; indeed it expresses and requires a more radical "justice" and above all it implores mercy. Crimes against life spill blood not only of our first brother Abel but Christ as well. Truly, the person of faith must be filled with holy indignation since countless brothers and sisters are being killed in sanctuaries that were meant to protect them. An outrage of a concerned Christian needs to see the figure of Christ crucified when every act of abortion and euthanasia occur yet filled with trust and hope as Christ triumphs in His love and mercy for sinners.

We pray for the unborn, the victims of abortion and contraceptive-abortifacients, *Evangelium Vitae* acknowledged that close connection between contraception and abortion: "It is being demonstrated in an alarming way by the development of chemical products, intra uterine devices and vaccines which, distributed with the same ease as contraceptives really act as abortifacients in the very early stages of the development of the life of the new human being." Our pope clarified those who would wish to redefine when life begins. Some propose a definition other than conception. "Some people try to justify abortion by claiming that the result of conception, at least up to a certain number of days cannot yet be considered a personal human life." Indeed there are lawmakers who redefine life as beginning at implantation, not conception, a redefinition contrary to our Philippine constitution. Our pope reaffirmed the Declaration on Procured Abortion by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith: But in fact, "from the time that the ovum is fertilized, a life is begun

which is neither that of the father nor the mother; it is rather the life of a new human being with his own growth. It would never be made human if it were not human already. This has always been clear, and... modern genetic science offers clear confirmation. It has demonstrated that from the first instance there is established the programme of what this living being will be: a person, this individual person with his characteristic aspects already well determined. Right from fertilization the adventure of a human life begins, and each of its capacities requires time - a rather lengthy time - to find its place and to be in a position to act".

I believe the words of Pope John Paul II from *Evangelium Vita?* are directed to lawmakers contemplating the passage of anti-life bills. "I repeat once more that a law which violates an innocent person's natural right to life is unjust and as such is not valid as a law. For this reason I urgently appeal once more to all political leaders not to pass laws which by disregarding the dignity of the person undermine the very fabric of society." Pope John Paul II spoke his mind on population management: "Today an important part of policies which favour life is the issue of population growth. Certainly public authorities have a responsibility to "intervene to orient the demography of the population". But such interventions must always take into account and respect the primary and inalienable responsibility of married couples and families, and cannot employ methods which fail to respect the person and fundamental human rights, beginning with the right to life of every innocent human being. It is therefore morally unacceptable to encourage, let alone impose, the use of methods such as contraception, sterilization and abortion

in order to regulate births. The ways of solving the population problem are quite different. Governments and the various international agencies must above all strive to create economic, social, public health and cultural conditions which will enable married couples to make their choices about procreation in full freedom and with genuine responsibility. They must then make efforts to ensure "greater opportunities and a fairer distribution of wealth so that everyone can share equitably in the goods of creation. Solutions must be sought on the global level by establishing a true economy of communion and sharing of goods, in both the national and international order". This is the only way to respect the dignity of persons and families, as well as the authentic cultural patrimony of peoples.

We finally ask to intercession of the Communion of the Saints. We ask for the aid of Our Lady of Guadalupe, our Pro-life Patroness and the Holy Innocents. We know that the battle against the culture of death is an uphill battle. We are aware of the material resources funding the advocates of the culture of death. We rely on divine help. We have a just cause. We are holding on that there is still some good in the world and its worth fighting for. We know that with our heavenly friends, good will prevail in the end.

As we pray for the repose of Pope John Paul II and seek the intercession of Mary and the saints, we encourage one another in the faith for God, the author of life, is our strength. God bless us all!

A Prayer for Pope John Paul II

CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES (CBCP)

*Our Father, Lord God,
We come to you today,
Our heads bowed in sorrow and
Our hearts heavy with grief at the loss
Of our dearly-loved shepherd and father, John Paul II.*

In this moment of deep anguish, we long for comfort
and consolation, we seek strength and fortitude,
as we surrender him and ourselves to Your will,
trusting that as You have called him home,
You now hold him in your bosom, where he now rests
in everlasting peace and joy.

We thank You for the gift of life of Karol Jozef Wojtyla.
He has been Your special gift to the world,
a man you have sent to lead and to serve,
to teach and to counsel,
to show us the path to peace,
the way to holiness that leads to You,

We pray for our dear Holy Father,
who in life has held each of us,
Your children, in his heart
You have given him the fullness of life,
where now with the angels and saints,
he gives eternal praise and glory to You.
Our joy lies in our faith that as
You have drawn him at last to You,
holding him now in Your heart,
he will continue to strive to bring us
also close to Your Heart.

We pray for the Church and the people of God,
whom he dearly loved and faithfully served
during his earthly life.

We pray that all his intentions for the Church
and for the world,
all that he stood for and lived by,
all that he had dreamed, hoped and worked for,
may find fulfillment in us and through us.
Help us to preserve in the mission
You have begun and which
he ardently continued in life.

We ask this through our Lord, Jesus Christ, Your Son,
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,
one God forever and ever.
Amen.

DOCUMENTATION

Inauguration Mass: Homily

POPE BENEDICT XVI

*Your Eminences,
My dear Brother Bishops and Priests,
Distinguished Authorities and Members
of the Diplomatic Corps,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

During these days of great intensity, we have chanted the litany of the saints on three different occasions: at the funeral of our Holy Father John Paul II; as the Cardinals entered the Conclave; and again today, when we sang it with the response: *Tu ilium adiuva* - sustain the new Successor of Saint Peter. On each occasion, in a particular way, I found great consolation in listening to this prayerful chant. How alone we all felt after the passing of John Paul II - the Pope who for over twenty-six years had been our shepherd and guide on our journey through life! He crossed the threshold of the next life, entering into the mystery of God. But he did not take this step alone. Those who believe are never alone - neither in life nor in death. At that moment, we could call

upon the Saints from every age - his friends, his brothers and sisters in the faith - knowing that they would form a living procession to accompany him into the next world, into the glory of God. We knew that his arrival was awaited. Now we know that he is among his own and is truly at home. We were also consoled as we made our solemn entrance into Conclave, to elect the one whom the Lord had chosen. How would we be able to discern his name? How could 115 Bishops, from every culture and every country, discover the one on whom the Lord wished to confer the mission of binding and loosing? Once again, we knew that we were not alone, we knew that we were surrounded, led and guided by the friends' of God. And now, at this moment, weak servant of God that I am, I must assume this enormous task, which truly exceeds all human capacity. How can I do this? How will I be able to do it? All of you, my dear friends, have just invoked the entire host of Saints, represented by some of the great names in the history of God's dealings with mankind. In this way, I too can say with renewed conviction: I am not alone. I do not have to carry alone what in truth I could never carry alone. All the Saints of God are there to protect me, to sustain me and to carry me. And your prayers, my dear friends, your indulgence, your love, your faith and your hope accompany me. Indeed, the communion of Saints consists not only of the great men and women who went before us and whose names we know. All of us belong to the communion of Saints, we who have been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we who draw life from the gift of Christ's Body and Blood, through which he transforms us and makes us like himself. Yes, the Church is alive - this is the wonderful experience of these

days. During those sad days of the Pope's illness and death, it became wonderfully evident to us that the Church is alive. And the Church is young. She holds within herself the future of the world and therefore shows each of us the way towards the future. The Church is alive and we are seeing it: we are experiencing the joy that the Risen Lord promised his followers. The Church is alive - she is alive because Christ is alive, because he is truly risen. In the suffering that we saw on the Holy Father's face in those days of Easter, we contemplated the mystery of Christ's Passion and we touched his wounds. But throughout these days we have also been able, in a profound sense, to touch the Risen One. We have been able to experience the joy that he promised, after a brief period of darkness, as the fruit of his resurrection.

The Church is alive - with these words, I greet with great joy and gratitude all of you gathered here, my venerable brother Cardinals and Bishops, my dear priests, deacons, Church workers, catechists. I greet you, men and women Religious, witnesses of the transfiguring presence of God. I greet you, members of the lay faithful, immersed in the great task of building up the Kingdom of God which spreads throughout the world, in every area of life. With great affection I also greet all those who have been reborn in the sacrament of Baptism but are not yet in full communion with us; and you, my brothers and sisters of the Jewish people, to whom we are joined by a great shared spiritual heritage, one rooted in God's irrevocable promises. Finally, like a wave gathering force, my thoughts go out to all men and women of today, to believers and non-believers alike.

Dear friends! At this moment there is no need for me to present a programme of governance. I was able to give an indication of what I see as my task in my Message of Wednesday 20 April, and there will be other opportunities to do so. My real programme of governance is not to do my own will, not to pursue my own ideas, but to listen, together with the whole Church, to the word and the will of the Lord, to be guided by Him, so that He himself will lead the Church at this hour of our history. Instead of putting forward a programme, I should simply like to comment on the two liturgical symbols which represent the inauguration of the Petrine Ministry; both these symbols, moreover, reflect clearly what we heard proclaimed in today's readings.

The first symbol is the Pallium, woven in pure wool, which will be placed on my shoulders. This ancient sign, which the Bishops of Rome have worn since the fourth century, may be considered an image of the yoke of Christ, which the Bishop of this City, the Servant of the Servants of God, takes upon his shoulders. God's yoke is God's will, which we accept. And this will does not weigh down on us, oppressing us and taking away our freedom. To know what God wants, to know where the path of life is found - this was Israel's joy, this was her great privilege. It is also our joy: God's will does not alienate us, it purifies us - even if this can be painful - and so it leads us to ourselves. In this way, we serve not only him, but the salvation of the whole world, of all history. The symbolism of the Pallium is even more concrete: the lamb's wool is meant to represent the lost, sick or weak sheep which the shepherd places on his shoulders and carries to the waters of life. For the Fathers of

the Church, the parable of the lost sheep, which the shepherd seeks in the desert, was an image of the mystery of Christ and the Church. The human race - every one of us - is the sheep lost in the desert which no longer knows the way. The Son of God will not let this happen; he cannot abandon humanity in so wretched a condition. He leaps to his feet and abandons the glory of heaven, in order to go in search of the sheep and pursue it, all the way to the Cross. He takes it upon his shoulders and carries our humanity; he carries us all - he is the good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. What the Pallium indicates first and foremost is that we are all carried by Christ. But at the same time it invites us to carry one another. Hence the Pallium becomes a symbol of the shepherd's mission, of which the Second Reading and the Gospel speak. The pastor must be inspired by Christ's holy zeal: for him it is not a matter of indifference that so many people are living in the desert. And there are so many kinds of desert. There is the desert of poverty, the desert of hunger and thirst, the desert of abandonment, of loneliness, of destroyed love. There is the desert of God's darkness, the emptiness of souls no longer aware of their dignity or the goal of human life. The external deserts in the world are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast. Therefore the earth's treasures no longer serve to build God's garden for all to live in, but they have been made to serve the powers of exploitation and destruction. The Church as a whole and all her Pastors, like Christ, must set out to lead people out of the desert, towards the place of life, towards friendship with the Son of God, towards the One who gives us life, and life in abundance. The symbol of the lamb also has a deeper meaning. In the Ancient Near East, it was customary for kings

to style themselves shepherds of their people. This was an image of their power, a cynical image: to them their subjects were like sheep, which the shepherd could dispose of as he wished. When the shepherd of all humanity, the living God, himself became a lamb, he stood on the side of the lambs, with those who are downtrodden and killed. This is how he reveals himself to be the true shepherd: "I am the Good Shepherd ... I lay down my life for the sheep", Jesus says of himself (*Jn* 10:14f). It is not power, but love that redeems us! This is God's sign: he himself is love. How often we wish that God would make show himself stronger, that he would strike decisively, defeating evil and creating a better world. All ideologies of power justify themselves in exactly this way, they justify the destruction of whatever would stand in the way of progress and the liberation of humanity. We suffer on account of God's patience. And yet, we need his patience. God, who became a lamb, tells us that the world is saved by the Crucified One, not by those who crucified him. The world is redeemed by the patience of God. It is destroyed by the impatience of man.

One of the basic characteristics of a shepherd must be to love the people entrusted to him, even as he loves Christ whom he serves. "Feed my sheep", says Christ to Peter, and now, at this moment, he says it to me as well. Feeding means loving, and loving also means being ready to suffer. Loving means giving the sheep what is truly good, the nourishment of God's truth, of God's word, the nourishment of his presence, which he gives us in the Blessed Sacrament. My dear friends - at this moment I can only say: pray for me, that I may learn to love the Lord more and more. Pray for me,

that I may learn to love his flock more and more - in other words, you, the holy Church, each one of you and all of you together. Pray for me, that I may not flee for fear of the wolves. Let us pray for one another, that the Lord will carry us and that we will learn to carry one another.

The second symbol used in today's liturgy to express the inauguration of the Petrine Ministry is the presentation of the fisherman's ring. Peter's call to be a shepherd, which we heard in the Gospel, comes after the account of a miraculous catch of fish: after a night in which the disciples had let down their nets without success, they see the 'Risen Lord on the shore. He tells them to let down their nets once more, and the nets become so full that they can hardly pull them in; 153 large fish: "and although there were so many, the net was not torn" (*Jn* 21:11). This account, coming at the end of Jesus' earthly journey with his disciples, corresponds to an account found at the beginning: there too, the disciples had caught nothing the entire night; there too, Jesus had invited Simon once more to put out into the deep. And Simon, who was not yet called Peter, gave the wonderful reply: "Master, at your word I will let down the nets." And then came the conferral of his mission: "Do not be afraid. Henceforth you will be catching men" (*Lk* 5:1-11). Today too the Church and the successors of the Apostles are told to put out into the deep sea of history and to let down the nets, so as to win men and women over to the Gospel - to God, to Christ, to true life. The Fathers made a very significant commentary on this singular task. This is what they say: for a fish, created for water, it is fatal to be taken out of the sea, to be removed from its vital element to serve as human food. But in the

mission of a fisher of men, the reverse is true. We are living in alienation, in the salt waters of suffering and death; in a sea of darkness without light. The net of the Gospel pulls us out of the waters of death and brings us into the splendour of God's light, into true life. It is really true: as we follow Christ in this mission to be fishers of men, we must bring men and women out of the sea that is salted with so many forms of alienation and onto the land of life, into the light of God. It is really so: the purpose of our lives is to reveal God to men. And only where God is seen does life truly begin. Only when we meet the living God in Christ do we know what life is. We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution. Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary. There is nothing more beautiful than to be surprised by the Gospel, by the encounter with Christ. There is nothing more beautiful than to know Him and to speak to others of our friendship with Him. The task of the shepherd, the task of the fisher of men, can often seem wearisome. But it is beautiful and wonderful, because it is truly a service to joy, to God's joy which longs to break into the world.

Here I want to add something: both the image of the shepherd and that of the fisherman issue an explicit call to unity. "I have other sheep that are not of this fold; I must lead them too, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd" (*Jn* 10:16); these are the words of Jesus at the end of his discourse on the Good Shepherd. And the account of the 153 large fish ends with the joyful statement: "although there were so many, the net was not torn" (*Jn* 21:11). Alas, beloved Lord, with sorrow we must now

acknowledge that it has been torn! But no - we must not be sad! Let us rejoice because of your promise, which does not disappoint, and let us do all we can to pursue the path towards the unity you have promised. Let us remember it in our prayer to the Lord, as we plead with him: yes, Lord, remember your promise. Grant that we may be one flock and one shepherd! Do not allow your net to be torn, help us to be servants of unity!

At this point, my mind goes back to 22 October 1978, when Pope John Paul II began his ministry here in Saint Peter's Square. His words on that occasion constantly echo in my ears: "Do not be afraid! Open wide the doors for Christ!" The Pope was addressing the mighty, the powerful of this world, who feared that Christ might take away something of their power if they were to let him in, if they were to allow the faith to be free. Yes, he would certainly have taken something away from them: the dominion of corruption, the manipulation of law and the freedom to do as they pleased. But he would not have taken away anything that pertains to human freedom or dignity, or to the building of a just society. The Pope was also speaking to everyone, especially the young. Are we not perhaps all afraid in some way? If we let Christ enter fully into our lives, if we open ourselves totally to him, are we not afraid that He might take something away from us? Are we not perhaps afraid to give up something significant, something unique, something that makes life so beautiful? Do we not then risk ending up diminished and deprived of our freedom? And once again the Pope said: No! If we let Christ into our lives, we lose nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing of what makes life free, beautiful and

great. No! Only in this friendship are the doors of life opened wide. Only in this friendship is the great potential of human existence truly revealed. Only in this friendship do we experience beauty and liberation. And so, today, with great strength and great conviction, on the basis of long personal experience of life, I say to you, dear young people: Do not be afraid of Christ! He takes nothing away, and he gives you everything. When we give ourselves to him, we receive a hundredfold in return. Yes, open, open wide the doors to Christ-and you will find true life. Amen.

*St. Peter's Square
Sunday, 24 April 2005*

The Seed was Sown in Good Soil: Filipino Bishops in the Service of the Universal Church

CHARLES BRANSOM

The 425th anniversary of the establishment of the first diocese and the appointment of the first bishop in the Philippines took place on February 6, 2004. Since 1579, 310 priests have been ordained bishops for service in the Philippines. In 1985, one of those 310 bishops, Archbishop Jose T. Sanchez, left the Philippines to serve the Church as a member of the Roman Curia. On June 28, 1991, he was created a cardinal by His Holiness Pope John Paul II. He is the first Filipino to serve as a bishop outside of the Philippines.

Six months prior to Cardinal Sanchez's entry into the College of Cardinals, the Church in the Philippines experienced another "first": the nomination of the first Filipino priest as an Apostolic Nuncio. On December 17, 1990, Monsignor Osvaldo Padilla, of the clergy of the Archdiocese of Cebu, was named Titular Archbishop of Pia and Apostolic

Nuncio to Panama. He was ordained to the episcopacy on January 6, 1991 by His Holiness Pope John Paul II in St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City. Exactly eleven years later, Monsignor Adolfo Tito Camacho Yllana was ordained Titular Archbishop of Montecorvino and Apostolic Nuncio to Papua New Guinea by His Holiness Pope John Paul II, likewise in St. Peter's Basilica.

On August 29, 2003, a third "first" occurred: the episcopal ordination of Monsignor Wenceslao Selga Padilla, C.I.C.M., Prefect Apostolic of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, as Titular Bishop of Tharros. The first Filipino missionary bishop had been ordained.

Four days after the 425 th anniversary of the establishment of the Diocese of Manila and the appointment of Fray Domingo de Salazar, O.P., as its first bishop, yet another "first" occurred: Father Oscar Azareon Solis was ordained Titular Bishop of Urzi and Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles, California, by His Eminence Roger Cardinal Mahony, Archbishop of Los Angeles on February 10, 2004, becoming the first Filipino diocesan priest to be ordained a bishop for service in a diocese outside of the Philippines.

These five appointments are indicative of the maturation of the Church in the Philippines. Some may argue that the appointment of Cardinal Sanchez to the Roman Curia was simply a result of the internationalization of the Curia begun by Pope Paul VI and continued by Pope John Paul II, and the same argument might be put forth for the nominations of Archbishops Padilla and Yllana as Apostolic Nuncios.

While the internationalization of the Roman Curia and the Holy See's diplomatic service certainly opened the possibilities for such nominations, these prelates were appointed to their positions because they possessed the qualities needed to fulfill the many demanding responsibilities of their offices.

The second half of the twentieth century saw the Church in the Philippines send hundreds of missionaries - priests, sisters, brothers, and lay people - to spread the Gospel in countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, North America, and South America. They take seriously their responsibilities to preach the Word of God alongside their brothers and sisters from many other nations. Various orders, congregations, and missionary societies which came to the Philippines as missionaries now have vibrant Filipino provinces, among them the Dominicans (OP), the Missionhurst Missionaries (CICM), the Divine Word Missioners (SVD), and the Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB). In 1965, the Mission Society of the Philippines (MSP) was founded and its members minister in several Asian countries as well as in the Philippines.

With the fall of Communism, Mongolia again opened its doors to Catholic missionaries. The Missionhurst Missionaries sent Father Wens Padilla to Ulaanbaatar in 1992 and he was named the Superior of the Mission *sui iuris* of Urga. In 2002, this jurisdiction was raised to the rank of an Apostolic Prefecture with the name of Ulaanbaatar and Father Padilla was named the first Apostolic Prefect. In 2003, he was named a titular bishop and received episcopal ordination in Ulaanbaatar.

Many Filipino secular priests minister to their compatriots throughout the world and the Church in the United States has greatly benefited by the ministry of these good

and zealous priests who serve both their fellow citizens and the people of many other cultures who are found in North America. There are many large and flourishing Filipino communities throughout the United States. Therefore, it should not be surprising that a priest from the Philippines has been named a bishop in the United States. Monsignor Oscar Azarcon Solis has the distinction of being the first Philippine-born member of the hierarchy of the United States. He also has the distinction of being the first bishop ordained in the new Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles, California.

All five bishops were nurtured in their personal and spiritual lives by loving families and communities which imbued them with a zeal for the proclaiming the Good News of Jesus and a love for both their Catholic faith and their Filipino culture.

Jose T. Cardinal Sanchez

Jose T. Sanchez was born in Pandan, Catanduanes, at that time part of the Archdiocese of Caceres, on March 17, 1920. The economy of Pandan is largely dependent on farming and fishing. In 1951, Pandan became part of the territory of the newly erected Diocese of Legazpi and in 1974 it became part of the newly established Diocese of Virac.

The young Jose Sanchez discerned a calling to the priesthood. After studies at Holy Rosary Seminary in Naga City, he was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Caceres on May 12, 1946. He was awarded a doctorate in theology by the University of Santo Tomas in Manila. He engaged in intense pastoral activity in the Dioceses of Sorsogon and Legazpi. He

was a faculty member of the minor seminary of Sorsogon and he taught at St. Agnes Academy, the lyceum of Albay, the University of Santo Tomas, and Holy Rosary Seminary in Naga City. For a time, he was also Vicar General of the Diocese of Legazpi.

On February 5, 1968, His Holiness Pope Paul VI appointed Monsignor Jose T. Sanchez as Titular Bishop of Lesvi and Auxiliary Bishop of Caceres. Bishop Sanchez received episcopal ordination on May 12, 1968 in the Cathedral of St. Gregory the Great, Legazpi City, from the Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, Most Rev. Carmine Rocco, Titular Archbishop of Iustinianopolis in Galatia, assisted by Bishop Flaviano Ariola of Legazpi and Bishop Arnulfo Arcilla of Sorsogon as co-consecrators.

On December 13, 1971, Bishop Sanchez was named Coadjutor Bishop with the right of succession of the Most Rev. Alfredo Maria Aranda Obviar, Bishop of Lucena. Upon the resignation of Bishop Obviar on September 25, 1976, Bishop Sanchez became Bishop of Lucena. On January 12, 1982, he was named Metropolitan Archbishop of Nueva Segovia.

From 1970 until his appointment to the Roman Curia, he was a member of various commissions of the CBCP. In October 1974, Bishop Sanchez participated in the Third Assembly of the Synod of Bishops as a delegate of the CBCP. This Assembly was dedicated to evangelization. He made important interventions in the fourteenth and sixteenth general congregations.

Pope John Paul II named Archbishop Sanchez Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples on

October 30, 1985. His resignation from the pastoral care of the Archdiocese of Nueva Segovia was accepted by Pope John Paul II on March 22, 1986.

Archbishop Sanchez was created a cardinal in the consistory of June 28, 1991 and received the deaconry of S. Pio V a Villa Carpegna. On July 1, 1991, he was named Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy and President of the Pontifical Commission for the Preservation of the Artistic and Historical Patrimony of the Church.

Cardinal Sanchez took part in the Synod of Bishops Special Assembly for Europe in November and December 1991; in the Synod's Special Assembly for Africa in April and May 1994; and in the IX Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October 1994. In October 1992, he attended the IV General Conference of the Latin American episcopate in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

Jose Cardinal Sanchez was the special papal envoy to the fourth centennial celebration of the establishment of the Diocese of Cebu in April 1995; to the fourth centennial celebration of the establishment of the Diocese of Nueva Segovia in June 1995; and to the closing of the fourth centennial celebration of the establishment of the Diocese of Caceres on September 15, 1995.

Pope John Paul II accepted his resignation as Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy on June 15, 1996. On February 26, 2002, Cardinal Sanchez opted for the order of cardinal priests and his deaconry was elevated to a presbyteral title *pro hac vice*.

Cardinal Sanchez has been the principal consecrator for two bishops. On March 29, 1987, in St. Peter's Basilica in

Rome, while Secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, he conferred episcopal ordination on Monsignor Camilo Diaz Gregorio, Titular Bishop of Girus and Auxiliary Bishop of Cebu. The co-consecrators were Archbishop Cesare Zacchi, Titular Archbishop of Maura, and Bishop Antonio do Carmo Cheuiche, O.C.D., Titular Bishop of Suturnuca and Auxiliary Bishop of Porto Alegre, Brazil.

On September 14, 1994, Cardinal Sanchez conferred episcopal ordination on Monsignor Manolo Alarcon de los Santos, Bishop of Virac, in the Basilica of Our Lady of Peiiafrancia, Naga City, with Archbishop Gian Vincenzo Moreni, Titular Archbishop of Turrus in Mauretania and Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, and Archbishop Leonardo Zamora Legaspi, O.P., of Caceres, as co-consecrators.

Archbishop Osvaldo Padilla

Osvaldo Padilla was born in Sogod, Southern Leyte, in the Archdiocese of Cebu, on August 4, 1942. He was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Cebu on February 20, 1966 and he entered the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy in 1968. After graduation for the Academy, he served in nunciatures in several nations, among them Sri Lanka, Haiti, Nigeria, and Mexico. On December 17, 1990, Pope John Paul II named him Titular Archbishop of Pia and Apostolic Nuncio to Panama. He was ordained to the episcopacy by Pope John Paul II in St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City, on January 6, 1991. The two principal co-consecrators were Archbishop (now Cardinal) Giovanni Battista Re, Titular Archbishop of Vescovio, and Archbishop (now Cardinal) Justin Francis Rigali, Titular Archbishop of Bolsena. On August 20, 1994,

he was named Apostolic Nuncio to Sri Lanka. He was subsequently named Apostolic Nuncio to Nigeria on August 22, 1998, and Apostolic Nuncio to Costa Rica on July 31, 2003.

Archbishop Padilla has conferred episcopal ordination on several bishops: on June 14, 1997, Bishop Winston J. S. Fernando, S.S.S., of Badulla, Sri Lanka; on February 24, 2001, Bishop James N. Daman, O.S.A., of Jalingo, Nigeria; on March 3, 2001, Bishop George Dodo of Zaria, Nigeria; on March 31, 2001, Bishop Matthew I. Audu of Lafia, Nigeria; on April 28, 2001, Auxiliary Bishop A. Amatu of Awka, Nigeria. He also consecrated Coadjutor Archbishop Valerian Okeke of Onitsha, Nigeria, on February 9, 2002; Bishop Hilary P. O. Okeke of Nnewi, Nigeria, on February 10, 2002; and Bishop Timothy J. Carroll, S.M.A., Vicar Apostolic of Kontagora, on August 17, 2002.

In 1993, when he was Apostolic Nuncio to Panama, the Diocese of Penonome was erected. While Archbishop Padilla was Apostolic Nuncio to Sri Lanka, the new Diocese of Ratnapura was created. During his service as Apostolic Nuncio to Nigeria, four new dioceses - Zaria, Lafia, Nnewi, and Auchi - and one Apostolic Vicariate, Kontagora, were erected.

Archbishop Adolfo Tito Camacho Yllana

Adolfo Tito Camacho Yllana was born at Naga City, Camarines Sur, in the Archdiocese of Caceres on February 6, 1948, one of the five children of Adolfo C. Yllana and Salud S. Camacho. One of his brothers is Father Pio Antonio Yllana, parish priest of St. Michael Archangel in Pamplona, in the Prelature of Libmanan. He has three married sisters: Francia Y. Maligaso, Dolores Y. Tuazon, and Andrea Y Garcia.

Until his departure for post-graduate studies in Rome in 1980, Father Adolfo Tito C. Yllana spent all of his life in Naga City. He attended Naga Parochial School, Holy Rosary Minor Seminary, and Holy Rosary Major Seminary. He was ordained a deacon on December/8, 1971 at the Holy Rosary Major Seminary Chapel by then Auxiliary Bishop Jose T. Sanchez of Caceres. Archbishop Teopisto V. Alberto of Caceres ordained him a priest on March 19, 1972 at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Naga City.

From 1972 to 1973, he was assistant priest at the Metropolitan Cathedral. From 1973 to 1979, he was assigned to Holy Rosary Minor Seminary. He was Professor of Languages (Latin, Spanish, and English), Catechetics, and Sociology from 1973 to 1979, Spiritual Director from 1973 to 1975; Treasurer from 1976 to 1977; and Rector from 1977 to 1979. During this time he was also actively involved in the Liturgical and Catechetical Apostolate on the diocesan level.

In October 1980 Father Yllana entered the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy and graduated in February 1984. He was awarded a Doctorate in Canon and Civil Laws by the Pontifical Lateran University.

From 1984 to 2001, Monsignor Yllana served as a collaborator at several apostolic nunciatures: Ghana, Togo, and Benin (1984-1987); Sri Lanka (1987-1989); Turkey (1989-1992); Lebanon and Kuwait and the Apostolic Delegation for the Arabic Peninsula (1992-1996); Hungary and Moldova (1996-1999); and China (Taiwan) (1999-2001).

On December 13, 2001, Monsignor Yllana was named Titular Archbishop of Montecorvino and Apostolic Nuncio

to Papua New Guinea. He was ordained bishop on January 6, 2002 in St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City, by Pope John Paul II, the co-consecrators being Archbishop Leonardo Sandri, Titular Archbishop of Cittanova, and Archbishop Robert Sarah, Archbishop emeritus of Conakry. On February 5, 2002, he was named Apostolic Nuncio to the Solomon Islands.

Bishop Wenceslao Selga Padilla, C.I.C.M.

Wenceslao Selga Padilla was born at Tubao, La Union, on September 28, 1949, the son of Constancio Padilla, a teacher and catechist, and Josefina Selga. He has three sisters - Pelagia, Lucila, and Blesida - and three brothers - Godofredo, Crispulo, and Daniel - all married with children. His childhood was spent partly in the Mountain Province, his father having been a Catechist of the CICM for 36 years. By the time he entered kindergarten, his family was back in Tubao. Tubao's main industry is farming rice and tobacco. At the time of his birth, Tubao was in the Archdiocese of Nueva Segovia. In 1970, it became part of the Diocese of San Fernando de La Union.

From 1955 to 1961, the young Wenceslao attended San Alberto Magno Academy, La Union. He attended St. Louis High School and Maryheights Minor Seminary, Baguio, from 1961 to 1966. His college years were spent at Maryhurst Seminary, Baguio (1966-1971). His noviciate (1971-1972) was at Maryhill CICM Noviciate, Taytay, and he attended Maryhill School of Theology, Taytay, from 1972 to 1976.

He made his First Profession on June 29, 1972 and his Perpetual Profession on Mary 31, 1975. He was ordained a

deacon on June 24, 1975 by Bishop Gaudencio Borbon Rosales, Titular Bishop of Oescus and Auxiliary Bishop of Manila. Bishop Victorino Cristobal Ligot of San Fernando de La Union ordained him a priest on March 17, 1976. His first Mission Departure was on August 30, 1977.

Father Wens Padilla pursued graduate studies at the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkley, California, U.S.A. He has been awarded a Bachelor of Arts (English major, history/philosophy minor); a Licentiate in Theology; and a Certificate of Theological Studies. He speaks Filipino, English, Chinese (Mandarin/Taiwanese), and Mongolian, and he has some knowledge of Spanish and Latin.

He has been a professor of Religious Education at Maryhurst Seminary in Baguio City (1976-1977); a parish priest at St. Therese Parish, Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C. (1980-1984); and Provincial Superior of the Sinica Province (Taiwan/Hong Kong/Singapore) from 1986 to 1991.

In March 1992, after Mongolia adopted a new constitution guaranteeing freedom of religion, the Holy See re-established the Mission *sui iuris* of Urga, Mongolia, with its seat at Ulaanbaatar. The Mission had been vacant for many years. The following month, the Holy See and the Republic of Mongolia established diplomatic relations and the first Apostolic Nuncio to Mongolia was appointed.

On April 19, 1992, Father Wenceslao Selga Padilla, C.I.C.M., was appointed Superior of the Mission *sui iuris* of Urga and he was installed on July 10, 1992. Since the arrival of the first three CICM Missionaries in July 1992, other missionary societies have sent members to work in Mongolia.

In mid-2004, the number of Catholic missionaries in Mongolia was 48.

Monsignor Padilla and his co-workers in this part of the vineyard have worked patiently, witnessing to the Mongolian people by their lives, their words, and their deeds. They are building a firm foundation for the Church in a country which had prohibited all religion for more than seventy years. God had pitched His tent among the Mongolian people.

The missionaries are engaged in social works, working with the street children of Ulaanbaatar, organizing a soup kitchen at Yarmag, and establishing care centers for elderly men and for young girls at risk.

Educational endeavors include several Montessori Kindergartens, the Don Bosco Technical Skills Center, a language school, and cooperation with a kindergarten which serves mentally handicapped children.

Developmental and humanitarian projects include an agricultural farm to help poor farmers and a community building project. Caritas Internationalis is active in Mongolia.

The Mission *sui iuris* of Urga was raised to the status of an Apostolic Prefecture with the name of Ulaanbaatar by Pope John Paul II on April 30, 1992. Monsignor Wens Padilla was installed as Apostolic Prefect on July 10, 2002.

Pope John Paul II named Monsignor Padilla Titular Bishop of Tharros on August 2, 2003, and he received episcopal ordination on August 29, 2003 in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul, Ulaanbaatar, with Crescenzo Cardinal Sepe, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples,

as his consecrator. The co-consecrators were Archbishop Giovanni Battista Morandini, Titular Archbishop of Numida and Apostolic Nuncio to Mongolia, and Bishop Antonio Realubin Tobias, Bishop of San Fernando de La Union and Apostolic Administrator of Novaliches.

As the Church in Mongolia grew and its activities multiplied, the need for a central site for meetings, worship, and large events became evident. Starting with the concept of God pitching His tent among the Mongolian people, the architectural design of a new multi-purpose building, including a cathedral, was developed: a building, in the form of a *ger*, a Mongolian traditional tent, sitting on a base in the form of a cross. The preparation of the grounds began in Autumn 2001. Due to a lack of funding, work progressed slowly. The day after the episcopal ordination of Bishop Wens Padilla, the still unfinished church, known as the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul, was inaugurated by Cardinal Sepe, Archbishop Morandini, and Bishop Padilla.

Bishop Oscar Azarcon Solis

Oscar Azarcon Solis came into this world on October 13, 1953 in San Jose, Nueva Eeija, the son of Anselmo de la Fuente Solis and Antonia Ortega Azarcon. His father was an insurance underwriter and his mother was a school teacher and principal. He was one of seven children, with three brothers and three sisters. Two of his brothers, Wilfredo A. Solis and Eugenio A. Solis, are deceased. His other brother, Father Ronald A. Solis, resides in Hong Kong. His three sisters are Celia S. Tapia (married to Antonio Tapia); Helen A. Solis; and Ma. Socorro Pacubas (married to Carlito Pacubas).

At the time of his birth, San Jose was part of the then Diocese (now Archdiocese) of San Fernando, Pampanga. In 1963, it became part of the new Diocese of Cabanatuan, and in 1984 San Jose became the seat of a new diocese.

The young Oscar A. Solis attended San Jose West Elementary School and his high school years were spent at Maria Assumpta Seminary in Cabanatuan City. He attended college at Divine Word Seminary, Tagaytay City, from 1969 to 1973, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy. From 1975 to 1978 he pursued his theological studies at the University of Santo Tomas Seminary, Manila, and was awarded a Bachelor of Sacred Theology, cum laude. He was ordained a deacon at Cabanatuan City on May 12, 1978 and he was ordained a priest on April 28, 1979 at San Jose, Nueva Ecija, by Bishop Vicente Reyes of Cabanatuan.

Father Solis pursued post-graduate studies at the University of Santo Tomas Seminary in Manila from 1979 to 1980. During this time he was in residence at Holy Family Church, Manila, and was chaplain to the Knights of Columbus and the Christian Family Movement.

From 1980 to 1984, Father Solis exercised his ministry in the Diocese of Cabanatuan, being Dean of College Students and teacher of Philosophy at Maria Assumpta Seminary, Cabanatuan City (1980-1981); Chaplain, Director of Campus Ministry, and Professor of Philosophy at Araullo Lyceum, Cabanatuan City (1980-1984); and Rector of the College and High School Seminary, Maria Assumpta Seminary; Diocesan Vocations Director; and Secretary of the Diocesan Senate of Priest, Diocese of Cabanatuan.

In 1984, Father Solis went to the United States and served as Associate Pastor of St. Rocco's Church, Union City, New Jersey, in the Archdiocese of Newark. He remained there until 1988.

From 1988 to December 2003, Father Solis exercised pastoral ministry in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, Louisiana. He was Associate Pastor of St. Joseph Co-Cathedral, Thibodaux, from 1988 to 1992. He was Pastor of Our Lady of Prompt Succor Church, Golden Meadow, Louisiana, from 1993 to 1999. From 1990 to 1994, he was a member of the Diocesan Personnel Board, and in 1993 he was a member of the College of Consultors and the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux.

Father Solis was appointed Dean of the South Lafourche Deanery in 1997 and served in that position until 1999. From 1999 until his appointment as bishop, he was Pastor of St. Joseph Co-Cathedral and the linked parish of St. Luke in Thibodaux. In 2003, he was named Dean of the Upper Lafourche Deanery and served on the Diocesan Priests Council.

In 2001, he became a founding member of the Board of Directors of the Crossroads Pregnancy Resource Center, also serving as its Spiritual Advisor.

On December 11, 2003, Pope John Paul II named Father Oscar Azarcon Solis as Titular Bishop of Urci and Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles, California. He was ordained a bishop on February 10, 2004 in the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, Los Angeles, California, by His Eminence Roger Michael Cardinal Mahony, Archbishop of Los Angeles, with

Bishop Sam Galip Jacobs of Houma-Thibodaux and bishop Charles Michael Jarrell of Lafayette as co-consecrators. This was the first episcopal ordination conferred in the new Cathedral. Cardinal Mahony appointed Bishop Solis as Coordinator of the Archdiocesan Ethnic Ministries.

Final Thoughts

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the missionary efforts of the Church drew their strength from missionaries from Europe and North America. In the last quarter of the twentieth century, many countries which had been the object of missionary efforts began to send their sons and daughters as missionaries to other countries, at times to the very countries which were part of their initial or ongoing evangelization. The seed had indeed been sown in good soil.

There can be no doubt that the Church in the Philippines is mature and vibrant. The Philippines has sent its sons and daughters to spread the Good News of Jesus throughout the world. The appointments of the five Filipino prelates related above are "firsts" and there is every reason to expect that they will be followed by many others in the years and decades ahead. To each of them, my prayer and my wish is *Ad Multos Annos!*

**"Hold on to Your Precious Gift" -
A Pastoral Letter on Population
Control Legislation and the
"Ligtas Buntis" Program**

**CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE
OF THE PHILIPPINES**

Beloved People of God:

Last February 15th, a committee in Congress approved a bill on population control, "reproductive health", sexual rights for young people, and mandatory child sex education, among others. The measure imposes fine and imprisonment for parents, spouses, and health professionals who impede "sexual and reproductive rights." It creates a program for fertility control by encouraging the limitation of family size to two children. It gives incentives to 2-child families. Women - married or single - will be taught "all methods and techniques to prevent pregnancy." The sponsors have called the proposal "*responsible parenthood*" and "*population management*."

During committee deliberations, the authors have also denied the beginning of human life at fertilization.

What is the underlying agenda? The central idea is to reduce our population purportedly to spur economic growth. This is also saying that in order to eliminate poverty, we must reduce our human resource.

The premises are all wrong. A long line of serious economists and demographers have long discredited the Malthusian myth that positive population growth stunts economic growth. Modern history has also demolished this myth.

Since a population control program was put in place in the country in the 1970s - with billions of public money spent every year to fund it - our population growth has been declining and continues to do so today, and yet, poverty has not been reduced. Official government data attest to this. If this population trend continues - and it will if we remain unmoved - the Philippines, much to its peril, will lose precious human capital.

"A *Ligtas Buntis*" Program

While this is happening in Congress, the Department of Health is now implementing nationwide a Program called "*Ligtas Buntis*." Touted as an information campaign for "maternal health", "*Ligtas Buntis*" targets two million MEN, WOMEN and COUPLES OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE, ADOLESCENTS 15-19 years old, and the POOR among us. Even INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES are identified as *priority areas*.

In this program, *barangay* health workers will interview couples, map and make a master list of families after house-to-house, door-to-door, and person-to-person "surveys" on their fertility control methods used. Sexuality education, contraceptive pills and devices will be dispensed. The surveys will be recorded, reported, and monitored. Everything will be documented.

THE CHURCH CANNOT REMAIN UNMOVED BY THESE ASSAULTS ON THE FAMILY

1. The legislative proposal to limit the size of the Filipino family in the guise of "reproductive rights" is unjust, arbitrary, and unreasonable legislation. It has no place in public governance.

2. *"Responsible Parenthood"* goes beyond simply providing for a family's material needs. While we must preach about providing bread, there is no substitute for first preaching about the higher truth about man.

For we know by our Faith what is authentic "responsible parenthood": *It means respect for one's generative functions. It calls upon married persons to use discernment and generosity in their decisions. It calls for due regard to physical, economic, psychological and social conditions in deciding "to raise a numerous family." It includes the spouses' decision "based on grave motives and with due respect for the moral law, to avoid for the time being or even for an indeterminate period, a new birth." Responsible parenthood makes parents "free and responsible collaborators of God the Creator." (Humanae Vitae)*

3. The "**LIGTAS BUNTIS**" Program is not simply what it claims to be: an information campaign for "maternal health." It violates and mocks the privacy and autonomy of couples and families. It desecrates the sanctity of marriage and family life.

4. We **CONDEMN the pressure to deny the presence of human life at the moment of fertilization.** Humanity cries for justice for the millions of crimes and senseless abortions because of this lie. From the fusion of the basic cells of the father and the mother following the marital act, the fruit is already human. No human ordinance can turn that truth into error. •

To our leaders and lawmakers: A well-formed Christian conscience does not permit you to write or support measures which contradict the basic rights of families and the fundamental imperatives of faith and morals." (*"On the Participation of Catholics in Political Life"*), Vatican, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.) Christian leaders have both a political *and* moral obligation to safeguard "the laws of nature and of nature's God." Failure in this duty is a betrayal of public trust and an open defiance of your Faith.

To all spouses: Build your family on the rock of Christian generosity and discernment. Your right to found a family is rooted on your Christian responsibility and freedom of religious belief, together with the right *to act according to that belief*. That freedom may not be breached.

To our Health Workers: You have the right to conscientious objection. It is both a civic right and a Christian duty to insist on it.

To all the faithful - Defend truth. It gives light to our reason, and preserves us from error. Resist the enticements of false "freedoms" and counterfeit "rights." Defend the privacy of family.

Take heart and stand firm. Be courageous in the Faith. Hold on to that precious gift - that "pearl of great price." It is the source of unfailing strength. It is your breastplate when you face the storms that besiege conscience.

Let our Blessed Mother, the Virgin Mary, Queen of the Family, be our loving Advocate in these challenging times. Entrust to her our families. Let us pray for the graces which the Lord promised to those who invoke her in this Marian Year.

For the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines:

(Sgd) **tFERNANDO R. CAPALLA, D.D.**
Archbishop of Davao
President, Catholic Bishops'
Conference of the Philippines
February 18, 2005

Vince in Bono Malum -
Overcome Evil with Good

**CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE
OF THE PHILIPPINES**

This is the challenge of the Pope in his Message for the World Day of Peace - "Overcome Evil with Good!" (January 1, 2005)

In his landmark message at the beginning of the New Year, the Pope grieved over the presence of pervasive evil in the personal lives of men and women and in their communities. He deplores the destruction of the fabric of mutual understanding through conflicts which feed on violence and reprisals. The Pope tells us that the solution to our social conflicts is through our commitment to justice and peace. Our fight for a better world is waged effectively with the weapons of love. *When good overcomes evil, love prevails and where love prevails, there peace prevails.*

It is the prayer and deep desire of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) that peace prevail in

Hacienda Luisita. And for this to happen, justice must also prevail.

We join the call for true justice for the victims of the November 16, 2004 confrontation that led to the deaths of seven and the wounding of hundreds. We call for an impartial investigation that will identify and punish the perpetrators of this violence and indemnify the families left behind by the victims.

We call for the resumption of negotiations between the strikers and management in a context of mutual respect. For we must not confront one another as adversaries but live as brothers and sisters under the same sky and sharing in a common dream of a better life. Our Christian faith tell us that we must strive to constantly look out for the good of others as if it were our own. It is by strengthening the common bonds of our humanity that we overcome our hatreds and selfishness.

Vince in Bono Malum / Overcome evil with good. Let us overcome the evil of violence with the good of peace. Let us overcome the evil of economic poverty with the good of social justice where workers receive just wages. Let us overcome the evil of a divided society by fostering love among us in a nation where labor is not pitted against management, where authority is not exercised with arrogance, where rich and poor work together as partners building a Philippines strong with the values of justice, freedom and peace.

For the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines:

(Sgd) tFERNANDO R. CAPALLA, D.D.
Archbishop of Davao
CBCP President
January 23, 2005

Pastoral Letter to All Filipinos - Hacienda Luisita: Theatre of Hope

**CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE
OF THE PHILIPPINES**

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) aware of the danger to our social order should the agrarian problem in Hacienda Luisita remain unresolved, issued its Pastoral Statement of 23 January 2005 entitled: Vince in Bono Malum - Overcome Evil with Good. This title was taken from the 2005 Message of Pope John Paul II for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace, 01 January 2005. In his message, the Pope stated that: "The one way out of the vicious circle of requiting evil for evil is to accept the Apostles words, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

The recent killings of persons who support the cause of the strikers at the Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac carry the danger that we shall be caught within that "vicious circles of requiting evil for evil." Should this happen, we shall find ourselves reliving a bloody chapter in our history when in the

1950s thousands of peasants armed themselves and rebelled against an unjust paternalistic social system that denied them economic justice through a genuine land reform program.

The murders of Tarlac City Councilor Abelardo Ladera, of Philippine Independent Church priest William Tadena and the attempt of the life of Atty. Romeo T. Capulong call for immediate Government investigation especially since the military is suspected to author these assassinations. Let us learn from our history and not repeat its mistakes. The "iron fist" policy of President Manuel Roxas in the late 1940s aggravated the peace and order situation. The army's artillery shells and bombs killed innocent people while undisciplined civilian guards and special military units burned houses, destroyed crops, looted property and assassinated innocent people.

We do not want this bloody scenario to repeat itself in our time. Thus the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines has entered with decisive commitment to help bring peace and justice into this explosive agrarian problem which once again revives the unresolved historic conflicts between landlords and peasants. The Church is doing its utmost to bring the mercy of Good Friday and the peace of Easter Sunday to the sorrowing and blood-stained land of Hacienda Luisita. We ask that our initiative to bring peace be accompanied by our government's own audacious policy decisions to create a climate of freedom that encourages frank dialogue between management and strikers. Such a precondition for a just settlement is absent when the government is seen as indifferent in investigating the assassination of key supporters of the strikers.

Hacienda Luisita has become the nation's social theatre where peasants and hacenderos, police and strikers, activists and religious, the CBCP and Bayan Muna with other Leftist organizations are the actors. But they possess different scripts. There are scripts whose core plot is violence; others are centered on the majesty of the law backed up by police power. But the script which the Church uses is authored by Christ. It unfolds a new horizon of peace and justice, a new civilization of life and love. It rejects violence from whatever source. Violence in the words of Pope John Paul II, "destroy what it claims to defend: the dignity, the life, the freedom of human beings."

The CBCP is in the Hacienda Luisita as the co-convenor and facilitator instrumental in bringing to the negotiating table both the representatives of management and of the strikers. Archbishop Capalla, Archbishop Aniceto and Bishop Cinense define the negotiating framework as one where management and strikers could meet not as adversaries but as brothers and sisters of one national family. The goal was not to arrive at perfect solutions but rather to adopt a realistic process which would lead to sustained dialogue. The workers and farmers have repeatedly expresses their joy in our presence at these negotiations which often ended late at night; while management felt that our support of a step-by-step process which narrowed down the areas of disagreement was an acceptable approach. The CBCP followed up these formal meetings with several "back-door" meetings which further strengthened the negotiation process.

The Church does not have the technical competence to propose concrete solutions regarding complex agrarian reform

questions. But its mandate is to teach and promote those moral values that help define the purpose of economic enterprise like haciendas. Thus the Church judges the economy by what it does *for* and *to* people. Something is wrong in a system where large numbers of workers are caught in a vicious cycle of heavy debt and who are denied the possibility of owning land.

This concern for a just agrarian system is not a new emphasis for the CBCP. Back in 1968 it organized a National Rural Congress which "saw the roots of much of our social evils in the present pattern of land ownership in our country" which condemns the farmer-tenants to a miserable condition of economic dependence and strips him of his freedom and dignity.

In 1997, the CBCP published the first Catechism for Filipino Catholics. In its section on the Importance of Work, (nn. 1181-1184) the Catechism states three basic rights, namely, the right to work; the right to a just share in the fruits of the work and the right to organize "for the purpose of defending their interests and contributing as responsible partners to the common good." (*1981 Speech of Pope John Paul in Bacolod*)

At present, the momentum of the negotiation process has stalled due to the slaying to two loyal supporters of the workers and strikers of the Hacienda Luisita. But at the end of this dark tunnel, we can divine the light of hope. Hope based on what we experienced in the course of the negotiations: the respectful hearing which each side gave the other; the request to start each session with a prayer for Divine help and enlightenment; the reflection of a peasant leader that solutions will come from the heart rather than from might; the willingness of the young members of the hacienda the livelihood of the

sugar workers, the desire to continue with back-door meetings moderated by the CBCP - all these are signs that our prayer to the Crucified Christ for a peaceful and just solution to the Hacienda Luisita problem are being heard. It is time to forsake our resentment and selfishness towards one another. Let us walk hand in hand as brothers and sisters under a sky lit by a new dawn of national unity and reconciliation.

A Blessed Easter to you and your families!

For the Catholic Bishops' Conference:

(Sgd) **†FERNANDO R. CAPALLA, DD**
Archbishop of Davao
President, CBCP

PALM SUNDAY
20 March 2005

Malacanang assures CBCP President of Pro-Environment, Pro-People Action on Mining

CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES

Malacanang has assured Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) president Archbishop Fernando R. Capalla that it is "taking seriously the concrete actions suggested" in the CBCP head's letter to President Arroyo concerning the issue of mining.

"I am told that President Arroyo is 'grateful' for the letter and that the requests are 'reasonable' and therefore seem acceptable enough to be endorsed to the cabinet", says Abp. Capalla, quoting an unnamed Malacanang official.

Archbishop Capalla, in consultation with the CBCP Episcopal Commission on Social Action, Justice and Peace, as well as the Episcopal Commission on Indigenous Peoples, appealed in writing to the President to consider the reports submitted by these two Commissions on the negative effects

of mining on the environment and in the affected communities, particularly of the tribal Filipinos. The reports trace the source of the deleterious effects both to the unscrupulous miners and their collaborators and to the judicial and executive decisions which were either violated or misinterpreted.

In his letter to the President dated January 31, 2005, Abp. Capalla says, "We are not against all forms of mining. We are only against those that are not pro-environment and pro-people." He says that since people expect certain Church leaders to articulate their sentiments in their behalf, "our bishops and social action directors therefore respectfully propose certain concrete actions to be taken by government."

The actions that government is requested to take, as specified in Abp. Capalla's letter to Malacanang, are as follow:

1. Require concerned mining companies to demonstrate goodwill by cleaning up mine tailings and rehabilitating open pits. If there are ongoing efforts along this line, supply us with updates from a participative and multisectoral perspective.

2. Require mining companies whose prior operations were questioned on grounds of lack or absence of social acceptability to address such concerns, particularly by strictly adhering to regulations prescribed by law.

3. Furnish us a list of companies seeking mining permits. This must include all companies regardless of whether their applications are pending or have already been approved. Armed with the list, we will coordinate with our overseas partners to examine the track record of these companies in their home countries and areas of operation.

4. Supply us with concrete figures detailing projected amounts that, government expects each mining company and each mine site to infuse into the economy, including amounts that will be repatriated to the home country of each mining company.

5. Supply us with concrete figures detailing the scope of employment that each mining operation will generate, including terms of employment citing nature, tenure and remuneration.

6. Prior to approval of a mining permit, require mining companies whose operations will dislocate populations to submit a comprehensive and viable plan of relocation that will ensure decent and humane habitation.

7. Prior to approval of a mining permit, require mining companies to communicate objectively and honestly the beneficial and adverse effects that their operations will create.

8. In the interest of transparency, make records and document produced pertaining to the foregoing requisites open to the public.

9. Identify pro-environment and pro-poor alternatives.

"It is a waste to not use the Philippines' rich natural resources for the benefit of the Filipinos," says Abp. Capalla, "but it is a greater waste to misuse and abuse this natural wealth. But government should reconsider the ecological and social costs accompanying the economic bonanza from mining."

Asked whether this is the official CBCP stand on the issue of mining, Abp. Capalla replies, "All official CBCP statements

must be approved by the Permanent Council which is composed of bishops and archbishops serving in different parts of our country. However, that does not prevent me from airing my personal opinion on burning issues that media expect me to comment on as CBCP President. So I wrote my letter on mining to Malacanang both as CBCP President in concurrence with concerned bishops, and as a human being who has vowed to be a steward of creation. The earth can not look after itself. If we leave it in the hands of unscrupulous miners, we will eventually kill our planet. If we do not take the lead in caring for earth, who will?"

Most Rev. FERNANDO R. CAPALLA, D.D.
Archbishop of Davao
CBCP President

CBCP Backs Japan's Action Plan to Protect Filipino Entertainers

**CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE
OF THE PHILIPPINES**

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) today came out in full support of the government of Japan's action plan regarding the trafficking of persons, particularly women, between the Philippines and Japan.

The assurance of cooperation and support was given on behalf of the CBCP by its president Fernando R. Capalla, Archbishop of Davao, to the Japanese envoys who had presented the plan to the bishops at the CBCP's recently concluded plenary assembly.

Japan's "action plan" calls for four basic moves: the dissemination of information on trafficking in persons through Church channels in the Philippines; the dissemination of information about the Protection Process in Japan; the provision of marriage seminars by the Church to Filipinos intending to marry Japanese nationals; and the provision of spiritual, mental and physical assistance and rehabilitation for repatriated victims.

The plan, which stresses the need to prevent further victimization of Filipino women entertainers by unscrupulous recruiters, aims to prioritize policies "to combat trafficking in persons" by way of prevention, protection and prosecution.

Through an inter-ministerial task force involving the cabinet secretary, the national police agency, and the ministries of justice, foreign affairs, health, labor and welfare, the Japanese government proposes to prevent greater damage from trafficking by strengthening immigration control and reviewing residence status and visas for "entertainers."

Protection for victims in Japan is suggested through the revision of Japan's Immigration Control Law to include special permission for residence, the provision of shelters, and repatriation assistance.

Prosecution measures in the plan recommend the revision of the Philippine Penal Code to "criminalize trafficking in persons."

"There were more than 80,000 Filipino entertainers in Japan in 2003," says Abp. Capalla. "We are told that this accounts for about 60 percent of all entertainers in Japan, and that almost all of them are illegally working as hostesses in amusement and sex related industries; is that not alarming? As followers of Jesus, we assure the Japanese government of the Church's cooperation on the matter. Christ himself confirms the dignity of personhood of women," the CBCP president adds, "Look at the attitude of Jesus towards the women he meets in the course of his Messianic service - Jesus renews women's dignity of personhood and makes it part of the Gospel and of Redemption."

Remembering the 1st National Filipino Youth in Italy Summer Camp and Pilgrimage at the Our Lady of Loreto in Ancona

RUPERTO SANTOS

A gathering of all Filipino Youth living in Italy was conceived during our first Italian consultation meeting of pastoral workers and chaplains on the Filipino ministry. During a healthy discussion on the pastoral care of Filipino migrants which was held on February 2-3, 2004 at the Chiesa di Santa Maria del Carmine, Piazza del Carmine, 2 in Milan we proposed and agreed for a first National Filipino Youth in Italy pilgrimage and summer camp at Loreto in Ancona. To foster interest and participation among Filipino Youth in Italy we decided to invite all Filipino Youth leaders from different Italian cities to an overnight preparation meeting in Rome at the Pontificio Cbllegio Filippino. The date was fixed on Saturday and Sunday of June 19-20, 2004. Upon returning to Rome, I immediately sent invitation letters to all different Filipino Centers in Italy.

PREPARATORY PHASE:

Sixteen Filipino youth leaders came, representing five Italian cities namely *Firenze, Milano, Roma, Padova* and *Torino*. They arrived before five in the afternoon. At six we started with group dynamics. Sister Ludy Avila of the *Suore di San Giovanni Battista* explained the nature of a pilgrimage. Father Albert Guevara gave the objective of a summer camp. The Philippine Ambassador to the Holy See, Leonida Vera spoke about the importance of the youth in the life of the Church. We told them that our proposed plan of pilgrimage and youth camp was for them. There are the participants and promoters. While they will do the planning, make decisions and lead the youth to actions and works we will take care of the board and lodgings, logistics and transportations. We told them that we will be at the backstage while they are at the center stage, directing and assuming too the lead roles. From that moment I can sensed how excited and inspired they were. They were eager to work and very much ready to listen.

At seven in the evening I imparted this message focusing on what Filipino youth should be. I told them this.

"My dearest young people, do you know that how special persons you are. You are important. The Church has special place for you. She hopes in you. We, your spiritual leaders, rely on you. We believe in your capacity. We trust your dedication. We admire your enthusiasm. We need you. The Holy Father during the International Youth Forum at the University Santo Tomas Seminary said *"enormous tasks lie before the youth of the world, especially before the Catholic youth of the Philippines, of Asia and the Far East, on the eve of the Third Millennium. The largest mission land of the world is in*

need of workers, and the Church constantly prays the Lord of harvest to send them" (January 13, 1995)

What the youth should be today?

My dearest young people, what should you be? *"There are three things,"* I said. First is to be RESPONSIBLE. To be responsible is to have the ability to response. You must be ready and available to answer. *"To what?"* you may ask. *"To a call, especially to God's call."* was my answer. Yes, God is calling you to have a happy and holy life. God is calling you to live a fruitful and fulfilling life. God is calling you to share in His life, to be one with Him, to be united with Him. God is holy, so we must be. God gives up His life for us, so we must live our life for others. Thus we can say that we are not alone, we are not isolated. We are all needed. We are for God and to God. We are called by God to lead other people to heaven. Why? It is because you and I belong to God.

Now, we must wake up from our complacent life and answer His divine call. We must turn our back from being happy-go-lucky kind of life and be responsible to pattern our life to His life. Let us remember then that God is asking you to life, and not to death. God is calling you into His light, and not to the darkness of sins, not to disgrace. God is calling us to His love, and not to be lost, not to be least. Where are you now, my dear young people? Where are you heading? What call are you answering? It is God's call or call of the wild? Or are you out of reach? Please remember that you must be responsible, ready and willing to answer God's call. Pope John Paul II affirmed this aspect as he said, *"I greet each one of you and encourage you to be steadfast in answering the call to a total self-giving love of the Lord. He*

will make many demands on you. He will require the fullest commitment of your whole being to the spreading of the Gospel and to the service of his people. But do not afraid! His demands are also the measure of his love for each of you personally" (University of Santo Tomas Seminary, January 13, 1995).

Second is to be CLEAN. With His sufferings and sacrifices on the cross, Jesus has cleansed us from sins. With His crucifixion and cruel death on the cross, Jesus has ransomed us from death and from eternal damnation. God's love has purified us. God's forgiveness has sanctified us. Therefore we must be clean in body, mind and soul. As to be clean with our mind, we must set aside impure thoughts and malicious intentions. We must get rid of envy and jealousy. We must be prudent and polite with our words. As to be clean with our body, we must not pollute our body with tattoos, with piercing. Don't mess your body with drugs, with liquors. We have our individuality. We are beautiful in our special ways. There is no need to decorate our bodies with fashionable jewelries and excessive cosmetics. Be modest with your dress. Be refined with your actions. Remember this maxim, *"simplicity is beauty."* As to be clean with our soul, we must deliberately avoid sins and the occasions of sins. We must observe the Ten Commandments and obey the teachings of the Church. We must follow the ways and will of God. Go always to the sacraments of Confession and Holy Eucharist. Nourish your souls with spiritual exercises and devotional prayers.

The Holy Father during the concluding Holy Mass of the Tenth World Day appealed to us as *"build your lives on the model that will not deceive you! I invite you to open the*

Gospel and discover that Jesus Christ wants to be your friend' (cf. John 15, 14). He wants to be your 'companion' at every stage on that road of life (cf. Luke 24, 13-35). He wants to be the 'way,' your path through anxieties, doubts, hopes and dreams of happiness (cf. John 14, 6). He is the 'truth' that gives meaning to your efforts and your struggles" (Luneta Park, Manila, January 15, 1995).

Now my dearest young people as you take good care of your body please take extra care of your soul. As you protect your body from dangers, please take necessary precautions against the enemies of our souls. Jesus reminds us *"do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but have no power to kill the soul. Rather be afraid of him who can destroy both body and soul in hell"* (Matthew 10, 28).

Third is being STEWARDS. God in His goodness has created you. God in His ultimate love has given us life. Not only you have been created, you are made in His image and likeness. Not only you are given life, you are endowed with skills and talents. God has graced us. He has blessed you. He has entrusted us with many beautiful things. He has gifted us with many bountiful blessings.

Now, my dearest young people even the Holy Father admitted that *"too many young people do not realize that they themselves are the ones who are mainly responsible for giving a worthwhile meaning to their lives"* (Prayer Vigil with the Youth at Luneta Park, Manila, January 14, 1995). So my dearest young people don't let those graces and blessings go to waste. Use them for greater good and for the greater glory of God. Maximize your talents. Develop further your skills. Remember then that you are stewards of God. God has high

hope in you. God believes in you. You have all the potentials. You have all the time and talents. You have all the support. Be successful. Be somebody as someone whom your parents will be proud of you. Be useful as our country and our Church will be happy for you. You have given much. Much is expected from you. So be faithful and dependable stewards. And thus Jesus will also tell us these words, *"well done, good and faithful servant, since you have been faithful in little things, I will entrust you with much more. Come and share the joy of your master"* (Matthew 25, 23).

Then, I invited them to take dinner with the community of Collegio Filippino priests, Dominican sisters and lay personnel.

At seventy thirty we continued our meeting. But by eight we left them on their own to formulate the objectives and theme of the pilgrimage and summer camp, to make the everyday schedules, to form different committees and assign different tasks. When we returned at eleven in the evening they proudly presented what they have accomplished. The proposed theme *"Kabataan magkaisa...si Maria ang huwaran, si Kristo ang hantungan"* was carefully composed and explained to us. They formed committees and divided themselves to head the five committees namely liturgy, accommodation and discipline, music and animation, transportation, and physical arrangement.

They asked our approval for their proposed everyday schedules which we completely agreed. We were satisfied with what they have done. We informed them that they have to actualize what they have prepared. But right now as we told they must rest and be ready for the eight o'clock Holy

Mass. And after breakfast the Filipino youth of Rome will bring them around the Eternal City. This elicited a joyful chorus of 'yes' and excitement was visible in their sleepy eyes. I was also happy, contented with what they have done. As returned to my room, I reviewed their proposed schedules. *"Well done,"* I remarked.

What are the schedules?

Friday, 23 July

1500 meeting and departure for Loreto, Ancona
2000 arrival, late dinner and systematization
2100 evening prayers and lights out

Saturday, 23 July

0800 morning prayers and breakfast
0900 spiritual conferences (3 talks)
1300 lunch
1500 small group sharing (by age levels)
1600 Holy Mass
1930 dinner
2130 cultural show

Sunday, 24 July

0730 morning prayers and breakfast
1000 Holy Mass
1200 lunch
1300 nomination and election of officers for the national
Filipino youth in Italy
1500 planning for the next national pilgrimage and
summer camp 2005,

proposal for forthcoming World Youth Day 2005,
giving of certificate of participation and recitation
of the act of consecration
1700 departure for Rome

CELEBRATION PHASE:

Our first National Filipino Youth in Italy pilgrimage and summer camp was held at Loreto on Friday to Sunday of July 23-25, 2004. We met at Via Marsala at four in the afternoon of Friday, July 23. Past six o'clock we left Rome by bus for Loreto. We were one hundred seventeen in two buses and a car. With a picture of total contentment and visible excitement we headed to the place known all over the world for its *"Shrine of the Holy House."* Pope John Paul II described it as *"the foremost shrine of international prestige devoted to the Virgin, and for several centuries the true Marian heart of Christianity."*

As we traveled we prayed the Holy Rosary and sung joyful songs. I also gave the bus leaders a part of this article entitled *"Holy House at Loreto"* taken from my book "looking for Jesus: reflections and prayers from Rome to be read along the way. This is what the book says.

Where is Loreto?

Loreto lies south of Ancona in the Italian region of Le Marche. It is situated 127 meters above sea level by the Adriatic Sea. Named after the laurel groves that thrive there, Loreto used to be a part of the town of Recanati. This rural area was, in 1336, called *"Villa of Loreto"* because of the Holy House that stood there. In 1356, a few private dwellings

and rudimentary houses for the accommodation of pilgrims were erected and the area became known as "*Villa of Saint Mary of Loreto*." Loreto stretches 17.7 kilometers between the Valley of the Musone to the north and the Valley of the Potenza to the south. It prides itself with rolling countrysides of wood and remote hills alongside long, sandy beaches.

How is the Holy House in Loreto?

According to Tradition, the Holy House venerated at Loreto is the same house as the one in the town of Galilee called Nazareth where "the Virgin Mary was born, raised and then greeted by angel, Gabriel" (cfr. Luke 1:26ff). The transportation of the Holy House was attributed to an 'angelic ministry.' The bull of Pope Paul II "Super Aethereas" of February 1470 affirmed that the Holy House was of miraculous origin and brought by angels.

Certain documents from Vatican archives state that a noble family by the name of Angeli (angels) saved the 'materials' of Our Lady's House from Muslim invasion and devastation of the Holy Land in 1291. The 'materials' consisted of "holy stones taken away from the house of Our Lady, Mother of God" and an "icon of Our Lady with the Child on her lap." The Angeli family, being descendants of the emperors of Constantinople, brought out these 'materials of the Holy House' from Nazareth to Illyria, then to the town of Tersatto, a place near a castle called Fiume (Rijeka) in Croatia. The Holy House reached Italy on the night of December 10, 1294. The Holy House settled in different places in the territory of Recanati. The first place it settled was in what is now the district of Bonderuola. A small chapel was erected for the Holy House. A quarrel over the votive offerings led to the

resettlement of the Holy House to its present location but it stood alone at that time on a public road.

The Recanati faithful, at the start of the 14th century, covered the Holy House in its entire height and width with a protective brick wall. Later, the Holy House was furnished with a humble portico (the trasanna). It was during the episcopate of Angelo Rinaldi, Bishop of Recanati (1383-1413), that the Holy House was enclosed within a church. In 1468, Bishop Nicolo delle Aste constructed the current Basilica which enshrines the Holy House. The Basilica was built under the Venetian inspiration and in the late Gothic style. The facade, on the* other hand, followed late Renaissance style. After the construction of the Basilica, the Holy House was placed inside as if mounted in a podium in the presbytery beneath the dome.

It was past ten in the evening when we arrived Loreto. Father Ricky Gente accompanied the youth from Milan. They brought their own van. Nine youth from Turin took the Euro-star train. They came ahead of us. We were housed at the Villa Pio XII Scalabrini in Via Marconi, 94. The superior of the House, Don Gianni Boren, welcomed us and graciously served us a late dinner. We have a short orientation. The youth were divided and assigned to different dormitories. Elders were distributed to different youth groups and acted as guardians.

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE:

We have our morning prayers at seven. Italian breakfast was served at eight. Then at nine in the morning walked towards the Piazza della Madonna. This square is bordered to the east by the facade of the Basilica. The two wings of the two-story Apostolic Palace are on the north and west sections.

To the south is the Illyric Palace. The brick Apostolic Palace now houses pilgrims, particularly the infirm. At the middle of the Piazza della Madonna is a Baroque fountain. There is a modest bell tower with nine bells on the left side of the Apostolic Palace. It is 67 meters from the ground level and surmounted by a copper sphere bearing a cross measuring 1.30 meters in diameter.

We went directly to the Sala Paolo Sesto for spiritual conferences. Sonya Berardini arranged the venues and the food. Her family owns the famous Tacabanda Ristorante near the Piazza della Madonna. Everything was all well arranged. All went well. Father Albert facilitated the program. Remi and Celeste Alberto led the youth to group singings and animation. Philippine Ambassador to the Holy See Leonida Vera greeted the participants. A youth leader Manolito delos Santos and a Teresian Association sister Belinda Villegas spoke about the theme of the gathering *"Kabataan magkaisa... si Maria ang huwaran, si Kristo ang hantungan."* It was inspiring and enlightening life testimonies. They spoke from their hearts. As to culminate our morning spiritual conference I spoke about who Maria must be in our life and lastly how should we be to Jesus. This is what I shared to them.

I was asked with this question in Italian, *"se il luogo pieno di acqua ha chiamato mare, come chiamerai una persona piena di grazia? La risposta e' Maria,* (if a place full of water is called sea, how will you call a person full of grace? The answer is Maria). From the gospel of Saint Luke we come to know that archangel Gabriel was sent by God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth to a young virgin whose name was Mary. He came to her and greeted her, *"rejoice,*

full of grace, the Lord is with you" (1,28). Now we can ask this question: who is Mary? Who is MARIA to us?

In answer to this question please allow me to define each letter from the name MARIA.

The letter M from the name Maria stands for MADRE, a mother. She is the mother of God. She is also our Mother. From the gospel of Saint John, we read that, *"when Jesus saw the Mother and the disciple, he said to the Mother,' Woman, this is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'there is your Mother"* (19,26-27). Even in the hour of betrayal and imminent cruel death on the cross, Jesus thinks of the well being of His loved ones. With His sublime love, Jesus desires to protect and to provide His mother assurance in her remaining earthly life. Thus John received the privilege to do what Jesus did with His mother, that is, to respect, to care and to serve Mother Mary. Jesus also contemplating the welfare of his beloved disciple and the community of apostles gave them a priceless gift in the person of Mother Mary who will assist and accompany them in their journey of faith to the Father. Mary as their Mother was entrusted to John, eventually to us the Church as John representing us. The gracious presence of Mary continues the abiding presence of Jesus to them.

Jesus listens to our petitions and prayers. Mary as a Mother presents them in a most ardent and pleasing way so that her Son, Jesus will surely do something to them. Jesus knows our shortcomings and sufferings. Mary as a Mother who underwent what we experiencing will surely comfort and console us. She will surely beg her Son, Jesus to alleviate our sufferings and to reward our sacrifices.

The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church described beautifully the Motherhood of Mary by stating that Mary, *"conceived Christ, brought Him forth, nourished Him, presented Him to the Father in the Temple, she suffered with the Son as He died on the Cross. She cooperated in a totally special manner in the work of the Savior by her obedience, faith, hope and charity, so as to restore the supernatural life to sinners. For this reason she is Mother to all in the order of grace"* (*Lumen Gentium*, 61).

We have this inspiring phrase, *"mother knows best."* Mother Mary knows what is best for us and so she gives to us her Son, Jesus. We may asked 'what is best for us?' It is to turn to Mary and take Mary as our Mother. And Mother Mary will surely give us the best and make us the best brothers and sisters of her Son, Jesus.

The letter A from the name Maria stands for ANCELLA, that is, handmaid. It is taken from her response to the Archangel Gabriel when Mary said, *"I am handmaid of the Lord, let it be made as you have said"* (Luke 1,38). Mary with her *fiat* cooperated with the divine plan of the Father. She collaborated with Jesus to accomplish our redemption. Mary obeyed God, without condition and without any hesitation. She offered herself to Him, totally and completely. Mary saw herself as God's servant and handmaid whose only desire is to follow and fulfill His will. As a handmaid, Mary did not complaint or doubted the ways of the Father. Being His handmaid, Mary perceived and performed everything with her Son, Jesus. She did not ask for privileges or special treatment. She just remained humble, silent and always at the background.

We will have notable achievements and great accomplishments. We will reap praises and acquire prominent positions. Mary is our living reminder of humility and holiness. With Mary we come to realize what we ought to become - handmaids of God, that is, faithful followers of Jesus, loving sons and daughters of the Church, nothing more and nothing less.

Redemptoris Mater affirmed this by saying "she, who at the Annunciation presented herself as the 'handmaid of the Lord,' remained throughout her earthly life faithful to what this title entails, thereby confirming to be a true 'disciple' of Christ. Jesus strongly emphasized that the character of mission was one of service: the Son of Man 'did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life in ransom for many' (Matthew 20, 28). For this reason Mary became the first of those who 'serving Christ also in others, with humility and patience lead their brethren to the King, for whom to serve is to reign" (41).

The letter R from the name Maria stands for REGINA, meaning queen. Pope Pius XII instituted this feast of the Queenship of Mary in 1954 as the fitting way to celebrate the octave of the feast of the Assumption. Pope Pius XII affirmed that the Blessed Virgin Mary "is to be called Queen not only by reason of her divine maternity, but also because by the will of God she has had an outstanding part in the work of our eternal salvation." Pope John Paul II said, "taken up into heaven, Mary is associated with the power of her Son and is dedicated to the extension of the kingdom, sharing in the diffusion of the divine grace in the world. Christians look with thirst to Mary Queen and this exalts their filial

abandonment to her, who is mother in the order of grace. Mary's glorious state brings about a continuous and caring closeness. She is a queen who gives all that she possesses, participating above all in the life and love of Christ."

God listens to our prayers. He attends to our needs. God grants our requests. And we also received many good things from God through Mary. Mary has given us everything for our salvation. She imparts to us what she receives from God. She never refuses or withholds anything from us. If we place our hope and trust in her powerful intercession with God, our prayers will never go unanswered.

Now Mary as our Regina, our queen let us give her what is due to her. Let us love her with the love of her Son, Jesus. Let us welcome her in our heart, in our home with the acceptance of Saint John. Let us respect her with the reverence of Archangel Gabriel. Let us honor her with the homage of her cousin Elizabeth. Let Mary rule and reign in life. Let Mary be our Lady and our Queen.

The letter I from the name Maria stands for ICONA, meaning image or portrait. Mary is the image of what a disciple of Jesus should be. She is a model of total womanhood, a paragon of a true wife, an example of a dedicated wife. Mary is the portrayal of the attributes of a faithful daughter of the Church. She is the icon of the Church. Mary as the Catechism of the Catholic Church puts its symbol and realization (507), model and teacher (2030), and emblem of the Church in prayer (2679). She embodies obedience and humility (Luke 1, 38), compassion (Luke 1, 39ff), confidence and dependence on God (Luke 2, 22ff), charity and counsel (John 2, 3ff).

From the invocations in the Litany of Loreto, we acknowledge the titles of Mary. We implore her intercessions as we firmly believe and trustingly accept her as mother and model, as virgin and queen, as throne of wisdom, mystical rose, as tower of ivory, as ark of covenant, as gate of heaven, as star of the sea. Mary is the icon whom we confide and solicit as health of the sick, refuge of sinners, comfort of the troubled, as helper and health of the sick.

To show our devotion and our filial affection to her we name our loved ones after her. We dedicate important places to her. To manifest our love and our commitment to her let us take her our model in life, an image in which we have to pattern our life. And in return let us make ourselves her living images here in on earth.

The letter A from the name Maria stands for AUSILATRICE meaning helper or helpmate. Saint Albert the Great vividly described this title saying, *"the Blessed Virgin Mary was not chosen by the Lord to be a 'minister,' but to be the 'spouse,' that 'help' according to what is stated in the Book of Genesis: 'Let us make him a helpmate' (2,18). The Blessed Virgin is not a 'vicar' [an agent] but a 'coadjutrix' and a 'companion,' participating in the kingdom as she had participated in the Passion, when all the ministers and disciples had run away and she alone remained at the foot of the Cross. The wounds which Christ received in His body, Mary felt in her heart"* (Mariale, 42).

God does not force us. He does not coerce us. God wants our cooperation. He needs our consent. Thus Jesus gave to us His Mother Mary to assist us and accompany us to Him. Mary is given to us as a Mother to make us stand whenever we

fall, to make us stronger whenever we are tempted, to make us secure whenever we falter. Mary is given to us a queen, as a helper to dispose to us divine graces (cfr. *Redemptoris Mater*, 41). Saint Grignon de Monfort affirmed this saying, *"God the Holy Spirit communicated to Mary, His faithful Spouse, His ineffable gifts and chose her as the dispenser of all He possesses. She can dispose all His gifts and graces to whomever she wishes, as much as wishes, as she wishes, and when she wishes. There is no heavenly gift which is bestowed to anyone unless it passes through her virginal hands. For such is the will of God: that all we have should come to us through Mary."*

Mary is the helpmate of the Lord. She is our helper. She intercedes for us. And she wants us to be with her in heaven. Now let us like Mary, a selfless helper and caring helpmate. And we can be like her - if we can love those who betrayed us; forgive those who maligned us; reach out to those who turned away from us; speak to those who ignored us; assist those who abandoned us; and to do good things to those who mistreated us.

Let us conclude our reflections on MARIA with this prayer of Saint Germanus of Constantinople.

O my Lady, my comfort,
divine dew, balm to my thirst,
rain falling from God upon the hardness of my heart,
shining light in the darkness of my soul,
guide in my journey,
support in my weakness,
clothing for my nakedness,
richness in my poverty,

healing for my wounds,
term of my tears and sighs,
freedom from my misfortunes,
relief from my sorrows,
freedom from my servitudes,
hope of my salvation.

So be it, o my Lady.
So be it, my refuge,
my life and my help,
my protection and my glory,
my hope and my strength.
Amen.

We have a break at eleven in the morning. We went back to the Piazza for the prepared snack of *panino con formaggio e prosciutto, succo di arancia e yogurt*. It was well prepared. The Scalabrinian Fathers graciously did everything to perfection. They provided board and lodging, gratuitous offered food and lovingly assisted us. The youth can eat as much as they want. And they can move freely around the Sanctuary. The people of Loreto especially the *volontari degli Scalabrini* heartily welcome us and made us felt at home. They acted with kindness and worked with love. They were always available and made things easy for us. I admired their dedication. And I was moved by selfless service.

Thirty minutes past eleven I continued the second part of my reflection. This time I spoke about Jesus and the young people. I told this.

How are we to Jesus?

"God so loved the world that he gave his only Son..." (John 3,16). Jesus came not by Himself, not in an instant or by magic. Jesus came through a family. As Saint Paul wrote to the Galatians, *"when the fullness of time came, God sent his Son. He came born of woman and subject to the Law, in order to redeem the subjects of the Law, that we may be given our full rights of sons and daughters of God"* (4, 4-5).

Jesus lived with His parents - Joseph and Mary. He stayed with them as narrated by Saint Luke in his gospel saying, *"Jesus went down with them, returning to Nazareth, and he continued to be subject to them"* (2, 51). Jesus has His friends. He chose them. Saint Luke described the manner Jesus selected them, *"at this time Jesus went out into the hills to pray, spending the whole night in prayer with God. When day came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them whom he called apostles"* (6, 12-13).

Jesus also worked. He labored as *"carpenter's son "* (Mark 6, 3). He was idle. He did not take things easy. He served as He said, *"the Son of Man has not come to be served but to serve and to give his life to redeem many"* (Mark 10, 45). Jesus worked for us. And His work is for our salvation. He did these saving works with His own blood, sweat and tears. He did not live in comfort. He did not indulge with material pleasures. Jesus made sacrifices. He suffered for us as He gave up His own life for our redemption. Saint Mark testified this by the very words of Jesus as He *"then begun to teach them that the Son of Man had to suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and the teachers of the law. He would be killed and after three days rise again"* (8, 31).

Now, my dearest young people, you have your family. You came into this world through a family. You have your parents. Live with them. Stay with them. Don't move away from them. Don't run away from them. Take good care of your home, of your family, of your parents. Follow the example of Jesus who loved His parents and lived with them. Like Jesus make it sure that you also *"increase in wisdom and age, and in divine and human favor"* (Luke 2, 52).

You also have friends. But be selective with your friends. As Jesus chose His friends through prayers and communion with God, take those who do good things and be good examples to you. Take friends who will not lead you to shame but to safety; those who will not make you sin but help you succeed; those who will not make you sorry but make you secured in life. Choose friends who will not only make you happy but much more holy, who will not only accompany you but much more will work for and with you. Learn from Jesus. Imitate how Jesus treated His parents. And how Jesus treated His Joseph and Mary? Are we going to learn and imitate. My answer is the Tagalog word 'OPO.' Our 'opo' is an affirmative word of respect. It is a polite word of saying yes. It shows positive action. Our 'opo' manifest truth, open admission and a confirmation. There is more to the Tagalog word 'opo.' For me every letter from the word 'opo' describes what we must do. These are the following:

The letter O from the word 'opo' stands for OBEDIENCE. Jesus obeys the will of the Father. To do the will of the Father, Jesus *"humbled himself by being obedient to death, death on the cross"* (Philippians 2, 8). Jesus was also obedient to Joseph and Mary *"by being subject to them"* (Luke 2, 51).

Jesus lived and stayed with them until at the age of thirty when He begun His public ministry. Thus, the very life of Jesus is best described by His total obedience to the divine plan of God the Father, complete submission to the parental guidance of Joseph and Mary, and unconditional fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets (cfr. Matthew 5, 17).

Our parents dreamed of our success. They work so hard to give us the best in life. They are protective because they want us to be safe. They always formulate rules, sometimes curtail our movements because they discern what is the best for us. What they desire from us is our compliance, our cooperation, our obedience. We, as their children, would listen and follow them. Is it difficult to obey their wishes that we study, that we go home early, that we don't hang around with suspicious acquaintances, that we avoid liquor and drugs? Is it hard to obey them when they tell us to take care of ourselves, to respect our elders, to follow rules, to be good children? Is it too much to obey them when we know that they love us, that they care for us and they are willing to sacrifice everything for us?

Our 'opo' means our obedience to them. Let us show our appreciation to what they do with our obedience. Let us show our admiration for their concern and services by obeying them.

The letter P from the word 'opo' stands for PRAISES. Jesus always acknowledges the Father. He refers everything to the Father. Before He does important actions Jesus calls on the Father (examples are choosing of the Twelve in Luke 6, 12ff; raising of Lazarus in John 11, 41; agony in the Garden in Matthew 26, 34). Jesus returns to the credit to the Father

as He said in the gospel of Saint Luke, *"I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and made them known to the little ones. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. I have been given all things by my Father, so that no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and he to whom the Son chooses to reveal to him"* (10,21-22).

Our parents are always giving us many good things. They cared for us. They provide us food, clothing, and education. What we ask, they give. What we lack, they supply. What we need, they provide. Their lives are life of services and sufferings. Their lives are life of constant giving, sharing and doing useful things for us. When was the last time we say 'thank you' to them? When was the last time we praise them? When was the last we have been polite to them? Is it too much to buy gift for them or to give them something special? Is it too much to admit our shortcomings and ask for forgiveness? Is it too much to take good care of them in their old age?

Our 'opo' is to be respectful to them. It is a 'yes' to praise them. Our 'opo' is to be polite to them. To give our 'opo' is to be courteous and to be concern to them. Our 'opo' means that we are truly care for them.

The last letter 'O' from the word 'opo' stands for OFFERING. Jesus offers everything for our own good. He gives what He has for us. His own life is a self-offering to the Father for our salvation. As Jesus said, *"there is no greater love than this, to give one's life for one's friends..."* (John 15,13). Because of love Jesus carried and died on the cross. Dying on the cross, He offers to us His forgiveness and friendship.

He relays to us the mercy and pardon of the Father. He extends to us His compassion and communion. Jesus only wants our salvation. And the Father has once more open the gates of heaven for us. Jesus assures us, promising, *"in my Father's house there are many rooms. Otherwise I would not have told you. After I have gone and prepared a place for you, I shall come again and take you to me, so that where I am, you also maybe"* (John 14, 2-4).

Our parents have given us life. They want us not only to live but much more to have a meaningful and fruitful life. They work and desire that we have a pleasant and happy life. They will do everything, share everything and provide everything in order to assure us of a better and brighter future. Even if we fail, they will understand us and offer to us their support. Even if we went against them, they will forgive us and offer us their love. Even if we ignore them, they will still welcome us and offer us a second chance. Our parents will never forget us, will never walk away from us, will never be tired of helping and hoping the best in us. They are always there for us. Is it difficult to spend some time with our parents? Is it too much to visit them, to speak to them, to take them for a meal? Is it difficult to bring them and introduce them to our friends and officemates?

Our 'opo' means our self-surrender. It signifies we give up a moment of our time for them. Our 'opo' means sharing and sacrificing our comforts just to be with them and to attend to their needs. Our 'opo' is our offering of our self, of our service to them. Let our 'opo' be our visible actualization of the fourth commandment in which the good Lord God asks us to *"honor your father and your mother"* (Exodus 20, 12).

One o'clock was lunch which served at the Piazza. Huge tents were set up. We have a great view of Loreto. Our lunch consisted of *spaghetti al pomodoro* (spaghetti with tomato) as first plate and for second plate was *polio al forno con patate* (roast chicken with potatoes).

What is the Holy House of Loreto?

After lunch we went back to the Basilica. We proceeded directly to the Holy House. I acted as tour guide, explaining something about the Holy House. Behind the altar at the center was a huge decorative marble block, called Marble Screen. *It is a stone wall built by the people of Recanati in the 4th century as an additional protection for the Holy House. The Marble Screen consists of a podium with geometrical ornamentation. There are a series of lined columns articulated in two sections. They are crowned by corinthian capitals supporting a projected cornice. The balustrade cloaks the ungainly barrel vault of the Holy House. It also provides an elegant frame encasing the marvelous Marble Screen. There are ten statues of Sybils and Prophets carved by two's in the niches between the balustrades. The intermediate panels of marble cubes depict stories in the life of Our Lady. Starting from the north wall of the Marble Screen, the panel features the Nativity, the Nuptials, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Census, Christmas, the Adoration of the Magi and the death of the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

We entered inside the Holy House. *The Holy House is a room with three walls following an unusual west-east direction. It has a height of almost 3 meters and has only one door facing north. There are no foundations and it is done partly in stone. The window faces west. Frescoes, painted*

during the 14th century, adorn it. These frescoes, starting from the right south wall from the altar towards the door, depict the following: the Madonna and the Child, the Madonna on the throne with Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Bartholomew, Saint Anthony the Abbot and Saint George on Horseback. On the west wall is the fresco of the Madonna and the Child on the throne with Saint Louis IX of France. On the left north wall are frescoes of the Madonna and the Child and two angels, the Madonna and the Child on the throne with Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Catherine of Alexandria. Above the altar is the statue of the Madonna with the Child set in its niche. The statue is carved out of the rare cedar wood of Lebanon from the trees in the Vatican gardens. Our Lady is garbed in a 'dalmatic' mantle. Commissioned by Pope Pius XI, the present statue was crowned in the Vatican in 1922 and solemnly transported to Loreto and enshrined above the altar in the Holy House. It is darker than the original. The original, an icon of Byzantine origin, was painted on wood and disappeared in 16th century. Its replacement was a 14th century wooden statue that was destroyed by fire in 1921.

Under a marble panel of the altar is an inscription: "*Hic verbum caro factum est*" (Here the Word was made flesh).

As to end our brief tour I invited the youth to recite with me this prayer.

My loving and gentle Jesus,
you left your true home-heaven -
to live in an earthly house.

Make us ever more aware that our true home is with you.
Make us aspire to reach and to stay in your heavenly home.

You had been obedient in your home - in Nazareth,
staying and working with your parents - Joseph and Mary.
Help us to listen and follow our parents.
Allow us not to run away from home,
nor to escape from our duties and obligations.

You blessed your home - in Nazareth with your
caring presence.
We humbly beg you in prayers to also bless our homes;
let there be peace and prosperity,
let there be unity and oneness,
let there be mutual respect,
let there be love and fullness of life,
let there be forgiveness and healing,
let there be you in us and us in you.

You sanctified the house of Zacchaeus with saving
and caring healing words.
We humbly implore you in prayers to sanctify also our homes;
with loving and responsible parents,
with caring and obedient children
with conscientious neighbors,
with true and dedicated friends,
with understanding and supportive relatives,
with a warm and compassionate community.

You performed miracles in the house of Martha and Mary.
We humbly beseech you to guard and protect our homes;
from falling and breaking apart,
from separation and mistrust,
from envy and jealousy,
from negligence and loss,
from closing our heart and our doors to our dear ones.

My loving and gentle Jesus,
we humbly invite and welcome you.
Make our homes your home.
We humbly beg you with the words of the disciples
at Emmaus,
"Stay with us, Lord!"
Amen.

Before we go back to Villa Pio XII Scalabrini I informed them of the little group sharing at 3, Holy Mass at 6 and cultural presentation at nine in the evening. To prepare for the group sharing I gave them these two guide questions:

1. How we, young people, become true sons and daughters to our dear Mother Mary?
2. How we, young people, become true brothers and sisters to our dear Lord Jesus Christ?

We gathered at the grounds of Villa Pio XII under the olive trees. Though it was bright, sunny day the afternoon breeze brought soothing freshness. The place was very conducive for rest and reflection. We grouped according to their age level and assigned respective facilitators. The sharing was lively and spontaneous. They spoke from their hearts. They came to know more about themselves and their relationships with Jesus and Mother Mary. The youth even shared their family life. Camaraderie was strongly fostered. Their Catholic faith was deepened. After two hours of sharing they gathered themselves for a big group sharing. It was all fun and friendship. There were cooperation and solidarity among them. We all were satisfied and fulfilled.

It was almost six in the afternoon when we walked to the Basilica. We went directly to the Cripta dei Santi Pellegrini for the celebration of the Holy Mass. Father Albert Guevara presided the Holy Mass. Father Ricky Gente, Don Gianni Boren and I concelebrated. I prepared this reflection.

What is the Holy House of Loreto for us?

The Holy House of Loreto is also our house, our home. And there are three things we must learn and ponder about the holy House of Loreto. First is our salvation starts here in this Holy House. Here, Mary received the greetings of the angel, Gabriel. Mary willingly expressed her consent to do God's will unconditionally with her profession, *"I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me as you have said"* (Luke 1:38). The 'Yes' of Mary is her self-offering to God, opening her house and her heart to God, and in so doing, letting God dwell in our human world. The 'Yes' of Mary is the beginning of man's salvation. Her 'Yes' enables the fulfillment of God's promise to redeem mankind.

Our home must be a source of salvation. Salvation must begin in our home. Not only must one find safety and security in one's house but one must also find salvation. Thus, let us invite God to dwell in our homes. Let us open the door of our heart and our home to God. Let our home be an oasis of salvation where our words can save, our works are service. Second is our human formation starts at home. Here in this Holy House, Jesus lived and learned under the exemplary tutelage of Mary and Joseph. Here, Jesus experienced the tender and loving care of his parents. And Jesus as a dutiful son obeyed his parents. He assisted them in their needs and in their old age. Saint Luke affirmed it in his gospel, *"Jesus*

went down with them, returning to Nazareth, and he continued to be subject to them" (2:50).

Our home must nourish us so that we grow not only in age but much more in grace and wisdom like Jesus who *"increased in wisdom and age, and in divine and human favor"* (Luke 2:52). Our home must provide an atmosphere of love for children and respect of parents. Our home must be solidly founded on the values embodied by the Holy House in Nazareth. Third is work, an important and necessary part of home. The Holy House sanctifies work. Here, Jesus spent his thirty years working as a *'carpenter's son'* (Matthew 13:55). Jesus labored with His human hands. And He blessed works with His hands.

One must not escape from work. One must not remain idle or lazy. One must not be choosy about work or feel ashamed of his work. Jesus worked in and outside His House, for His parents and for His people. Jesus continues to work for us and for our salvation.

As planned we have cultural show of dances, songs and drama skits at nine in the evening at the Piazza. A stage was set up. A sound system was provided. It was not an entertainment but a memorable way for the youth to express their gratitude for the hospitality of the people of Loreto. It was also a showcase of Filipino folkdances such *maglalatik*, *pangdanggo sa Haw*, *sinulog*. The youth from Milan presented modern dances. The Turin youth group presented *Ifugao dances*. The YES or youth for El Shaddai shared their talents with drama skit about the family life of Filipino migrants. The Youth Ministry of Santa Pudenziana gave up some inspirational songs. The cultural show ended at eleven in the

evening. The cultural show was well received. All were happy and contented. The youth were tired yet all smiled. They have proven their worth and shown their talents to the appreciative Italian audiences. It was indeed a fruitful day and fulfilling night.

CONCLUSION:

On the last day of the pilgrimage and summer camp we joined the 10 o'clock morning Sunday Holy Mass at the Santuario for the opening of the 7th International Meeting on Migration. Archbishop Silvano Maria Tomasi, *osservatore permanente della Santa Sede presso Ufficio delle Nazioni Unite ed Istituzione Specializzate a Ginevra*, was the main celebrant. At the start of the Holy Mass the *delegato pontificio per il Santuario della Santa Casa di Loreto*, Archbishop Angelo Comastri, joyfully welcomed Archbishop Silvano Maria Tomasi and the delegates for the 7th International Meeting on Migration. He heartily acknowledged the presence of the Filipino youth. The liturgy was prepared by the Filipino youth. They acted as choir, lectors and commentators, and read the prayers of the faithful.

"These Filipino youth can fully integrate to the Italian Church. They can lead in the Church activities. They look up with respect to the Church authorities." I said to myself. I know that they felt that they are needed, trusted and can make a difference. This is what the Holy Father told to the students in his meeting with them at the grounds of the University of Santo Tomas saying *"young people of the Philippines, the modern world needs a new kind of young people: it needs men and women who are capable of self-discipline, capable*

of committing themselves to the highest ideals, ready to change radically the false values which have enslaved so many young people and adults" (January 13, 1995).

The rest of the Sunday morning was spent purchasing religious souvenirs and cleaning the dormitories and the surroundings. An Italian lunch of *lasagna e bistecca* (beef-steak) was served at the Villa Pio XII Scalabrini. We held a simple program to acknowledge the sacrifices and services of the *gruppo della cucina, gruppo di volontari* and valuable assistance of Don Gianni Boren. The Filipino youth of different Italian cities rendered songs of praises and gratitude. Father Albert Guevara and I presented them plaques of appreciation. They were all surprised yet satisfied. *"To serve is our contentment,"* was their swift respond.

After lunch we gathered at the chapel. I facilitated the nomination and election of officers among the Italian cities and communities of Filipino leaders. They as we envisioned them will form a set of officers representing the whole Filipino youth in Italy. We solicited suggestions for the next 2nd *national Filipino youth in Italy pilgrimage and summer camp 2005* and for the forthcoming *World Youth Day 2005* in Cologne, Germany. To share with them our appreciation for their gracious presence and selfless sharing of time and talents, we handed to them certificates of participation, VHS and cassette tapes about the Holy House of Loreto. As to give a fitting end to our memorable pilgrimage and meaningful summer camp, we consecrated ourselves to the maternal guidance and loving care of our Blessed Mother, our Lady of Loreto. We recited this act of consecration and prayed for a pleasant trip back home.

Act of Consecration

Our dearest Lord Jesus, our divine savior and merciful brother
we firmly commit ourselves to you through the caring
intercession of
our Blessed Mother Mary, the Lady of Loreto
to fix our future on you,
to walk in Your footsteps,
to live your life and to follow Your attitudes towards our sweet
Mother Mary.

We consecrate ourselves to You as we take the Blessed Virgin
Mary
to be our model and mother in life.
Like our Blessed Mother Mary and for you, our dearest Lord
Jesus:
We will say our 'yes' to our responsibilities and obligations.
We will be clean in body, pure in thoughts, and chaste in
relationships.
We will be faithful friends, compassionate companions,
obedient children, and loyal sons and daughters of the
Church.
We humbly ask the guidance and constant enlightenment of the
Holy Spirit
To accompany us, watch over us and guard us
so that we can be all true to our commitments and fulfill this
act of consecration.
Amen.

Cases and Inquiries

JAVIER GONZALEZ, O.P.

ALIENATION OF CHURCH PROPERTY: WHY AND HOW?

QUESTION:

Is the concept of Alienation of ecclesiastical goods applied to a case of exchange of property (church lot and a donation of PhP 22.5 million)? If yes, who is the competent ecclesiastical authority to handle the case? Another question: If permit from the Apostolic See is needed, to whom/to what Office in the Vatican should the letter for permit be addressed? Does said letter have to be coursed through the Office of the Papal Nuncio in Manila?

RESPONSE:

After reading this inquiry it seems to me that the entire concept of Alienation of ecclesiastical goods has to be reviewed in order to clarify some of its basic canonical implications, such as the requirements for a valid alienation, the permission needed, its competent authority, etc., as well as to

address the specific questions above formulated, which also imply the alienation norms for the Philippines.

1. Alienation of Church Property: What for?

The catholic Church claims that she has the inherent right to acquire, retain, administer and *alienate* temporal goods, in the pursuit of her objectives (cf c. 1254). (By the way, the term "catholic Church" means not only the universal Church or the Apostolic See, but also the particular Churches and all other public and private juridical persons in the Church, such as dioceses, parishes, religious houses, etc.)

What are those objectives of the Church? Primarily the putting of divine worship in order, the provision of adequate support for the clergy and other ministers, and the carrying out of works of apostolate and of charity, especially for the needy. In the case of alienation of church property, her immediate specific objective is to safeguard her temporal patrimony, not in the sense of keeping it intact, but rather of guarding it against imprudent loss by any individual public juridical person in the Church.

Alienation means "to make something another's." In other words, alienation implies the transfer of ownership of something (a thing or a right), normally through sale, donation or exchange. In the Code of Canon Law, however, the concept of alienation includes not only those transactions or acts involving sales, donations and exchanges, but also *any other* legal act which could somehow depreciate or change substantially the condition, value, security, etc., of the property, even if there is no actual transfer of ownership, as it happens in

cases of mortgage, lease, indebtedness, loans, issuance of bonds and debentures, etc. (c. 1295).

2. What are the Requirements for Valid Alienation?

Canon 1291 prescribes *"the permission of the authority competent by law is required for the valid alienation of goods which, by lawful assignment, constitute the stable patrimony of a public juridical person, whenever their value exceeds the sum determined by law."*

Three basic issues concerning alienation are mentioned here that need somehow to be clarified, namely, (a) What can be considered "ecclesiastical goods" and when these constitute the "stable patrimony" of a public juridical persons; (b) What are the maximum and minimum sums for alienation; and (c) Who is the competent authority to grant the permission.

*(a) What **can** be considered "ecclesiastical goods"?*

Ecclesiastical goods are all temporal goods belonging either to the universal Church, to the Apostolic See or to other *public* juridical persons in the Church (a diocese, a parish, a religious house...).

How can we know if a juridical person is *public* or *private*? Canon 116 §1 mentions the features which distinguish the *public* juridical persons: (1) they are established by the competent ecclesiastical authority; (2) the task they carry out is done not in their own name but in the name of the Church; (3) they are subject to their own statutes as well as to universal and particular law (their property and assets are 'ecclesiastical goods' which are governed by the canons of the

Code); and (4) they are to fulfill the task for which they were established 'for the public good'.

Ecclesiastical goods are regulated by the Code of Canon Law, as well as by the respective juridical persons' statutes (c. 1257, §1). Thus, for instance, in the Constitutions of each religious institute there should be a chapter on the administration of temporal goods, outlining the right of ownership, the norms for administration, and so on. Equally, each diocese should have a policy regarding the administration of goods belonging to parishes, e.g., the amount of money a parish priest may spend without recourse to higher authority, etc.

On the other hand, since the permission of the competent authority is required for the valid alienation of goods *which constitute the stable patrimony* of a public juridical person, we may ask: What can be considered "stable patrimony"? The answer is that, in general, ecclesiastical goods are considered the stable patrimony of a public juridical person when they constitute the present and future means whereby the said juridical entity funds its objectives and personnel. Usually, these are capital assets - real or personal - destined to remain in the possession of its owner for a long or indefinite period of time to afford financial security for the future. Examples of it are either real estate (land, buildings), movable property (furniture, books, cars), long-term investments in securities (stocks, bonds, treasury notes), funds set aside for a specific purpose (pensions, scholarships), etc. On the contrary, cash on hand, short-term investments are not part of the stable patrimony and so are not subject to alienation rules.

(b) What are the maximum and minimum sums for alienation?

Canon 1292 states that when the value of the goods whose alienation is proposed falls within the minimum and maximum amounts to be defined by the Conference of Bishops for its own region, the permission of the competent authority is needed. Likewise, "the permission of the Apostolic See is also required for the valid alienation of goods whose value exceeds the maximum amount, goods given to the Church by vow, or goods precious for artistic or historical reasons."

Since the minimum and maximum sums are to be established according to the principle of subsidiarity by each Episcopal Conference - and legitimately promulgated after having been reviewed by the Apostolic See - the amount obviously varies from country to country. [For all religious institutes the maximum amount is to be determined by the Holy See for each region (c. 638 §3)]

Acting on this matter, the Episcopal Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) has set the following norms for the country (cf. CB, Prot. 35/84, in Testera, E, *Canon Law Digest of the Philippine Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., Manila, 1985, p. 17):

[1] *"The minimum amount in the alienation of temporal goods in the Church is US\$20,000 or its peso equivalent, and the maximum amount US\$100,000 or its peso equivalent.*

[2] *In the alienation of goods which constitute the stable patrimony of the Church, whenever the value is between US\$10,000 and US\$20,000 or its peso equivalent, the diocesan bishop should hear its council of economic affairs and board of consultants for a valid transaction."*

Thus, in the Philippines, any administrative act of alienation of ecclesiastical goods by any diocesan Bishop or their equivalents in law, reaching the total value of one hundred thousand US Dollars and above, needs the majority consent of the Diocesan Financial Council, of the Board of Consultors, and of the Apostolic See itself.

(c) Who is the competent authority to grant permission for alienation?

The authority that is competent by law to grant the required permission for alienation depends of the value of the goods to be alienated as well as of the owner of those goods. Thus,

[1] If the amount of the goods to be alienated is *below* or *between the minimum and maximum* sums established by the Episcopal Conference for the region [in the Philippines, between US\$20,000 and US\$100,000]:

- in the case of juridical person subject to the diocesan Bishop, the competent authority is the diocesan Bishop himself acting with the consent of the Finance Council and of the Board of Consultors and of any interested party (c. 1292 §1);
- in the case of juridical person not subject to the diocesan Bishop, the competent authority is determined by the juridical person's own statutes;
- in the case of Religious institutes (c. 638 §3), Secular Institutes (c. 718) and of Societies of Apostolic Life (c. 741 §1), the competent authority is the Superior indicated in the Constitutions, with the consent of his/her council.

[2] If the value of goods goes *beyond the maximum sum or limit established by the Episcopal Conference* [in the Philippines US\$100,000], the additional permission of the Apostolic See is required for the validity of the alienation.

The permission of the Apostolic See is required for validity also when the goods to be alienated are something given to the Church by reason of a vow or of goods which are precious by reason of their artistic or historical significance, regardless of their monetary value.

3. Permission by the Apostolic See: By Whom and How?

It has just been said that the permission of the Apostolic See is required for the valid alienation of goods whose value exceeds the maximum sum defined by the Episcopal Conference of the place, or if the ecclesiastical goods come to the possession of the Church by reason of a vow or the objects are precious by reason of their artistic and/or historical significance.

One frequently asked question is *"Who" is the Apostolic See for these cases?* Or better - quoting from the above consultation — *to whom, or to what office in the Vatican should the letter for permit be addressed?* The answer is twofold: For the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, it is the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. For all others, it is the Congregation for the Clergy.

The justification of this answer is found in the Apostolic Constitution *PASTOR BONUS*, which, speaking of the competencies of the Congregation for the Clergy, states: *"The Congregation [for the Clergy] carries out everything that*

pertains to the Holy See regarding the regulation of ecclesiastical goods, and especially their correct administration; it grants the necessary approvals and 'recognitions', and it further sees to it that serious thought is given to the support and social security of the clergy." (Art. 98)

Another question is *What is the information that has to be supplied to the Apostolic See in the request for the permission?* In answer to this question, I should say that the information presently required by the Apostolic See in the request for permission includes the following (cf. Testera, F., *Canon Law Digest of the Philippine Catholic Church*, p. 19):

- a. the reason for the alienation;
- b. the nature of the transaction: loan, mortgage, donation, sale, etc.;
- c. the name of the other party involved in the transaction: firm, corporation, physical person,-etc.;
- d. the terms of the proposal;
- e. the financial position of petitioner, specially the obligations contracted and the ability of the juridic entity to pay the interests from current revenue and the capital itself within a reasonable time;
- f. the balance sheet of current assets and liabilities of the juridic entity and a statement of receipts and expenditures plus a list of other obligations the juridic entity may have contracted before and have not yet been settled.

This required meticulous information seems to suggest that alienation when really reasonable and wherefore justified,

should be done businesslike although not really for business. Among other things, this means that while material gain from alienation is not the primary intention, financial loss should neither be a welcome accompaniment in the alienation of ecclesiastical goods. The Apostolic See wants to make sure that at any time the provisions, especially of civil law, as well as the integrity and capacity of the subject recipient of the ecclesiastical goods concerned have been well considered by the Administrator. A practical consideration in alienation of ecclesiastical goods is that Administrators must always have in mind their Successors so that they would not be left with either too meager temporal resources or none at all such that the same would find it difficult if not morally impossible to fund the needs of divine worship, the works of the apostolate and charity and the Church ministers.

4. Conclusion

All these things been said, I just go back to the original inquiry and answer briefly to the questions thereby formulated:

a) *Is the concept of alienation of ecclesiastical goods applied to a case of exchange of property (church lot and a donation of PhP 22.5 million)?* Yes. In Canon Law the concept of alienation includes not only those transactions involving sales and/or donations, but also *exchanges* and any other legal act which could somehow depreciate or change substantially the condition, value, security, etc., of the property (cf. c. 1295). Besides, the amount of PhP22.5 million goes far beyond the maximum sum established by the Episcopal Conference of the Philippines and therefore the permission from the Apostolic See is required for validity.

b) *Who is the competent ecclesiastical authority to handle the case?* Since there is no indication here of Institutes of Consecrated Life or Societies of Apostolic Life being involved, I presume it is a case of a juridical person subject to the diocesan Bishop. Therefore, the competent authority to handle the case is the diocesan Bishop himself acting with the consent of the Finance Council and of the Board of Consultors and of any interested party (cf. c. 1292 §1). Obviously, additional permission from the Apostolic See is needed. [If it were a case of Religious or Secular Institutes and/or Societies of Apostolic Life the competent authority would be the Superior indicated in the Constitutions, with the consent of his/her council. Additional permission from the Apostolic See would be equally needed.]

c) *If permit from the Apostolic See is needed, to whom/ to what Office in the Vatican should the letter for permit be addressed?* Based on the same presupposition, I answer that the competent office in the Vatican is the Congregation for the Clergy. [For institutes of Consecrated Life and/or Societies of Apostolic Life, the competent office would be the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.]

d) *Does said letter have to be coursed through the Office of the Papal Nuncio in Manila?* My answer is No. At least I have not found any mention of it anywhere nor am I aware of such practice.

Homiletic and Bibliarasal Pointers for July-August 2005

EFREN RIVERA, OP

July 3,2005

◁ 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings (A): Zec 9:9-10; Rom 8:9,11-13; Mt 11:25-30

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). ***Father revealed by gentle and humble Son.*** <> Mt 11:25-30 is between the Missionary Discourse used in the previous Sundays and the Parabolic Discourse (Mt 13:1 ff) which will be taken up in the following three Sundays (15th to 17th). The Reading begins with Jesus' prayer of jubilation directed to his Father. Commenting on it the Catholic Church Catechism (2603) says, it "expresses the depth of his heart, his adherence to the Father's 'good pleasure,' echoing his mother's *fiat* at the time of his conception and prefiguring what he will say to the Father in his agony. The whole prayer of Jesus is contained in this loving adher-

ence of his human heart to the mystery of the will of the Father." <> In the second part, Jesus is like personified Wisdom (see Sir 24:19; 51:23-30) inviting people to be wise.

2. VALUES THAT WE CAN PICK FROM THE PASSAGE (*Bibliarasal Step Three*).

V. 25b "You have revealed (heavenly mysteries) to the childlike." - Value of spiritual childhood.

V. 28b "I will give you rest." - Value of resting after we have done our labor.

V 29a "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart." - Value of being meek and humble.

3. POINTS FOR SHARING (*Bibliarasal Step Five*).

- (V. 25b) Have you met adult people who are childlike?
- (V. 28b) Have you experienced being spiritually reinvigorated after a retreat?

4. WHAT THE LORD WANTS US TO DO (*Bibliarasal Step Six*).

a) In relation to Philippine Church Life Today. - Let us practice the spiritual childhood taught in the Gospels and clarified by the life and writings of St. Therese of the Child Jesus, now a doctor of the Church.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - We have to look for ways and

means of making people more productive. Recreation should help people be more productive.

c) In relation to Spiritual and Personal Life. Let us train ourselves in the values pointed out above (n. 2).

HUMBLED BY BEING ELECTED POPE

Cheering crowds in a packed St. Peter's Square greeted the Church's 265th Pope as he emerged onto the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica April 19 in the evening (the biblical beginning of a new day). "Dear brothers and sisters," said the German-born prelate, "after the great Pope, John Paul II, the Lord Cardinals have elected me, a simple, humble worker in the Lord's vineyard. I am consoled by the fact that the Lord is able to work and act with insufficient instruments and, above all, I rely on your prayers."

The sentiments in Benedict XVI's heart at his first Mass with the Cardinals on the day after his election are almost a perfect echo of the sentiments we see in today's Gospel Reading, namely the sentiments of humility and gratitude. The Pope said, "In these hours, two contrasting sentiments coexist in my spirit. On one hand, a sense of inadequacy and of human anxiety before the universal Church, because of the responsibility that was entrusted to me yesterday as Successor of the Apostle Peter in this See of Rome. On the other hand, I feel very intensely in myself a profound gratitude to God who - as we sing in the liturgy - does not abandon his flock, but leads it through the times, under the guidance of those whom he himself has chosen as vicars of his Son and has constituted pastors (cf. Preface of the Apostles I)".

The Pope also touched on his human weakness at his inaugural Mass on April 20: "Weak servant of God that I am, I must assume this enormous task, which truly exceeds all human capacity."

* * #

Bishops in various countries quickly welcomed news of the election of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger as Pope.

Archbishop Mario Conti of Glasgow, Scotland, said: "I know the new Pope personally. I have had the honor of meeting him several times over the years in Rome. He is a very humble, personable man, quite different from the hard-line "enforcer" image which is often portrayed of him. X x x The choice of name is interesting, and I would say, inspiring. The last Pope to bear that name, Benedict XV, was a man of enormous humility who spent himself in the cause of peace. I think we may find a clue to the style of pontificate we are likely to see in that choice of name."

Cardinal Keith O'Brien, Archbishop of Saint Andrews and Edinburgh, Scotland, said: " May our new Pope work for peace throughout the world following the example of his earlier predecessor Pope Benedict XV who died at the time of the First World War. St. Benedict is one of the patron saints of Europe; may he inspire us as we remember Europe's Christian roots and may our new Pope also keep before his own mind and ours the final words in St. Benedict's rule; 'Place no one before Christ.'"

Source: Zenith (ZE05041923)

July 10, 2005

◇ 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings (A): Is 55:10-11; Rom 8:18-23; Mt 13:1-23 (or 13:1-9)

July 11 St. Benedict, abbot - patron saint of our new Pope

July 16, Saturday: Memorial of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). **The parable of the sower.** <> *The Parable of the Sower is the first story in Matthew's long "parabolic discourse" of our Lord. It is from this parabolic discourse that the 15th, 16th and 17th Sundays in Ordinary Time, Year A, take their Gospel Reading.* <> Biblical criticism distinguishes between the pure parables that came from Christ himself (*ipsissima verba Christi*) and the allegorization done by the Christian communities as they applied the teachings of Christ to their situations (*Sitz im leben*). The Parable of the Sower as read in the Gospels certainly contains many allegorical elements. For example, the birds represent "the evil one," the thorns represent "worldly anxiety and the lure of money." These elements are important for the application of the parable, which is the task of the Church from the first generation of Christians until our time and beyond, and we must not disregard them. We can also look for modern equivalents. For example, the birds could represent the many evil forces and social situations that rob children of their childhood. But it is also important to get the original message of Jesus Christ. To do so, one has to temporarily set aside the allegorical elements and get to the "point" (only one) of the story. It seems that the original "point" for the Sower Parable is that, in spite of the seeds wasted by the wayside, or among

rocks, or among thorns, the good seeds on the good ground yield such a bountiful harvest that the farmer's effort is far from wasted. It is an exhortation to believe in the power of God's word and not to get discouraged because of setbacks in apostolic work.

2. VALUES THAT WE CAN PICK FROM THE PASSAGE (*Bibliarasal Step Three*).

V. 8 "Some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold." - Value of good seed and good soil. Neither poor seed on good soil nor good seed on poor soil will produce a good harvest.

3. POINTS FOR SHARING (*Bibliarasal Step Five*).

- (V. 8) Do you know anyone who was already a good person when he was a Buddhist but became a much better person when he became a Christian?

- (V. 19-22) Do you know any Christian - perhaps yourself some time in your past - whose goodness was made unproductive by evil forces ("birds") or by lack of caring for the poor ("rocks") or by worldly pursuits ("thorns")?

4. WHAT THE LORD WANTS US TO DO (*Bibliarasal Step Six*).

a) In relation to Philippine Church Life Today. - Let us see to it that people become "good soil" by promoting values-oriented education in our schools.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - Let us pursue the cultivation

of values without which everything else will be unproductive for the happiness of our people.

c) In relation to Spiritual and Personal Life. Let us train ourselves in the values pointed out above (n. 2).

POPE JOHN PAUL II - SOWER

Mt 13:37 says, "He who sows the good seed is the Son of man." This is true even today. However, in God's providence, he also avails himself of faithful servants to do the sowing. We can indeed salute Pope John Paul II - the Grest - as God's Sower in the field of the whole world in the past 25 years and more.

Our new Pope, Benedict XVI, who now also has to sow good seed all over the world, paid tribute to his great predecessor at his Mass with the cardinals after he was elected (April 20, 2005). He said: "I have before me, in particular, the testimony of Pope John Paul II. He has left a more courageous, free and young Church. A Church that, according to his teaching and example, looks with serenity to the past and has no fear of the future. She was led into the new millennium with the Great Jubilee, carrying in her hands the Gospel, applied to the present world through the authoritative re-reading of the Second Vatican Council. Pope John Paul II indicated the Council precisely as a "compass" with which to orient oneself in the vast ocean of the third millennium (cf. apostolic letter "Novo Millennio Ineunte," Nos. 57-58). In his spiritual testament he noted: "I am convinced that the new generations will still be able to draw for a long time from the riches that this council of the 20th century has lavished on us" (17.11.2000).

Earlier in the same sermon Pope Benedict XVI showed that Pope John Paul II sowed good seed even through his death: "The Holy Father John Paul II's death, and the days that followed, were a time of extraordinary grace for the Church and for the entire world. The great sorrow of his death and the sense of emptiness that it left in everyone were tempered by the action of the risen Christ, which was manifested during long days in the unanimous wave of faith, love and spiritual solidarity, culminated in his solemn obsequies."

"We can say it: John Paul II's funeral rites were a truly extraordinary experience in which in some way the power of God was perceived that, through his Church, desires to make of all peoples a great family, through the unifying force of Truth and Love (cf. "Lumen Gentium," No. 1). At the hour of death, conformed to his Teacher and Lord, John Paul II crowned his long and fruitful pontificate, confirming the Christian people in the faith, gathering them around himself and making the entire human family feel more united. How can we not feel supported by this testimony? How can we not perceive the encouragement that comes from this event of grace?"

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| July 17, 2005 | ◇ 16 th Sunday in Ordinary Time |
| Readings (A): Wis 12:13,16-19; Rom 8:26-27; Mt 13:24-43 (or 13:24-30) | |

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). *Parable of the Weeds and others*. The longer form of this Sunday's Gospel Reading covers three parables: The Weeds among the Wheat (24-30 -

the short form); the Mustard Seed (31-32); the Yeast (v. 33). It also touches on the Use of Parables (34-35), and gives the allegorical explanation of the Parable of the Weeds (36-43). <> The original "point" of the parable of the weeds is that, like the good grains of wheat that can withstand weeds and still yield a good harvest, the Kingdom of God can withstand competition from people manipulated by Satan and still produce a rich harvest in the end. When the parable was allegorized, the sower was thought of as Jesus, "the Son of Man, the field is the world, the good seed the children of the Kingdom. The weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels" (Mt 13:37-39).

2. VALUES THAT WE CAN PICK FROM THE PASSAGE (*Bibliarasal Step Three*).

V. 29 "If you pull up the weeds you might uproot the wheat along with them. Let them grow together until the harvest." - Value of opting for the lesser evil.

V 34-35. The use of parables. - Value of using stories for teaching (not only moral lessons but also insights on the Kingdom of God).

3. POINTS FOR SHARING (*Bibliarasal Step Five*).

- (V. 29) It is hard to tell the good wheat from the bad weeds until it is about time for the harvest. If I am good and not bad, it is because of God's grace working in me. Let me work with God to produce good fruit. - Reflect on this, and if a personal story comes up in your reflection, share it with your small group.

- (V. 34-35) Do you have a personal experience about the effectiveness of using stories for teaching? Share it with your small group.

4. WHAT THE LORD WANTS US TO DO (*Bibliarasil Step Six*).

a) In relation to Philippine Church Life Today. - Let us use stories from Philippine culture to teach people about the Kingdom of God.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - Let us look at the track record of aspiring leaders to decide whether they will really be the leaders that our country needs. Too many leaders turn out to be bad weeds rather than good wheat.

c) In relation to Spiritual and Personal Life. Let us train ourselves in the values pointed out above (n. 2).

GOOD AND BAD SEED IN MEDIA

The media of social communication (TV, radio, newspapers, etc.) can give us both good seed and bad seed. For example, when Pope John Paul II died and Pope Benedict XVI was elected as the new Pope, media had good and bad things to bring out about them.

Pope Benedict XVI in particular, was targeted by media practitioners who have a grudge against him or the Catholic Church in general. For example. The British press immediately headlined that one who was a member of the hated Nazi Hitler Youth had been elected Pope. This view is so unfair

that the Germans were one in condemning the British tabloids' handling of the election of Joseph Ratzinger as Pope.

To the critics of Pope Benedict XVI a biographer of Pope John Paul II, George Weigel, has this to say:

"Judging from the hysteria in some quarters after his election, you might have thought Pope Benedict XVI was ordering boxes of freshly polished thumbscrews (for torture) to be brought to the papal apartments from the bowels of the the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith ('... formerly known as the inquisition...') - while concurrently issuing orders for the rusty guillotine that served the 19th-century papal states to be hauled out of storage and reassembled... All of which, of course, fits the regnant caricature of Joseph Ratzinger as 'God's Rottweiler (attack dog).' To which those who know him can only say, 'Rot' (bad smelling rubbish)." - Newsweek May 2, 2005 p. 22.

July 24,2005 ◇ **17th Sunday in Ordinary Time**
Readings (A): 1 Kgs 3:5,7-12; Rom 8:28-30; Mt 13:44-52 (or 13:44-46)

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). ***Parables of the Treasure, the Pearl and the Dragnet.*** The short form of the Gospel Reading includes only two parables, namely, that of the Treasure and that of the Pearl. The longer form includes one more parable, that of the Dragnet, and the concluding remark of Jesus about the "scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven... who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old." ◇ Both the parable of the Treasure and

that of the Pearl speak of a man who "sells all he has and buys" the thing of great value that he has come across. The thing of great value is no other than the Life of Faith in Jesus Christ. Moreover, the parable of the Treasure teaches that one who finds this thing of great value experiences such JOY that for its sake he makes the sacrifice of "selling all that he has." The parable of the Dragnet, like that of the Weeds, reminds people of the punishment of the wicked "at the end of the age." The reward of the good people is that their value is recognized.

2. VALUES THAT WE CAN PICK FROM THE PASSAGE
(*Bibliarasal Step Three*).

V. 44 & 46 "Out of joy goes and sells all that he has..."
- Value of joyful sacrifice in expectation of possessing something of great worth.

V. 52 "Brings from his storeroom both the new and the old." - Value of appreciating both the new and the old.

3. POINTS FOR SHARING (*Bibliarasal Step Five*).

- (V) Have you experienced teaching not only with words but also with example?

- (V.) Have you ever helped someone by showing empathy?

4. WHAT THE LORD WANTS US TO DO
(*Bibliarasal Step Six*).

a) In relation to Philippine Church Life Today. - Let us continue to teach our people that, even more than natural

life itself, our life of Faith in Jesus Christ is the thing of greatest value on earth.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - Let us remind our people that, in the past we were called "the pearl of the Orient." We have to recover this lost glory.

c) In relation to Spiritual and Personal Life. We have to train ourselves in the values pointed out above (n. 2).

THE NEW AND THE OLD (POPE)

There are obvious differences between Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. For example, Karol Wojtyla was a sportsman and actor. Joseph Ratzinger loved playing Mozart on the piano and was a shy adolescent. But in substance, they are the same: men who have totally dedicated themselves to serve Christ and his Church at all cost.

Benedict XVI gave us his first attempt at drawing up a program for his work as Pope when he addressed the cardinals who elected him in his Mass with them on April 20, 2005. Here are some salient points.

"I wish to continue on this path on which my venerated Predecessors advanced, concerned only to proclaim to the whole world the living presence of Christ. X x x I wish to affirm strongly my determination to continue the commitment to implement the Second Vatican Council, in the footsteps of my Predecessors and in faithful continuity with the 2,000-year tradition of the Church."

"X x x (Peter's) present Successor aims, as a primary commitment, to work without sparing energies for the reconstitution of the full and visible unity of all the followers of Christ. This is his ambition, this is his imperative duty. He is aware that for this, manifestations of good sentiments are not enough. There must be concrete gestures that penetrate spirits and move consciences, leading each one to that interior conversion that is the presupposition of all progress on the path of ecumenism."

"Theological dialogue is necessary. Also, in-depth knowledge of the historical reasons for choices made in the past is perhaps indispensable. But what is urgent in the main is that "purification of the memory," so many times recalled by John Paul II x x x. The present Successor of Peter lets himself be challenged in the first person by this request and is prepared to do all that is in his power to-promote the fundamental cause of ecumenism."

"X x x I think in particular of young people. To them, privileged interlocutors of Pope John Paul II, I direct my affectionate embrace while waiting, God willing, to meet them in Cologne on the occasion of the next World Youth Day. With you, dear young people, future and hope of the Church and of humanity, I will continue to dialogue, listening to your expectations in an attempt to help you to encounter ever more profoundly the living Christ, the eternally young."

Source: Zenit (ZE05042001)

July 31,2005

◊ **18th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Readings (A): Is 55:1-3; Rom 8:35,37-39; Mt 14:13-21

August 5. Friday: Memorial of the Dedication of St. Mary Major
("Our Lady of the Snows")

August 6, Saturday: Feast of the Transfiguration

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). ◊ **Bread for the hungry.** Matthew's fourth booklet (ch. 13:53 -18:35) starts with narratives in ch 13:53 - 17:27 and, as customary in Matthew, concludes with a discourse in 18:1- 35. The Gospel Readings for the 18th to the 22nd Sundays are taken from the narrative part. ◊ **"The feeding of the five thousand"** is the usual title for today's Gospel Reading. Traditionally, the bread miraculously given to the people has been understood as symbolizing the Eucharist. It is usually pointed out that the words and gestures here and at the Last Supper are practically the same: Jesus TAKES bread, he SAYS A BLESSING... BREAKS the bread and GIVES IT TO HIS DISCIPLES... Undeniably, the narrative is linked to the tradition about the Eucharist. Nevertheless, one should add that, just as the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees are referred to as bread (see Mt 16: 12), so also the teaching of Jesus is symbolized by the bread given to the crowds. Reflecting further, we realize that the Eucharist is both the Bread of Life and the Bread of Wisdom. It responds to our hunger for the presence of Jesus as well as our hunger for his teaching.

2. VALUES THAT WE CAN PICK FROM THE PASSAGE (*Bibliarasal Step Three*).

V. 14 "His heart was moved with pity for them." - Value of compassion for people who hunger for life (healing) and wisdom (teaching). - Value of the messages of the Sacred Heart and Jesus, Divine Mercy.

V. 16b "Give them some food yourselves." - Value of service to the needy. It is nice for the disciples of Jesus to have sympathy for the hungry crowds but what Jesus wants is ACTION FOR THEIR WELL BEING.

3. POINTS FOR SHARING (*Bibliarasal Step Five*).

- (V. 14) Have you experienced compassion-in-action for people who hunger for life / healing and for wisdom / teaching? Share your experience.

- (V. 16b) Did you ever have sympathy for others but hesitated about doing something for them? Did the Lord move you to act? Share your experience.

4. WHAT THE LORD WANTS US TO DO (*Bibliarasal Step Six*).

a) In relation to Philippine Church Life Today. - Let us respond more and more generously to the hunger of people for life / healing / food and/or wisdom / teaching.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - Let us support initiatives like "Pondo ng Pinoy" that urges people to share what little money they have so that there will be seed money for projects that will transform the lives of the poor.

c) In relation to Spiritual and Personal Life'. We have to train ourselves in the values pointed out above (n. 2).

NO BREAK IN THE YEAR OF THE EUCHARIST

With the death of Pope John Paul II, some people may have thought that there will be some kind of "break" in the year of the Eucharist that the departed Pope had inaugurated and had personally wanted to conclude in October. But, it is no surprise that his successor, Pope Benedict XVI, is just as dedicated as he was in promoting Eucharistic devotion.

Less than 24 hours after his election, addressing the cardinals who elected him, Pope Benedict XVI said: "How very significant it is that my pontificate begins while the Church is living the special Year dedicated to the Eucharist. How can one not perceive in this providential coincidence an element that must characterize the ministry to which I have been called? The Eucharist, heart of Christian life and source of the evangelizing mission of the Church, cannot but constitute the permanent center and the source of the Petrine service that has been entrusted to me."

"The Eucharist will be at the center, in August, of the World Youth Day in Cologne and, in October, of the Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, which will focus on the theme: 'The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church.' I ask all to intensify over the next months their love and devotion to Jesus in the Eucharist and to express in a courageous and clear way their faith in the Lord's real presence, above all through the solemnity and correctness of the celebrations."

"I ask this in a special way of priests, whom I am thinking of at this moment with great affection. The ministerial priesthood was born in the Cenacle, together with the Eucharist, as my venerable Predecessor John Paul II underlined so many times. 'The life of a priest [must] be *shaped* by the Eucharist,' he wrote in his last letter for Holy Thursday (No. 1). To this purpose contributes first of all the devoted daily celebration of the Holy Mass, center of the life and mission of every priest."

Source: Zenit (05042001)

August 7, 2005

◇ **19th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Readings (A): 1 Kgs 19:9,11-13; Rom 9:1-5; Mt 14:22-33

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliaraset Step Three*). *Jesus walks on water.* <> Like the multiplication of the loaves, Jesus' walking on water is not just an extraordinary phenomenon. It is a sign of Jesus' relationship with his disciples (or with the Church). Frequently we may feel, either as individuals or as the Church, that we are about to be submerged by the chaotic forces surrounding us. At such times, particularly, we need to recall Jesus' words to his disciples on the Sea of Galilee: "Take heart, it is I: have no fear," and to Peter, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?"

2. VALUES THAT WE CAN PICK FROM THE PASSAGE (*Bibliaraset Step Three*).

V. 23 "He went up on the mountain by himself to pray."

- Value of spending a long time (almost the whole night) in prayer.

V. 25 "During the fourth watch of the night (CEV: a little while before morning), he came toward them, walking on the sea." - Value of physical presence (not only of spiritual presence) of one capable of helping people who are in trouble.

3. POINTS FOR SHARING (*Bibliarasal Step Five*).

- (V. 23) Have you experienced spending a long time (8 to 10 hours) in praying, interceding especially for people in grave danger? Share your experience with your small group.

- (V. 25) In times of great danger, the spiritual presence of a loved one is a great comfort, but there is really no substitute for a loved one's physical presence. Do you have an experience that can illustrate this? Share it with your small group.

4. WHAT THE LORD WANTS US TO DO (*Bibliarasal Step Six*).

a) In relation to Philippine Church Life Today. - Let us respond more and more generously to the hunger of people for life / healing / food and/or wisdom / teaching.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - Let us support initiatives like "Pondo ng Pinoy" that urges people to share what little money they have so that there will be seed money for projects that will transform the lives of the poor.

c) In relation to Spiritual and Personal Life. We have to train ourselves in the values pointed out above (n. 2).

UNSEEN PHYSICAL PRESENCE

At Jesus' last visible meeting with his disciples he promised, "I am with you always, until the end of the age." He was not speaking only of a spiritual presence (that the Holy Spirit, his Spirit, will assure), nor only of "doctrinal presence" because of the continuance of his teachings. He knew his disciples will need his mysterious physical presence, as they needed it when their boat was being tossed by the waves of a stormy sea. For this reason he instituted the Eucharist.

At his first papal Mass, our new Pope, Benedict XVI said: "The Eucharist renders the risen Christ constantly present, who continues to give himself to us, calling us to participate at the table of his Body and his Blood. From full communion with him flows every other element of the life of the Church, in the first place communion among all the faithful, commitment to proclamation and testimony of the Gospel, the ardor of charity toward all, especially toward the poor and the little ones."

August 14,2005 ◇ **20th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Readings (A): Is 56:1,6-7; Rom 11:13-15,19-32; Mt 15:21-28

August 15, Monday: Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary

World Youth Days will take place in Cologne, Germany August 15-21

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). ***Miraculous favor to an outsider (the Canaanite woman), o*** The Church is the new

Israel. This Israel, like the old one, is always in danger of becoming a sect, that is, of serving itself rather than being at the service of all people. The Canaanite woman's faith is a reminder of the essentially non-sectarian character of true faith. Even people who are "outside" of Israel can get "inside" the Kingdom of God by their faith and enjoy the blessings of God's mercy.

2. VALUES THAT WE CAN PICK FROM THE PASSAGE (*Bibliarasal Step Three*).

V. 22b "Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David, my daughter is tormented by a demon." - There are two values here. First, that of the mother becoming the "alter ego" of her daughter. Second, the value of compassion that is asked and given.

V. 28 "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be done to you as you wish." - Value of flexibility (or the capacity to make exceptions to a rule).

3. POINTS FOR SHARING (*Bibliarasal Step Five*).

- (V. 22b) Have you ever witnessed a mother becoming the *alter ego* of her child? Did you admire that mother? Share your experience - thoughts, feelings, practical consequences - with your small group.

- (V. 28) Have you exercised flexibility to show compassion to someone? Or have you been the beneficiary of someone's flexibility? Share your experience with your small group.

4. WHAT THE LORD WANTS US TO DO

(Bibliarasal Step Six).

a) In relation to Philippine Church Life Today. - Let us not spend most if not all our energy in looking after orthodoxy in doctrine. Let us give priority to giving pastoral care to all those in need, both those inside our church or outside it.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - Let us preserve the tradition of compassionate motherhood. Girls or single women are to be trained in such a way that when they become mothers, they will be ready to sacrifice themselves for their children.

c) In relation to Spiritual and Personal Life. We have to train ourselves in the values pointed out above (n. 2).

THE POPE REACHES OUT

Upon the election of Cardinal Ratzinger as Pope, some people expressed their fears that there will be a step backward in what Pope John Paul II had already achieved in interreligious dialogue and openness to the concerns and civilizations of the world. These fears were immediately allayed by Pope Benedict XVI less than 24 hours after his election.

The new Pope said: "I turn to all, 'also to those who follow other religions or who simply seek an answer to the fundamental questions of life and have not yet found it. I turn to all with simplicity and affection, to assure them that the Church wishes to continue to engage with them in an open and sincere dialogue, in search of the true good of man and of society."

"I invoke from God the peace and unity for the human family and declare the readiness of all Catholics to cooperate for a genuine social development, respectful of the dignity of every human being."

"I will spare no efforts and devotion to continue the promising dialogue undertaken by my venerable Predecessors with the various civilizations, so that from reciprocal understanding conditions will flow a better future for all."

Source: Zenit (05042001)

August 21, 2005

◇ **21st Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Readings (A): Is 22:15, 1'9-23; Rom 11:33-36; Mt 16:13-20

August 22, Monday: Queenship of Mary

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). ***The role of Peter in the Church.*** <> Today's Gospel Reading presents Simon Bar-Jona as one whose name or personality has been changed by Jesus. He (and his successors, the Popes) will have to show forth that the Church of Jesus Christ is built on solid foundation. One has to look for the *analogy* or harmony of this Gospel passage with the clear belief of the Church that Jesus himself is the "stone rejected by the builders that has become the cornerstone" (Ps. 119:22; Mt 21:42; Mk 12:10; Lk 20:17; Rom 9:33; 1 Pt 2:7). Moreover, Paul clearly says, "No man can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 3:11). Hence, the other image, that of Peter being the *mayordomo* holding the keys (Mt 16:19) might

be clearer. Certainly the servant who holds the keys to the Master's house does not supplant the master of that house!

2. VALUES THAT WE CAN PICK FROM THE PASSAGE (*Bibliarasal Step Three*).

V. 17 "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father." - Value of blessedness because of a revelation given by God. <> Note that God did not reveal by speaking to Peter or by putting ideas into his head. God moved Peter to join the company of Jesus and witness his teachings and his miracles over a period of several months. These were the means through which Peter learned that Jesus is the Messiah. But Peter did get something more than the other disciples because he was moved by God to profess (or "confess") that Jesus is the Messiah.

V. 18 "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates (= forces) of the netherworld (= Hebrew/Aramaic Sheol) shall not prevail against it." (CEV: "death itself will not have any power over it"). - Value of a person or an institution having a firm foundation (see Mt 7: 24-25).

3. POINTS FOR SHARING (*Bibliarasal Step Five*).

- (V. 17) Today many Catholics follow the devotion to the Sacred Heart based on private revelations given to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, or the devotion to Jesus, Divine Mercy based on private revelations to Sr. Maria Faustina Kowalska. The revelations are "private" because they are not in the Bible nor in the binding Tradition of the Church. Never-

theless, they put people today in touch with Jesus, the Messiah or Savior to accept the salvation that comes from him. <> Share with your small group how devotion to the Sacred Heart or to Jesus Divine Mercy has touched your life.

- (V. 18) Have experienced the benefit of having a rock-foundation through the teaching and pastoral care of the Popes of the Catholic Church? <> Share your experience with your small group.

4. WHAT THE LORD WANTS US TO DO (*Bibliarasal Step Six*).

a) In relation to Philippine Church Life Today. - Let us not forget that the Pope's role as the "rock-foundation" of the Church and as the "holder of the keys" of God's house go hand in hand with his role as Pastor of lambs and sheep (Jn 21: 15-19). When we invoke his authority, let us not forget his love and care for us.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - Our society has to be built on the solid foundation of values we have traditionally accepted as a people.

c) In relation to Spiritual and Personal Life. We have to train ourselves in the values pointed out above (n. 2).

OUR SOLID FOUNDATION

St. Catherine of Siena, living during times of numerous and grave problems for the Church (there were three claimants to the papacy at that time!), referred to the true Pope as "the sweet Christ on earth." The Pope is not the successor of

Christ. He is the one who, in the person of Christ, exercises some functions necessary for the permanence of the Church on earth until Jesus comes again. This is called the "Petrine office."

Our new Pope, Benedict XVI, shared his reflection on this with the Cardinals who elected him. He said, "I reflect again in these hours on all that occurred in the region of Caesarea Philippi, some 2,000 years ago. I seem to hear Peter's words: 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God,' and the Lord's solemn affirmation: 'You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church ... I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 16:15-19)."

"You are the Christ! You are Peter! I seem to relive the same evangelical scene; I, Successor of Peter, repeat with trepidation the anxious words of the fisherman of Galilee and I hear again with profound emotion the reassuring promise of the divine Teacher. If the burden of responsibility That is placed on my poor shoulders is enormous, exceeding is as well the divine power which I can count on: "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church" (Matthew 16:18). In choosing me as Bishop of Rome, the Lord has desired me to be his Vicar, he has desired me to be the "rock" on which all can lean^with security. I ask him to make up for the poverty of my strength, so that I will be a courageous and faithful Shepherd of his flock, always docile to the inspirations of his Spirit."

"I prepare to undertake this peculiar ministry, the 'Petrine' ministry at the service of the universal Church, with humble abandonment in the hands of the Providence of God. In the first place it is to Christ that I renew my total and faith-

ful adherence: In Te, Domine, speravi; non confundar in aeternum!"

"To you, Lord Cardinals, with a grateful spirit for the trust shown to me, I ask that you support me with prayer and with constant, active and wise collaboration. I ask also all brothers in the episcopate to be by my side with prayer and counsel, so that I can truly be 'Servus servorum Dei.' As Peter and the other apostles constituted, by the will of the Lord, a unique Apostolic College, in the same way the Successor of Peter and the bishops, successors of the apostles, must be very closely united among themselves, as the Council confirmed forcefully (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, No. 22)."

"This collegial communion, though in the diversity of roles and functions of the Roman Pontiff and of the bishops, is at the service of the Church and of unity in the faith, from which depends in notable measure the efficacy of the evangelizing action in the contemporary world. Therefore, I wish to continue on this path on which my venerated Predecessors advanced, concerned only to proclaim to the whole world the living presence of Christ."

August 28, 2005 ◇ **22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time**
Readings (A): Jer 20:7-9; Rom 12:1-2; Mt 16: 21-27

National Heroes Day

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). **Onward to Suffering and Death.** <> Christ's first prophecy of his suffering and death was such a shocking announcement that Peter became bold

enough to tell Jesus: that's nonsense! To which Jesus replied: Stay in your place behind me! I'm the Teacher here, and I'm telling you what God wants! Fortunately, Peter was humble enough to accept Christ's rebuke. <> Today, the liturgy invites us to examine ourselves and find out whether we are like the Peter who was shocked at the prospect of his glorious dreams being shattered by suffering and death, or like the Peter who will one day accept dying on a cross for love of Christ and Christ's flock.

2. VALUES THAT WE CAN PICK FROM THE PASSAGE (*Bibliarasal Step Three*).

V. 21 "From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised." - Value of resoluteness in pursuing one's mission.

V. 24 "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." - Value of sacrifice for the success of a great enterprise.

3. POINTS FOR SHARING (*Bibliarasal Step Five*).

- (V 21) It is a *Dabar* - a Word-Event - that today is also National Heroes Day (as in 1999). It's not just a coincidence. We must see in the example of the lives of our national heroes that one needs resoluteness in pursuing one's life-mission. Do you have a personal story to confirm this?

- (V. 24) Also in line with the celebration of National Heroes Day, do you have a personal story that will confirm the need of sacrifice for the success of a great enterprise?

4. WHAT **THE** LORD WANTS US TO DO

(Bibliarasal Step Six).

a) In relation to Philippine Church Life Today. - We have to keep rejecting the temptation that we can do away with the cross or that we can have success without sacrifice.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - We have to appreciate the sacrifices of our national heroes and learn from them.

c) In relation to Spiritual and Personal Life. Let us train ourselves in the values pointed out above.

WE NEED HEROES

By a coincidence that could be called a DABAR or "Word-Event," today's Gospel Reading about the destiny of Jesus to suffer in Jerusalem falls on Philippine National Heroes' Day. Each and every one of our National Heroes, men and women, had to cope with trials and suffer - many of them to the point of death - out of love for their country.

* * *

"To imitate Jesus, it is not enough to sacrifice and suffer now and then. It is not a sometime kind of thing, an Advent or Lent type of penance. On the contrary, if one wishes to resemble Jesus and to be remade into His image and likeness, one must suffer daily, develop the habit of sacrifice, and constantly choose what is uncomfortable rather than what is comfortable."

Ven. Fr. Al Schwartz, "To Live is Christ" p. 107