

BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

THE OFFICIAL INTERDIOCESAN BULLETIN

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PAALAM... MAHAL NA KARDINAL
PARI NG MGA PARI
Editorial

CARDINAL SIN,
A PROPHET FOR OUR TIMES
Tamerlane R. Lana, OP

BIOGRAPHY OF HIS HOLINESS
BENEDICT XVI
Holy See

WE ARE A PEOPLE OF DIALOGUE
Fernando Capalla, DD

CATHOLIC EDUCATION:
THE OIEC EXPERIENCE
Angel Astorgano, SDB



BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS

The Official Interdiocesan Bulletin

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Paalam...
Mahal na Kardinal
Pari* ng mga *Pari

Ang mga pananalitang ito ay iginuhit sa harap ng hamak na katawan ng isang nilalang na may kaluluwang di pangkaraniwan. Ako ay isa sa mga saksi na nagnilay-nilay sa harap ng bangkay ng kanyang kabunyian, Jaime Kardinal Sin, DD. Katatapos lamang ng isang pagdiriwang ng kanyang mga kaabay na nanggaling sa Pamantasan ng Santo Tomas. Puno ang katedral ng mga paring Dominikano, mga paring Tomasino, tagapamahala, guro at mag-aaral ng pamantasan. Ang layunin ay ang pagpapasalamat sa kanyang kabunyian.

Mahalaga ang mga sinabi ng Rektor ng pamantasan. Kahanga-hanga si Kardinal dahil siya ay tunay na makatao. Siya ay isang tagapagligtas ng bayan. Siya ay isang pastol, at iba pa. Naaalala ko rin ang salita ng Arsobispo ng Maynila. Kanyang ibinahagi ang pag-aalay ng kanyang sarili sa mga mag-aaral at sa mga guro sa Maynila. Ang mga nakikinig ay mga estudyante ng mga eskwelahan sa Maynila kasama

ang kanilang mga guro, at ang mga tagapamahala ng mga paaralan at ng mga parokya sa ka-Maynilaan.

Binalikan ko ang mga sinabi sa mga pahayagan, sa radyo, at sa telebisyon. At sinabi ko sa aking sarili na mayroon pang kulang. At ano iyon? Ito ay ang pagmamahal at pag-aalaga na iniukol niya sa mga pari. Malapit sa kanya ang mga pari ng simbahan. Siya ay madalas dumalaw sa mga seminaristang nag-aaral sa Seminario Minor ng Guadalupe at sa Seminario Mayor ng San Carlos, sapagkat ang mga magpapari ay mahal na mahal niya.

Halos taun-taon sa kanyang kaarawan ay may isang araw na nakalaan para sa mga pari sa Villa San Miguel. Hindi rin makakalimutan ang kanyang paghahanda sa ordinasyon ng mga bagong pari. Pati na rin ang araw ng Huwebes Santo kung saan nagkakaroon ng pagkakataon ang Kardinal upang makipag-isa sa kanila sa katedral.

Akin ring nagugunita ang kanyang maligayang pagbati sa mga pari na naanyayahan mula sa iba't ibang bansa upang makibahagi sa mga komperensya sa Maynila. Sila ay mga naatasan upang tumulong sa pagsanay at paghubog ng mga nais na magpari sa mga bansang India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Singapore, Korea, Thailand, Bangladesh at marami pa.

Maliban rito aking naalaala ang kanyang interes sa patuloy na pagpapahalaga sa mga pangangailangan ng mga pari: mga bata na nasa ministryo sa unang limang taon ng kanilang pagkapari; sa mga paroko na mayroong sampu hanggang dalawampu't limang taon na nagsisilbi sa simbahan bilang pari; at ang mga paring may edad, na mayroong pansariling pangangailangan sa mga huling taon ng kanilang buhay.

Ang kanyang kabunyian ay *pari* ng mga pari sa Maynila. Siya ay ipinapanalangin araw-araw sa hapag ng eukaristiya. Ang pagyaon ng Kardinal ay lubhang dinamdam ng lahat ng mga pari nguni't higit pa rito ay ang kanilang panalangin at pag-asa na arig Kardinal ay bigyan ng karapat-dapat na gantimpala sa kaharian ng Ama.

Mahalaga ang mga nabanggit ni Kardinal para sa lahat bago siya pumanaw sa kanyang huling oras: sinabi niya bilang huli niyang pananalita: "*Vamos.* " Tayo na!... Tayo na sa magandang umaga na naghihintay sa bayan natin. Sana ang lahat ng ginawa ni Kardinal Sin sa ating simbahan at bansa ay magdala ng isang bagong umaga.

VICENTE G. CAJILIG, O.P.

BIOGRAPHY OF JAIME CARDINAL SIN



His Eminence

JAIME L. CARDINAL SIN, D.D.f

PERSONAL

Birth: August 31, 1928

Place of Birth: New Washington, Aklan

Sacerdotal Ordination: April 3, 1954

Episcopal Ordination: March 18, 1967

EDUCATION

** Elementary*

New Washington Elementary School

** New Washington, Aklan Seminary*

St. Vincent Ferrer Archdiocesan Seminary

Jaw, Iloilo City

** Degrees*

Bachelor of Science in Education

Immaculate Conception College

Roxas City, 1959

** Doctor of Laws, Honoris Causa*

Adamson University

Manila, March 15, 1975

** Doctor of Humane Letters, Honoris Causa*

De La Salle University

Manila, June 22, 1975

- * *Doctor of Sacred Theology, Honoris Causa*
University of Santo Tomas
Manila, March 26, 1977
- * *Doctor of Laws, Honoris Causa*
Angeles University
Angeles City, March 15, 1978
- * *Doctor of Humanities, Honoris Causa*
University of San Agustin
Iloilo City, March 23, 1980
- * *Doctor of Philosophy in Human Letters, Honoris Causa*
Ateneo de Manila University
Quezon City, March 29, 1980
- * *Doctor of Philosophy in Humane Letters, Honoris Causa*
Fu Jen Catholic University
Taipei, Taiwan, December 10, 1980
- * *Doctor of Pedagogy, Honoris Causa*
Assumption University
San Fernando, Pampanga, March 31, 1981
- * *Doctor of Letters, Honoris Causa*
Republic Central Colleges
Angeles City, April 4, 1982
- * *Doctor of Humane Letters, Honoris Causa*
Brandeis University
Boston, Massachusetts, USA, May 20, 1984
- * *Doctor of Laws, Honoris Causa*
Manhattan College
Bronx, New York, USA, September 21, 1984
- * *Doctor of Sociology, Honoris Causa*
Aquinas University
Legazpi City, February 22, 1985
- * *Doctor of Humane Letters, Honoris Causa*
University of San Francisco, USA

- * *Conferment Ceremonies at Villa San Miguel*
Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, April 8, 1986
- * *Doctor of Humanities, Honoris Causa*
Stonehill College
North Easton, Massachusetts, USA, May 18, 1986
- * *Doctor of Sacred Theology, Honoris Causa*
Boston College
Chestnut Hills, Massachusetts, USA, May 19, 1986
- * *Doctor of Humane Letters, Honoris Causa*
Georgetown University
Washington, DC, USA, May 25, 1986
- * *Doctor of Divinity, Honoris Causa*
Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut, USA, May 26, 1986
- * *Doctor of Laws, Honoris Causa*
Seton Hall University
South Orange, New Jersey, USA, May 31, 1986
- * *Doctor of Humanities, Honoris Causa*
University of Portland
Portland, Oregon, USA, May 3, 1987
- * *Doctor of Sacred Theology, Honoris Causa*
Santa Clara University
San Jose, California, USA, May 14, 1987
- * *Doctor of Humane Letters, Honoris Causa*
St. Michael's College
Winooski, Vermont, May 17, 1987
- * *Doctor of Humane Letters, Honoris Causa*
University of San Diego
San Diego, California, USA, June 18, 1988
- * *Doctor of Humanities, Honoris Causa*
University of the East
Manila, May 5, 1989

- * *Doctor of Social Philosophy, Honoris Causa*
Loras College
Dubuque, Iowa, USA, May 14, 1989
- * *Doctor of Humanities, Honoris Causa*
St. Thomas More University, USA
PICC Manila, April 27, 1992

MINISTRY

- * *1954-1957 - Missionary Priest, Archdiocese of Capiz*
- * *1957-1967 - First Rector, St. Pius X Seminary, Roxas City*
- * *1960 - Domestic Prelate of Pope John XIII*
- * *1967 - Titular Bishop of Obba and Auxiliary Bishop of Jaw*
- * *1970 - Apostolic Administrator, Sede Plena, Archdiocese of Jaw*
- * *1972*
 - * *Titular Archbishop of Massa Lubrense and Coadjutor Archbishop of Jaw*
 - * *Metropolitan Archbishop of Jaw*
- * *1974-Vice President, Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines*
- * *1974 - Metropolitan Archbishop of Manila*
- * *1976 - Named Cardinal at the Consistory*
- * *1977 - Permanent Member, Synod of Bishops in Rome*
- * *1977 - Elected President, Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines*
- * *1978*
 - * *Member, Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples*
 - * *Member, Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education*
 - * *Member, Pontifical Commission for Social Communication*

- * *Member, The Secretariat for Non-Christians*
- * *1979 - Re-elected President, Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines*
- * *1981 - Member, Council of Cardinals for the Study of Organization and Economic Questions Relating to the Holy See*
- * *1982*
 - * *Member, Prefecture of Economic Affairs of the Holy See*
 - * *Chairman, CBCP Commission on Mass Media*
 - * *Chairman, CBCP Commission on Pontificio Collegio Filippino*
- * *1983*
 - * *Member, Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples*
 - * *Member, Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education*
 - * *Member, The Secretariat for Non-Christians*
 - * *Member, Sacred Congregation for Bishops*
- * *1984*
 - * *Member, Pontifical Commission for Social Communication*
 - * *Member, Council for Public Affairs of the Church*
 - * *Member, Sacred Congregation for the Clergy*
 - * *Member, Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments*
 - * *Member, Sacred Congregation for the Divine Worship*
- * *1987 - Re-appointed Member, Prefecture of Economic Affairs of the Holy See*

Cardinal Sin, A Prophet for Our Times

TAMERLANE R. LANA, O.P.

I surmise that anyone who has fond memories of Cardinal Sin would have a striking experience to share in his encounter with this beloved man of God. I would particularly remember him as a very human, down-to-earth Archbishop who would even make fun of his name. I was privileged to be one of his numerous guests whom he welcomed in his residence, Villa San Miguel, with his usual pun: "Welcome to the House of Sin." Taking the lead from the Cardinal himself, a number of aspiring punsters would also take his name in jest as, for instance, he is the only Sin to have been glorified by the Church and elevated to the Cardinalate at that. When the Cardinal marked his 10th year as Manila archbishop, Msgr. Ramirez, at that time the vicar general, wrote a book entitled "A Decade of Sin." Recently Fr. Sid Marinay, a Thomasian, wrote a book on the beloved Cardinal entitled: "The Happy Life of Sin." Undoubtedly Cardinal Sin has endeared himself to his flock because of his great sense of humor and the penchant to make other people really feel good. He too

made me feel good when in his homily during my installation as the Rector of the University of Santo Tomas, he called me as the "expert of sex". Of course, he meant expert in sexual morality. By the fact that I was only then a struggling moral theologian taking keen interest in sexual morality, I knew he was only giving some comic relief to the very serious occasion. But never mind, because he called me "expert" it was indeed something to make me feel good. All these seemingly irreverent puns about his name, he accepted with gracious humor. At the inner recesses of his jovial and cheerful being, however, was a deep contemplative spirit, who regarded prayers as indispensable source of power for his crusade for holiness, justice and moral rectitude.

The remarkable happy disposition that marked the life and ministry of this pastor of the Church was a clear indication of the thing that really mattered in his life, and that is, to be a happy priest. Happiness, for him, is not just being able to laugh at the parody of human existence; not just seeing the good and bright side of life which was the tremendous source of his sense of humor. Happiness is being able to do God's handiwork through his humble instrumentality. When asked about his greatest handiwork as archbishop, Cardinal Sin said there was none. He said rather: "I consider everything as God's handiwork. I am just an instrument. I am just like a donkey the Lord rode on. I cannot boast of anything." This faithful donkey, however, has risen above others to tower over even the tall stallions by the great handiwork that God has made through him.

After decades of faithful service to his flock, God has finally called him to his heavenly abode. It is not only the

Church that mourns his passing. The whole nation is saddened by the demise of this great servant of God. It is difficult in this homily to articulate the legacy that he has left to the Church and the nation. But I would say that our beloved Cardinal Sin has always been a source of light and hope to our nation which has persistently been threatened by the forces of darkness and despair. He was able to do it because he placed the people's interest uppermost in his great task of shepherding. He was indeed the people's cardinal. He reached out to them and defended their rights. As a shepherd, he called them to live their lives to the full. It is for his pastoral concern that he has used his pulpit and the influence he wielded to build a human society, where justice is upheld and charity enshrined.

On February 2, 2001, few days after the people power uprising known as EDSA 2, the Thomasian community gave a tribute to the beloved Cardinal Sin for the great service he rendered to the Church and to the nation. The words inscribed in the special plaque given to him summarized the rationale of the tribute of the Thomasians: "For his unassailable role in the people power uprisings of 1986 and 2001 that have become a model for peaceful revolutions around the world; for his breath-taking pastoral vision that strikes a balance between the spiritual and socio-political, between the supernatural and the natural, and his fidelity to the prophetic role of the Church, the University of Santo Tomas gives this tribute to Jaime Cardinal Sin, prince of the Church, champion of people power."

The role that our beloved Cardinal played in the bloodless revolutions that led to the strengthening of the democratic ideals has now been inscribed in the annals of our nation. But

his death does not put an end to his vision of the Catholic Church as one that forges the link of the City of Man and the City of God. It was then a vision that is often challenged by critics when the Cardinal was perceived to have intervened in the political domain. But he had made himself clear in his role as spiritual leader of the Filipino people: "I do not espouse any human ideology, nor support any political party, not advocate a mere social cause. As a Christian and a priest, I believe in the Kingdom of God inaugurated by Jesus Christ. My agenda is the Gospel of the Lord. The mission I receive from the Church is to transform the world with values of Christ. If ever I get involved in issues, political or otherwise, it is simply because I cannot compromise the Christian faith I am called to uphold, defend and promote." Recently he confided that as part of his mission as Pastor, he strived to bring Christ to our political life, because, in his words, "politics without Christ is a scourge."

This statement was a strong affirmation of the role he played as demanded by his prophetic ministry. He had to serve as God's voice for the people, and this he did even at the risk of being assailed by his critics. With courage, he preached the truth even if this means hurting some people. Pope John Paul II, stressing the prophetic role of the Catholic Universities, said: "If need be, a Catholic University must have the courage to speak uncomfortable truths which do not please public opinion, but which are necessary to safeguard the authentic good of society. As a Catholic University, the University of Santo Tomas has looked up to Cardinal Sin as a model of a true prophet, indeed a modern prophet for our times.

The death of Cardinal Sin is also a great loss for our beloved University of Santo Tomas. UST undoubtedly has a special place in his heart. As patron of the University, in his capacity as Archbishop for so many years, he has always been its inspiration. While he was still in his good health, he never declined our invitation to grace the University's important activities. When he could not anymore attend actively to his ministry, he would show his concern by always asking his brother, Dr. Ramon Sin, how UST is; how the Rector is. That's why we, Thomasians are here, celebrating this Eucharist to express our gratitude to God for the gift given to us in the person of our beloved Cardinal Sin. Likewise, we express our thanks to you, our beloved Cardinal, for always believing in the power and strength of the Filipino people and for always loving us and showing that love by your service, sacrifices and prayers.

We bid you our loving farewell, dear servant of God. Remember us your poor children, as we continue to struggle to be worthy of the heavenly reward promised to us by the Lord. Goodbye, until we meet again, to share together God's banquet in heaven.

We Are A People of Dialogue

FERNANDO R. CAPALLA, DD

We are a people of dialogue. God initiated this dialogue by creating us in order to live in dialogue and in peace. As such we have the moral obligations to search for the truth in freedom, the truth about God, about life, about ourselves, our country, our society, our world and the events around us.

For it is only the truth that will set us free to be ourselves to love and respect each other, to enrich and develop each other and the environment, thus building a relationship of harmony and peace in spite of our social, cultural and religious differences.

Through dialogue we come to know the truth. When the truth possesses us, we discover aspects of the issue we have not seen before. We are then liberated from our mistrusts and prejudices. We eventually change our views. And as partners in dialogue, we together reach a happy consensus. Hence in authentic dialogue, there are no losers - only winners.

With this in mind we can now make a shift in our perspective on the issues that face us and reconsider our respective

role. The new perspective is Dialogue for peace and Development. Our only role is that of partners in dialogue. So we are all dialogue partners. We are all peacemakers and peace-builders. Our peacemaking and peace building is directed towards the total, human and sustainable development of our people and our land.

This is the common good. This is and must always be our real motive in any social, economic, political and cultural activity we undertake. In this new perspective, we are not promoters and oppositors, pros and antis, protagonists and antagonists, progressive and conservatives, concerned and unconcerned, involved and uninvolved, neutral and partisans.

We are and must be a people in constant dialogue with one another. So wherever this friendly encounter is held, wherever the partners stand:

- whether separately or together, whether through media or correspondence,
- whether in private or in public, in the Churches or in Congress, in the streets or at home, in symposia or in consultation the dialogue is characterized by attentive listening on the levels of words, meaning and persons, but most especially on this third level.

Listening on the level of persons is possible only when there is love and respect, acceptance and openness, sincerity and truthfulness, calmness and sobriety, humility and patience, reasonableness and clarity.

This is the attitude, the outlook, the spirit that leads to the discovery of the truth that will set the partners free to dis-

agree without being disagreeable, and to arrive at or postpone a consensus for the good of all.

Without these elements in dialogue, the truth and, consequently, peace will always elude us. Without them we are doomed to live with untruth and half-truths, errors and lies, deceit and mistrust. Without them dialogue is turned into insulting debates and bitter diatribes, into debilitating argumentation and anarchic squabble where the winner is determined by the tyranny of banners and placards, and God forbid by the tyranny of force of arms.

Because we are a multi-religious and multi-cultural society engaged in a peace process that is still holding, we can continue to prove, as it is being proven, that sustainable development and lasting peace through authentic dialogue is possible in a democracy and society such as ours.

Catholic Education: The OIEC Experience

ANGEL ASTORGANO RUIZ, SDB

Last April 12-16, 20Q5 the OIEC's 78th Board Meeting was held in Konigswinter, Germany. It was attended by participants coming from Liban, Belgium, Senegal, South Africa, Colombia, Thailand, Kenya, Brazil, Mexico, United States, India, Indonesia, Germany, Italy, Spain, France, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. OIEC stands for the Office International de VEducation Catholique. Fr. Editor (Vicente Cajilig, OP) has the privilege to attend this meeting.

Fr. Angel Astrogano Ruiz, SDB, secretary general of OIEC provided the participants with a report. He said that:

In the plan of action approved by the Council last year, we set as a goal, to promote with all the members of the OIEC, the implementation of the following work objectives:

- **MEETING:** Promoting the knowledge and dissemination of information on the different realities experienced by Catholic schools: the difficulties, their experiences, the challenges, the projects, etc.

- **COMMUNICATION:** establishing a functional and smooth communication system between the bodies and members of OIEC.
- **COOPERATION:** supporting the assistance and solidarity initiatives, to ensure the smooth operation of the different OIEC structures.

It is my intention, that the general goal of the next Secretariat Plan of Action be the same, with of course, the necessary modifications to the specific objectives and respective actions.

I will now proceed to analyze the key points that were decided in the last Plan of Action and which will be implemented.

They are:

1. Reinforcing a periodical relationship with the Board of Governors and the College of Regional Secretaries.
2. Developing usual and periodical contact with the permanent Representations.
3. Reinforcing the information and communication with and between the Regions and the member countries.
4. Reinforcing the animation and coordination of the Regions.
5. Creating and developing mutual help and responsible solidarity links between the members.
6. Setting up a harmonious and stable financing system for the Office.

1. Reinforcing a periodical relationship with the Board of Governors and the College of Regional Secretaries.

The Board of Governors will be defined in the text of the new Statutes which will specify the various members of and what their functions are. From that moment on, we have to reinforce its action and more specifically, with regards to the animation and coordination of the Council meetings. We consulted previously the members to establish the Council's agenda; however, there is still work to do before they receive their functions which will be appointed by the Council itself.

With regards to the College of Regional Secretaries, we are still working on the Regions fully monitoring the OIEC objectives and projects. Therefore, we need to think about the balance that there should be between the independence of each Region and the monitoring of the decisions taken by the OIEC Council and Assembly. It is important, for the near future to reinforce the membership to the regional and world-wide organizations. Now it is the time to fully develop the Catholic and universal aspects of our schools which is in line with the mission of the universal Church.

PENDING ISSUES:

- Revaluing the Board of Governors, based on the definition of their functions, as stated in the new Statutes.
- Reinforcing the College of Regional Secretaries by activating their functions and by making contact with General Secretary.
- Strengthening the membership of the countries which are members of the regional organizations and of the OIEC.

//. Developing usual and periodical contact with the permanent Representations.

From the General Secretariat we have proceeded to implement the reference document that deals with the permanent Representations approved during the last Council in Sri Lanka.

The process has already started with the collaboration of UNESCO in Paris. The team working there has put a lot of efforts in increasing their presence and communicating their activities to all the representations. The news bulletin, BETWEEN, that they brought about is a real means of communication between the permanent Representations and all the members of the OIEC.

Later on, the team which will be working in Strasbourg in the permanent Representation for the Council of Europe will be formed. Mr Gerog Platz will be coordinating this team of five people. I would like to seize this opportunity to thank Fr. Gilbert Caffin for the work he undertook in this mission, since he is being relocated to Paris by his Congregation, thus leaving the Representation. The team in Strasbourg has already programmed its activities: being present in the different commissions, during the meetings, so on and so forth. Something that is still pending is the design of the system of communication with the other members.

In view of this, we should follow their example when organizing the rest of the permanent Representations. In order to do so, Mgr Zaidan has started to contact the National Association of Catholic Education of the United States asking them to be a part of New York's permanent Representation. Never-

theless, there are still many things to be done. Currently, the permanent Representation of Geneva is undergoing the same situation. Additionally, the health problems that our Representative is currently experiencing have delayed their activities.

We all bear in mind the two impressions I have mentioned in my previous report. The first being: the depth of the reflection and information arising from each office, as well as the need to hear in these forums, the voice and opinion of Catholic schools around the world. As for the second, which is a consequence of the first impression, we have to reinforce our presence with regards to the international organizations so as to make the most of the opportunities it brings.

PENDING ISSUES:

- Implementing the reference document approved during the last permanent Representations' Council in order to improve their goals and reinforce the relation among and with all the members.
- Creating within each of the remaining offices an appropriate work team for the mission they have been assigned.
- Designate someone to be present in the General Secretariat who could deal directly with the permanent Representations.

///. Reinforcing the information and communication with and between the Regions and the member countries.

Two of the decisions taken during the Council in 2004 have been implemented. Indeed, since April 2004 and with

the mentioned recurrence, the New Bulletin CONTACT has been sent to all the members and friend of the OIEC. We hope that the efforts put into writing and translating it into all three official languages, answers the need of improving the communication sought between the General Secretary and the members of the OIEC. The messages of encouragement and gratitude we have received help us to continue and improve this bulletin.

Secondly, on March 17th, we inaugurated, for the world to see, the new website of the OIEC. A simple opening ceremony was held in *Simon Bolivar de la Salle* School, in Mexico. Hence, we put at everyone's disposal, a means that we consider indispensable, for the improvement of the quality of the communication in the OIEC. We wish to turn this website into a common ground for all the regions and member states of the OIEC to meet, be informed, and keep in touch. All of this should be done between the members, with the Office headquarters, with the Permanent Representations and with the International Authorities on education.

For both actions it is very important to be able to count on the help of all the members of the OIEC along with the direct and coordinated work of the General Secretariat. In many places, news, activities and reflections are carried out; therefore, what we should be aiming at is to share all this information among us. I hope, therefore, that the informative presence of all our correspondents around world; bring liveliness to our website so as to become a site "worth visiting".

PENDING ISSUES:

- Setting up a network of correspondents so as to enhance the content of the bulletin CONTACT and the OIEC's website.

IV. Reinforcing the animation and coordination of the Regions.

The visits I have made to all the regions which will conclude with the one scheduled in Senegal (Africa) next August, have enabled me to strengthen my knowledge of them and therefore determine what the most urgent actions are for their animation and coordination.

It is worth mentioning the meeting held with the Asian authorities of the Region in the Philippines, last September. We were able to analyze the situation in this Region, its reality, difficulties and possibilities to improve the region's organization. We agreed to hold a first meeting, to set the grounds for the study of the region's prospects, before the next Council. We will seize this opportunity to draw up a plan for "the OIEC with Asia" project so as to alleviate the consequences of the tsunami.

In addition to the organization and coordination of the Asia Region, I, once more, underline the urgent needs I mentioned last year, that is to say: identifying what is more urgent for Africa in order to reinforce their organization; promoting the meeting and dialogue brought by the Middle East/North Africa Region; working on animating all the sub-regions of America and lastly, entertaining and bringing forward the potential in the opening of the European region to the Eastern countries.

Another important issue to consider is the division of the Asia/Oceania region.

PENDING ISSUE:

- A thorough communication a month the different regions and its corresponding organs.
- Continuing the study: "X-ray of Catholic Schools in the World".

V. Creating and developing mutual help and responsible solidarity links between the members.

One of the goals of the Office is the determination of the needs that the Catholic schools in the world have to go through, which, quite often is recurrent phenomenon or in other cases it is sudden and disastrous. This has to force us to plan a quick stable support system that shows the universality and solidarity of our schools.

Without a doubt, the disaster brought by the tsunami is the most poignant example which underlines the imperative need to set up a support system in view of the current situation of need in Catholic education.

For that reason, we have begun to work on the design of a support process during the meeting held with the counselors of the Asia group. The Council's mission, is to set up this project, so that when, situation arises we are able to act upon it quickly, in order to put the solidarity of Catholic schools at the service of those who most need our help.

PENDING ISSUES:

- Knowing quickly what the urgent needs are so as to promote support and solidarity.
- Designing the support Project (The OIEC with Asia) for the existing needs or those that may arise.

VI. Setting up a harmonious and stable financing system for the Office.

A stable financing of the Office remains one of the greatest concerns for the daily life of our organization. We are still carrying out the two decisions voted in Brasilia: the first, collecting all the members' contributions bearing in mind that the amount fixed in 1994 in Rome can be considered as the minimum which each member could increase voluntarily. And the second, the decision to promote the search for a stable financial collaboration.

Regarding the first decision, the incomes from the collaboration have decreased, as you will see in the financial report. This is mainly due to the devaluation of the dollar/euro exchange rate. Nevertheless, some countries have considerably increased their contribution.

As for the second decision, we continue with the project "Friends of the OIEC" in Spain and Mexico. We hope we will be able to start this campaign in Lebanon, next September. Additionally, we have been looking for financial support to carry out the project of the website and its maintenance.

We will provide the Council with all the appropriate information on our financial health that will enable us to assess our financial situation and suggested other stable financing systems.

PENDING ISSUES:

- Decide what to do with the unpaid contributions of some of the members.
- Look for new stable financing system.

VII. On other subjects.

Preparation of the 17th OIEC Assembly

After the celebration of the Council in Sri Lanka and in light of the decision taken regarding its content and organization, the preparation of the meetings in Lebanon 2006 are being carried out.

During the first meeting held in Beirut some basic issues were specified as follows: forming several preparation commissions; studying the financial budget, studying the adequacy of the locations, etc. On the occasion of the Assembly of the Regions, last January, we held several other meetings with these commissions, analyzing the work that had been done and the issues that were left pending. We seized this opportunity to present all that had been done, studying the details and improving the programme with some valuable suggestions.

Currently, the impression that we have, and only time will tell, is that we are heading toward a turning point that will be key for the history of the OIEC. We will discuss this

later on; nevertheless, I want to stress my interest in the Pre-Congress and in the Post-Congress that signifies the path to follow before and after this event.

Informative Visit to the Vatican

Last December, we made an informative visit to the different Dicasteries of the Holy See involved in education and culture. In Rome, we were received by the State Secretariat, by the Congregations for the Evangelization of People for Catholic Education, by the Oriental Churches and the Pontifical Council for Culture, together with the President of the OIEC Council. Here, we handed in a report with all the information on the OIEC's last year activities. The report also included the details of the preparation for the next Worldwide Education Council that will be held in Lebanon in May 2006. During our visits we were escorted by Fr Antonio Perrone, OIEC's Representative to the Vatican and we were able to meet with several Vatican authorities amongst whom: the Cardinal Mgr Ignace Moussa Daoud (Oriental Churches), Mgr Zenon Grocholewski (Catholic Education) and Mgr Paul Poupard (Council for Culture). The common message received was to continuously consider the importance of Catholic education in the world of today and of the near future. Other issues that were addressed were: the phenomenon of interculturalization and the presence of pupils of other religions, the challenge of defining the identity and mission of Catholic schools, the school as a place for evangelization for love, that the Congress [to be held] carries distinctive Christian values, the right of parents to choose a school in harmony with their beliefs and ideology and bringing round the Church to the importance of Catholic schools.

Renewing our Statutes

Throughout this year we have put into practice the steps approved during the Council of Sri Lanka on the study and updating of the new Statutes. We sent to all the Counselors the fruit of our work, namely, the renewed text drawn up by the General Secretariat with the help of the lawyer's commission and the invaluable assistance of Mgr Zaidan which will be explained in a moment.

This Council has the responsibility to approve the provisional draft that we will be presenting on its due time to the members of the Assembly for their final approval of the text. This is a task we have to undertake, after pondering the text for a long time. Therefore, I wish that we all be efficient and decide quickly on the text to be sent to the 2006 Assembly.

Brussels, April 2005

Restoring Trust: A Plea for Moral Values in Philippine Politics

CBCP

The Pastoral Situation

1. As a people we seem to have passed from crisis to crisis in one form or another. For many analysts, reinforcing these crises are ambivalent cultural values such as *palakasan*, *pakikisama*, *utang na loob*, and *family-centeredness*. As Bishops we have long contended that the crises that we have suffered are basically moral — the lack of moral values in ourselves, in our relationships, in our social structures.

2. Today we are beset with yet another political crisis of such magnitude as to polarize our people and attract them to various options ranging from the extreme right to the extreme left. In this grave situation, various groups take advantage of one another, manipulate situations for their own agenda and create confusion among our people sometimes by projecting speculation or suspicion as proven fact, with the aim of grabbing power.

3. At the center of the crisis is the issue of moral value, particularly the issue of trust. The people mistrust our economic institutions which place them under the tyranny of dehumanizing poverty. They also mistrust yet another key institution - our political system. This mistrust is not recent. For a long time now, while reveling in political exercises, our people have shown a lack of trust in political personalities, practices, and processes. Elections are often presumed tainted rather than honest. Congressional and senate hearings are sometimes narrowly confined to procedural matters and often run along party lines. Politics has not effectively responded to the needs of the poor and marginalized.

4. This question of trust in national institution has taken a critical urgency with the resignation of some key Cabinet members, the realignment of political parties and the creation of new alliances. Amid this realignment of forces we commend the clear official stand of our military and police authorities who reiterated their loyalty to our Constitution that forbids them from engaging in partisan politics.

5. Moreover within academe, business, professional and civil society varied positions have been taken with regard to President Macapagal Arroyo. Some want her to resign; others want her to go through due process. Some want a Truth Commission. Others impeachment. Some want a constitutional process and others an extra-constitutional process. On the other hand there is also a wide manifestation of support for the chief executive by a cross section of society.

6. Today we ask ourselves, "As Bishops what can we offer to our people? Can we provide some clarity and guidance in the present confusing situation?" We can only answer these

questions from who are. We are not politicians who are to provide a political blueprint to solve political problems. Rather we are Bishops called by the Lord to shepherd the people in the light of faith. With Pope Benedict XVI we do not believe in the "intrusion into politics on the part of the hierarchy." But we are to interpret human activities such as economics and politics from the moral and religious point of view, from the point of view of the Gospel of Jesus and of the Kingdom of God. We are to provide moral and religious guidance to our people. This is what we offer in the present crisis. Not to do this would be an abdication of our duty.

Our Pastoral Role and Our Stand

7. In the welter of conflicting opinions and positions our role is not to point out a specific political option or a package of options as the Gospel choice, especially so when such an option might be grounded merely on a speculative and highly controvertible basis. **In the present situation we believe that no single concrete option regarding President Macapagal Arroyo can claim to be the only one demanded by the Gospel. Therefore, in a spirit of humility and truth, we declare our prayerfully discerned collective decision that we do not demand her resignation. Yet neither do we encourage her simply to dismiss such a call from others. For we recognize that non-violent appeals for her resignation, the demand for a Truth Commission and the filing of an impeachment case are not against the Gospel.**

8. In all these we remind ourselves that a just political and moral order is best promoted under the present circumstances by a clear and courageous preference for

constitutional processes that flow from moral values and the natural law. Hence, we also appeal to the people, especially their representatives and leaders, to discern their decisions not in terms of political loyalties but in the light of the Gospel values of truth, justice, and the common good. We urge our people in our parish and religious communities, our religious organizations and movements, our Basic Ecclesial Communities to come and pray together, reason, decide and act together always to the end that the will of God prevail in the political order. People of good will and credibility who hold different political convictions should come together and dialogue in order to help move the country out of its present impasse. We believe with Pope Benedict XVI that through prayer the Filipino people and their political representatives and leaders, guided by moral principles, are capable of arriving at decisions for the common good that are based not only on political realities but above all on moral precepts.

9. Yet having said this we wish to subject specific situations to moral inquiry to guide our people in deepening their moral discernment.

Restoring Moral Values

10. On Moral Accountability: "Political authority is accountable to the people. Those who govern have the obligation to answer to the governed" (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 408). *President Macapagal Arroyo has admitted and apologized for a "lapse of judgment" for calling a COMELEC official. The admission further eroded that people's trust on the already suspected electoral system*

and raised serious questions on the integrity of the elections. Beyond apology is accountability. Indeed, with forgiveness is justice. To restore trust would require a thorough, credible, and independent process to examine the authenticity of the so-called Garcillano tapes, verify any possible betrayal of public trust, and mete out due punishment on all those found guilty. Punishment should also be imposed on those duly found guilty of corruption and illegal acts, such as jueteng and wire-tapping. Moral accountability calls for radical reforms in various agencies of government to make them more responsive to the requirements of integrity as well as to the needs of the poor.

11. On Constitutionality: In the present crisis some calls are being made for measures that are counter-constitutional. The Constitution enshrines cherished values such as human dignity and the common good, freedom, the rule of law and due process. On this basis, we reject quick fixes that cater to selfish political agenda and advantage rather than to the common good. We deplore the attempts of those groups who seek to exploit our vulnerable national situation in order to create confusion and social chaos, in order to seize power by unconstitutional means. We reject calls for juntas or revolutionary councils. Our political leaders have to be the first to observe and faithfully implement the Constitution. Resolving the crisis has to be within the framework of the Constitution and the laws of the land so as to avoid social chaos, the further weakening of political systems, and greater harm in the future.

12. On Non-Violence: Violent solutions, as Pope Paul VI taught us, "produce new injustices, throw more elements out of

balance, and bring on new disasters" (*Populorum Progressio*, 31). There are today, on different sides of the social and political spectrum, those who would instigate violence in order to promote their own agenda or causes. We reject the use of force and violence as a solution to our problems. Such cannot be an option of the Gospel, for we know that Jesus the Lord taught a Gospel of love and non-violence.

13. On Effective Governance: "Public authority in order to promote the common good... requires also that authority be effective in attaining that end" (*Pacem in Terris*, ch. IV). Together with competence, personal integrity is one of the most necessary requirements of a leader. Ineffective governance may be due to a lack of personal integrity or lack of competence. It could also be the result of a confluence of factors that have eroded trust and credibility and hence effectiveness. In our present situation we recognize that blame could be attributed to many, even to all of us. Yet we would ask the President to discern deeply to what extent she might have contributed to the erosion of effective governance and whether the erosion is so severe as to be irreversible. In her heart she has to make the necessary decision for the sake of the country. We all need to do the same. Indeed, moral discernment is very difficult since it is not based on political allegiances and alignments but no moral considerations.

Conclusion

14. Dear People of God, sadness and anxiety were our feelings when we as Bishops first met to study the various aspects of the crisis. To confront the fears and hopelessness

that at the daily companions of our poor is to realize that we of the Church likewise contributed to them by our neglect, our bias, our selfishness.

15. To respond to the pastoral situation we commit ourselves to a more effective evangelization in word and deed so that moral values might become dynamic forces of human life in economics, politics, and culture. We especially commit ourselves to the formation of men and women endowed with competence and integrity and empowered to effective leadership in the economic and political spheres. With the Gospel of truth, justice, peace and love in their hearts they might, indeed, be a leaven of social transformation for our country.

16. This Year of the Eucharistic reminds us of the abiding, loving and healing presence of the Lord Jesus in our midst. By the grace and mercy of God and the maternal protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we pray that a deep sense of hope will prevail in these dark moments of our history. Our loving God will not abandon us no matter what pit of evil have fallen into. We shall emerge stronger from this crisis. We shall rise endowed with greater integrity. We shall be witnesses to the power of God's grace to transform us into a noble nation, a holier Church, a united people.

For the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines:

t FERNANDO R. CAPALLA, D.D.
President
Archbishop of Davao

First Message of His Holiness Benedict XVI

POPE BENEDICT XVI

*At the end of the Eucharistic Concelebration
with the Members of the College of Cardinals
in the Sistine Chapel, on 20 April 2005*

Venerable Brother Cardinals,
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
All you men and women of good will,

1. "Favour and peace be yours in abundance" (I Pt 1:2)!
At this time, side by side in my heart I feel two contrasting emotions. On the one hand, a sense of inadequacy and human apprehension as I face the responsibility for the universal Church, entrusted to me yesterday as Successor of the Apostle Peter in this See of Rome. On the other, I have a lively feeling of profound gratitude to God who, as the liturgy makes us sing, never leaves his flock untended but leads it down the ages under the guidance of those whom he himself has chosen as the Vicars of his Son and has made shepherds of the flock (cf. *Preface of Apostles I*).

Dear friends, this deep gratitude for a gift of divine mercy is uppermost in my heart in spite of all. And I consider it a special grace which my Venerable Predecessor, John Paul II, has obtained for me. I seem to feel his strong hand clasping mine; I seem to see his smiling eyes and hear his words, at this moment addressed specifically to me, "Do not be afraid!".

The death of the Holy Father John Paul II and the days that followed have been an extraordinary period of grace for the Church and for the whole world. Deep sorrow at his departure and the sense of emptiness that it left in everyone have been tempered by the action of the Risen Christ, which was manifested during long days in the unanimous wave of faith, love and spiritual solidarity that culminated in his solemn funeral Mass.

We can say it: John Paul II's funeral was a truly extraordinary experience in which, in a certain way, we glimpsed the power of God who, through his Church, wants to make a great family of all the peoples by means of the unifying power of Truth and Love (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, n. 1). Conformed to his Master and Lord, John Paul II crowned his long and fruitful Pontificate at the hour of his death, strengthening Christian people in their faith, gathering them around him and making the entire human family feel more closely united.

How can we not feel sustained by this testimony? How can we fail to perceive the encouragement that comes from this event of grace?

2. Surprising all my expectations, through the votes of the Venerable Father Cardinals, divine Providence has called me to succeed this great Pope. I am thinking back at this

moment to what happened in the neighbourhood 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 entrust to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven"* (cf. Mt 16:15-19).

You are Christ! You are Peter! I seem to be reliving the same Gospel scene; I, the Successor of Peter, repeat with trepidation the anxious words of the fisherman of Galilee and listen once again with deep emotion to the reassuring promise of the divine Master. Although the weight of responsibility laid on my own poor shoulders is enormous, there is no doubt that the divine power on which I can count is boundless: *"You are 'Peter', and on this rock I will build my Church"* (Mt 16: 18). In choosing me as Bishop of Rome, the Lord wanted me to be his Vicar, he wanted me to be the "rock" on which we can all safely stand. I ask him to compensate for my limitations so that I may be a courageous and faithful Pastor of his flock, ever docile to the promptings of his Spirit.

I am preparing to undertake this special ministry, the "Petrine" ministry at the service of the universal Church, with humble abandonment into the hands of God's Providence. I first of all renew my total and confident loyalty to Christ: *"In Te, Domine, speravi; non confundar in aeternum!"*.

Your Eminences, with heartfelt gratitude for the trust you have shown me, I ask you to support me with your prayers and with your constant, active and wise collaboration. I also ask all my Brothers in the Episcopate to be close to me with their prayers and advice, so that I may truly be the Servus servorum Dei. Just as the Lord willed that

Peter and the other Apostles make up the one Apostolic College, in the same way the Successor of Peter and the Bishops, successors of the Apostles - the Council has forcefully reasserted this (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, n. 22) -, must be closely united with one another. This collegial communion, despite the diversity of roles and functions of the Roman Pontiff and the Bishops, is at the service of the Church and of unity in the faith, on which the efficacy of evangelizing action in the contemporary world largely depends. Therefore, it is on this path, taken by my Venerable Predecessors, that I also intend to set out, with the sole concern of proclaiming the living presence of Christ to the whole world.

3. I have before my eyes in particular the testimony of Pope John Paul II. He leaves a Church that is more courageous, freer, more youthful. She is a Church which, in accordance with his teaching and example, looks serenely at the past and is not afraid of the future. With the Great Jubilee she entered the new millennium, bearing the Gospel, applied to today's world through the authoritative rereading of the Second Vatican Council. Pope John Paul II rightly pointed out the Council as a "compass" by which to take our bearings in the vast ocean of the third millennium (cf. Apostolic Letter, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, nn. 57-58). Also, in his spiritual *Testament* he noted, "I am convinced that it will long be granted to the new generations to draw from the treasures that this 20th-century Council has lavished upon us" (17 March 2000; *L'Osservatore Romano* English edition [ORE], 13 April 2005, p. 4).

Thus, as I prepare myself for the service that is proper to the Successor of Peter, I also wish to confirm my determi-

nation to continue to put the Second Vatican Council into practice, following in the footsteps of my Predecessors and in faithful continuity with the 2,000-year tradition of the Church. This very year marks the 40th anniversary of the conclusion of the Council (8 December 1965). As the years have passed, the *Conciliar Documents* have lost none of their timeliness; indeed, their teachings are proving particularly relevant to the new situation of the Church and the current globalized society.

4. My Pontificate begins in a particularly meaningful way as the Church is living the special *Year dedicated to the Eucharist*. How could I fail to see this providential coincidence as an element that must mark the ministry to which I am called? The Eucharist, the heart of Christian life and the source of the Church's evangelizing mission, cannot but constitute the permanent centre and source of the Petrine ministry that has been entrusted to me.

The Eucharist makes constantly present the Risen Christ who continues to give himself to us, calling us to participate in the banquet of his Body and his Blood. From full communion with him flows every other element of the Church's life: first of all, communion among all the faithful, the commitment to proclaiming and witnessing to the Gospel, the ardour of love for all, especially the poorest and lowliest.

This year, therefore, the Solemnity of *Corpus Christi* must be celebrated with special solemnity. Subsequently, the Eucharist will be the centre of the *World Youth Day in Cologne* in August, and in October, also of the Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, whose theme will be: "*The Eucharist, source and summit of the life and mission of the Church*". I

ask everyone in the coming months to intensify love and devotion for Jesus in the Eucharist, and to express courageously and clearly faith in the Real Presence of the Lord, especially by the solemnity and the correctness of the celebrations.

I ask this especially of priests, whom I am thinking of with deep affection at this moment. The ministerial Priesthood was born at the Last Supper, together with the Eucharist, as my Venerable Predecessor John Paul II so frequently emphasized. "All the more then must the life of a priest be 'shaped' by the Eucharist" (*Letter to Priests for Holy Thursday* 2005, n. 1; *ORE*, 23 March, p. 4). In the first place, the devout, daily celebration of Holy Mass, the centre of the life and mission of every priest, contributes to this goal.

5. Nourished and sustained by the Eucharist, Catholics cannot but feel encouraged to strive for the full unity for which Christ expressed so ardent a hope in the Upper Room. The Successor of Peter knows that he must make himself especially responsible for his Divine Master's supreme aspiration. Indeed, he is entrusted with the task of strengthening his brethren (cf. Lk 22:32).

With full awareness, therefore, at the beginning of his ministry in the Church of Rome which Peter bathed in his blood, Peter's current Successor takes on as his primary task the duty to work tirelessly to rebuild the full and visible unity of all Christ's followers. This is his ambition, his impelling duty. He is aware that good intentions do not suffice for this. Concrete gestures that enter hearts and stir consciences are essential, inspiring in everyone that inner conversion that is the prerequisite for all ecumenical progress.

Theological dialogue is necessary; the investigation of the historical reasons for the decisions made in the past is also indispensable. But what is most urgently needed is that "purification of memory", so often recalled by John Paul II, which alone can dispose souls to accept the full truth of Christ. Each one of us must come before him, the supreme Judge of every living person, and render an account to him of all we have done or have failed to do to further the great good of the full and visible unity of all his disciples.

The current Successor of Peter is allowing himself to be called in the first person by this requirement and is prepared to do everything in his power to promote the fundamental cause of ecumenism. Following the example of his Predecessors, he is fully determined to encourage every initiative that seems appropriate for promoting contacts and understanding with the representatives of the different Churches and Ecclesial Communities. Indeed, on this occasion he sends them his most cordial greeting in Christ, the one Lord of us all.

6. I am thinking back at this time to the unforgettable experience seen by all of us on the occasion of the death and funeral of the late John Paul II. The Heads of Nations, people from every social class and especially young people gathered round his mortal remains, laid on the bare ground, in an unforgettable embrace of love and admiration. The whole world looked to him with trust. To many it seemed that this intense participation, amplified by the media to reach the very ends of the planet, was like a unanimous appeal for help addressed to the Pope by today's humanity which, upset by uncertainties and fears, was questioning itself on its future.

The Church of today must revive her awareness of the duty to repropose to the world the voice of the One who said: *"I am the light of the world. No follower of mine shall ever walk in darkness; no, he shall possess the light of life"* (Jn 8: 12). In carrying out his ministry, the new Pope knows that his task is to make Christ's light shine out before the men and women of today: not his own light, but Christ's.

Aware of this I address everyone, including the followers of other religions or those who are simply seeking an answer to the fundamental questions of life and have not yet found it. I address all with simplicity and affection, to assure them that the Church wants to continue to weave an open and sincere dialogue with them, in the search for the true good of the human being and of society.

I ask God for unity and peace for the human family, and declare the willingness of all Catholics to cooperate for an authentic social development, respectful of the dignity of every human being.

I will make every conscientious effort to continue the promising dialogue initiated by my Venerable Predecessors with the different civilizations, so that mutual understanding may create the conditions for a better future for all.

I am thinking in particular of the young. I offer my affectionate embrace to them, the privileged partners in dialogue with Pope John Paul II, hoping, please God, to meet them in Cologne on the occasion of the upcoming *World Youth Day*. I will continue our dialogue, dear young people, the future and hope of the Church and of humanity, listening to your expectations in the desire to help you encounter in ever greater depth the living Christ, eternally young.

7. *Mane nobiscum, Domine!* Stay with us, Lord! This invocation, which is the principal topic of the *Apostolic Letter of John Paul II for the Year of the Eucharist*, is the prayer that wells up spontaneously from my heart as I prepare to begin the ministry to which Christ has called me. Like Peter, I too renew to him my unconditional promise of fidelity. I intend to serve him alone, dedicating myself totally to the service of his Church.

To support me in my promise, I call on the motherly intercession of Mary Most Holy, in whose hands I place the present and future of the Church and of myself. May the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and all the Saints also intercede for us.

With these sentiments I impart to you, Venerable Brother Cardinals, to those who are taking part in this rite and to all who are watching it on television and listening to it on the radio, a special, affectionate Blessing.

Biography of His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI

HOLY SEE

Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) was born on 16 April 1927 in Marktl am Inn, Germany. His father, a police officer, came from a traditional family of farmers from Lower Bavaria. He spent his adolescent years in Traunstein, a small town on the Austrian border.

It was in this context, which Pope Benedict XVI himself has described as "Mozartian", that he received his Christian, human and cultural formation.

Second World War

Joseph's days of youth were far from easy.

His faith and family upbringing prepared him for the harsh experience of the problems connected with the Nazi regime; he even remembers seeing his parish priest being beaten by Nazis before celebrating Holy Mass, and was well aware of the fiercely hostile atmosphere to the Catholic Church that existed in Germany at the time.

Towards the end of World War II, Joseph was enrolled in the auxiliary anti-aircraft service.

Priest, Professor, Vatican Council

From 1946 to 1951, he studied philosophy and theology at the University of Munich and at the higher school in Freising. Together with his brother Georg, he was ordained a priest on 29 June 1951 in the Cathedral at Freising.

In 1953 Fr Ratzinger obtained a doctorate in theology with a thesis entitled: "The People and House of God in St Augustine's doctrine of the Church".

Four years later, he qualified as a university professor. He then taught dogma and fundamental theology at the higher school of philosophy and theology of Freising; then in Bonn from 1959 to 1969; in Münster from 1963 to 1966; and in Tübingen from 1966 to 1969.

Beginning in 1969, he was a professor of dogmatic theology and of the history of dogma at the University of Regensburg, where he eventually became Dean and Vice-Rector.

From 1962 to 1965 he was present during all four sessions of the Second Vatican Council as a chief theological advisor to the Archbishop of Cologne, Cardinal Josef Frings.

A "Theological" Vocation

Fr. Ratzinger's important and useful experience as a priest and an "expert" at the Second Vatican Council was immensely valuable and fundamental to his life. He lived out

this experience as confirmation of his own vocation, which he defined as "theological".

The rapid succession of his numerous, detailed publications has also continued as the years have passed, serving as a reference point for Catholics and especially for those involved in advanced theological studies.

"Fellow Worker in the Truth"

On 24 March 1977, Pope Paul VI appointed him Archbishop of München und Freising (Munich and Freising).

He was ordained a Bishop on 28 May that same year and was the first diocesan priest in 80 years to take on the pastoral governance of this large Bavarian Diocese. He chose as his episcopal motto: "Fellow Worker in the Truth" (cf. III Jnl:8).

He was created and proclaimed Cardinal by Pope Paul VI in the Consistory of 27 June 1977, of the Titles of the Suburbicarian Church of Velletri-Segni (5 April 1993) and Suburbicarian Church of Ostia (30 November 2002).

On 25 November 1981 he was appointed by Pope John Paul II as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. He also became President of the Biblical Commission and of the Pontifical International Theological Commission.

On 15 February 1982, he resigned his pastoral office as Archbishop of Munich and Freising.

"Catechism of the Catholic Church"

His role as President of the Commission for Drafting the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the six years of

intense work (1986-92) behind its preparation are one of his many outstanding achievements.

On 6 November 1998, he was appointed Vice-Dean of the College of Cardinals; on 30 November 2002, the Holy Father approved his election, by the order of Cardinal Bishops, as Dean of the College of Cardinals.

Within the Roman Curia

Until his election to the Chair of Peter Cardinal Ratzinger was a Member of the Council of the Second Section of the Secretariat of State; of the Congregations: for the Oriental Churches, for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, for Bishops, for the Evangelization of Peoples, for Catholic Education, as well as for the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America and the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*.

As Dean of the College of Cardinals he presided over the College's deliberations during the Vacancy of the Holy See following the death of Pope John Paul II on 2 April 2005.

On Friday, 8 April, Cardinal Ratzinger presided at Holy Mass in St Peter's Square for the funeral of Pope John Paul II.

"Habemus Papam"

On Tuesday, 19 April, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was elected the 265th Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church, selecting the name Benedict XVI.

The Legacy of John Paul II

JOSEPH M. DE TORRE

Historical Overview

On the occasion of the first twenty years of John Paul II's pontificate I published an article in the *Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas* under the title "The Concerns of the Church in the Twenty Years of John Paul II's Pontificate". Since then we have witnessed the holy death of this extraordinary Vicar of Christ and successor of St. Peter, as well as the accession of another successor of St. Peter, who has taken the evocative name of Benedict XVI, with the double reference to one of the Patron Saints of Europe (the cradle of Christianity) and to Pope Benedict XV who spent all his years in the See of Rome (1914-1922) peacefully struggling to reconcile all the warring factions of World War I.

I have therefore decided to adapt the said article completing now the years of John Paul II and trying to summarize the astonishing legacy of a Pontiff whom many have called "the great", and Benedict XVI has ruled to waive the five year

period required by Canon Law to start the process of beatification and canonization of John Paul II in view of the popular acclaim of "*santo subito*" (a Saint at once).

The election of Karol Wojtyla on October 16, 1978, took place just a hundred years after the election of Gioachino Pecci as Leo XIII. This was a papacy already released from the encumbrance of the Papal States, and so more, free to address the complex moral issues of modernity: social, political, economic and cultural.

A Record-breaking Papacy

John Paul IPs papacy has brought us into the third millennium, as Cardinal Wyszyski told Wojtyla on being elected. It has brought us to "cross the threshold of hope" as the Pope said in the long interview with Vittonzo Messori in 1994, and the "witness to hope" of George Weigel's biography of 2000. This is an invitation to attempt an assessment of a pontificate which seems to have broken all papal "records".

It is unnecessary to cite the staggering figures of his pastoral trips both at home and abroad: suffice it to say that not a single year has passed from 1979 to the present without such trips. The thorough use of up-to-date means of transport and communication; and the number and kinds of personalities and groups met in person by him both at home and abroad were unprecedented.

To make this assessment brief and to the point, it confines itself to the *concerns of the Church* which the pope expressed himself from the very beginning of his pontificate, when he cried out to the whole world. "Be not afraid to open

your doors to Christ!", and which he vigorously promoted ever since even to the last painful gasp.

The Ecclesiology of Vatican II (1962-1965)

As a backgrounder, it is indispensable to bear in mind that it is a characteristic of the Church as the Kingdom of God on earth, to be *both* inward-oriented (cf. Lk 17:21) *and* outward-oriented (cf. Mt 5:13-16), or in other words, *both* eschatological or transcendent or vertical, *and* world-transforming or immanent or horizontal, as the ecclesiology of Vatican II proclaimed, notably in its two major documents on the Church, namely *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*.

The concerns of the Church, stemming from this ecclesiology, have been manifested and thoroughly articulated and spelled-out by her visible Head, the Vicar of Christ, ever since he assumed his God-given office in 1978. He did so in avowed continuity with Vatican II, with his immediate predecessors connected with that Ecumenical Council, Popes John Paul I, Paul VI and John XXIII, and with the entire *living* tradition of the Church.

As a divine or eternal institution (cf. Mt 16:17-19), the Church has to be *traditional* or in living (not dead) communion with her past. But at the same time, she must avoid a *traditionalism* that rejects all changes, including those required by the needs of a growing and adaptable organism always true to itself but in constant development and interaction with the world. And on the other hand, as a human or temporal institution in the world (cf. Jn 3:16), the Church has to be *progressive* or forward-looking. But at the same time, she

must avoid a *progressivism* that rejects the past in the name of a relativistic historicism, shortsighted and self-destroying.

As I have written elsewhere (*Generation and Degeneration: A Survey of Ideologies*, p. 18), "the so-called deposit of revelation or set of divinely revealed truths (some of them surpassing but not contradictory the power of human reason alone, and other truths confirming and clarifying the findings of human reason concerning religion and ethics) was entrusted to the Apostles in communion with Peter for the oral and written transmission in a "Sacred Tradition" of life in the Holy Spirit. These truths are the Word of God kept alive in a Church marching through history and evangelizing every age and people. 'Here on earth', Pope John Paul II said (*U Osservatore Romano*, English ed., July 15, 1992, p. 6), 'a church which does not move is not a Church. And neither would the Church exist if she did not faithfully cultivate the memory of her origins and the mysterious goal towards which she strives in hope'.

Thus while the 'mysteries', revealed by God must of necessity remain unchangeable in themselves, the 'dogmas' or rational expressions of those mysteries by the teaching Church (Magisterium) must be living realities subject to growth. The Magisterium (Apostles with Peter) is entrusted with the custody of that sacred tradition to ensure (a) that it preserves the original content and meaning of those divine mysteries, and (b) that it adapts their communication to changing circumstances of time and place. Following the ancient teaching of St. Vincent of Lerins, the Church explained once again this 'growth' of dogmas, which preserves the original meaning of the revealed mysteries, in the I Vatican

Council (1870), under the influence of Cardinal Newman. And in 1923 Francisco Marin-Sola, O.P. published his now classic *The Homogeneous Evolution of Catholic Dogma*.

The Pope's Balanced Position

The Pope's firm stand as a "rock" between the two erroneous extremes of traditionalism and progressivism as well as between the two erroneous extremes of fideism and rationalism, since Christ is neither on the Left nor on the Right, but in the truth (cf. Jn 8:32), caused him intense suffering inflicted on him by the individuals and groups of both tendencies, whose names are well known. But he persevered in the Petrine office of confirming his brethren in the faith (cf. Lk 22:32), with his boundless trust in the protection of the Blessed Virgin, Spouse of the Holy Spirit (cf. Lk 1:35), and the support of all the faithful, the really *faithful* children of the Church.

Secular observers, without the supernatural outlook of true believers in the divinity of Christ and of his Church (cf. Mt 16:17-19), tend to classify Popes and other prelates in political categories such as "conservative", "moderate", "liberal", "progressive" and so forth, which of course, are off the mark in this case, since "My kingdom is not of this world" (cf. Jn 18:36).

The point is that, if one takes into account the aforementioned two-fold dimension of the Church (the ecclesiology of Vatican II), the Church as a force unleashed and injected into the very bloodstream of secular society - the 'people of God', to use the expression of *Lumen Gentium* and the 1983 Code of Canon Law - must not only be progressive but even in some sense revolutionary, with a revolution on the spiritual

level, namely of freedom and justice, love and peace, not of hatred and violence (cf. Acts 4:32-37). But she is so, however, only on condition of remaining true and faithful to herself as Mystical Body of Christ and Bride of Christ (cf. Eph 5:21-32), in a living *resourcement* or contact with her source.

The Role of the Laity

Those two dimensions of the Church, the eternal and the temporal are respectively represented by the official ministers (clergy and religious) and the laity. Because of this, the world-transforming action of the Church is to be carried out by the laity, a laity well-trained both in Christian doctrine and in technical and professional expertise in secular occupations; and in the heart of the families, who are the living cells of society.

This is how the Church can be and will be the "sacrament or the sign of intimate union with God, and the unity of all mankind", as Vatican II declared in *Lumen Gentium*. And John Paul II, following his two predecessors committed the Church "irrevocably" to the implementation of that Ecumenical Council from the very start of his pontificate.

A Glance at the Pope's Output

A brief look at the major documents he issued gives a good idea of his mind, of his objectives and of his projects. All of these are, for believers (cf. Mt 16:19), a reflection of the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the pilgrim Church (cf. Jn 16:12-13).

He issued fourteen encyclicals. Three of them on each of the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, core truth of the

mystery of Christianity, namely *Redemptor Hominis* (1979) on the Son, as Redeemer of Man, *Dives in Misericordia* (1980) on the Father, and *Dominum et Vivificantem* (1986) on the Holy Spirit, relating the three of them to the truth about man and society rooted in the dignity of the human person, a Christian anthropology or philosophy for the "enlightenment" and guidance of all human or social sciences.

Three more on the "social question" as corollaries of socio-economic and political anthropology deriving from the theological trilogy on the Blessed Trinity (the social teaching of the Church), namely *Laborem Exercens* (1981) on the philosophy of labor and capital (90th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*), *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987) on the theology of development (20th anniversary of *Populorum Progressio*), and *Centesimus Annus* (1991) on the cultural roots of a free society and a free economy (100th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*).

Three more on Ecumenism and evangelization namely *Slavorum Apostoli* (1985) on the theme of what he called the two "lungs" of the Church: Latin (Rome) and Greek (Constantinople), with the latter having evangelized most of the Slav world. This is why he joined the two great Greek apostles of the Slavs, Sts. Cyril and Methodius, to St. Benedict as Patron Saints of Europe, the cradle of Christianity. Then, *Redemptoris Missio* (1990), on the ever-present evangelizing thrust of the Church in obedience to her Founder (cf. Mt 28:18-20), defying all attempts at emasculating the missionary efforts on the grounds of being a sign of fanatical fundamentalism. This encyclical is in line with the three Vatican II documents on the subject, namely *Ad Gentes* (on Evangelization), *Unitatis Redintegratio* (on the unity of Christians), and *Dignitatis*

Humanae (on Religious Freedom), as well as with Paul VI's 1975 Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* on the right to *propose* the faith without *imposing* it on anybody. And finally *Ut Unum Sint* (1995), on opening the Church to all together towards unity by an all-out effort of "healing memories". This is the "crossing threshold of hope" into the third millennium after a second millennium of divisions.

The programmatic Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (1994) also described this hopeful process, dedicating the countdown of the three years leading to the 2000 Jubilee to each of the Three Divine Persons: 1997 to the Son, the sacrament of rebirth in Christ, and the supernatural virtue of faith; 1998 to the Holy Spirit, the sacrament of confirmation, and the supernatural virtue of hope; and 1999 to the Heavenly Father, the sacrament of the Eucharist and the supernatural virtue of charity. And the three years are placed under the motherly protection of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God the Son, Spouse of God the Holy Spirit, and Daughter of God the Father, in line with the Encyclical *Redemptionis Mater* (1987) to commemorate the approximate centenary of Mary's birth.

Four more Encyclicals complete the number: *Veritatis Splendor* (1993), *Evangelium Vitae* (1995), *Fides et Ratio* (1998), and *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (2003). These are perhaps the most far-reaching of them all: an astonishingly comprehensive analysis of present day culture - a "culture of death" in a crisis of truth challenged by a "culture of life" (the "gospel of life") preceded by a ringing affirmation of the rational power of submitting to and lovingly embracing the "splendor of the truth", of the truth about man, his freedom and responsibility, and the truth about God as creator and redeemer of

man and liberator of humanity. Then, his masterpiece *Fides et Ratio* on the vindication of the power of human reason to grasp reality and being opened to the enlightenment of supernatural faith. And finally on the life of the Church flowing from the Sacrament of Love. The latter led him to proclaim the year of the Eucharist from October 2004 to October 2005.

Other Documents

The unparalleled wealth of doctrine poured out by John Paul II is by no means exhausted by the encyclicals. It has been enormously augmented and enriched by the series of Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortations and a number of Apostolic Letters and Apostolic Constitutions on related issues. Among the latter: *Sapientia Christiana* (1982) on seminary teaching (in line with Vatican IPs *Optatam Totius*), and *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (1988), on Catholic schools, both of them emphasizing the crucial role of the training in philosophy and history. Among the former: *Catechismi Tradendae* (1979), on the absolute need of a Christocentric orthodoxy faithful to the Magisterium in all spheres of the Church's life, from public worship to catechesis and temporal action: it has provided the inspiration and guidance for the subsequent collegial elaboration of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1992), coordinated by Cardinal Ratzinger. Then *Familiaris Consortio* (1982) (a sequel to Paul VI's Encyclical *Humanae Vitae* of 1968) on the centrality of the family for the world's evangelization and indeed for the "future of humanity". This has been further developed by the *Letter to the Families* (1995). Then, *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* (1985), on the meaning of sin, personal and social, conversion and the sacrament of Penance. Then, *Christifideles Laici* (1988), a follow-up of the Vatican II docu-

ments *Lumen Gentium* (Chapter IV) and *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, on the mission of the laity in the Church and in the world. Then, *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (1991), on the formation, life and ministry of priests, in line with the Vatican II documents *Presbyterorum Ordinis* and *Optatam Totius*. And finally, *Vita Consecrata* (1996) on the institutes of consecrated life, in line with the Vatican II documents *Lumen Gentium* (Chapter VI) and *Perfectae Caritatis*.

Three more Apostolic Letters are of notable interest, namely *Salvifici Doloris* (1982), on the Christian value of human suffering as man's contribution to Christ's redemption (cf. Col 1:24), *Redemptoris Custos* (1988) (a sequel to *Redemptoris Mater*) on the unique role of St. Joseph in the mysteries of the Incarnation and the Redemption, and *Mulieris Dignitatem* (1993) on the "genius" of womanhood and its place in God's providence, an unprecedented document on feminine anthropology, accepting all the positive aspects of modern feminism while disqualifying those not in keeping with woman's dignity.

In addition to all the above, we cannot overlook the bewildering output of addresses to the youth, particularly in the successive World Youth Days: his weekly catechetical talks in the Wednesday audiences, most notably the series on the "theology of the body" and the meaning of human sexuality, as well as his series on Catholicity, Mariology, and the Psalms and Canticles. Then his innumerable addresses to diplomats and civil leaders applying the social doctrine of the Church to specific issues, his World Day addresses for universal peace, associated with the historic meeting of all religions at Assisi on October 27, 1986; and last but not least, his memorable addresses to the UNO on October 2, 1979, and October 5, 1995

as well as those commemorating the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe, and the foundation of the United Nations (1995).

A Christian Humanism and Anthropology

Throughout all the above, as well as in his countless other speeches, messages, addresses, and homilies to civil leaders, to ecclesiastics, to leaders and representatives of all religions, to academics, health-care workers, industrialists, businessmen, workers, artists, sports people, media people, scientists, farmers, in short to people in all sectors of culture and society, John Paul II has left a legacy of Christian humanism and anthropology ready to supply the energy for the new millennium, for a culture of life and truth, for a civilization of love, justice and freedom, whose point of departure was his 1980 Address to UNESCO, and outlined in the Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* (2000). Evidently Pope Benedict XVI is in perfect continuity with these ideals and goals.

In this regard, John Paul II repeatedly referred to a "new springtime for the Church". Here is indeed an ecclesiology (the ecclesiology of Vatican II) vitally linked with its living tradition, but dynamically forward-looking, and wielding a truly "public philosophy" as an instrument of dialogue and a means of communication with the whole of mankind. Cardinal Ratzinger, in his book *The Salt of the Earth* revealed the keen interest of the Pope in the philosophical issues so thoroughly discussed in *Fides et Ratio*: social, anthropological, ethical and scientific. *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* reveals the Pope's profound respect for all philosophers, writers, and social and natural scientists. With all of them, as with all religions, he

showed an open, friendly and truth-loving mind and heart, in the truly Catholic tradition of Justin, Irenaeus, Chrysostom, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas and all the great Fathers and Doctors of the Church. He is equally removed from a fideism that scorns philosophy, and a rationalism that scorns the enlightenment of faith in "Christ, the Son of the Living God" (Mt 16:17). This thrust toward unity and peace, in freedom, truth and love, has dictated the tentative agendas for "crossing the threshold of hope", and so has spelled out the true concerns at the Church on the threshold of and looking forward to the third millennium of Christianity.

Will future generations look at our time, John Paul II's time, as a turning point in history? This is neither wishful thinking nor Utopian dreams, but the firm hope (and prayer) of John Paul II as Visible Head of Christ's Church, and of his successor Benedict XVI.

Cases and Inquiries

JAVIER GONZALEZ, O.P.

CHANGES IN THE BAPTISMAL RECORDS

What is the data to be placed in the Baptismal Register? What is the data that should be placed in the Observanda or Remarks portion of the Book of Baptisms? Can changes be introduced in the baptismal records? If so, what would be the procedure? What to do when a Certificate of Baptism cannot be produced due for instance to loss or destruction of records, or because the baptism may have not been recorded? What about recording a baptism administered in special circumstances?

The reception of the sacrament of baptism is very significant, not only because of its theological meaning, but also because of its canonical implications. "By baptism," canon 96 reads, "one is incorporated into the Church of Christ and constituted a person in it." (The term "person" here is understood in its legal or canonical sense, that is, "a subject of duties and rights.")

Proper recording and proof of one's baptism is then very important so that this personality in the Church be recognized. The recording is done in the Register or Book of Baptisms that every parish has, and the Baptismal Certificate is the ordinary and acceptable proof of baptism.

With this as departure point, I will try to answer the above-formulated questions.

1. What Data is to be Placed in the Parish Baptismal Register?

The Code of Canon Law contains provisions on how to register baptism and on how to give proofs of it. Briefly, it says that the parish priest of the place where the baptism was conferred must carefully and without delay record in the register of baptism *the names of the baptized, the minister, the parents, the sponsors and, if there were such, the witnesses, and the place and date of baptism*. He must also enter *the date and place of birth*, (cf c. 877 §1)

For practical reasons, it is recommended that a Certificate of Live Birth of the child to be baptized be required from parents so that whatever data are contained in the Certificate of Live Birth may also be entered in the Baptismal Registry. This will avoid possible future problems coming from discrepancies between the data found in the Live Birth Certificate and those in the Baptismal Certificate.

In the case of a child of an unmarried mother, the mother's name is to be entered if her maternity is publicly known or if, either in writing or before two witnesses, she freely asks that this be done. Similarly, the name of the father is to be entered, if his paternity is established either by some

public document or by his own declaration in the presence of the parish priest and two witnesses. In all other cases, the name of the baptized person is to be registered, without any indication of the name of the father or of the parents. [N.B. The Civil Code of the Philippines insists that the child carry the family name of the mother if the parents are not married. The church provision gives the possibility of not only entering the name of the father but even of having the child bear the family name of the father. Having no impediments for the future marriage of the parents could be one reason for letting the child bear the name of the father. This would save the parents later on of the difficulty of changing again the family name of the child once the parents are married.]

In the case of an adopted child, the names of the adopting parents are to be registered and, at least if this is done in the local civil registration, the names of the natural parents in accordance with what was said above, subject however to the rulings of the Episcopal Conference.

Aside from the baptismal data, the Book of Baptisms has an *Ob servanda* or Remarks portion where other information pertaining to the canonical status of the faithful are also entered in time. The following annotations should be written there:

- a) Date of Confirmation
- b) Date of Marriage
- c) Date of Ordination to Diaconate, Priesthood or Episcopacy
- d) Date of Perpetual Profession in a Religious Institute or Society of Apostolic Life.

e) Change of Rite

f) In case of adoption after baptism: The full name of the adopting parents shall be added to the baptismal entry mentioning at the same time the number and date of the decree of adoption issued by the civil court.

g) In case of adoption before baptism and the adopting parents request that the names of the natural parents be kept confidential, the adopting parents are listed as the parents in the baptismal register. The names of the natural parents are to be forwarded to the Secret Archives of the chancery, to be released only upon approval by the local ordinary and for a serious reason. An annotation is to be made in the Baptismal Register with the following remarks: *"For marriage purposes, consult secret records of the diocesan archives."*

All annotations found under the *Observanda/Remarks* should be copied whenever a baptismal certificate is issued.

2. Can changes be introduced in the baptismal records? If so, what would be the procedure?

Yes, changes can be introduced in the baptismal records for the purpose of correcting previous wrong entries. However, in doing so, two things are to be taken into account:

a) First, that corrections cannot be made without the authorization of the Bishop; and

b) Second, that corrections by way of erasures, either by wiping out data or by striking out words and writing over again, even if accompanied with an initial of the parish priest to authenticate them, are not allowed.

'Wo *change* (correction, substitution, addition, suppression) *may be made in the parochial books without first being acknowledged and approved by the Bishop,*" decreed in 1953 the First Plenary Council of the Philippines (n. 323). This decree - which remains valid even after the 1983 Code of Canon Law, as it is not contrary to it (cf c. 6) - goes on: "Hence if there be a need of making a change or correction in the Book of Baptisms, let the pastor not make it on his own accord, but let him refer the matter to the Bishop, who, after duly weighing all circumstances, may by a written decree order the changes to be made; the decree, however, should be kept in the parochial archives, mention being made in the Book of Baptisms."

On the other hand, corrections by way of erasures put into question the validity of the document itself. As canon 1543 states, "if documents are shown to have been erased, amended, falsified or otherwise tampered with, it is for the judge to evaluate to what extent, if any, they are to be given credence."

Thus, in order to change baptismal records certain procedures have to be followed. Actually there are two alternative procedures, both equally valid, that can be adopted upon the discretionary judgment of the Parish Priest and of the Bishop.

A. A Procedure in Changing Baptismal Records

1) The petitioner makes an Affidavit pointing out the wrong entries and the corrections that would have to be made. This affidavit should be signed by the petitioner and countersigned by the Parish Priest or Assistant Parish Priest.

(Since it is an ecclesiastical document that they are correcting, the Affidavit does not have to be made by a Notary Public). It would be better if the Affidavit is accompanied by other documentary proofs to further prove their allegations, i.e. a Birth Certificate; a Marriage Contract of the parents in case of change of family name due to a subsequent marriage; pictures, etc.

2. The Parish Priest or Assistant Parish Priest writes a letter to the Bishop asking permission to make corrections in the Baptismal Register.

3. The Bishop issues a decree authorizing the Parish Priest/Assistant Parish Priest to make corrections in the Baptismal Register.

4. The Parish Priest/Assistant Parish Priest makes these annotations under the *Observanda* in the Baptismal Record: *Changes Made. See Affidavit.* [No correction by way of erasure or crossing out is to be made in the baptismal record -just the annotation].

5. The Affidavit and the Bishop's decree are to be kept in a separate file near the Parochial Books. They become part of the canonical documents of the parish.

6. The Parish Priest/Assistant Parish Priest now issues a corrected Baptismal Certificate.

B. *Another Procedure in Making Changes/Corrections in the Baptismal Register*

1. The Petitioner fills up the Petition Form for the Correction of Baptismal Entry. He/she should write all the errors that appear in the Baptismal Certificate in the appro-

priate space provided in the Petition Form, followed by the correct data written also in the appropriate space provided in the same Petition Form.

3. The Petitioner signs the Petition (A parent or guardian could sign for him/her if the Petitioner is a minor).

4. If the father or mother's name needs correction, then he or she, too, has to sign the Petition.

5. The Petition Form duly accomplished should be accompanied by the following documents:

a) Endorsement of the Parish Priest or Parochial Vicar. The Parish Priest or the Parochial Vicar should endorse the petition only after having examined the papers presented by the Petitioner and after having ascertained the truth from reliable sources. He should also administer the oath to tell the truth to the Petitioner and the witnesses.

b) Original Baptismal Certificate of the Petitioner.

c) Live-Birth Certificate of the Petitioner in both original and photocopy. If this has been registered late or in "red entry," school records should be submitted.

3. What to do when a Certificate of Baptism cannot be produced due to loss or destruction of records, or because the baptism may have not been recorded?

When a Certificate of Baptism cannot be produced for a variety of reasons, for instance, the records have been lost or destroyed or the baptism may have not been recorded, a *Certificate of Loss of Baptismal Record* may be issued.

However, a Certificate of Loss of Baptismal Record does not suffice to prove the fact of baptism: An *Affidavit on the Reception of Baptism* is normally required to prove that baptism has been conferred. On this regard, canon 876 states that "to prove that baptism has been conferred... it is sufficient to have either one unexceptionable witness, or, if the baptism was conferred upon an adult, the sworn testimony of the baptized person." The execution of the affidavit is to be done before the parish priest. [If the baptismal Certificate or the baptismal Affidavit is for marriage purposes'- a requirement for parties who are not baptized in the parish where the investigation is conducted or where the marriage is solemnized - it has to be issued within six months.]

Another thing that can be done when a Certificate of Baptism cannot be found is to proceed to *reconstructing the Baptismal Record*. Now, in reconstructing Baptismal records, the procedures given above should be followed with the following adaptations:

a. In cases where the Baptismal Registers were destroyed by fire, flood or other causes, a special Register decreed by the diocesan bishop should be made where reconstructed data could be entered.

b. In occasional cases where a record of baptism is inadvertently not entered in the Baptismal Register, the name of the baptized could be inserted/entered at an appropriate space on the page (perhaps at the bottom of the page) where the other baptismal entries of the same date were recorded with just the following notation: *Reconstructed. See Affidavit*. Otherwise a separate Baptismal Register should be made just for such reconstructions.

c. In case no document or witnesses can be found to attest to the veracity of the allegation of the petitioner, or the witnesses could no longer give the specific data like the dates, names of sponsors, etc., a reconstruction of Baptismal Document cannot be made. The parish priest can then just issue a Certificate of Loss of Baptismal Record.

4. What about the recording of a baptism administered in special situations (e.g., done not in the presence of the parish priest, in a hospital, in a private home or by a lay person...)?

Well, the proper thing to do in those cases is to as soon as possible notify the parish priest of the place so that he may register the baptism in the parish Baptismal Book. Such is in fact the advise given by the Code of Canon Law, which in canon 877 §1 states that "If baptism was administered neither by the parish priest nor in his presence, the minister of baptism, whoever that was, must notify the parish priest of the parish in which the baptism was administered, so that he may register the baptism in accordance with can. 877 §1."

This provision covers emergency celebrations of baptism and any baptism not conferred in the regular manner in the parish. This obligation to report the baptismal celebration falls on the chaplains of hospitals with permission to administer solemn baptisms and/or on all other ministers who administered the sacrament of baptism. The report, signed by the minister, is to be handed to the parish priest of the place where the baptism took place, and the information should include the usual basic data (name of the baptized person, of the father, the mother, place and date of birth, place of baptism, name

of sponsors, and name of the minister.) The reason or reasons why the baptism was performed in that special circumstance (e.g., danger of death, etc.) may be added.

Some curious related questions:

a) *Can baptism be administered in private homes?*

The law of the Church (can. 860 §1) gives the possibility that for a grave cause, the local Ordinary (General and Episcopal Vicars included) may permit that baptism may be celebrated in a private home. It is the local Ordinary himself who decides whether that grave cause is present in a given situation. Otherwise, the proper place for baptism is a church or oratory (c. 857 §1). The permission for baptism in a home is given only for individual cases. An oral permission would suffice, although a written document is preferable.

b) *Can Infant Baptism take place in a hospital?*

Canon 860 §2 deals with the possibility of celebrating baptism in a hospital. This is different from the administration of baptism by any person with the right intention in case of necessity (cf. c. 861 § 2). The administration of baptism in a hospital requires the authorization of the diocesan Bishop, and can be given on a regular and habitual basis. Concerning this practice, the *Rite of Baptism* (Introduction, no. 13) states that "care should always be taken that the parish priest is notified and that the parents are suitably prepared beforehand."

c) *May local Ordinaries depute a catechist or another lay person to baptize infants?*

The norm is that when an ordinary ordained minister is not available for the administration of the sacrament of baptism,

any suitable layperson (e.g. catechists, nurses, doctors...) may be deputed by the local Ordinary as minister of baptism, although in case of necessity, no express deputation is needed: right intention is the only requirement. Actually canon 861 §2 states that "if the ordinary minister is absent or impeded, a catechist or some other person deputed to this office by the local ordinary, may lawfully confer baptism; indeed, in a case of necessity, any person who has the requisite intention may do so." This appointment can be made for a term or for an unlimited period of time. The appointment must contain the words, "if the ordinary minister is absent or impeded." The local Ordinary may place other conditions on this faculty; e.g., 'only inside the church' or 'only after Sunday ceremonies conducted without a priest.'

Homiletic and Bibliarasal Pointers for September-October 2005

EFREN RIVERA, OP

September 4,2005 <> 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Readings (A) Ez 33:7-9; Rom 13:6-10; Mt 18:15-20

September 8: Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). ***Reconciliation within the Church*** <> ***The Liturgy turns to the "Discourse on the Church"*** (Mt 18). The Gospel Reading invites us to reflect on Christ's teachings about "Brotherly correction," which includes Christ's statement about the Power of the Church to bind and to loose (v. 15-18), and "Prayer in common" (v.19-20). If we only heed these teaching of Christ and put them into practice in our ecclesial life, then we will truly give witness to the presence of the Kingdom of God among us.

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

V. 15 "Go and tell (your brother) his fault between you and him alone." - Value of fraternal correction.

V. 17a "Tell the Church (the Christian community)." - Value of community action to remedy a particular need.

V. 17b "If he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector." <> This is a punishment, but not a vindictive one (like "a tooth for a tooth"; "your life to pay for another's life that you took"). It is a *curative / healing* punishment. When erring Christians realize that their life has become worse because of separation from the community, they might decide to rejoin. In that case, the community, after making sure of the penitent's sincerity, has to welcome him or her. - Value of curative or healing punishment.

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

- (V. 15) Have you ever done a successful fraternal correction?

- (V. 17) Has your community ever acted as community to correct an erring brother or sister? 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. - Some dioceses have set up procedures so that it will be easy for

priests to practice fraternal correction. Usually it is done during the monthly gathering, which has a happy atmosphere. Hopefully, all dioceses in our country will some day make the fraternal correction of priests a habit.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - Communists have championed the rights of workers while Christians lagged behind. But success has a way of creating a backlash. Sometimes the demands of workers have become unreasonable. Investors leave our country to do business in neighboring countries that have no labor unrest. Maybe some people have to back track or be more patient in seeking reforms.

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

REHABILITATED SINNER

A young man secretly misappropriated several millions of pesos from the business where he was employed. When the shortage was discovered, the senior partner called the young man into his office. Downcast, the young man thought he would be fired and sent to prison.

Asked by his boss whether he was guilty, the young man admitted his crime. Then the executive surprised him.

"If I keep you in your present position, can I trust you in the future?" he asked.

"Yes, sir, you surely can. I've learned my lesson," replied the astonished employee.

Being a good judge of character, the boss detected the repentant man's sincerity. "I'm not going to press charges and you can continue in your present responsibility," he said. Then he added, "I think you ought to know, however, that you are the second man in this company who succumbed to temptation but was shown mercy. I was the first. What you have done, I did. The mercy you are receiving, I received. It is only the grace of God that can keep us both from falling back to crime."

September 11, 2005 ◇ 24th Sunday of Ordinary Time
Readings (A) Sir 27:30-28:9; Rom 14:7-9; Mt 18:21-35

September 14: Triumph of the Cross

September 15: Our Lady of Sorrows

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). **Forgive your brother.** <> While last Sunday's Gospel Reading touched on the need of Christian offenders to listen to correction, today's Gospel Reading takes up the need of the offended member(s) to forgive.

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

V. 22 "Jesus answered (Peter), 'I say to you, forgive (your brother / sister) not seven times but seventy seven times.'" ◇ "Seven times" in Jewish idiom means many times. Jesus multiplies this by ten to teach his disciples that they must forgive *every time* a brother / sister who asks for forgiveness.

- Value of forgiving *whenever* an offending party asks for forgiveness. <> What if the offending party does not ask for forgiveness? Go an extra mile, and forgive him or her just the same (as Pope John Paul II did when he forgave the man who tried to assassinate him).

V. 27 "Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan." See also v. 33 "Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?" - Value of compassion, pity, mercy.

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

- (V. 22) Has your community forgiven an erring brother or sister more than two or three times?

- (V 27 & 33) Have you shown compassion/pity/mercy to any brother or sister of your community aside from forgiving him or her? 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. - Maybe it is time for us to forgive the bishops and priests in our history who have harmed our church.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - Let us seek reconciliation with the rebels of our society: the communists including the NPA, and the separatists (MILF).

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

MASONIC PUZZLE

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

"What is jtf" I asked him.

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

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

But the man could not see the light. He said, "You see, Father, I think it is OK to be a Mason and a good Catholic. I find nothing in the teachings of the Masons that is against Jesus Christ."

In answer, I said: "Masons are against the Catholic Church. They want to bring about the downfall of the Catholic Church. Anyone who is against the Church is also against Jesus Christ. You see, we read in the Bible that when Saul persecuted the Church, Jesus came from heaven to confront him, saying, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting" (Acts 9:5).

The Mason was more confused than ever. He said, "It will not be long now before I get to your door. Tell me what to do. Just this morning I got this booklet through the mail." He shows me a booklet bearing the title: "How-to Destroy the Catholic Church-The Basic Strategy."

Before getting off the car, I told the perplexed Mason-Legionary of Mary: "Do what Saul did in Acts ch. 9. Get off your horse. Humble yourself. Ask God to heal you from your blindness."

September 18,2005 ◇ **25th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Readings (A) Is 55:6-9; Phil 1:20c-24; Mt20:1-16a

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). ***Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard***. God chose us to be his special people, just as he chose Israel in the past. He does not owe us anything. We owe him everything, including our being chosen. Jesus originally addressed the parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard to the Pharisees who considered themselves to be the "first" in God's kingdom. It was meant to show them that God's justice is not measured by human standards (see Isaiah 55:6-9, the First Reading). One cannot enter into the kingdom (that is, the right relationship with God) on one's own merits, since^ it is a pure gift completely undeserved by the human being. It is God who saves. People do not save themselves. People just let God save them. Matthew, by placing the parable in its present context among the teachings directed to the Church, has pointed out that its lesson is also applicable to Christ's disciples. The laborers are no longer the Pharisees but the disciples. Nevertheless, the message is basically the same: being right with God is not a matter of human endeavor but of God's favor. One should be grateful for it and not boast about it. One should want to share it with others.

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

V. 4 "I will give you what is just." See also v. 13, "I am not cheating you." - Value of giving laborers a just wage.

V. 9 "When those who had started at about five o'clock (p.m.) came, each received the usual daily wage." See v. 15, "I am generous." - Value of such generosity as to give laborers more than they deserve.

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

- (V. 4) Have you given a just wage to your employees even though it had meant a lot of sacrifice on your part?
- (V. 9) Have you been a worker or employee who has benefited from the generosity of your employer? 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 watch out against having^a a superiority complex with regard to our Muslim brethren or those who follow indigenous traditional religion. We are God's chosen people not because we are better than others but because God wants us to be his cooperators in bringing his kingdom to others.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - Let us promote dialogue with the different religions and different cultures in our country.

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

THE BISHOP'S JEEP

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

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

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

This story modernizes the Parable of the "Workers Who Got Equal Pay for Most, More, Less, Lesser and Least Work."

September 25, 2005 <> 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings (A) Ez 18: 25-28; Phil 2:1-11 (or 2:1-5); Mt 21:28-32

National Seafarers' Sunday

September 28: St. Lorenzo Ruiz and companion martyrs

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). **Parable of the Two Sons.** This Sunday's parable conveys the message that Jesus preached from the beginning of his ministry: people must repent - be converted, undergo a change of heart - if they

want to enter the Kingdom of God. The chief priests and elders of the Jewish people thought that this message was fine. It was good that a prophet had come to tell sinners - the tax collectors, harlots, thieves - to obey God. Paradoxically, however, Jesus goes on to show that the invitation to repentance has been particularly directed to the leaders. In his parable of the Two Sons, the Jewish leaders are the son who said "yes" but disobeyed his father. Maybe some of us, Christians, have set aside our new life and have become like them too.

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

V. 29 "(The first son) said in reply, 'I won't (work at the vineyard),' but afterwards changed his mind and went." - Value of "*pagbabalik-loob*" or changing one's mind after introspection.

V. 31c "Tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you." - Value of doing what is necessary (repenting) to enter into the kingdom of God.

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

- (V. 29) Have you experience the relief or joy that comes from "*pagbabalik-loob*" (change of mind/heart) for' the better?

- (V. 31c) Has there been any event in your life that led you to experience "entering into the kingdom of heaven?" 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 remember that bishops and priests and religious Brothers and Sisters - not only lay people - need repentance or "*pagbabalik-loob*".

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - Let us remember that "moral re-armament" in our country will have to be led by elders rather than by the young generation.

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

BILL CLINTON'S DREAM

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

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

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

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

"*X repented about it already," Clinton answered.

"Maybe," St. Peter answered. "But that's not real META-NOIA. You repented only because you were pressured by

Congress and the American people. Besides, you repented only so that you could keep your job."

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

"OK," St. Peter said. "But now you go back to earth and join the Couples for Christ."

From the time of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, the proclamation of the Good News of the Kingdom of God has always begun with the call to repentance or METANOIA. This is not mere regret - what Filipinos call "*pagsisisi*." You regret something just because you see that you are the loser. METANOIA requires that you stop the evil you are doing, turn around to face God, and then walk toward him. It requires a thorough-going change of mind, heart and lifestyle out of a personal conviction that the way you have taken is not God's way.

October 2, 2005 <> 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Readings (A) Is 5:1-7; Phil 4:6-9; Mt 21: 33-43

October 5: St. Faustina Kowalska, Apostle of Divine Mercy

October 7: Our Lady of the Rosary

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). ***Parable of the Tenants who killed the Owner's Son.*** <> The vineyard is a famous symbol of Israel in the Old Testament's prophetic teachings. Jesus and Matthew, however, considerably modify the image. They

mean to tell us that whole human race is the Lord's vineyard. Those who work in it - the laborers (Mt 20:1-16), the sons (Mt 21:28-32) and the tenants (Mt 21:33-43) - compose the True Israel, the Church. The Greek word for "tenant" really means "gardener," a person who does not simply occupy the vineyard but works in it. Jesus emphasizes *personal responsibility*. The Church is not just a farm protected by God, it is *a community of workers who must work to produce fruit*. Thus, the parable as we read it today refers not just to the leaders of the people, who would be the tenants of the vineyard, but to the whole people, the whole Church, considered as individuals who must bear fruit.

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

V. 36 "Again he sent other servants, more numerous than the first ones... Finally, he sent his son." - Value of God's persistent calls to repentance.

V 41b "Lease his vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the proper times." - Value of being results oriented.

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

- (V. 36) Has God persistently called you to repentance?
- (V. 41b) After so many years in the Lord's service, do you think you have produced fruits of the Spirit? 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 produce more fruits of holiness.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - Let us be result-oriented, and let us aim for results that have lasting benefit. For example, if we are going to celebrate a fiesta, let us not just festoon our streets. Instead, let us improve the lighting or the drainage of the streets, or the garbage collection.

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

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

God expects us to produce the "fruits of the Spirit" (some of which are mentioned by St. Paul: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control - see Gal 5:23).

Being a good Christian goes beyond doing duties at home, in school, church and society. It requires the impression of the Christian character on us, just as a seal is impressed on wax. We must have the same *mind, heart and Spirit* that Jesus Christ has.

Christian society has to produce *transformed people*. Unfortunately, Christian school, colleges and universities sometimes concentrate in producing doctors, lawyers, businessmen and the like who are more successful in their careers than in bearing the "fruits of the Spirit." It is time for us to change this situation.

October 9

◇ 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings (A) Is 25:6-10a; Phil 4:12-14,19-20; Mt 22:1-14 or 22:1-10

Indigenous People's Sunday

Feast of La Naval de Manila

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). *Parable of the King's Wedding Banquet* <> Since the old Israel refused to believe the Gospel, the Kingdom (God's special love and care and the task of bringing these to the attention of people) has been taken away from it and given to another people, the Church. The episode about the wedding garment that guests at the wedding must have (not in the short form), is a warning to Church members that they must prove themselves worthy of their call by being faithful to a life according to Christ's Spirit. We can say that the Spirit of Love is the garment that a Christian person must wear.

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

V. 3 "He dispatched his servants to summon the invited guests to the feast." See also v. 4 and v. 9. - Value of doing everything for a successful wedding banquet.

V. 14 "Many are invited but few are chosen." ◇ In this saying of Jesus, "many" means "all," "everyone," while "few" means "not all." If 100 are the "many," 99 would be "few" because one is lacking. - Value of doing ALL that God requires to be saved.

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

- (V. 3) Did you ever have travails in preparing for a successful wedding?

- (V. 14) Good works are not needed BEFORE accepting Christ as one's Lord and Savior. But afterwards, moved by the Holy Spirit, one must do good works. 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 be a Church led by the Holy Spirit.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - Let us be persistent in pursuing our national goals for total human development. We continue to lag behind in Asia because we as a people lack the will to become a totally developed nation. Many countries that used to be less developed than us - like Korea, Malaysia, Thailand - have surged forward. Vietnam will surely overtake and go far ahead of us because the Vietnamese people are determined to emerge from underdevelopment.

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

CLOTHE YOURSELF WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

In today's Gospel reading, Jews and Christians are tested differently by God's invitation to his banquet. For the Jews the test is whether they will come or not. For the Gentiles,

the test is whether they will prove themselves worthy of the king's company or not. For them the symbolic test is whether or not they have taken the trouble to use a party garment.

Good works are not a kind of passport or visa for entering the Kingdom. All you need is faith in Jesus Christ. Accept Christ as your Lord and Savior. But once one is inside the Kingdom, one has to behave properly. Just as one who is admitted to the USA, one has to abide by the laws of the USA.

How do we behave properly in God's Kingdom? The secret is to live in the Spirit. Let the Holy Spirit guide you in everything you do. Surely, he will make your life fruitful in works of charity for your fellow human beings.

October 16,2005 ◇ 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Readings (A) Is 45:1,4-6; 1Th1:1-5b; Mt 22:15-21

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). *Give to Caesar and give to God.* <> Jesus' famous saying, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, but give to God what is God's" (Mt 22:21) is first of all a reminder that Christians must do their civic duties. They must pay taxes and indeed they are to be concerned about where these taxes go, namely, to socio-economic and cultural development projects for the good of all. Secondly, and more importantly, the saying teaches us that Christian worship is essentially *eucharistic* - *the grateful giving back to God of all that we are and all that we have* - because everything come from him and belong to him.

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

V. 21a "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's." - Value of complying with one's civic duties like paying taxes.

V. 21b "Give to God what is God's." - Value of recognizing that our being - made to the image and likeness of God - belongs to God.

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

- (V. 21a) Have you complied with civic duties like paying taxes "in a Christian way?"

- (V. 21b) Have you grown in spirituality because of meditating on having the image and likeness of God in yourself? Share your answer 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 teach people to have self-esteem because they have in themselves the image and likeness of God.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - Christians should be known as models for others in paying taxes to the government.

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

EHEM!

Christian Philippines has maintained its rating of being, for the past three years, the 11th most corrupt country in the world and second most corrupt in Asia, according to international studies. This cannot be dismissed as sensationalist journalism. The anecdotal data from experience as well as from the empirical records of various law enforcing agencies cry out for immediate and long lasting reform in our structures as well as in our values.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, in a 2003 Pastoral letter on graft and corruption, admits that in parish financial management, some Church members and leaders, through loose and even dishonest stewardship, stray from the path of righteousness and integrity.

One area of concern brought to our attention in today's gospel is the matter of paying taxes due to the government. How many institutions - including universities, colleges and schools - and businesses run by priests, brothers and sisters are cheating the government from taxes due to it?

It is time for us to make the necessary sacrifices to follow Christ's teaching: "Give to Caesar what belongs to-Caesar."

(We have borrowed our title from the book; *Ehem! A Manual for Deeping Involvement in Combatting Corruption*, second edition. Davao City: Research and publication Office, Ateneo de Davao University. - The main writer is Fr. Albert E. Alejo, S.J. - For more information and research materials, contact Ehem! Staff Roni Amorado 0917-448-5473.)

October 23,2005

◇ 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings (A) Ex 22:20-26; 1 Th 1:5c-10; Mt 22:34-40

World Mission Sunday

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). ***The Greatest Commandment.***

<> Christian doctrine can be reduced to one simple truth: all peoples are one big family cared for by one Father, namely, God. So also the Christian ethic can be reduced to one rule: take the love that was manifested in the life of Jesus Christ as the norm of your relationship to God and your fellow human beings. If your actions are inspired and guided by Christian Love, you are on the right track.

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

V. 37 "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." - Value of giving one's whole being to God.

V 39 "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." - Value of putting every human being (whatever his or her religion, color, culture) on par with oneself.

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

- (V 37) Have you ever found it difficult to obey this commandment?

- (V 39) Have you ever found it difficult to accept a poor person, a black person, an illiterate person, etc. as your

neighbor whom you have to love? 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. - Although all of us are bound to obey the commandment of loving God with total self-commitment, our sisters and brothers who enter religious life and make vows (of poverty, chastity and obedience) give witness to this. We have to encourage people to promote vocations to the religious life.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - We must totally extinguish any discrimination due to sex, color, creed or culture.

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

TRANSFORM SELF LOVE

The two commandments of love are alike not because of their formulation or because the intensity of the love that is required is the same for both. It is because they require the same kind of love, namely *agape*.

Agape is self-sacrificing and self-effacing love. Unfortunately, even people who say they are followers of Christ know erotic love and friendship love more than *agape*, the love that Jesus showed on the cross when he saved human-kind. To obey God's commandment of love, we have to

transform our self-love into a love that saves others, just as Jesus did. We have to ask Jesus to fill us with *agape*, his kind of love.

October 30, 2005

◇ 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings (A) Mai 1:14b - 2:2b, 8-10; 1 Th 2:7b-9,13; Mt 23:1-12

1. SUMMARY OF THE GOSPEL TEACHING (*Supplement to Bibliarasal Step Three*). *Christ's disciples must be humble servants.* <> The Pharisees were people who claimed that their religious observances have made them good and holy and very pleasing to God. But Jesus said they were deficient in goodness. Indeed, he forbade his disciples and the crowd to be like them. <> The Pharisees are the type of people who can exist in any religion, including our own Catholic religion. And the Catholic Church must admit that it has not been remarkable for heeding the warning not to use the titles "Teacher" and "Father" (see v. 8-9) and even an equivalent of "Rabbi" (see v. 7, literally "my great one"), in the title "Monsignor" (literally, "my lord").

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

V. 2-3 "The Scribes and Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses. Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example, for they preach but they do not practice." - Value of distinguishing between a teacher's teaching or authority, and his or her personal example of life which may be bad or defective.

V. 8-10 "You have but one Teacher... you have but one Father in heave... you have but one Master, the Christ." - Value of looking beyond the human channels to the One Source of all teaching, all paternity, all claim to superiority.

V. 11 "The greatest among you must be your servant." - Value of humble service to God and his people.

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

- (V. 8-10) Have you learned something good even from defective teachers?

- (V. 11) Have you known any superior who has done a menial task for you?

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. - Our seminaries must redouble their efforts to produce humble priests.

b) In relation to the Socio-Economic, Political and Cultural Life of Filipinos Today. - In spite of the restoration of democracy in our country through "EDSA 1," we must not seek to use "people power" every time we see defects or defective performance in our leaders.

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

"SERVUS SERVORUM DEI"

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was known as a church prelate who disciplined erring theologians when he was Prefect of the Vatican's Sacred Congregation on Doctrine and Faith. He was perceived as autocratic, proud, ambitious. When he became Pope, people close to him testified that he was actually a humble man who wanted Pope John Paul II to accept his resignation from his position of power at least two times, and who never dreamed to be Pope.

When he turned out to be choice of the cardinal electors for the office of Supreme Pontiff, he made it a point to recall that he has to be "Servus Servorum Dei" - servant of the servants of God.