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LEADING AND SERVING THROUGH THEOLOGY: 50 YEARS AFTER VATICAN II

Leading and Serving through Theology: 50 Years After Vatican II
GIUSEPPE CARDINAL VERSALDI, D.D.

The Call to New Evangelization: The Church in Asia in the Next 50 Years
ORLANDO B. CARDINAL QUEVEDO, O.M.I., D.D.

Testimonies of the Faithful
CATALINO G. ARÉVALO, S.J.
JUDETTE A. GALLARES, R.C.
CORY & NELSON VILLAFANIA

Summaries of the Round Table Discussions
PATRICK S. NOGOY, S.J.
SHERWIN Q. SANTOS

Loyola School of Theology and the Second Vatican Council
CATALINO G. ARÉVALO, S.J.

Theology Whose Heart is Mission
ANTONIO M. PERNIA, S.V.D.

The Dynamic Spiral of Mission Spirituality: Exploring Insights of Recent Popes
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JOJO M. FUNG, S.J.

Landas



LST International Theological Symposium
"Leading and Serving through Theology:
50 Years After Vatican II"

A Special Issue in Celebration of the
50th Anniversary of the
Loyola School of Theology

Landas

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Contents

Landas
Vol. 30, No. 1 (2016)

LST International Theological Symposium: "Leading and Serving through Theology: 50 Years After Vatican II"

1 *Welcome Address*
Jose Ramon T. Villarin, S.J.
President, Ateneo de Manila University

3 *Welcome Address*
Antonio F. Moreno, S.J.
Jesuit Provincial and LST Vice-Chancellor

5 *Greetings from the CBCP*
Roberto C. Mallari, D.D.
Bishop of San Jose de Nueva Ecija and Chairperson, Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education

9 *Leading and Serving through Theology: 50 Years After Vatican II*
Giuseppe Cardinal Versaldi, D.D.
Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education

27 *The Call to New Evangelization: The Church in Asia in the Next 50 Years*
Orlando B. Cardinal Quevedo, O.M.I., D.D.
Archbishop of Cotabato

43 *Testimony of the Faithful on Priesthood*
Catalino G. Arévalo, S.J.

51 *Testimony of the Faithful on Consecrated Life*
Judette A. Gallares, R.C.

57 *Testimony of the Faithful on Lay and Family Life*
Cory & Nelson Villafania

63 *Summary of the Round Table Discussions - 1*
Patrick S. Nogoy, S.J.

79 *Summary of the Round Table Discussions - 2*
Sherwin Q. Santos

93 *Loyola School of Theology and the Second Vatican Council*
Catalino G. Arévalo, S.J.

97 *Theology Whose Heart is Mission*
Antonio M. Pernia, S.V.D.

103 *The Dynamic Spiral of Mission Spirituality: Exploring Insights of Recent Popes*
James H. Kroeger, M.M.

119 *Teaching Theology: A Ministry with a Mystagogy*
Jojo M. Fung, S.J.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

This issue of *Landas* commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of Loyola School of Theology-Loyola House of Studies. In addition to scholarly articles, it contains messages, speeches, testimonials, and summaries of the round table discussions during the International Theological Symposium held last March 10–11 to celebrate the jubilee of Loyola School of Theology.

In his keynote address at the symposium, the Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education, Giuseppe Cardinal Versaldi, D.D. ("Leading and Serving through Theology: 50 Years After Vatican II") calls attention to the process of renewal ushered in by the Second Vatican Council which aimed to overcome the separation between the Church and modern sciences (culture):

> [O]ne of the reasons for this separation and, at times, conflict that cannot be grasped is the fact that, on the part of theology, there was a certain immobilism (rigidity) in the process of formulating the Christian message in order to adapt this formulation to the understanding of peoples in places and times of always changing human history.... This rigidity can be explained also by what a great theologian and epistemologist, the Jesuit Bernard Lonergan, calls "the neglected subject," that is, an approach to the truth which forgets that any judgment (also on God) is always a relationship between the knowing subject and the object known. "Veritas formaliter est in solo iudicio." (p. 12)

This immobilism spawned the separation of culture's evolution from religious thought. The secular culture became indifferent or

even antagonistic to religious truth, and the Church, for a time, was unable to move on from a defensive position.

"The historic novelty of Vatican Council II" according to Versaldi, "was essentially that of taking the Church towards a non-defensive and rather proactive dialogue with the world, without denying the difficulties that an anti-Christian culture created for the Church in modern times" (p. 13). Real and integral progress can be achieved "only if [theology] reconnects the dialogue between faith and reason, overcoming the errors on both sides" (p. 16).

> In this way, the *scientia Dei* does not remain an abstract and aesthetic knowledge, transmitted in a uniform and immutable way through a system of truth that does not have impact on the history of the world. On the contrary, it becomes that *scientia amoris* accessible to the more simple according to the words of Jesus who thanked his Father because He revealed himself more to the "childlike" than to the "wise and the learned." (p. 19)

In the second major address of the symposium, Orlando B. Cardinal Quevedo, O.M.I., D.D. ("The Call to New Evangelization: The Church in Asia in the Next 50 Years") focused on the challenges of evangelization in Asia. How does the Church in Asia understand "evangelization" or "New Evangelization"? For the Church in Asia, proclamation and dialogue are not two separate elements of evangelization; rather, "[p]roclamation and all other paths of evangelization are in the mode of dialogue" (p. 30). Far from diminishing the importance of the explicit proclamation of the Gospel, telling the story of Jesus Christ can be more effective if he is given, as it were, an "Asian face," i.e., images of Jesus intelligible to the ethos and culture of Asia, such as "the Teacher of Wisdom, the Healer, the Liberator, the Spiritual Guide, the Enlightened One, the Compassionate Friend of the Poor ..." (p. 31).

How does the Church in Asia want to evangelize? In telling the story of Jesus, the Asian Church must reach out to the people by means of a triple dialogue: 1) with cultures, 2) with Asia's

religious traditions, and 3) with the poor of Asia. According to Quevedo, "... telling the story of Jesus in dialogic mode should be gradual and progressive, employing a pedagogy that is evocative, not proselytizing but respectful and humble, guided certainly by the Spirit of God, while patiently waiting for God's grace for the final fruition of the Jesus story" (p. 36).

What will the Church in Asia do to evangelize in the next fifty years? Some of the challenges that the Asian Church has to face are the following: economic globalization, an emerging secular and materialist culture, poverty abetted by social injustice, the plight of migrants and refugees, the marginalization of indigenous peoples, religious intolerance, global warming and climate change, etc. To meet these challenges, the Asian bishops propose a "spirituality of communion" that has some of the following features: a deep personal encounter with Jesus Christ, a passion for mission, and dialogue as a mode of life and mission characterized by humble sensitivity to the hidden presence of God in the struggles of the poor, in the riches of people's cultures, and in the varieties of religious traditions.

In his address to the LST graduates last May, Antonio M. Pernia, S.V.D. ("Theology Whose Heart is Mission") called attention to the shift in demographics of the Christian population from the global North (Europe and North America) to the global South (South America, Africa, and South Asia). "It is therefore extremely important," he said, "that in the global South there be reliable institutes of research and reflection and world-class centers of study and teaching in theology and missiology." The Loyola School of Theology, he adds, "should see itself as one such institute and center in the global South. As such, LST must be both rooted in the classical tradition of theology and responsive to the missionary exigencies of the concrete context" (p. 98). The theology in LST must not just be "faith seeking understanding" but also "faith seeking expression" (*fides quaerens linguam*). The latter involves proclamation, inculturation, and dialogue with

the local communities and other religions. It is a theology whose heart is mission.

While a mission theology that arises from the Asian context still needs to be developed, Pernia suggests salient features of such a theology. First, there is *powerlessness*—because Christians are a minority in Asia, the missionary has to evangelize from a position of humility. "The only power he or she will need is the power of the Word and of the Spirit. And that power is the power of love, which is manifested in self-giving. The ultimate reason for humility in mission is that mission is God's and not ours" (p. 100–101). Second, there is *contemplation*—because of Asia's rich religious traditions and contemplative spirit, the missionary "will not be tempted to explain away the mystery of God by words and discursive language, but will try to lead people into the very mystery of God through signs and symbols in respectful dialogue" (p. 101). Finally, there is *stewardship*—because the Christian faith is seen in Asia as a Western importation, the missionary must share the faith "as a gift received from God through others, conscious of himself or herself as merely its steward or servant and never its owner or master" (p. 102). "The missionary, therefore, will respect the freedom of God who is present and active among the people, and respect as well the freedom of the people who are responding in their own unique way" (p. 102).

James H. Kroeger, M.M. ("The Dynamic Spiral of Mission Spirituality: Exploring Insights of Recent Popes") discusses the important elements of a dynamic spirituality for ministry and mission based on theological-pastoral themes found in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, *Redemptoris Missio*, *Ecclesia in Asia*, and *Evangelii Gaudium*. He systematizes them under four headings: 1) mystery—the aim of mission is to serve in the unfolding, the epiphany, of God's saving plan for the world (Paul's *mysterion*); 2) meditation—through prayer and contemplation, the evangelizer becomes deeply rooted in the *mysterion* so as to be filled with the Holy Spirit, "the principal agent of mission"; 3) ministry—the

call to be an evangelizer emerges from a life of faith and takes the form of a personal commitment within the loving plan of God; "faith-service" can be rendered in a variety of ways, all of which work toward bringing the Good News to people and transforming their lives from within through it; and 4) mission—any form of ministry or apostolate in the Church involves a vibrant sense of mission; an evangelizer must realize that his particular ministry, no matter how localized and limited, is a participation in the missionary activity of the universal Church. According to Kroeger, it "remains a paradoxical truth that the home parish or diocese is strengthened when it sends forth missioners—even out of an insufficient supply of personnel" (p. 115).

Jojo M. Fung, S.J. ("Teaching Theology: A Ministry with a Mystagogy") criticizes the enslavement of theology to a kind of positivistic rationalism that relativizes and sanitizes the religio-cultural worldview of the common people. He also criticizes an exaggerated dualism that separates humankind from the cosmos and alienates the creature from the Creator, making the latter so distant and inaccessible. Theology must be grounded on bedrock mysticism, i.e., it must be rooted in a personal encounter with and experience of God so that its articulation would resonate with people who have already been touched by God in their lives. Fung thus proposes a ministry of teaching theology that involves "a mystagogy in which the lecturer guides the *formandi* in a contemplation of placing oneself in God's triune presence, becoming attentive to God's voice and the deepest passion, to the burning issues and challenges in the *formandi*'s heart" (p. 128).

As we now celebrate the fiftieth year of Loyola School of Theology, it is important to recall what Horacio de la Costa, S.J., then Jesuit Provincial, said at its inauguration:

> No doubt, men will tell us why they do not believe or why they believed before but do not any longer. And when they do tell us, we must be able to understand them. This is the crucial, the urgent need. We must be able to understand not only what they say, but

> what they mean but cannot say. For they will tell us in the language of modern science and technology; they will tell us in the language of the new psychological and behavioral disciplines .... The burden of this task of understanding, loving and saving lies on all of us .... This is a tremendous task. How shall a man train himself for it? This house was built to create the conditions in which such a man, given the dedication and the grace, may undergo such training with a measure of success.[1]

Thus, when the Jesuits decided to establish the school of theology inside the campus of the Ateneo de Manila University, they were keenly aware of the importance of studying theology within a university milieu where other disciplines are studied and discussed.

Today, the Loyola School of Theology continues to prepare its students to face the challenges of a contemporary society that has become secularized, multicultural, and multidisciplinary in its outlook. In addition to being affiliated with the university, LST has been enriched by its close collaboration with other institutes located on campus, such as the Center for Family Ministries (CEFAM), the Center of Ignatian Spirituality (CIS), the Emmaus Center for Psycho-Spiritual Formation, Jesuit Communications (JESCOM), and the East Asian Pastoral Institute (EAPI). Students have access to the Ralph Gehring Library, one of the finest theological libraries in Asia, as well as to the university's own Rizal Library.

If enrollment is a measure of success, LST has the numbers to prove it—a total of 464 students were enrolled this school year, one third of whom are from abroad, mostly from Asia, Africa, and Latin America where Christian churches are flourishing and experiencing a "new Pentecost." Moreover, while the bulk of its students (about half) are studying for the priesthood, LST has also drawn both men and women as lay students. The school

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[1]Unpublished address of Horacio de la Costa, S.J., on the occasion of the inauguration and blessing of the Loyola House of Studies (Quezon City, Philippines: March 13, 1966).

offers both ecclesiastical and civil degree programs that cater to the needs of emerging churches. Its graduates have become leaders and administrators of dioceses, missionaries and parish priests, professors and formators in seminaries, theology teachers in universities and colleges, and family and marriage counselors, as well as spiritual directors and retreat givers, among others.

As more and more international students enroll in the school, LST—in its vision and mission statement—"aspires to be a leading Catholic center of theological and ministerial formation in Asia, working to realize a believing and praying Church that serves humanity and collaborates with diverse cultural and religious traditions."[2] The school has embarked on a program to make the content as well as the pedagogy of theology more contextual ("Asian") yet sensitive to the issues and concerns of the universal Church.

Felipe Fruto Ll. Ramirez, S.J.

[2]Available at http://www.lst.edu/about-us/vision-a-mission.

Landas 30:1 (2016) 1–2

WELCOME ADDRESS*

Jose Ramon T. Villarin, S.J.
President, Ateneo de Manila University

His Eminence Giuseppe Cardinal Versaldi, Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education; His Excellency Honesto Ongtioco, Bishop of the Diocese of Cubao; Rev. Fr. José Quilongquilong of the Society of Jesus, President of Loyola School of Theology; my brothers and sisters in Christ, good afternoon.

On behalf of the Ateneo de Manila University, I warmly welcome Cardinal Versaldi to the campus that is shared by four Catholic education and formation institutions. We welcome his eminence as well to the Ateneo Church of the Gesù, named after the Society of Jesus' mother church in Rome.

We are deeply grateful to Cardinal Versaldi for generously sharing his time and the wealth of his experience and expertise with us in the theology symposium organized by the Loyola School of Theology.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate once again the Loyola School of Theology on its golden jubilee, and to thank them for organizing the symposium which will benefit the faculty of

*Delivered at the liturgical reception for His Eminence Giuseppe Cardinal Versaldi, D.D. (Church of the Gesù, Ateneo de Manila University: March 9, 2016).

the Ateneo de Manila, our students, and the Catholic Church in the Philippines as well.

In the spirit of Ignatius of Loyola who exhorts us in *omnibus amare et servire Domino*, to love and serve the Lord in all things, we take the Cardinal's visit and the jubilee of the Loyola School of Theology as an opportune and gracious time to revisit, deepen, and fortify our shared mission as Catholic educators and formators fifty years after the closing of the Second Vatican Council.

It is our hope and prayer that these days with Cardinal Versaldi, Cardinal Quevedo, with some of the best theologians in our communities, and with our other companions in the mission be days marked by solidarity and inspiration. May our gathering during these days serve to strengthen our vocation. May it deepen our love and service of the Lord, confirming us in our commitment to learn and teach, to form others and our very selves, to spread the joy of the Word, *ad majorem Dei gloriam.*

Landas 30:1 (2016) 3–4

WELCOME ADDRESS*

Antonio F. Moreno, S.J.
Jesuit Provincial and LST Vice-Chancellor

His Eminence, Giuseppe Cardinal Versaldi, Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education and our keynote speaker; His Eminence, Orlando Cardinal Quevedo, Archbishop of Cotabato; His Excellency, Most Reverend Giuseppe Pinto, Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines; His Excellency, Most Reverend Roberto Mallari, Bishop of San José Nueva Ecija; Very Reverend Fr. Gerard Timoner III, Prior Provincial of the Dominican Province of the Philippines; Reverend Fr. José Quilongquilong, President of Loyola School of Theology; Reverend Fathers, Brothers and Sisters, friends, a very pleasant good morning to all.

We waited for half a century for this great event to happen. I warmly welcome you all to this International Theological Symposium in celebration of the Golden Jubilee of Loyola School of Theology (LST) in this Holy Year of Mercy. I especially welcome Cardinal Versaldi. I would like to thank most profoundly, His Eminence, for taking time out and gracing this occasion.

*Delivered on the first day of the LST International Theological Symposium (Henry Lee Irwin Theater, Ateneo de Manila University: March 10, 2016).

Thank you LST community, led by Fr. Quilongquilong, for bringing us all together in this happy event.

Today we are deeply grateful to the Lord for Loyola School of Theology's fifty years of leading and serving through theology. We thank the many people who served as trustees, professors, administrators, staff, friends, and benefactors who labored selflessly for this institution. We thank the cardinals, bishops, priests, religious, and lay people who graduated from this institution and have become fitting instruments in the service of God and the Church.

We have come a long way, thanks to the mercies of the Lord. We were initially a small school of fifteen students, but now we have 464 students coming from numerous religious congregations and dioceses. We started as a theologate mainly for Jesuit scholastics, Filipino seminarians, and a few religious formands, but now a third of our students, including lay people, come from 36 countries. We were an affiliate of Fu Jen University in Taipei, but now some theologates are applying to become affiliates of LST. We were initially and predominantly a teaching institution, but now we see a growing interest in research and the generation of new theological reflections that inform our leadership in, and service to, the Church.

In the end, however, it is not all about our achievements and successes that count, but the mercies of the Lord that kept LST going despite the many challenges. We have nothing to boast about. We are just mystified by the graciousness of God. We seek nothing else but the glory of God.

Congratulations, Loyola School of Theology! May God bless us all in these days of the symposium.

Thank you all.

Landas 30:1 (2016) 5–8

GREETINGS FROM THE CBCP*

Roberto C. Mallari, D.D.
Bishop of San Jose de Nueva Ecija and Chairperson,
Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education

Your Eminence, Giuseppe Cardinal Versaldi, Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education; your Eminence, Orlando Cardinal Quevedo, Archbishop of Cotabato, Chairman of the Episcopal Commission on the Doctrine of the Faith; your Excellency, Most Rev. Giuseppe Pinto, Papal Nuncio to the Philippines; the president of the Loyola School of Theology, the Very Rev. Jose V. C. Quilongquilong of the Society of Jesus; distinguished members of the academic community of the Loyola School of Theology and Loyola House of Studies, my brothers and sisters in the Lord, especially our dearest students: praise be Jesus Christ, now and forever!

I greet all of you with a warm embrace in the name of my brother bishops of the Conference, in particular, the Episcopal Commission on Catechesis and Catholic Education.

Your Eminence Giuseppe Cardinal Versaldi, your visit in our country and Church is most auspicious! It is thus very favorable and encouraging. We see this once again as a ray of light emanating from the See of Peter. The visit of Pope Francis last year continues to inspire us even up to this day.

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*Delivered on the first day of the LST International Theological Symposium (Henry Lee Irwin Theater, Ateneo de Manila University: March 10, 2016).

The year 2016 is a blessed year. It is not only the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy but also a year dedicated by the Church in the Philippines as the Year of the Eucharist and the Family.

The Pastoral Letter issued by the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines to celebrate the year created a beautiful tapestry under the theme "On Bended Knees." That as a nation and Church, we need to renew our faith "on bended knees." That "on bended knees" we are able to ask forgiveness for our faults and offenses. That "on bended knees" we are able to adore Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament. That "on bended knees" we are able to see Jesus and serve Him in one another, especially the poor, through our engagement in the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

It is also a special year for Catholic education in our country. The association of Catholic schools known as the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) is celebrating its 75th year of foundation. Borne out of the heart of a bishop, the Most Rev. Michael O'Doherty of Manila, the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines has created communion and impelled schools to collective mission in our country.

We are on holy ground! Because we are in a school, in a university where the encounter with Jesus who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life happens everyday. It is in this place, like so many other schools, colleges, and universities in the country, where engagement to learning and dialogue of life and faith takes place. There are more than 1,200 Catholic schools, colleges, and universities in our country today. They are owned and administered by dioceses and religious institutes and congregations.

And with pride and joy, I say with my brother bishops in this august body

- that the Catholic schools have been a sure and reliable agent of evangelization; it is in schools that systematic and programmed instruction in the faith happens;

- that the Catholic schools have provided quality education while relying on their own resources; when government and public schools were yet wanting, Catholic schools were centers of learning in the islands;
- that the Catholic schools have been custodians and promoters of music, arts, and culture; they have been depositories of our rich tradition;
- that the Catholic schools have been extended arms of the Church as they opened their doors to the marginalized: the handicapped, the poor, the orphans, and the out of school youth;
- that the Catholic schools have been a ready support to the advocacies of the Church;
- that the Catholic schools have been a ready resource in times of calamities and tragedies.

We reaffirm the validity and the necessity of our Catholic schools, for what will the Philippines be without the Catholic schools?

Moreover, let it be said that the heart of Catholic education is catechesis, the transmission of the Christian Faith to the young people of our country. After all, in the spirit of the New Evangelization, the encounter with Jesus is the starting point for an effective and worthwhile Christian education in our schools. While excellence is priority for a school, the pursuit for excellence is transformed by a commitment to make saints out of our students.

We have produced the best graduates in our schools. We hope that we can form future saints … "beatifiable" and "canonizable" men and women for others, achievers for God and country!

The Pastoral Letter of the bishops' conference in 2012 commemorating four hundred years of Catholic education in the country illustrates these challenges and gains of Catholic education.

Your Eminence Giuseppe Cardinal Versaldi, my deep and humble gratitude for your visit. Please give the Holy Father our warm greeting of love and fidelity. Thank you and good morning!

Landas 30:1 (2016) 9–26

LEADING AND SERVING THROUGH THEOLOGY

50 Years After Vatican II*

Giuseppe Cardinal Versaldi, D.D.
Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education

It is with pleasure that I accepted this invitation to address the academic community of Loyola School of Theology on the occasion of its 50th Founding Anniversary, and those who have come to this symposium, and to join the Faculty's celebration.

Fifty years ago, on 12 July 1965, this institution was established as a house of studies for Jesuits in the Philippines and Southeast Asia, which also extended its services to seminarians of other religious congregations.

After the Second Vatican Council, and as encouraged by the former Superior General Fr. Pedro Arrupe and by Pope Paul VI in the very important task that Jesuits have always been trusted to do in priestly formation, the founding fathers steered the institution toward training future ministers of the Church according to the teachings of the Council.

But it also admitted women religious as early as 1968. By March 28, 1972, the institution adopted its current name, Loyola

*Keynote address delivered on the first day of the LST International Theological Symposium (Henry Lee Irwin Theater, Ateneo de Manila University: March 10, 2016).

School of Theology, or LST, as it is popularly referred to. The first lay student was admitted in 1974.

Twenty years after Loyola School of Theology's foundation, the Congregation for Catholic Education approved the affiliation of the theological studies of LST with the Faculty of Theology of Fu Jen Catholic University in Taipei for the granting of the First Cycle Ecclesiastical degree in Theology. A year before its 25th anniversary in 1989, the Loyola School of Theology's academic collaboration with Fu Jen Catholic University was raised to an aggregation, allowing its students to pursue also the Second Cycle Ecclesiastical degree or Licentiate in Theology. Again, five years later, another stride was achieved in order to give Loyola School of Theology greater responsibility and service in the Church. In 1999, the Congregation for Catholic Education established LST as an autonomous Ecclesiastical Faculty of Theology, with the authority to grant also the terminal degree in this discipline.

Through the years, the Faculty has labored to provide an integral formation for priests which seeks to attune academic or theological training with pastoral realities. However, inspired by the Second Vatican Council and by the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (1991) in the renewed understanding of the Church and in building participatory communities of believers, LST widened its services to include the formation of religious and lay leaders in fields closely related to the transmission of the faith. Lay empowerment and new evangelization are some of the pathways taken by the Faculty in their vision to be a leading Catholic center for theological and ministerial formation in Asia, for the building of a believing and praying Church at the service of humanity, ready to face the challenges of collaborating with a plurality of religious and cultural diversities in this region.

As it embarks toward this new horizon, Loyola School of Theology has embraced the three-fold mission grounded on the ideals of St. Ignatius, defined by Pope Francis, and specifically given to it by the present Jesuit Superior General as its compass: Dialogue, Discernment, and Frontier.

1. Theology as Light for the World (Leading through Theology)

In his address at the solemn opening of the Second Vatican Council, St. John XXIII clearly affirmed that the Council "wants to transmit the entire, not diminished, not distorted Catholic doctrine,"[1] but he immediately added in his message that "our duty is not only to guard this precious treasure, as if we were concerned only with antiquity, but working hard and without fear, we must continue the work that our age demands, continuing the path that the Church has traveled for almost twenty centuries."[2] He, therefore, asserts the value of Tradition. However, he clarifies that the mission of the Church cannot be limited to simple repetition of traditional doctrine. But the renewal, understood as a doctrinal study expressed in a language suitable to be understood by people of all times, belongs to Tradition because

> it is necessary that the same doctrine be examined more extensively so that minds might be more fully imbued and informed, as all sincere supporters of Christian, catholic, and apostolic truth earnestly hope; it is necessary that this sure and immutable doctrine, to which [we] must pay a loyal assent, be deepened and given exposition in ways required by our times.[3]

The Supreme Pontiff substantiated this statement, enunciating a principle that became classic: "One thing, in fact, is the *depositum fidei*, or the truths that are contained in our venerable doctrine, another is the way in which these are proclaimed, but always in the same sense and in the same meaning."[4]

A process of renewal was thus encouraged also in the field of theology, which is aimed at overcoming a now historic separation

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[1]Address of John XXIII at the Solemn Opening of the Second Vatican Council (October 11, 1962), n. 6.2.

[2]Address of John XXIII, n. 6.3.

[3]Address of John XXIII, n. 6.5.

[4]Address of John XXIII, n. 6.5.

between the Church and modern sciences (culture), as the Conciliar Fathers underlined when they said that: "Although the Church has contributed much to the development of culture, experience shows that, for circumstantial reasons, it is sometimes difficult to harmonize culture with Christian teaching."[5] And one of the reasons for this separation and, at times, conflict that cannot be grasped is the fact that, on the part of theology, there was a certain immobilism (rigidity) in the process of formulating the Christian message in order to adapt this formulation to the understanding of peoples in places and times of always changing human history—an immobilism that has transformed itself into a mechanical repetition of the great tradition handed down, however, beholden to historical circumstances in which it was systematized. This rigidity can be explained also by what a great theologian and epistemologist, the Jesuit Bernard Lonergan, calls "the neglected subject," that is, an approach to the truth which forgets that any judgment (also on God) is always a relationship between the knowing subject and the object known. "Veritas formaliter est in solo iudicio."

Objectifying the truth in order to understand and systematize it into categories and abstract concepts, while forgetting the process of cognition that has taken place in the knowing subject, has led to serious consequences. According to the distinguished author:

> The neglected subject, then, leads to the truncated subject, to the subject that does not know himself and so unduly impoverishes his account of human knowledge. He condemns himself to an anti-historical immobilism, to an excessively jejune conjunction between abstract concepts and sensible presentations, and to ignorance of the proleptic and utterly concrete character of the notion of being.[6]

On the other hand, among the "contingent reasons," which the conciliar text mentions, is a certain need to consider also the attack that modern culture (thought) has done to the essence of Christianity

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[5]Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et spes* (1965), 62.

[6]Bernard Lonergan, *A Second Collection* (London: 1974), 75.

in the name of reason and science—calling for the end of religion in the name of the light of reason. But there is a correlation of circular causality between these two factors: immobilism of the theological formulation has favored the separation of culture's historic evolution, and the opposition of this to religious thought has encouraged the defensive position of the Church. One must admit that, for a time, the Church was not able to move on from this defensive position.

The historic novelty of Vatican Council II was essentially that of taking the Church towards a non-defensive and rather proactive dialogue with the world, without denying the difficulties that an anti-Christian culture created for the Church in modern times. Thus, the Council Fathers wrote in the quoted text of the Constitution *Gaudium et spes*: "These difficulties do not necessarily harm the life of faith, rather they can stimulate the mind to a deeper and more accurate understanding of the faith. The recent studies and findings of science, history and philosophy raise new questions which affect life and which demand new theological investigations."[7] And here, the Council Fathers take up the introductory message of the Pope with a clear call to theologians:

> Furthermore, theologians, within the requirements and methods proper to theology, are invited to seek continually for more suitable ways of communicating doctrine to the men of their times; for the deposit of Faith or the truths are one thing and the manner in which they are enunciated, in the same meaning and understanding, is another.[8]

It is certainly observable in the post-conciliar history that this invitation was positively welcomed by many theologians and scholars, although there have been exaggerations that, in turn, have caused regressions in the expected renewal desired by Vatican Council II. Between these extremes, as pointed out previously by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger in his precious and still relevant work *Introduction to Christianity* (Brescia, 2000), the failed attempt of a certain theology to borrow directly from worldly categories, especially from

[7] *Gaudium et spes* 62.

[8] *Gaudium et spes* 62.

the Marxist ideology, should certainly be remembered. Such categories could not reconcile the Gospel message with the ideology's vision of the world and human society, notwithstanding some common concerns it shares with Christianity, like the question on the poor victims of injustice. Without prejudice to the good intentions and the laudable goal, Ratzinger emphasized the methodological flaw of this approach in which, instead of expressing the genuine integral salvation message brought by Jesus of the Gospels in a new language suitable to the changed historical conditions, it adopted an ideology that excluded the transcendent level of salvation, confining the message of salvation to liberation achievable by political means alone, even through a revolution. Cardinal Ratzinger wrote:

> The primacy of practice and economy means, first of all, the impossibility of including God in the category of "practical"…. The "Reality" that it needed to recognize was only the subject of historical event, which was necessary to penetrate and to direct to the right target, transforming it with instruments created specifically for the purpose, without excluding, depending upon the need, violence. From this point of view, it became necessary to set aside the question about God, outside the scope of the practical and the sphere of reality, in order to have the freedom of achieving the most important goals.[9]

In this context, the historical figure of Jesus was reduced to a symbol of all the persecuted—their spokesperson, without any reference to his divinity, and with his mission totally losing its supernatural dimension. In the above-cited work and, above all, later with his papal teaching, Ratzinger advocated a return of theology to its mission of fostering dialogue between faith and reason, overcoming the concept of a faith that is disembodied from history, which imposes itself abstractly and uniformly to all cultures as well as surmounting the idea of a faith that reduces itself to practical politics. He said, and I would like to recall it here, that one

> thing is clear now: the mystical dimension of the concept of God, which comes to us from the religions of Asia in [an] appealing way, must distinguish clearly also our thinking and our faith. God became

[9]Joseph Ratzinger, *Introduzione al Cristianesimo* (Brescia: 2000), saggio introduttivo.

> tangible in Christ and, in this way, also His mystery is deepened. God is always infinitely greater than any of our definition[s] and our every attempt to give a picture or a name.[10]

However, he continues, right through the darkness of mystery appears also the brightness of God who is the *Logos*, that is, the meaning or significance of the world created and redeemed in Christ: "The world comes from reason and this reason is a person, love: and this love is the message of the biblical faith in God. Reason can speak about God, indeed it must speak about God, if it does not want to amputate itself."[11] According to this perspective, God is still the protagonist in human history:

> Then, and only then, God is not only a mere past, but He is present among men, [He is] our contemporary in our today. Therefore, and I am absolutely convinced, a renewal of Christology must have the courage to conceive Christ in all his grandeur just as the four Gospels, taken together, present him, in their tense unity.[12]

His writings and his Papal magisterium were a great contribution in this sense, such as when he said that the

> West has long been endangered by this aversion to the questions which underlie its rationality, and can only suffer great harm thereby. The courage to engage the whole breadth of reason, and not the denial of its grandeur—this is the programme with which a theology grounded in Biblical faith enters into the debates of our time. "Not to act reasonably, not to act with *logos*, is contrary to the nature of God," said Manuel II, according to his Christian understanding of God, in response to his Persian interlocutor. It is to this great *logos*, to this breadth of reason, that we invite our partners in the dialogue of cultures. To rediscover it constantly is the great task of the university.[13]

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[10]Ratzinger, *Introduzione al Cristianesimo*, saggio introduttivo.

[11]Ratzinger, *Introduzione al Cristianesimo*, saggio introduttivo.

[12]Ratzinger, *Introduzione al Cristianesimo*, saggio introduttivo.

[13]Benedict XVI, *Apostolic Journey to München, Altötting and Regensburg: Meeting with the Representatives of Science in the Aula Magna of the University of Regensburg* (September 12, 2006).

Therefore, the real integral progress, also including that of the sciences, is possible only if it reconnects the dialogue between faith and reason, overcoming the errors on both sides. The same Benedict XVI strongly reaffirmed:

> Only thus do we become capable of that genuine dialogue of cultures and religions so urgently needed today. In the Western world it is widely held that only positivistic reason and the forms of philosophy based on it are universally valid. Yet the world's profoundly religious cultures see this exclusion of the divine from the universality of reason as an attack on their most profound convictions. A reason which is deaf to the divine and which relegates religion into the realm of subcultures is incapable of entering into the dialogue of cultures. At the same time, as I have attempted to show, modern scientific reason with its intrinsically Platonic element bears within itself a question which points beyond itself and beyond the possibilities of its methodology. Modern scientific reason quite simply has to accept the rational structure of matter and the correspondence between our spirit and the prevailing rational structures of nature as a given, on which its methodology has to be based. Yet the question why this has to be so is a real question, and one which has to be remanded by the natural sciences to other modes and planes of thought—to philosophy and theology. For philosophy and, albeit in a different way, for theology, listening to the great experiences and insights of the religious traditions of humanity, and those of the Christian faith in particular, is a source of knowledge, and to ignore it would be an unacceptable restriction of our listening and responding.[14]

It is precisely on this rational plane that the challenge concerning modern culture occurs with an invitation to a fundamental option or conversion of the reductionist thinking of scientific positivism. It is what Lonergan calls "intellectual conversion," with which what wins is a tenacious and misleading myth that "knowing is similar to the looking, objectivity consists of seeing what is to be viewed and in not seeing what does not exist, [and] the real is what is out there now and which one must look at."[15] Staying only in the world of

[14]Benedict XVI, *Apostolic Journey to München, Altötting and Regensburg.*

[15]"… il conoscere è simile al guardare, l'oggettività consiste nel vedere ciò che è da vedere e nel non vedere ciò che non c'è, il reale è quello che è fuori là

sensitive immediacy is tantamount to neglecting the world mediated by meaning, which is not just limited to looking at the visible but experiences, understands, judges, and believes in a process of personal and communitarian knowledge. Without this intellectual conversion, opening to faith in the transcendent becomes difficult, as Cardinal Ratzinger explains in the above-cited work that to

> believe means to have decided that in the very heart of human existence there is a point, which cannot be nourished and sustained by the visible and tangible, but instead one encounters in the unseen, so that the latter becomes almost tangible, presenting itself as an inherent necessity in its very existence …. Faith is actually the conversion … in which man discovers himself chasing an illusion if he throws himself solely at the mercy of the perceptible.[16]

The Magisterium of Pope Francis goes in the same direction, albeit with different emphasis, when he points out in his programmatic encyclical *Evangelii gaudium* the essential aspects of the Church's mission in the world today. Recalling the above-cited introductory address to the Second Vatican Council and distinguishing between the substance and the formulation of Christian teaching, Pope Francis says that "vast and rapid cultural changes demand that we constantly seek ways of expressing unchanging truths in a language which brings out their abiding newness"[17] to avoid running the risk that, in order to be faithful to one formulation of the truth, we no longer transmit the substance of the Gospel that, as St. John Paul II said, can be expressed in a multifaceted way. As a matter of fact, "the renewal of these forms of expression becomes necessary for the sake of transmitting to the people of today the Gospel message in its unchanging meaning."[18] Pope Francis appeals to the constant discernment that the Church must also work on in evaluating its own practices that are not directly related

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ora e al quale si deve guardare" (Bernard Lonergan, *Il Metodo in teologia* [Brescia: 1975], 254).

[16]Ratzinger, *Introduzione al Cristianesimo*, 21–22.

[17]Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* (2013), 41.

[18]John Paul II, *Ut unum sint* (1995), 19.

to the core of the Gospel. Even though "[these] have deep historical roots, [they] are no longer properly understood and appreciated. Some of these customs may be beautiful, but they no longer serve as means of communicating the Gospel."[19] Hence, there is the invitation to return to the "heart of the Gospel," avoiding the risk of communicating a message that is "distorted or reduced to some of its secondary aspects."[20] There is the necessity to concentrate on and always start from the essential core of the Gospel message:

> All revealed truths derive from the same divine source and are to be believed with the same faith, yet some of them are more important for giving direct expression to the heart of the Gospel. In this basic core, what shines forth is the beauty of the saving love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ who died and rose from the dead.[21]

Only by keeping this basic core in the message transmitted will we give the other truths meaning and, above all, will we make Christian ethics appear not as a "form of stoicism" or "a catalogue of sins and faults," but as a loving response to the "God of love who saves us," evading the risk that the edifice of the Church's moral teaching becomes "a house of cards" which will lead the Christian message to "run the risk of losing its freshness and … cease to have 'the fragrance of the Gospel'."[22]

In this context, the theological science also takes on an important part to play in the Church of our day as in the past because, using reason as a tool to understand the God who reveals himself (*fides quaerens intellectum*), one can, on the one hand, restore hope to a culture that, after exalting the light of reason as the path of progress, finds itself distrustful in the face of resulting setbacks and contradictions. And, on the other hand, through a more rigorous and courageous search for the substance of the message revealed and embodied in

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[19]Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* 43.

[20]Cf. Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* 34.

[21]Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* 36.

[22]Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* 39.

the history of salvation, the Church can still carry out its mission of announcing and of giving witness to the merciful love of God, the Creator and Redeemer of the whole of humanity, which is immersed in difficulties and weaknesses. By knowing more and more the God who reveals himself, theology as *scientia Dei* will discover that "God is love," and that "in this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins."[23] In this way, the *scientia Dei* does not remain an abstract and aesthetic knowledge, transmitted in a uniform and immutable way through a system of truth that does not have impact on the history of the world. On the contrary, it becomes that *scientia amoris* accessible to the more simple according to the words of Jesus who thanked his Father because He revealed himself more to the "childlike" than to the "wise and the learned."[24] For this, it is not surprising that St. Therese of Lisieux was declared a Doctor of the Church. St. Therese was not educated in the sacred sciences, but she was able to intuit the core of Revelation, which is precisely the gratuitous, unconditional, and infinite love of God for all his creatures, so much so that she was able to write:

> To me He has granted His infinite Mercy, and through it I contemplate and adore the other divine perfections! All of these perfections appear to be resplendent with love, even His Justice (and perhaps this even more so than the others) seems to me clothed in love. What a sweet joy it is to think that God is Just, that is, He takes into account our weakness, that He is perfectly aware of our fragile nature. What should I fear then? Ah! must not the infinitely just God, who deigns to pardon the faults of the prodigal son with so much kindness, be just also toward me who "am with Him always?"[25]

[23]1 John 4:9–10.

[24]Matthew 11:25.

[25]Cf. Therese of Lisieux, *The Story of a Soul: The Autobiography of St. Therese of Lisieux*.

An intuition that, on its own, resolves many questions still present in the Church (and even among theologians!) about the compatibility between the justice and mercy of God.

2. Theology at the Service of the Church's Mission in the World (Serving through Theology)

Confirming its practicability and reaffirming the value that theology, as a science, plays in the field of knowledge and in responding to the deepest questions of the human mind, the role of this sacred science is well noted and reinforced within the one mission of the Church in the world, that is, to proclaim and to give testimony to the message of salvation fully fulfilled in Christ Jesus.

Theologians are, first of all, sons and daughters of the Church. As such, they are called to proclaim the Gospel, taking into account not only the uniqueness of peoples but also the totality of their cultures. Pope Francis reaffirmed the charism and vocation of theologians when he said that

> the Church, in her commitment to evangelization, appreciates and encourages the charism of theologians and their scholarly efforts to advance dialogue with the world of cultures and sciences. I call on theologians to carry out this service as part of the Church's saving mission. In doing so, however, they must always remember that the Church and theology exist to evangelize, and not be content with a desk-bound theology.[26]

The service of theologians is a part of a larger framework of the Church's mission. Therefore, the invitation of Pope Francis calls for a generous response from those who have engaged themselves in higher studies of the sacred science, so that they may involve themselves always and evermore deeply in this mission of the Church "which is to proclaim the good news to people of every nation, tribe, people and language (cf. Mt. 28:18–20; Rev. 7:9)," and, by enabling them to

[26]Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* 133.

hear the voice of the one Lord, to gather them all into one flock with one shepherd (cf. Jn. 10:16).[27]

This involvement requires, in particular, a fruitful collaboration between bishops and theologians in the spirit of communion in one service. The element common to the tasks of both the Magisterium and theologians, though it is realized in analogous and distinct fashions, is "to preserve the sacred deposit of revelation, to examine it more deeply, to explain, teach, and defend it, for the service of the People of God and for the whole world's salvation."[28] On a personal note, I am pleased to know from the Superior General of the Jesuits (when he asked for the confirmation of the second mandate of Fr. Quilongquilong) that your Faculty President "has placed the School more decisively in the service of the Philippine Bishops." I can imagine the joy of the Filipino Prelates in working with you in mutual esteem and distinction of tasks.

In a Jesuit Faculty of Theology, it is expected (as St. Ignatius asks his spiritual sons) that effort for knowing the living God would involve the entire being of the theologian, not only his intelligence. "Man is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord," says your Founder, "and by this means to save his soul. And the other things on the face of the earth are created for man and that they may help him in pursuing the end for which he is created."[29] One could even say that theology "is characterised by a distinctive spirituality. Integral to the spirituality of the theologian are: a love of truth, a readiness for conversion of heart and mind, a striving for holiness, and a commitment to ecclesial communion and mission."[30] This is the heart of a spirituality that gives birth to the desire for promoting theology as wisdom, in response to God's truth fully revealed in the person of Christ, the Son of the

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[27]International Theological Commission, *Theology Today: Perspectives, Principles and Criteria* (2011), n. 3.

[28]International Theological Commission, *Theses on the Relationship between the Ecclesiastical Magisterium and Theology* (1975), Thesis 2.

[29]Cf. Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*, "Principle and Foundation."

[30]International Theological Commission, *Theology Today*, n. 93.

living God. "As wisdom, theology is able to integrate aspects of the faith both studied and experienced and to transcend in the service of God's truth the limits of what is strictly possible from an intellectual standpoint."[31] It might be useful to give emphasis to this perspective, especially in Asia, in order to facilitate the mission of the Church in the context of its encounter with non-Christian cultures. The wisdom dimension of Catholic theology demonstrates to us that theology, in its plurality, is united in the service of the truth of God.

Among theologians, there exist many specialists in the various fields of this discipline (biblical, fundamental, dogmatic, moral, pastoral, etc.). Dialogue and interdisciplinary collaboration are essential not only in promoting the unity of theology but also in guaranteeing and in articulating it. With respect to the legitimate research methods, theologians are engaged in "a common search for truth, common service of the body of Christ and common devotion to the one God."[32] For this reason, it is desirable that theologians must be persons of prayer also, and praying as well for each other. And, most important of all, the efforts of theologians must be supported and encouraged by the prayer of the Church.

Theology must always be attentive to the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ, the Word Incarnate. Christ entered human history. Theology must also be grounded on history, taking into account and being attentive to the signs of God's call and action in concrete human realities. The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council teach that

> through this revelation, therefore, the invisible God (see Col. 1:15, 1 Tim. 1:17) out of the abundance of His love speaks to men as friends (see Ex. 33:11; John 15:14–15) and lives among them (see Bar. 3:38), so that He may invite and take them into fellowship with Himself. This plan of revelation is realized by deeds and words having an inner unity: the deeds wrought by God in the history of salvation manifest and confirm the teaching and realities signified by the words, while the words proclaim the deeds and clarify the mystery contained in them.

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[31]International Theological Commission, *Theology Today*, n. 95.

[32]International Theological Commission, *Theology Today*, n. 80.

> By this revelation then, the deepest truth about God and the salvation of man shines out for our sake in Christ, who is both the mediator and the fullness of all revelation.[33]

Examining the *sensus fidei* in the context of history is important in this regard. God dialogues with man through the Holy Spirit, and enters into human history day after day.[34] Man is capable of daily dialogue with God through an instinct of faith, enlightened by the Holy Spirit. Pope Francis insists on discerning the direction of the daily choices we make in following the Lord through this *sensus fidei*. In *Evangelii gaudium*, he wrote: "The Spirit guides it in truth and leads it to salvation. As part of his mysterious love for humanity, God furnishes the totality of the faithful with an instinct of faith—*sensus fidei*—which helps them to discern what is truly of God."[35] Theologians, being members of God's people, are called by Christ to follow him, to walk with him, and to rediscover that "history therefore becomes the arena where we see what God does for humanity."[36] The theological language is historical, but it can express a truth that transcends history because "truth can never be confined to time and culture; in history it is known, but it also reaches beyond history."[37]

All of this is the background of what Article 39 of the Apostolic Constitution *Sapientia Christiana* says about directing Ecclesiastical Faculties:

> Following the norm of the Second Vatican Council, according to the nature of each Faculty: 1) just freedom should be acknowledged in research and teaching so that true progress can be obtained in learning and understanding divine truth; 2) at the same time it is clear that: a) true freedom in teaching is necessarily contained within the limits of God's Word, as this is constantly taught by the Church's Magisterium,

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[33]Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum* (1965), 2.

[34]Cf. Hebrews 3:7–15.

[35]Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* 119.

[36]John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* (1998), 12.

[37]John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* 95.

> b) likewise, true freedom in research is necessarily based upon firm adherence to God's Word and deference to the Church's Magisterium, whose duty it is to interpret authentically the Word of God.

This fidelity to the Magisterium of the Church does not exclude, however, the possibility, and indeed the necessity, to investigate and to deepen the understanding of Revelation: "While 'dissent' towards the magisterium has no place in Catholic theology, investigation and questioning is justified and even necessary if theology is to fulfill its task."[38] So, within this legitimate autonomy, theologians are personally called to be the first interlocutors with other sciences, overcoming the isolation which is often found in the academic world. This is the invitation of the Council:

> With the help of the Holy Spirit, it is the task of the entire People of God, especially pastors and theologians, to hear, distinguish and interpret the many voices of our age, and to judge them in the light of the divine word, so that revealed truth can always be more deeply penetrated, better understood and set forth to greater advantage.[39]

These four tasks (to hear, to distinguish, to interpret, to judge) remain valid, even today, as aids toward fulfilling the mission of theologians so that they may participate effectively in serving the mission of the Church. For this, a constant dialogue with and openness to other sciences is desirable. In this dialogue, however, it is necessary to have a critical sense in accepting the results provided by other sciences because "other disciplines must not be allowed to impose their own 'magisterium' on theology. The theologian should indeed take up and utilise the data supplied by other disciplines, but in light of theology's own proper principles and methods."[40]

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[38]International Theological Commission, *Theology Today*, n. 41. Also cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction *Donum veritatis* (On the Ecclesial Vocation of the Theologian) (1990), nos. 21–41.

[39]*Gaudium et spes* 44.

[40]International Theological Commission, *Theology Today*, n. 81.

Dialogue should cover all social, religious, and cultural necessities of our time, and should encourage participation of all stakeholders, even those who reject it or dread it. In the Apostolic exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, Pope Francis speaks about the challenges posed by scientism and positivism. In this regard, the Holy Father proposes another way of looking at and of using the many scientific advancements that we enjoy today (discernment). He said:

> Evangelization is attentive to scientific advances and wishes to shed on them the light of faith and the natural law so that they will remain respectful of the centrality and supreme value of the human person at every stage of life. All of society can be enriched thanks to this dialogue, which opens up new horizons for thought and expands the possibilities of reason. This too is a path of harmony and peace.[41]

The many achievements of people of our time can be potential and fecund instruments for promoting peace. Enriching their end-users with wisdom that comes from the Gospel will lead to the correct way of harnessing scientific and technological accomplishments in favour of fulfilling God's plan for the happiness, peace, and full life of humanity. The theologians' responsibility, being well aware of the Christian call to be peacemakers (Matt. 5:9), is crucial in forming and in encouraging society to construct peace that favours the common good.

Conclusion

The Congregation for Catholic Education places great faith in the role of theology in this interdisciplinary dialogue among ecclesiastical faculties, but also among all the Catholic universities in order to maintain the specific mission that all educational institutions render as service to the mission of Church in the world. For this, I am particularly grateful to LST for its fifty years of work in research and in teaching in this important and promising area of the world, following the Ignatian pioneering spirit, and in fidelity to the Magisterium of the Church, which is now committed to the new evangelization.

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[41]Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* 242.

On the part of the Congregation that I guide and serve, I want to offer the assurance of our readiness to work with you in your apostolic commitment, and to provide what is useful for guaranteeing the communion and the richness of the universal Church, to whose guidance the Lord always places Shepherds who are abreast of the times. For this I would like to conclude by quoting the words of Pope Francis, who encourages us to build a missionary Church in the joy of the new evangelization. In the exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, the Supreme Pontiff affirms the principle that time is greater than space:

> This principle enables us to work slowly but surely, without being obsessed with immediate results. It helps us patiently to endure difficult and adverse situations, or inevitable changes in our plans …. Giving priority to space means madly attempting to keep everything together in the present, trying to possess all the spaces of power and of self-assertion …. Giving priority to time means being concerned about initiating processes rather than possessing spaces. Time governs spaces, illumines them and makes them links in a constantly expanding chain, with no possibility of return.[42]

And this is my wish and my prayer: that the fifty linking rings forming the chain, which this school has successfully built, would multiply and would spread in time, and in the space of the entire Asian continent, for the coming of the Kingdom of God to all nations.

[42]Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* 223.

Landas 30:1 (2016) 27–41

THE CALL TO NEW EVANGELIZATION

The Church in Asia in the Next 50 Years*

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May I begin with a geographical context. The "Asia" that I shall discuss does not include the Middle East Countries. Rather, I refer to the "Asia" of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC). This Asia consists of the countries of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgystan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan); the countries of South Asia (Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka); East Asia (the countries of Mongolia, South Korea, Japan, the territories of Macau, Hong Kong, and Taiwan); and the countries of Southeast Asia (Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei, Timor-Leste and Indonesia).

The FABC territory covers a large swath of the Asian continent and consists of 18 Bishops' Conferences as members and 8 Associate Members (those without a Bishops' Conference such as Turkmenistan, Macau, Hong Kong, and Taiwan). All in all, FABC covers 28 Asian countries and territories.

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Therefore, when I speak of the Church in Asia, it is the Church that is constituted by the bishops' and episcopal conferences of the FABC. "Church" as used in this presentation refers only to bishops and not to the entire People of God.

I shall attempt to answer the following questions:

- How does the Church in Asia understand "evangelization" and "new evangelization?"
- How does the Church in Asia want to evangelize?
- What will the Church in Asia do to evangelize in the next fifty years?

It is best to let the Asian bishops themselves address the questions on the basis of the statements, messages, and documents issued by their plenary meetings.[1]

A. Evangelization in Asia

Evangelii Nuntiandi speaks of evangelization in different ways. In a broad way, to evangelize is "to bring the Good News into all areas of humanity, and through its impact, to transform that humanity from within, making it new."[2] More specifically, evangelization is "the clear and unambiguous proclamation of the Lord Jesus."[3]

1. Dialogue and Proclamation

On the other hand, the significant document *Dialogue and Proclamation* (1991), jointly produced by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious

[1]These plenary documents are found in the five-volume work, *For all the Peoples of Asia*. Also very useful for our purposes would be *Sprouts of Theology from the Asian Soil*, ed. Vimal Tirimanna (Claretian Publications, 2007).

[2]Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975), 18.

[3]Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 22.

Dialogue and the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, has an alternative description of evangelization. The document states that "the single but complex and articulated reality" of the *evangelizing mission* of the Church consists of the following "principal elements: presence and witness; commitment to social development and human liberation; liturgical life; prayer and contemplation; interreligious dialogue; and finally, proclamation and catechesis."[4] Thus, in this sense, dialogue and proclamation are both different and distinct components of the evangelizing mission of the Church.

Dialogue and Proclamation acknowledges that dialogue at the purely human level means "reciprocal communication, leading to a common goal or, at a deeper level, to interpersonal communion" as well as "an attitude of respect and friendship" ("spirit of dialogue").[5] This spirit of dialogue should permeate all the evangelizing activities of the Church. However, *Dialogue and Proclamation* chooses to treat specifically of interreligious dialogue and its relationship to explicit proclamation. When official Church documents speak of dialogue, it is usually about interreligious dialogue, a concept the documents consider as separate and distinct from proclamation.

It is the sense of explicit proclamation that *Evangelii Nuntiandi* speaks of when it declares that "there is no true evangelization if the name, teaching, life, promises, kingdom and mystery of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God are not proclaimed."[6]

2. Proclamation in Asia—the Asian Face of Jesus

The proclamation of Jesus has never been a problem in Asia. But for the Church in Asia, proclamation and dialogue are not two

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[4]Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, *Dialogue and Proclamation* (1991), 2, citing *The Attitude of the Church toward Followers of Other Religions: Reflections and Orientations on Dialogue and Mission* (Secretariat for Non-Christians, 1984), no. 13.

[5]*Dialogue and Proclamation*, no. 29.

[6]Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 22.

separate and juxtaposed realities. Proclamation and all other paths of evangelization are in the mode of dialogue.

The final statement of the FABC International Theological Symposium[7] described the Asian idea of proclamation:

> If Jesus were to ask us today in Asia, "Who do you say that I am?" we would boldly confess as did the early Church "You are the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation" (cf. Col. 1:15). You are the Messiah, the Savior, the Lord! "You are the Word in the beginning, you are with God, you are God" (cf. Jn. 1:1). Ours is the faith of the Apostles in the Risen Christ.
>
> Yet as we reflect on the harsh underside of suffering Asia, the image of Jesus that captures our imagination is his human portrait in the Scriptures. Born of woman (Gal. 4:4), he is the God who pitches his tent among us (Jn. 1:14). He empties himself to be in solidarity with the little ones, those treated as non-persons—the poor and deprived, the outcast and marginalized, the oppressed and downtrodden, the sick, those who do not count, children and women. He strikes at the natural upward mobility of humankind and goes down to the downtrodden, walks among them, lives with them, takes up their burdens, calls them his friends (Lk. 4:18; 15:2). This predilection for the poor we now call his preferential option.
>
> This is how we see Jesus with an Asian face …. This human face of Jesus, born of woman, God-made-poor, God-with-us, our Peace, teacher and prophet, healer, a person of harmony, suffering servant-leader, liberator, lifegiver, is one that powerfully resonates with Asia's situation of servitude, with Asia's struggle towards jusice and harmony—with our struggle for life.

Such a declaration seems to be in tension with the idea of explicit proclamation of Jesus, the unique Savior of the world, without which there is no true evangelization.

Some Asian theologians are seen to put aside the uniqueness and finality of Jesus as God and Savior in interreligious dialogue. But undoubtedly FABC official documents do not do so.

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[7]Pattaya, Thailand: 1994.

I recall here the famous adversarial positions taken by a non-Asian keynote speaker and a Filipino theologian at the opening session of the 1990 Bandung FABC Plenary Assembly. The former attacked Asian theological development that puts aside the uniqueness and finality of Jesus the Lord and Savior and thus diminishing the need for mission. The Filipino theologian put aside his prepared paper and directly rebutted the attack as an unjustified overgeneralization.

3. Telling the Story of Jesus

At the 1998 Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Asia, Pope John Paul II listened intently to the way Asian bishops spoke about evangelization and proclamation. And in his post-synodal exhortation a year later (1999), Pope John Paul II "canonized" the way the Church in Asia proclaims the Lord Jesus.

He first reminded the Church in Asia: "There can be no true proclamation without the explicit proclamation of Jesus as Lord."[8]

But, taking the language and spirit of Asian bishops, in the light of the cultures of religions of Asia, he explained what he meant by proclamation: "In fact the proclamation of Jesus can most effectively be made by narrating his story, as the Gospels do."[9]

Asian bishops at the Assembly had suggested images of Jesus that are intelligible to Asian cultural patterns and are "faithful to Sacred Scriptures and Tradition."

> Among them were "Jesus Christ as the Teacher of Wisdom, the Healer, the Liberator, the Spiritual Guide, the Enlightened One, the Compassionate Friend of the Poor, the Good Samaritan, the Good Shepherd, the Obedient One" …. In the midst of so much suffering among Asian peoples, he might best be proclaimed as the Savior "who can provide meaning to those undergoing unexplainable pain and suffering."[10]

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[8]John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia* (1999), 19.

[9]John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia* 20.

[10]John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia* 20.

Thus did the Magisterium finally resolve the tension between explicit proclamation of Jesus, the unique Lord and Savior, and the Asian way of "proclamation by telling the story of Jesus" as in the Gospels.

In the 2006 Asian Mission Congress in Chiang Mai, Thailand, the Church in Asia picked up the Asia-inspired insight of Pope John Paul II. The Congress developed the theme "Telling the Story of Jesus in Asia: A Celebration of Faith and Life."

In a remarkable way, the basic text provides both a preview and a synthesis of the Mission Congress. It speaks of the Asian context of religious and cultural pluralism in the journey of faith. It speaks of an Emmaus experience in that journey as it narrates the story of Jesus in the early Church, and the story of Jesus in Asia as Jesus reveals his Asian face. And finally, it concludes with the story of Jesus in the lives of individuals as in the lives of Asian holy men and women of past and recent history.

The message of the Mission Congress speaks of the inspiration and strength of faith that more than one thousand participants derived from listening to the personal stories of Jesus in the lives of the elderly, families, youth, children and women, of Christians in BECs, migrants, and poor people—stories of "faith, heroism, service, prayer, dialogue and proclamation."[11]

As they listened to stories of transformed life, they remembered what the Apostle John had written: "what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked upon, and touched with our hands" is none other than "the Word of Life" (1 Jn. 1:1). From this encounter with Jesus comes mission: "Go home to your own people and tell them what the Lord in his mercy has done for you" (Mk. 5:19), the scriptural passage adopted by the Mission Congress.

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[11]*Telling the Story of Jesus in Asia*, Asian Mission Congress (Chiang Mai, Thailand: October 19, 2006), http://www.eapi.org.ph/resources/eapr/east-asian-pastoral-review-2007/volume-44-2007-number-3/telling-the-story-of-jesus-in-asia (accessed February 5, 2016).

B. The Mode of Evangelization in Asia—Dialogue

As has been noted, the term dialogue is usually understood as interreligious dialogue as distinguished from proclamation. This is not so in the understanding of the Church in Asia. Its understanding of dialogue comes from Vatican II as it opened the the doors of the Church to dialogue with the world, with its joys and sorrows. This is echoed by Pope Francis in his use of dialogue with society and the state, with science and reason, with cultures, and with the poor.

Dialogue is the human encounter between individuals, between human groups, communities and societies, ethnic groups and races, cultures and creeds, and institutions. It is finally the encounter of the human and the divine.

1. The Triple Dialogue of the Church in Asia—Dialogue with All the Life Realities of a People

In telling the story of Jesus, the Church has to reach out in dialogue with the cultures of Asia, with its religions, and with its peoples, especially the poor.

In dialogic encounter, a dynamic reciprocal action takes place, guided by the Spirit of Jesus. There is mutual enrichment between faith and culture, between the Gospel and different religious and philosophical traditions, between the Gospel of the Kingdom and the poor. It is the mysteries of Incarnation and Redemption taking place. And in the process, the Church becomes truly Asian while never ceasing to be universal.

2. Dialogue with Cultures—Inculturation, Indigenization

That magnificent section on the local Church in the Final Statement of the First FABC Plenary Assembly[12] sums up the idea of dialogue with cultures in near-lyrical language:

[12]Taiwan: 1974.

> The local church is a church incarnate in a people, a church indigenous and inculturated. And this means concretely a church in continuous, humble and loving dialogue with the living traditions, the cultures, the religions—in brief, with all the life-realities of the people in whose midst it has sunk its roots deeply and whose history and life it gladly makes its own. It seeks to share in whatever truly belongs to that people: its meanings and its values, its aspirations, its thoughts and its language, its songs and its artistry. … Even its frailties and failings it assumes, so that they too may be healed. For so did God's Son assume the totality of our fallen human condition (save only for sin) so that He might make it truly His own, and redeem it in His paschal mystery.[13]

3. Dialogue with Asia's Religious Traditions

Going beyond dialogue with cultures (indigenization), the Final Statement further develops the dialogue with all the life realities of the people. It involves "a dialogue with the great religious traditions of our peoples."[14] It "means dialogue with the poor."[15]

Asia is the cradle of the great ancient religions of the world, including Christianity. Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Islam, as well as the great philosophical tradition of Buddhism were born in Asia. We have to recognize the riches of these ancient traditions. They were the wellsprings of ancient civilizations. From them, countless generations of people drew, and continue to draw, authentic religious experiences. The Spirit of God hovers over them and so we can discern "seeds of the Word" in them[16] as well as the presence of a "ray of that truth which enlightens all."[17] In mutual enlightenment, dialogue with

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[13]Final Statement of the First FABC Plenary Assembly, no. 12 (Taipei, 1974).

[14]"Inter-Religious Dialogue," Final Statement of the First FABC Plenary Assembly, no. 14.

[15]"Human Development and Liberation," Final Statement of the First FABC Plenary Assembly, no. 19.

[16]On the Mission Activity of the Church *Ad Gentes* (1965), 11.

[17]Declaration on the Relation of the Church with Non-Christian Religions *Nostra Aetate* (1965), 2, cited in *Dialogue and Proclamation*, no. 16.

them enables us to understand our own spiritual riches more clearly and with respect and humility offer these riches to them.

The observation of the great Jewish philosopher of dialogue, Martin Buber, is apropos to an understanding of the FABC idea of dialogue. He speaks of dialogic relationships in terms of values, of recognition of human dignity, respect and understanding, of trust and love. He says: "When two people relate to each other *authentically and humanly*, God is the electricity that surges between them."[18] "Dialogic is not to be identified with love. But love without dialogue, without real outgoing to the other, reaching to the other, the love remaining with itself—this is called Lucifer."[19]

Reaching out to the other, love going out of itself, the power of the Spirit surging between interactive relationships—this is a way to understand FABC interreligious dialogue.

4. Dialogue with the Poor of Asia

Already in 1970, Pope Paul VI reminded the Asian bishops gathered in Manila of the immense missionary possibilities of Asia as the continent of the poor. Together with the rich variety of cultures and ancient religions, poverty is the third characteristic of the Asian continent that the Asian bishops discerned at the First FABC Plenary Assembly in 1974 as they faced the challenge of evangelization.

To dialogue with the life realities of Asian peoples is also to dialogue with them in their poverty. It involves active solidarity with them and empowering them in their struggle for a better life. It requires eyes and hearts that see and understand reality from their optic. It requires of the Church a commitment to social justice and "active participation in the transformation" of the Asian world. It requires finally of the Church to become a Church of the poor.

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[18]Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Charles Scribner, 1970), 23.

[19]Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man*, trans. Ronald Gregor-Smith (London & New York: Routledge Classics, 2004), 21.

Inculturation, interreligious dialogue, dialogue with the poor—the Asian triple dialogue—are tasks for the local Church to be truly rooted in Asian soil. They are tasks by which Jesus is proclaimed, his story told, and faith in him evoked.

Thus did the Asian bishops in 1974 draw up a vision of the Church that would be the guiding light for local Churches and episcopal conferences—the Church in Asia as a Church of dialogue and a Church of the poor.

Pope John Paul II's magisterial teaching recognized this characteristic, stating "the importance of dialogue as a *characteristic mode of the Church's life in Asia*."[20]

And so is dialogue the Church's mode of evangelization. Consequently, telling the story of Jesus in dialogic mode should be gradual and progressive, employing a pedagogy that is evocative,[21] not proselytizing but respectful and humble, guided certainly by the Spirit of God, while patiently waiting for God's grace for the final fruition of the Jesus story. Or, as Pope John Paul II says, until in God's own time "the final appropriation of the mystery" of Jesus is realized.[22]

C. New Evangelization in Asia

The way Asian bishops understand "new evangelization" has always been the call to the dialogic mode of evangelization for a "new way of being Church." It was a call heard from the beginning of the FABC up to the present, old but ever new.

The 2012 FABC Assembly in Vietnam dealt specifically with the New Evangelization. It had this to say:

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[20]John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia* 3. Italics in original.

[21]John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia* 20.

[22]John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia* 20.

> In most of Asia, as in Mongolia where Catholic presence is only 20 years old, the paramount need is for "first proclamation" …. We do recall that from its very beginning the FABC has been promoting a new evangelization by its vision of a Church in Asia becoming a "*new way of being Church*."[23]

The Vietnam Assembly discerned the pastoral situation forty years after the statutory inauguration of FABC in 1972 and confronted new pastoral challenges including climate change and post-modern secularism. Building on the dialogic mode of evangelization of a new way of being Church, the Assembly declared:

> A New Evangelization is imperative …, "new in its ardor, methods and expression" …. The New Evangelization has to take in the whole of creation …. The New Evangelization has to insist on the religious and moral character of God's Creation where God dwells in many and various ways.[24]

1. Contemplative Dimension and the Principle of Communion

Since 1974, the Church in Asia has been insisting on the necessity of two faith realities in telling the story of Jesus:

- the spiritual and contemplative dimension, and
- the principle of communion.

Thus, the second and third assemblies were devoted to the themes of prayer—the life of the Church and the Church as a community of faith in Asia. A spirituality of communion has been a continuing work in process.[25]

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[23]Tenth FABC Plenary Assembly (Vietnam: 2012), no. 53.

[24]Tenth FABC Plenary Assembly, no. 53.

[25]See esp., e.g., Part II of the 1982 Samphran Plenary Assembly; Workshop VI of the 1979 Manila International Mission Congress; "Communion with Jesus and Communion of Liberation, Lay Spirituality" in the 1986 Tokyo Assembly; "Spirituality for Our Times" in the 1990 Bandung Assembly;

2. Megatrends in Asia—Challenges to New Evangelization

Surveying the signs of the times, the 2012 Vietnam Plenary Assembly discerned new pastoral challenges which would preoccupy the episcopal conferences and local Churches in years to come. In brief, the Assembly discerned the following megatrends in Asia, some of which have been the concerns of the Church in Asia for two decades:

- economic *globalization*;
- an emerging *global secular and materialist culture*;
- growing *Asian poverty* abetted by social injustice;
- the plight of *Asian migrants and refugees*;
- the integral development of marginalized *indigenous peoples*;
- *population control*;
- *religious freedom* besieged by extreme and violent religious radicalism;
- *life threatened* by national security ideology, ethnic conflicts, and arms buildup;
- the immense but ambiguous potential of *social communications*;
- ecological concerns of *global warming and climate change*;
- inadequate integral *faith-formation of the laity*;
- the discriminatory, abused, and exploited *situation of women*;
- inadequate social and ecclesial response given to the concerns of *Asian youth*;
- the continuous growth of *pentecostalism*; and
- nourishing the springtime of *Asian vocations* to the priestly and religious life.

Parenthetically, that list of megatrends was drawn up four years ago in Vietnam. But the first draft of a working paper for this year's FABC plenary assembly in Sri Lanka is suggesting a shorter list of the more urgent megatrends for the New Evangelization.

"Family Spirituality of Communion" in the 2006 Daejeon General Assembly; and "The Eucharist as Communion with Jesus" in the 2009 Manila Assembly, esp. sections A, D, and E.

Unless the world's social, economic, and political order is radically transformed, the New Evangelization in Asia will be addressing these megatrends over the next fifty years.

3. A Vision of the Church as Acting Subject of the New Evangelization

Despite variations in pastoral priorities and praxis in FABC regions and local Churches, ever constant is the continuing effort of the Church in Asia to realize its vision of being a Church of dialogue and a Church of the poor. Such vision indicates both the mode and the acting subject of the New Evangelization, i.e., by mode of dialogue, by a new way of being Church.

Most recently, in the 2012 Vietnam Plenary Assembly, the Asian bishops rearticulated and expanded the 1974 vision of Church.

> We envision a Church that is:
>
> - *truly Asian, in triple dialogue* with the religions, cultures, and peoples of Asia, especially the poor [interreligious dialogue, inculturation, and integral liberation];
> - *a humble servant of the peoples of Asia*, accompanying them to the Kingdom of God;
> - *a credible herald of the Gospel, a disciple community sent on mission of integral evangelization* to tell the story of Jesus to Asians in season and out of season;
> - *bearing in herself the Asian face of Jesus*, the God who became man, compassionate, loving, forgiving, self-sacrificing, a teacher, servant, healer, prophet, life-giver, ennobler of the poor;
> - *a communion of communities, reflecting the Trinitarian communion*;
> - *a participatory Church* of renewed servant-leaders, of prophetic Religious and empowered laity;
> - *a Church of the Poor*, where the sick and the needy are at home;
> - *a Church of the Youth* where they find solidarity in their struggle for authentic life; and
> - *a Church in solidarity with the whole of creation* [a new component of the vision of Church].

Conclusion: Spirituality of New Evangelizers

The Vietnam Assembly also briefly synthesized what the Church in Asia means by the spirituality of communion.[26]

What may be more relevant for us at this time is the Final Message of the Assembly, "Renewed Evangelizers for New Evangelization in Asia." The bishops came up with the term "spirituality of New Evangelization," stating that the "*spirituality of communion is in truth the spirituality of the New Evangelization.*"[27]

That spirituality for our times requires of the renewed evangelizer the following dimensions:

- a deep *personal and transforming encounter with Jesus Christ*;
- *a passion for mission*, lighted with the fire of God's love, in order to share one's faith in Christ;
- *focus on the Kingdom of God* which is never to be separated from the person of Jesus and is oriented towards the integral transformation of the Asian world;
- *commitment to communion*, realizing that "communion is both the source and fruit of mission";[28]
- *dialogue, a mode of life and mission*, characterized by *humble sensitivity to the hidden presence of God* in the struggles of the poor, in the riches of people's cultures, in the varieties of religious traditions, and in the depths of every human heart;
- *humble presence*, a "mode of dialogical living" that is aware of the "mysterious presence and action of the Holy Spirit" among the peoples and cultures of Asia;[29]

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[26]Tenth FABC Plenary Assembly, no. 55.

[27]Tenth FABC Plenary Assembly, "Renewed Evangelizers for New Evangelization in Asia," Final Message (Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam: Dec. 16, 2012), 4.

[28]John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia* 24, citing *Christi fideles laici* (On the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World), 32.

[29]Tenth FABC Plenary Assembly, "Renewed Evangelizers for New Evangelization in Asia," no. 6.

- being a *prophetic evangelizer* who will denounce the contradictions in the Asian world and in so doing tell the story of Jesus who himself as a child was prophesied as a "sign of contradiction";
- *in discipleship of Jesus, solidarity with and compassion for victims* who are the victims of globalization, natural and man-made disasters, injustice and violence, oppression and marginalization;
- *care for the integrity of creation, a responsible stewardship of God's gift* for the sake of intergenerational justice confronted by the crisis of global warming and climate change;
- *boldness of faith and martyrdom* inspired by the cloud of many holy witnesses and martyrs who by their lives and their deaths told the story of Jesus throughout Asia.

A final word on the call to new evangelization will have to come from paraphrasing Pope John Paul II and I would address it to everyone of us here:

> The silent witness of a faithful Christian life in Asia is most eloquent in credibly telling the story of Jesus, unique Lord and Savior.

Thank you very much.

Landas 30:1 (2016) 43–49

TESTIMONY OF THE FAITHFUL ON PRIESTHOOD*

Catalino G. Arévalo, S.J.

This testimony (for which fifteen minutes were assigned in this afternoon's program) is expected to be a sharing of personal experience, *priestly experience*, and, after much "searching," I thought I could best do this by speaking about three priests, all connected with the Loyola School of Theology, and "giving witness" to their priesthood and priestly lives.

Sixty years ago, I was told that I was expected not only to teach theology at San Jose Seminary but eventually to "bring to separate existence" and to lead what is now the Loyola School of Theology. Fr. Juan Oñate, who was head of a Spanish mission in China before the Communist takeover, and who was sent out of China in 1949, "landed" first in Manila, and later served as one of Fr. Pedro Arrupe's assistants at the Jesuit Curia—it was he who arranged in 1966 for a brief audience for me with Papa Montini, Pope Paul VI. During the brief audience, the Holy Father, looking steadily into my eyes (as was his wont), said, simply and quietly, but with a sense of authority:

> For you, Father, you should receive the task given you—that of helping in the teaching and forming of priests—as given you by the Lord

*Delivered on the first day of the LST International Theological Symposium (Henry Lee Irwin Theater, Ateneo de Manila University: March 10, 2016).

> himself, not just an assignment from obedience. So, personally, hear from me, that it is the greatest and most important mission the Lord could have given *you*, and it should be *for you* a mandate for the fullest dedication of your life, your gifts, your labors. Receive this also as a mandate from the Holy Father.

I was 41 years of age then, and I must confess that I was deeply moved by those ten minutes or so with him, and by what he said to me. It was a unique experience that, in a real way, defined my life and the realization of my vocation. As a matter or fact, from then till my 85th year of life, it was, in our catalogues, my single lifetime assignment for forty-four years.

That said by way of foreword, let me, in the brief time I have, "give witness" to three priests.

First, on the priest formally called the "founder of LST," Fr. Horacio de la Costa [HLC], the first Filipino Jesuit Provincial (from 1964 to 1971) in our history as a Jesuit province, and the first Filipino Provincial in the history of the Church in the Philippines. Our university is at present presenting a ten-lecture series on him, celebrating his birth one hundred years ago.

Let me cite a paragraph from a book written by Fr. Clement McNaspy, then a well-known Jesuit writer in the U.S., who served a few years with HLC at the Jesuit Curia in Rome. These lines are about his first extended meeting with HLC, in Hongkong in 1968, at a Jesuit Missions U.S.A. conference on "The Future of Mission in Asia." Of that workshop, McNaspy wrote:

> Some participants were almost legendary, especially Horacio de la Costa, a Filipino Jesuit, [who] had written the authoritative history of the [Jesuit] Society in the Philippines and was later to become Assistant to Father Arrupe for East Asia, a man of the rarest brilliance combined with charm and accessibility. Indeed, when he died of cancer, unexpectedly, before the General Congregation that elected Father Kolvenbach as superior general, many of us had hoped Horacio would be the first non-European superior general.

Quite simply, from his earliest years at the Ateneo, HLC was regarded by all who had heard of him as a genius. He graduated from

the Ateneo de Manila University's humanities course in 1935, *summa cum laude*, at not yet 19 years of age. His unique gifts of mind and character, his talent as a writer and speaker, had then already become "nationally known." So great was his reputation for brilliance that the President of the country, Manuel Luis Quezon, together with a good number of other national leaders from government and professional life who were part of the SRO audience at the State University's auditorium, spent several hours at what was called "the grand act" of his presentation and defense of scholastic philosophy. "His future had no ceiling" when he graduated; he was expected in time to be the prime leader of our land. But he believed, and a young priest/spiritual guide with him, that the Lord was calling him to service in the Church for his people. To the surprise of most, he accepted this with an unexpected firmness, giving up that "future without a ceiling" for the Jesuit priesthood.

In the Jesuit Order, at that crucial time of the end of colonialism especially in Asia, he was given—one after the other—tasks of governance and its bureaucratic labors—all the way to Rome. This prevented him from the research and writing of history which he most wanted to do. This called for the complete self-sacrifice of what he really wanted to do in his life, to obediently accept what the Order asked of him.

The founding of LST, his dedicated, hands-on involvement in our earliest years here (I know because I was asked to be founding Dean and President then), were the *fruits of that continuing sacrifice he made to his Jesuit priesthood*. I became close enough a friend in later years to know what all this cost him and his own personal plans and desires. This side of him and his self-gift has never been brought up. Today, on this rather unusual event, in tribute and affection I do bring it up, to give it, and him, recognition and honor which I think he has never been explicitly given.

Secondly, a witness to the person and priestly ministry of Fr. Eduardo Pardo Hontiveros, all his priestly life a teacher and academic dean at LST, and for some years spiritual mentor and rector at San Jose Seminary. He was also a man of so many gifts, and the consequent variety of tasks he was involved in was somewhat

surprising. But, first of all, he was a pioneering musician in worship music and hymns; sometime in his latter years, he himself said he had written over 500 songs. He trained choirs; he led concerts abroad, featuring quite a bit of his own music, in Asia, in the U.S.A, in several countries in Europe. He received an honorary Ph.D. as the "father of Philippine liturgical music," and the Ateneo de Manila University's "Tanglaw ng Lahi" medal not only for writing the songs, but for the fact that those songs literally "encircled the globe" wherever Filipinos were present—even in Communist China, even at St. Peter's in Rome.

But from 1958 to 1991, he taught theology mainly at San Jose, at LST, at St. John Vianney in Cagayan de Oro, and in other seminaries. Some admirers have said, with some measure of truth, that "writing his songs and leading choirs to sing them was a teaching of theology also, perhaps in a more effective, more far-reaching way." When Cardinal Sin held a survey in the year 2000 to celebrate "the most outstanding Catholic writers in the Philippines in the 20th Century," to everyone's great surprise, Fr. Honti came out second in the voting, after Fr. de la Costa.

Fr. Honti's life was so full of "every sort of doing," but in 1991, while on a teaching stint at Vianney Theological Seminary, Cagayan de Oro City, he suffered a stroke which, after an initial promising recovery, ended up by really ending his "active life"—destroying almost totally his capacity for speech, his capacity to function in any of the activities he was involved in. Eighteen years of almost total silence followed. Eighteen years of enforced silence, for a man who really loved to be with people, to converse and socialize; one who loved—greatly loved—to sing, and with others above all; one who seemed to be always laughing with friends, the hundreds of friends who so readily loved him. At his funeral Mass, I said, to applause and tears, that this man was one who "never never had an enemy in all his life."

Among others, Fr. Pedro de Achutegui used to repeat that remark that if our Catholic doctrine held that only Mary the Mother of the Lord was conceived free from original sin, some pious Tradition said that John the Baptist was born without original sin (vid. the Visitation

account and the unborn baby rejoicing in Elizabeth's womb), and St. Joseph the foster-father of Jesus, too, we could probably add Eddie Hontiveros to the little list—so innocent and so filled with happy goodness did he seem to all.

For those eighteen years of "imprisoned silence," Fr. Honti lived in the room beside mine. In all those years no one—almost never—saw him sad or depressed or unsmiling. In public, with others, yes, somehow he kept up almost unfailingly that "way of proceeding." But there was another side to his life. I saw him often alone in his room, lonely and in suffering, in visibly deep suffering, sometimes quietly weeping, his rosary in his fingers, or his face in his hands. Or in the infirmary chapel, when it was empty, in some quiet corner, his head bent—sometimes for hours, in inner pain, all alone.

I know that his obedient love was the one assignment the Lord and the Jesuit Order gave him for all his priestly life, and when its faithful fulfillment became mostly his silence and his suffering, he offered these as his priestly ministry, and for the priesthood we served here at LST. Many of us who were colleagues and contemporaries think that if perhaps any of our LST faculty were saints, Honti was surely the first of them.

The third priest and last I will give witness to was an early LST student who came from the Maryknoll Sisters' St. James Academy in nearby Malabon, an Oblate of Mary Immaculate, ordained priest in December 1967, graduate of our LST class of 1968. He was not a priest in the academe but a shepherd, one of those Pope Francis speaks about as bearing the smell of his sheep—"faithful to the one who appointed him," the Letter to the Hebrews says (Heb. 3:2), "and compassionate with his flock." The Second Pastoral Council of the Philippines (PCP II) stressed that being "close to his people" is at the heart of our priestly service.

It is Bishop Ben de Jesus, made Vicar Apostolic of Jolo in 1991, ordained bishop in 1992, who we have in our sights.

"No one of his flock was unimportant to him"—this was said of him by everyone who knew him: the *manangs*, the *estambays*, the sick, and

especially the poor. "*Pauperes evangelizantur*" was the OMI motto from the start, even before Latin America gave us the "preferential option for the poor." Fr. Ben perhaps did not use the formula, but somehow from the start simply practiced it. And long before "interreligious dialogue" became a buzzword, the Oblates have been working at it in Mindanao, and Archbishop Capalla remarked that it had become part of Bishop Ben's person, practiced mostly by friendship and unfailing kindness. This was joined with a practical, feet-on-the ground wisdom, openness, and patience. And people began to sense a heart open to much loving not so much by words, but mostly by compassion, by deeds. Even his Malabon family saw that for Bishop Ben, Muslims had become part of his flock; some of them he sent to Pateros to learn how to make *balut* for a living. They told me that "*Lolo pari*" was forever looking for ways to help Muslims get better schooling, improved livelihood, higher incomes, and fuller human living.

Early on in his ministry, we are told, the children began to gather around Fr. Ben whenever he was near. They seemed to know that his heart was with them. He would stop for them when they came; he always had some friendly time with them, watching their games, joining them in chatter and laughter. At his funeral Mass, tears flowed unashamedly when the kids sang with their high voices the *baleleng* song which *Padil Bin* would often stop and sing along with them as they walked together down the streets.

I do not know how exactly we had become quite friendly; in later years, he always seemed genuinely glad to meet me. Once, already a bishop, he brought me home, in the car which picked him up from the airport. I do not forget that ride, because with his usual soft-spoken simplicity, he told me much about his own life, and opened his priestly heart and its love—a passionate love, really—for the Lord and His people. After his death, I heard much about his prayer, e.g., when staying nights at the CBCP, the sisters who sometimes retired quite late due to work would find him in the chapel long after midnight, kneeling before the tabernacle, sometimes with arms outstretched in prayer. An Italian Salesian priest who worked at the Nunciature told me he had several times spoken with him and was always struck by

his unmistakable peace. "As with Mother Teresa, one sensed a deep peace in the presence of God that comes with an unceasing prayer. With him, as with Mother Teresa, one knew it was truly there."

One morning, on February 4, 1997, as he stood in front of the Jolo cathedral, a car drove up and he was shot many times for a brutal and bloody death. Up until now, it seems it has never really been known why he was killed, so senselessly and brutally killed. His funeral showed how greatly loved he was by his own flock, and by Muslims who had experienced or heard of the unfailing goodness and generosity of heart of *Padil Bin*.

In a talk he gave at the Golden Jubilee celebrations of OMI presence in Jolo, Bishop Ben said, "I am an ordinary human being, weak, vulnerable, but God used me to proclaim his love and compassion to others." But that weakness and vulnerability finally gave to the Lord the total gift of life.

For sure LST cannot take much credit for the priestly spirit, zeal, and holiness of Bishop Ben, or for the glory of the sacrifice of his life. But we can hope that the hours which he spent over the years in the classrooms and halls of LST, listening to its teachers, contributed to the wonder and beauty of the priestly life he lived—contributed to the "faithfulness to Christ Jesus and compassion for his people" which the Word says must mark the priest, and that from heaven he continues to pray for us and our labors. And that maybe, just maybe, he does not mind that today we rejoice, with humble pride, to have his name listed as "graduate of LST."

Landas 30:1 (2016) 51–56

TESTIMONY OF THE FAITHFUL ON CONSECRATED LIFE*

Judette A. Gallares, R.C.

I had been asked to share my personal experience on the influence/impact of Vatican II on my consecrated/religious life. Having entered the religious life a few years after Vatican II, the changes were only starting, and so there were a lot of remnants of the pre-Vatican II religious lifestyle. Our ministry was more confined to the retreat house, and there were still a lot of monastic elements like the emphasis on common chanted prayer, silence, scheduled adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, and less contact with people from the outside world except with those who came to the house to make retreats or when a Sister had to go to the doctor. The retreats given in the Cenacle were the preached retreats given by a priest (usually a Jesuit), and the Sisters were just expected to have individual conferences with assigned retreatants, usually women. However, all throughout there were also the individually directed Ignatian retreats given by the Sisters to other religious.

In the past, the Cenacle ministry of education in the faith was conducted in the house—giving retreats and teaching catechism. The change of orientation which Vatican II ushered in—opening up to

*Delivered on the first day of the LST International Theological Symposium (Henry Lee Irwin Theater, Ateneo de Manila University: March 10, 2016).

the outside rather than keeping ourselves separate from the world—challenged us to go out to where people were. We were constantly reminded that "entering the convent" (as most people would still say) does not mean leaving the world!

Vatican II influenced the prayer life of the Cenacle Sisters. There was greater emphasis on one's personal relationship with Jesus, the "love affair of a religious" as one of our older Sisters used to remind the younger Sisters. The practice of monastic common prayer began to give way to more creative and meaningful ways of praying together. The Sisters learned to do real faith sharing in community. This has become an essential binding force for promoting communion in community as contrasted to the former emphasis on uniformity. Community structures became more fluid as we struggled to balance our threefold mission of prayer, community, and apostolic service. Thus, it became mandatory that one grew into personal maturity since this was necessary for personal and communal discernment in living the choices of our consecrated life.

This change in direction had a direct consequence on the way we did our ministry. No longer were we confined to the retreat house. We began to go to where people were and where our ministry was needed—to parishes, homes (for home retreats), schools, formation houses, seminaries, convents, and other retreat houses to conduct retreats and seminars on psycho-spiritual formation. We no longer limited our clientele to "lay and religious women"; we became available to different kinds of people (women and men, lay, religious, priests, seminarians, students, young, old, straight or otherwise, etc.)—anyone who was seeking God in their lives.

As a Cenacle Sister caught up in this, I was challenged to keep "reinventing" or reinterpreting the Cenacle mission in the locality where I found myself. Retreat work, which is an expression of education in the faith, is our way of evangelization.

Some years ago, the apostolic nuncio for China asked the Institute for Consecrated Life in Asia (ICLA), where I was teaching, to conduct an investigative survey of the needs of local religious women in

China. There was an observed influx of Chinese Sisters coming to the Philippines to study. This was when the Chinese government started to allow priests and religious to study abroad. I was sent by ICLA to conduct the survey.

I had mixed feelings when I first visited several congregations of women in four provinces in China over a period of three weeks. I was appalled to see some of their living conditions, with their walls pasted with old newspapers to protect them from the harsh winter cold. Some of the convents looked like old garage structures. I was touched to hear about their incredible stories of mission, while at the same time feeling incensed that they were being used as cheap labor for the Church, without the benefit of adequate human and religious formation. Many of them did not have an adequate understanding of their religious vocation, much less understand their Christian vocation. These were moving experiences for me, encountering so many women desiring to serve the Church yet given very little or no preparation or education for the life and mission. But God was there.

The results of the survey significantly impacted the discernment for our small region to embrace the China mission. Since the Chinese Sisters were already coming to the Philippines for theological studies, we thought of providing the Sisters holistic formation and integration before they returned home. But our small number of Cenacle Sisters in Asia (never going beyond 25!) and our lack of proficiency in the Chinese language limited our capacity to be the direct evangelizers. Now, we have a Philippine-based China mission effort in the form of our 10-month residential formation program. To date, we have already included Sisters coming from other repressed Asian Churches such as Vietnam, Myanmar, and Cambodia. We also have opportunities to follow-up on those who have gone through our program. How we are engaged today in the area of "education in the faith" is certainly very different from the way we ministered before the Vatican II Council. There have been a lot of "moving out of the box"—a daring to go out into the deep. Even the document from our last General Chapter has affirmed our "daring to go out."

In my years of Cenacle religious formation, I also grew up with the paradigm of retreats conducted in the Cenacle retreat house with what we call the particular Cenacle "flavor" providing a prayerful and beautiful space to encounter God. Responding to the calls in the greater "world," I found myself having to let that go if needed.

A few years back, one of my former students, a priest belonging to the underground Church, invited me to give a retreat to the clergy of his diocese in China. There were 21 of them, including a few who were preparing for the diaconate. At that time, the Cenacle had just begun going into China to conduct modular courses for local women religious. I welcomed the opportunity to be of service to the Church of China. I had expectations that the retreat was going to be held in some convent or retreat house. But that was not the case—the priests were able to arrange as retreat venue an unfinished three-storey house that the owners abandoned when they moved to the city. The second floor had a living room which was converted into a chapel where the conferences and communal/personal prayer were held. There was another big room that accommodated ten priests and on the third floor there were two big rooms that accommodated the rest of the eleven retreatants. Even I had to share the room with the two local Sisters who took care of cooking and cleaning for us, as well as providing a bucket of water for the day's use for each person (because there was no running water in the building). As the retreat was held in November, cold weather was already setting in.

This building was in the middle of a seemingly abandoned farm in a rural village far from civilization. Stacks of old tires, old rotting hardware, and other stuff surrounded the house. There was no place to walk around, no typical retreat atmosphere. We did not have any choice but to be confined to the building for our sessions, prayer, liturgies, and meals during the 6-day retreat.

I had planned to give them time for personal prayer, to walk around and enjoy nature, but that plan had to be abandoned as there really was no place for them to walk around. There was no surrounding beauty for their eyes to feast on. I found out that this retreat had a number of

"firsts" for them: first time to be guided by a woman religious, first time to have a quiet retreat, and first time to learn to pray with Scripture.

Despite the seemingly herculean limitations, God's grace was poured out upon them in abundance. At the end of the retreat, they commented that that was their very first time to experience the power of God's Word in their lives through Scripture prayer and to experience solitude of the heart. It was deeply consoling to witness God's grace working each day in each one.

Reflecting on the journey of consecrated life in the context of the continuing challenges of Vatican II, there are some gold nuggets of truth that I have received:

1) Without a personal relationship with Jesus in prayer, we lose the power of the prophetic edge of our consecrated vocation.

2) Our prophetic spirit cannot be awakened unless we are immersed in the life of the people in a particular place and time, enabling us to interpret the concrete situation in contemplative stance before the world in the light of God's dream for people and the whole of humanity.

3) Contemplation and mysticism require a growth in one's capacity for discernment and critical thinking in the quest for one's authentic self. In the past, external structures were given emphasis in formation and religious lifestyle. With all the changes and challenges after Vatican II, internal structures in formation and the living of one's consecrated vocation have to be given greater importance.

4) The situation of our world and the constant search for God that lies in the human heart are challenging us to be true to the nature of our consecrated life as a gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church. Confronted by the present reality of our world, by our society, by our church, we can only give witness to our life as prophets and mystics if we respond to God's constant invitation to become spiritual adults capable of contemplation and discernment and

attentive to the presence of the sacred in our own inner journeys, in the lives of others especially the poor and the marginalized, and throughout creation. Recognizing contemplation as a way of life for the whole Church, we see our communities and ourselves as centers of spirituality and places of encounter with the living God, enabling us to "weave" the various "threads" that form our response to the call of mission.

Landas 30:1 (2016) 57–62

TESTIMONY OF THE FAITHFUL ON LAY AND FAMILY LIFE*

Cory & Nelson Villafania

Cory: Our little sharing today is a tribute to our parents who taught us first to love God above all else, and then to love our neighbor, especially the poor, with brotherly or sisterly love; the educational institutions that formed us to become Christian disciples wherever we might be; and the Church that has nurtured our faith until the present, as we strive daily to live a "faith that does justice."

Vatican II says:

> … the laity, by their vocation, seek the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God. They live in the world, that is, in each and in all of the secular professions and occupations. They live in the ordinary circumstances of family and social life, from which the very web of their existence is woven. They are called there by God, that by exercising their proper function and led by the spirit of the Gospel, they may work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven. In this way, they make known Christ to others, especially by the testimony of a life resplendent in faith, hope, and charity.[1]

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*Delivered on the first day of the LST International Theological Symposium (Henry Lee Irwin Theater, Ateneo de Manila University: March 10, 2016).

[1]Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium* (1964), 31.

Nelson and I did not read Vatican II before we got married in December 1974; it was our parents who reflected its spirit to us: our mothers raised us in prayer, and our fathers showed us the beauty of, and fulfilment in, helping others, especially those in need. As a family, we went regularly to Sunday Mass where we were nourished by the Word of God and by the Body and Blood of Christ. In addition, our growing years were nurtured and influenced by at least five expressions of Christian spirituality: Benedictine, Salesian, Vincentian, Assumption, and Ignatian. The Lord must have thought: "You have enough to raise a Christian family of your own."

We raised our children in family prayer, the Word of God, and the Eucharist. It was not an easy climb, especially when, as we were concentrating on the "Hail Mary," we would see our children fighting, or when, as we were trying to teach them how to reflect on the Word of God, one of them would say, "Mama, may I go to the bathroom?" Enfleshing the Word became better when the children were grown. They have also learned from Jesus' example that we must be neighbor to everyone, especially the disadvantaged.

The Church tells us that the family, aside from being the first school of "discipleship and evangelization,"[2] is the first school of humanity. Indeed, "the future of mankind passes through the family. … [and so] does the future of the Church."[3] We constantly strive to practice tenderness, dialogue, and forgiveness in the family. Nelson and I have always been working parents but we try to make up for our physical absence by embracing our children as often as needed, texting them "I love you" or "Ingat at dasal" (Take care and pray) especially when they go to their workplaces. We encourage them to express their feelings to us or to one another especially in times of conflict, but to do this with tact and respect. We are not always successful, but we try. We have all discovered that our family cannot be truly Christian if we cannot forgive one another from the heart. If we cannot say "sorry" up close

[2]Plenary Council of the Philippines II (PCP II) IV, no. 576.

[3]PCP II IV, no. 597.

and personally, we do it via notes or texting, and for some who truly find it difficult, through little acts of kindness after a misunderstanding.

Since about eight years ago, Nelson has involved himself more in the mission of evangelization by working as a part-time values formation facilitator for Evangelion Foundation, Inc., founded by Fr. Edwin Mercado, an alumnus of San Jose Seminary. I myself had been an educator in the faith, both directly and indirectly, during the 38 years that I was with Assumption College, San Lorenzo. Since my retirement in 2011, I have taught theology to would-be catechists at the Mary Help of Christians College in Canlubang, Laguna where we live. The late Mother Carmen Reyes of the Religious of the Assumption had bequeathed to me two very important questions: "Why do you do what you do? For whom do you do what you do?" I have tried to answer that through the years, but today, my answer is definite: I do what I do because I love God and I, together with my family, would like to take part in the Church's mission of extending His Kingdom where God has called us. I believe that today, I am able to answer those questions in all sincerity because I had the kind of parents that I had, and I heard throughout my formal education words like "Ora et Labora," "Woman of Faith, Woman of Action," "Men and Women for Others," and the like. Our involvement in the Synod last October has fueled our zeal for the Kingdom, as we experienced the universality, the warmth, and the humility of the Church of which we are all members. It has confirmed the way we have tried to raise a truly Christian family and it has encouraged us to be courageous in sharing this with the bigger families: the Church and the world.

Nelson: Last December 15, 2015, Cory and I celebrated our 41st wedding anniversary. So much time has passed since the day we began our long journey to forever … and we're struggling still. The Second Vatican Council emphasized the importance of fostering the dignity of marriage and the family,[4] reiterating the fact that marriage

[4]Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et spes* (1965), ch. 47–52.

is "a community of life and love."[5] Even if we had not read Vatican II before we were married, we knew of these truths from the example of our parents. I came from a large family, having three sisters and seven brothers. My family of origin was far from being an ideal family, but amidst the many challenges in life, and in particular, poverty, my parents gave us two precious gifts: *love* and *faith*. My mother was a public school teacher and my father worked in the field. Aside from prayer and hard work, "malasakit" (self-sacrificing other-centeredness) and "damayan" (solidarity) were very strong family values. Even if the food was just enough for the family, if a relative or a stranger came in hungry, we shared the food. From my family I learned gratitude and generosity, respect, patience, and forgiveness. I have also discovered a sense of self-worth and have come to know the meaning of love and commitment through my parents' example. I can only thank them for guiding us toward greater responsibility and maturity, preparing me for marriage and family life.

As Cory has shared, we tried (and we are still trying) to raise the children in family prayer, the Word of God, and the Eucharist. We also tried to keep the practice of eating our meals together so we could share our stories and promote the "culture of encounter" in the midst of virtual reality. We are not always complete and we are not always successful, but we try ….

The one thing that I feel I have contributed and continue to contribute to our family life is a sense of *sacrifice* in imitation of the Lord Jesus and in union with His Paschal Mystery.

My way of loving the family is to be an example of quiet service, humble endurance of suffering, and forgiveness and loving presence. Unlike Cory, I do not talk much, but together we are there, where we are needed, especially by our children.

Penultimately, Cory and I have realized that the extended family is so often the ordinary means by which many of us, especially in the Philippines, are accompanied through every stage of life. The love

[5] *Gaudium et spes* 48.

given by relatives, particularly the elderly, contribute to the ongoing formation of the family in the faith, in compassion, and in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the larger family of humankind.

There is so much more that we can share, but perhaps the intervention we made at the Synod last October 2015 will speak for itself. Here it is:

Intervention

We are Nelson and Cory Villafania, retired educators from the Philippines but now more involved in evangelization through values formation seminars, retreat-giving, and education of poor youth to become catechists and religion teachers.

We have been married for 40 years, gifted with five children, two of whom have passed on to the Lord. We have constantly tried to root our marriage and family life in the Word of God, the Eucharist, and family prayer, and we saw the fruits of this daily striving when we lost our eldest son to kidney failure in 2004, and our fourth child to a vehicular accident in 2011. Up until the time of his death, JB, a special child, showed a genuine love for the Eucharist, so that even as his body weakened in pain, he chose to participate in it rather than go home and rest. His favorite t-shirt had the words "God is good all the time."

Seven years later, our other son, NJ, was run over by a jeepney driver who was playing with his cellphone while driving. During our son's wake, we discovered reflection papers written when he was in third year high school and first year college where he said: "What is best, however, is that we nurture our relationship with God daily so that we may really learn how to love Him and not to fear Him as a slave would fear his master. This, I have discovered is the beginning of eternal life. … I belong to God and I am going back to God."

The death of our two sons made the Resurrection of our Lord more real because their stories gave life to our seminar-workshops and retreats. They became, so to speak, our co-facilitators. We grieved their

leaving us, but the way the faith has shaped them and us made it easier for us to let them go and place them in the hands of God where they will be happiest. Our greatest proof of the reality of the Resurrection was the time when the driver who killed NJ asked for forgiveness, and we, by the grace of God, forgave him.

We realize now that we were helped in our grieving by much personal and family prayer, and not so much by what people said to us or did for us but by their just *being there* for us. It was their *presence* that gave us hope. Our priest friends just came one after the other to celebrate the Eucharist, and the religious sisters who were our friends prayed with us. Two busloads of friends and co-workers came, a good number texted us their condolences, two of whom were Cardinal Tagle and Bishop Bacani. More than many words, we feel that we and many of our marginalized countrymen and -women who cannot even afford to buy a coffin for their dead need from the Church the *ministry of presence*. We thank the Holy Father for having set an example of this when he visited the victims of Typhoon Yolanda (international codename Haiyan). His presence in the name of the Lord was a source of new life for them and for all of us. Our deepest gratitude, Your Holiness.

Landas 30:1 (2016) 63–78

SUMMARY OF THE ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS – 1*

Patrick S. Nogoy, S.J.

On the second day of the International Theological Symposium, two round table discussions were held at the LST Cardinal Sin Center in response to the various speeches delivered on the first day of the symposium. The discussion focused on the question "how do we lead and serve through theology in the changing Asian contexts?" Each round table discussion had a moderator. Every panelist was given three minutes to present his/her reaction. A free-flowing discussion among the panelists followed. Afterwards, the floor was opened for the audience to interact with the panelists and also to share their reactions.

First Round Table Discussion on Systematic Theology

Panelists

Dr. Joaquin C. Yap, Jr., S.W., D.Phil. (Moderator)—Professor of

*On the second day of the LST International Theological Symposium held at the Cardinal Sin Center (Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University: March 11, 2016). Statements attributed to the panelists are the author's summaries/paraphrases and not verbatim transcriptions. Thus, the panelists cannot be cited as authors of the statements.

Systematic Theology, Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Rev. Albertus Bagus Laksana, S.J., Ph.D.—Professor of Systematic Theology, Wedabhakti Pontifical Faculty of Theology, Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta.

Rev. Jose Mario C. Francisco, S.J., Ph.D.—Professor of Systematic Theology, Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City; Gregorian University, Rome.

Rev. Jojo M. Fung, S.J., Ph.D.—Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, Loyola School of Theology and East Asian Pastoral Institute, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Dr. Patricia Panganiban-Lambino—Assistant Professor, Theology Department, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Mr. Michael J. Liberatore—Assistant Professor, Theology Department, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Rev. Quirico T. Pedregosa, Jr., O.P., Ph.D.—Rector and Professor, University of Santo Tomas Central Seminary, Manila.

Thoughts of Each Panelist

Jojo M. Fung

- Consider the faith in specific contexts like Africa, Oceania, and Asia—with their own rich traditions in mystical cosmology—they are like an "oasis" that can refresh the way we do theology.
- Ours is a Jesuit institution; we should be inspired by GC 34 which stresses the importance of dialogue between faith and culture and listening to the *sensus fidelium.*
- Pope John Paul II's *Redemptor Hominis* 6 acknowledges that the belief of the non-Christian religions is also "the effect of the Spirit of truth operating outside the visible confines of the Mystical Body." For example, the mystical notion of the earth can lead to cultural conversion and integral ecology. Hence, communicate with the earth, listen to the earth, and respond to the pains of the earth.

Jose Mario C. Francisco

- My hashtag for yesterday's symposium is #LifeTheo—the link between theology and life. How do we strengthen the link? First, we need to take into account the history of religious formation. Current religious formation that includes theological education categories or divisions are products of German theological foundations. The teacher of theology should be self-reflexive, aware of his/her social location. For example, a woman theologian teaching the priesthood would go through the classic questions but bring in a different experience.
- Second, the texts of theology are not walls that divide but windows to God. The Logos is present in and around us. Thus, everything is fair game. There should be an interdisciplinary approach to theology.
- Third, the relationship between pastoral ministry and theology begins with listening to the faith of the people—the *sensus fidelium*. Listening is a skill: how do we listen to and understand the faith of the people? There is a dynamic and dialectical relationship between theology and pastoral ministry; they interact with one another. Kathryn Tanner says that "theology is an ongoing conversation of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus."

Albertus Bagus Laksana

- In the next fifty years in Asia, there is a call to reflect on the category of beauty. The starting point: beauty of Christian life that is inspiring rather than convincing (truth). Beauty helps make Christian life whole in Asia—shrines, festivals, humanitarian movements. Starting point should be *pulchrum*: what makes our Christian life worth living? Examples are the personal testimonies of the speakers in the symposium. It is time to reflect on the new theology of Asia through beauty. It is reason that contemplates on the mysteries of life and God. Thus, we can be an "oasis" in Asia. We stop

in categories of thinking and instead connect to the beauty of life so we can be a more contemplative people. Asian traditions are wisdom traditions, not systems of thinking. They comprise a life force.

Patricia Panganiban-Lambino

- My hashtag is #TeachingfromBooksTeachingfromLife. Where do we draw out theological thoughts? This is a question of theological sources. My professors taught not only from books but also from life. My criticism in learning theology is that we read a few books particularly the classics, and only in part.
- How have we led and served through theology? Cardinal Versaldi mentions that through theology, we found better ways of communicating doctrine, ways that integrate. For Cardinal Quevedo, it is through the theology of dialogue. The testimonials in the symposium tell us that it is from life.
- David Tracy says we theologians are accountable to the wider society, Church, and academy. I wonder how we can develop more accountability to the academy?

Michael J. Liberatore

- Three thoughts come to mind: first, pray over the lessons and not simply teach the lessons. In praying, questions rather than answers are opened. It is a wonder how theologians grapple with these questions.
- Second, commit to a particular place where prophetic witness can spring. Cardinal Versaldi recognizes that service has a particular location. We should witness to the value of social movement, the prophetic spirit awakening in a specific place, in a certain community.
- Third, can we spend time developing a robust lay vocation? Let's move beyond seeing the laity simply as leftovers or non-clerics, but as people possessing a rich vocation that articulates what it means to participate in the Church.

Quirico T. Pedregosa, Jr.

- The connection between leading and serving is more intimate than it appears. We should emphasize serving which is the greatest need of theology. It is serving the transforming life of God. Theology is the science of the love of God.
- Second, notice the powerful impact of testimonies. They are more concrete and experiential. They show how alive the *sensus fidelium* is, declaring the presence of the loving God. Theology in Asia should be a living and life-giving theologizing. Reality is characterized by a surplus of love.
- Third, there is the need for systematic theology that is formative and, if possible, transformative. Pope Francis says, "Go to the peripheries." The call to theologians is to stay close, listen with a heart, and learn from the people with whom we do theology. Pope Francis tells us not to be a "'museum' theologian who gathers data and information on Revelation without, however, really knowing what to do with it."[1] The places of reflection are the peripheries.

Jose Mario C. Francisco

- (To the laywoman and layman): Suppose you are to design the curriculum on the priesthood, what will you say to us today?

Patricia Panganiban-Lambino

- It's something to be in the minority. Being one of the few females in the classes gets attention. A better gender mix in class would help. From a religious education perspective, strengthen homily giving.

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[1]Letter of Pope Francis to the Grand Chancellor of the Pontificia Universidad Catolica Argentina for the 100th anniversary of the founding of the faculty of theology (March 3, 2015), https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/letters/2015/documents/papa-francesco_20150303_lettera-universita-cattolica-argentina.html (accessed March 18, 2016).

Michael J. Liberatore

- Consider how power gets bound up with sacramental responsibility. The faculty given to the priests to administer the sacraments does not necessarily mean they know everything. In the management of the parish, lay people can bring more expertise to the table—like the budget—and transparency can be served more by the lay rather than the priest.
- Theology is taught partially in the classroom. Houses of formation reinforce what is learned in LST. The biggest challenge is how theology can be lived and witnessed in the houses of formation.

Jose Mario C. Francisco

- Religious formation is taken care of by different sectors. There are areas of life to which priests are not privy. There are major aspects of human life to which lay people can contribute.

Quirico T. Pedregosa, Jr.

- The experience and life of the lay are important loci of theologizing in our time. That's why we need to go to the peripheries where God's presence can be articulated more.

Joaquin C. Yap, Jr.

- Classroom discussions vary but in general, lay people have a lot to share, making conversations dynamic and provocative.

Open Forum

Ruben Habito: I see a common theme: we are called to do a theology of life. We should realize that God's people are hurting. In our task as theologians, how does theology connect with the hurts of God's people?

Joaquin Yap: Theologians speak a lot about God but not to God.

Francisco Machado: What worries me is the quality against the quantity: too many courses but very little time for reflection. And homilies are not central in studies and formation.

Jojo Fung (responding to the question on the mysticism of the earth): Mysticism has to do with the web of relationships with the seen and unseen. God is everywhere and in everyone. Connect with the earth, hear the cries and joys of the earth. Mysticism is the door that opens us to the beyond—God. One experiences it as fullness of life.

Albertus Bagus Laksana: We have to test the avenues and how they connect with the lives of the people. We have to be attuned to the culture, which is fluid. We have to differentiate the sociological aspect from the theological aspect. We have to be creative; there are no easy answers to the questions.

Jose Mario Francisco: When we speak of inculturation, we must be careful in talking about pure Gospel. Christianity is incarnate. Faith and culture are dynamic.

Patricia Panganiban-Lambino: Theologians offer different principles or frameworks for inculturation.

Jose Mario Francisco (commenting on pedagogy): On one extreme, we have a dry, academic, and technical lecture, and on the other extreme, we have a theology class that is like a recollection. How do we locate ourselves, both theologically and pedagogically?

Quirico Pedregosa: There is no concrete formula. Our approach should be integrative. The Gospel is not about something but about Someone who loves us. We should not make people know theoretically but make them experience.

Kristiono Puspo: How deep is the reflection? We should lead and teach students how to reflect.

James Kroeger: Cardinal Quevedo mentions the need for a road map and our roles. The informative/intellectual (the roadmap) and the transformative—both have to be there.

Grace Marquez: In the effort to marry book and life theologies, is there a possibility to include family life and human stages of development in the curriculum?

Second Round Table Discussion on Spirituality & Biblical Theology

Panelists

Rev. Arnel dC. Aquino, S.J., S.T.D. (Moderator)—Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Rev. Samuel H. Canilang, C.M.F., S.T.D.—Director and Professor, Institute for Consecrated Life in Asia, Quezon City.

Rev. Arthur Leger, S.J., Ph.D.—Director and Professor, East Asian Pastoral Institute, Quezon City.

Dr. Melba P. Maggay, Ph.D.—Founder and Director, Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture, Quezon City.

Dr. Carmen M. Scheuerman, Ph.D.—Assistant Professor, Union Theological Seminary, Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Dr. Niceta M. Vargas, O.S.A., Ph.D.—Assistant Professor of Biblical Theology, Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Dr. Federico G. Villanueva, Jr., Ph.D.—Lecturer, Asian Graduate School of Theology; Assistant Professor of Biblical Theology, Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Thoughts of Each Panelist

Melba P. Maggay

- It is important not to debunk formal theology. But we have to think theologically from historical experiences. We need to have a social consensus, for example, on martial law. The work of theology is to provide a theological understanding

of our experience and tell us what is wrong. It is to look at the truth through the lens of God.
- We must heed the call to be prophets and mystics. We have "to be in the world but not of the world." What is the shape of the Kingdom in the Filipino-Asian context? How should it look like from the perspective of Asian theologians?
- We should develop a hermeneutical community composed of social scientists and theologians because theologians tend to think in the abstract.

Carmen M. Scheuerman

- How does one make meaning in theology? We make meaning when we do, create, live, and embody theology. The testimonies of the symposium speakers remind us of our theological quest. At the end of the day, we are human beings confronted with the realities of life. Theology cannot be divorced from the life of the people.
- Has our theological formation mediated theological learning? Has our method touched the lives of the people? Has our theological formation changed the theological grammar that frames your service and leadership?
- When we do our theology, there is something in our bodies that reflects the *imago Dei*.
- We need to create theologies from our authentic identities. We need Christian educators who can teach the Filipino and Asian way of learning.

Niceta M. Vargas

- Why is it that in the curriculum we divide theology and spirituality? We start with the lived experience, with the love of God, and then reflect (do theology). Doing theology leads to humility and to love of God and neighbor. Studying theology is in view of the love of God. It is about humility so as to live in truth.
- To pay attention is the beginning of prayer. Theology as prayer becomes an encounter with Someone, leading to love of God and neighbor. Cardinal Versaldi mentions that

"careful, patient, and deliberate attention to the thoughts of others cultivates the capacity in loving God," and "it is desirable that theologians are persons of prayer." Doing theology is learning how to listen. Study is learning how to listen.

- In my experience of studying the Scriptures, it is about listening, waiting, begging. Doing theology is seeking Jesus.

Federico G. Villanueva, Jr.

- What is the purpose of the study of the Scriptures? We study the Scriptures to serve the Church and the world. How do we make this a reality?

  1. First, through prayer. And we should pray for each other. Biblical theologians don't talk to each other. Can we be more welcoming?

  2. Second, collaboration between bishops and theologians. In actual practice, bishops and pastors don't work closely with theologians. There has been a dichotomy imported from the West; but Filipinos see things holistically. It is the people of God that suffers from the dichotomy.

Samuel H. Canilang

- On the figure of theologian in the Asian context: it is desirable that theologians are persons of prayer. In the Asian context, witness of life is important in transmitting the faith. Asian peoples are not moved by doctrine, logic, or authority. The transforming experience of God becomes their primary source of doing theology.
- On ecclesial communion: there is unity of different forms of discipleship. We are *Christi fideles*.

Arthur Leger

- On spirituality and theories of leadership: theology is inadequate for leadership today in the Church. We need to dialogue with secular disciplines to avoid continuing Church problems.

- Bernard Lonergan asks: how do we make theology dialogue with sciences? Our categories and pedagogy are European and until we move away from this mental framework, we will not be able to make sense in the Asian context. I am proposing a new pedagogy of theology. Unless we change the pedagogy, there will be a disjunction between the classroom and the reality outside the classroom. Faith-seeking-understanding is a European-Greek category. It is inadequate, especially in Bloom's taxonomy of education. Michael Amaladoss, S.J., uses faith-seeking-transformation for conversion. The end of theology is the transformation of the person.

Open Forum

Walter Ysaac: The image of God is in everybody. It comes alive when you pray, when you do theology. Talk to God. Everybody becomes a mystic.

Jun-G Bargayo: There is need for theological reflections on issues affecting our people, especially in Mindanao. How do we address people who criticize us?

Carmen Scheuerman: The problem is the posture that Christianity is the religion with answers to all. When we work in a particular place, we should not monopolize the power of transformation. Keep an open space and look into the "diwa" (spirit) of "kapwa" (fellow)—look into the practices of the people and learn from them.

Melba Maggay: We live in a pluralistic world where Christianity no longer monopolizes space. Understand religion in terms of our spiritualities. The language of the defense of the faith presupposes boundaries but we have to realize that maybe those boundaries are superficial. We are inheritors of dualism: sacred-secular. It is important to apprehend the reality of pluralism and see where the boundaries are shifting. Asian Christians are not interested in having boundaries but in direction or movement. I can be a fellow traveler of anybody who is a follower of Christ. The problem is that religion has become

boundary-keeping, which we inherited from the West. Let us begin with our spirituality, like Carmen who begins with her Aeta heritage. Who are actually shaping us?

Jeffrey Scheuerman: Have we walked with those whom we bring Christ to? Have we danced with the people we're working with? Pope Francis dances with the poor. Have we danced with the poor?

Arthur Leger: Jesus' pedagogy is story-telling (narrative teaching). In the old classroom pedagogy, the teachers fill up students with knowledge. In the new pedagogy, the teachers facilitate leaning. The students have the knowledge; the teachers bring it out. The students have the wisdom; the teachers draw it out of the students and they celebrate as a community.

Carmen Scheuerman: We do weaving. We cannot remove the Christianity from us, but culture is also in us. How do we weave the two together? Since Christianity has transformed our culture, we need to look at our concept of God in two ways: from Christianity's standpoint and also from our cultural perspective.

Niceta Vargas: Use dialogue as pedagogy. For example, in the process of exchanging ideas, theses grow. This is a question of humility, openness, and growth—create a place for discovering oneself and listening.

Melba Maggay: Most Western cultures learn with the left brain, which is linear, logical, abstract. Theology in the West is mostly abstract and compartmentalized. It is important to recognize this. Whereas Asian cultures are dominantly right-brained: intuitive. The aim is to learn more with the right brain: e.g., through songs, narratives. It is the music in our souls that will carry us from our deathbed to the afterlife.

Carmen Scheuerman: My suggestion is to gather families, look at their best practices, and bring an educator to learn from them and make a module for the classroom. We need to listen to them and their great practices.

Federico Villanueva: We should allow the negative things to find a place. "God is good all the time," but not all can identify with it. It's

okay not to be okay; there is room for that in prayer. Many times our testimonies are all positive. I hope we can also have communal lament.

Niceta Vargas: For every module we made in the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) textbooks, there was a family activity. Also, the homilies we give should be inspiring for the people.

Summary

The purpose of this summary is to present some common themes arising from the panel discussions. In the first round table discussion, the conversation revolved around the impact of the *sensus fidelium* in helping articulate "new theologies" in Asia. *Sensus fidelium* refers to the faith of the people. This faith is a "life force" interacting with culture. Here, specific avenues of doing theology surfaced. For example, Jojo Fung, S.J., points to the importance of mysticism in creating intimate relationships with the earth. He defines cosmic mysticism as the "web of relationships with the seen and unseen," and as the "door that opens us to the beyond." This particular type of doing theology deals with cultural conversion and integral ecology. Pope Francis released *Laudato Si'*, an encyclical calling for deeper engagement and care for creation. In Fr. Fung's example, this care for creation is contextualized in cosmic mysticism.

Jose Mario Francisco, S.J., emphasizes the need for listening. Taking a cue from Kathryn Tanner who insists that "theology has to be engaged in negotiations with popular theologies,"[2] Fr. Francisco sees theology as an "ongoing conversation of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus." Such conversion requires listening especially to the *sensus fidelium*. Michael Liberatore deepens the notion of *sensus fidelium* by pointing out the importance of the commitment to a particular place where prophetic witness can spring. He draws from the insight of Cardinal Versaldi who recognizes that service has a particular location.

[2]Kathryn Tanner, *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 85.

Therefore, we should witness to the value of movement and be sensitive to the prophetic spirit awakening in a specific place. This includes a deliberate development of robust lay vocation, which is a rich calling, articulating the meaning of participation in the life of the Church.

Another theme that came up in the discussion was the link between theology and life. Albertus Bagus Laksana, S.J., points to beauty as the starting point of theology since beauty communicates life rather than doctrines. The personal testimonies given by the speakers on the first day of the symposium are powerful examples of what Christian life means. Fr. Laksana notes that beauty "helps make Christian life whole in Asia—[with its] shrines, festivals, [and] humanitarian movements." Perhaps the important theological question is: "what makes our Christian life worth living?" Quirico Pedrosa, O.P., thinks along similar lines when he mentions that the testimonies in the symposium were powerful reminders of how alive the *sensus fidelium* is when people speak about the presence of the loving God. He opines that theology in Asia should be a living and life-giving theologizing since the reality is characterized by a surplus of love. Patricia Panganiban-Lambino and Jose Mario Francisco, S.J., question whether our sources of theology are close to, or divorced from, life. Panganiban-Lambino notes that her professors taught not only from books but also from life, while Francisco highlights how the texts of theology are windows to God and not walls that divide.

Spirituality affects and animates the *sensus fidelium*. Whether it is about pedagogy or methods of inculturation, listening to the various movements of the one Spirit found in the various ways of Christian living is an indispensable tool in forming the relevant frameworks of doing theology. Here we encounter the old adage that a good theologian is the one who prays and the one who prays is a good theologian. In the second round table discussion, Niceta Vargas, O.S.A., and Federico Villanueva reiterate the value of prayer in studying the Scriptures. Vargas reminds us that in prayer, one waits, begs, and becomes humble in letting the text speak to him or her. Villanueva sees the importance of biblical theologians praying for one another and talking with one another, since they work individually most of

the time. Furthermore, he notes that prayer leads to a transformative experience. Samuel Canilang, C.M.F., says that "it is desirable that theologians are persons of prayer. In the Asian context, witness of life is important in transmitting the faith. Asian peoples are not moved by doctrine, logic, or authority. The transforming experience of God becomes their primary source of doing theology."

Doing theology opens up the question of pedagogy, which became a crucial point of discussion among some of the panelists. Carmen Scheuerman, a Methodist educator, notes that the testimonies remind us of our "theological quest" and manner of meaning-making. Our human context makes theology integral in our life and is enriched by our different realities. In terms of pedagogy, she raises crucial questions: "[How has] our theological formation mediated theological learning? Has our method touched the lives of the people? Has our theological formation changed the theological grammar that frames [our] service and leadership?" Melba Maggay vouches for a "hermeneutical community" composed of theologians, social scientists, etc. This will make the study of theology more holistic and relevant to the situation of the people. Arthur Leger, S.J., proposes a new pedagogy that moves away from the prevailing European mental framework. This new pedagogy underlines the role of the teacher as facilitator of wisdom or knowledge among students in order to bring out a more contextual theology. He cautions that unless we change the pedagogy, there will be a disjunction between the classroom and the reality outside of the classroom.

An important *locus theologicus*, especially in Filipino culture, is the family. Grace Marquez, a counselor of the Center for Family Ministries (CEFAM), suggests the inclusion of family and human development studies in seminary formation. Scheuerman presents the idea of gathering the "best practices" from select families and arranging them into a teaching module, while Vargas notes the inclusion of a parent-child activity in the CEAP education module. Villanueva points out the importance of allowing negative experiences to find their place in prayer and theology. He notes that there is very little room

for negative experiences in the Church, and that our testimonies are oftentimes positive.

These common themes that arose from the round table discussions have enriched the speeches and testimonies in the International Theological Symposium. They also open new avenues for further reflection on the sources, issues, and pedagogy of theology. Although there may be limitations to what can be achieved in reinventing and applying theology to various contexts, these themes may reflect the signs of the times. In its effort to lead and serve through theology, the Loyola School of Theology tries to be sensitive to the movement of the Spirit. In the words of Melba Maggay: "We must heed the call to be prophets and mystics. We have 'to be in the world but not of the world.' What is the shape of the Kingdom in the Filipino-Asian context? How should it look like from the perspective of Asian theologians [and not elsewhere]?"

Landas 30:1 (2016) 79–91

SUMMARY OF THE ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS – 2*

Sherwin Q. Santos

The round table discussion focused on the question "how do we lead and serve through theology in changing Asian contexts?" There were two sets of panelists chosen from a wide range of competencies, and each set had a moderator. The panelists were given three minutes each to present his or her views. A free-flowing discussion among the panelists then followed. Afterwards, an open forum allowed the audience to engage the panelists in a conversation and also to share their own reactions.

First Round Table Discussion on Systematic Theology

Panelists

Dr. Joaquin C. Yap, Jr., S.W., D.Phil. (Moderator)—Professor of Systematic Theology, Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

*On the second day of the LST International Theological Symposium held at the Cardinal Sin Center (Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University: March 11, 2016). Statements attributed to the panelists are the author's summaries/paraphrases and not verbatim transcriptions. Thus, the panelists cannot be cited as authors of the statements.

Rev. Albertus Bagus Laksana, S.J., Ph.D.—Professor of Systematic Theology, Wedabhakti Pontifical Faculty of Theology, Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta.

Rev. Jose Mario C. Francisco, S.J., Ph.D.—Professor of Systematic Theology, Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City; Gregorian University, Rome.

Rev. Jojo M. Fung, S.J., Ph.D.—Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, Loyola School of Theology and East Asian Pastoral Institute, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Dr. Patricia Panganiban-Lambino—Assistant Professor, Theology Department, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Mr. Michael J. Liberatore—Assistant Professor, Theology Department, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Rev. Quirico T. Pedregosa, Jr., O.P., Ph.D.—Rector and Professor, University of Santo Tomas Central Seminary, Manila.

Thoughts of Each Panelist

Jojo M. Fung

- Fr. Jojo began by stating that it would be good for the Loyola School of Theology (LST) to consider not only *fides quaerens intellectum* but also to engage the faith and explain what God is saying to God's people of various cultures and religions. There is a need to engage the different contexts of Africa, Asia, and Oceania.
- In the next fifty years, we should consider ourselves as an oasis into which many springs from other religions flow, so that they would seep into the way we are doing theology.
- As a Jesuit institution, we are to be guided by GC 34, decree 4, no. 17 (dialogue with culture) and by GC 35 (depth in theological reflection).
- According to John Paul II's *Redemptor hominis*, God works in different religions.
- Forming others must include what Fr. Jojo calls a mystical sense of the earth. There should be an ecological conversion.

Jose Mario C. Francisco

- Fr. Mario summarized the symposium of March 10 as "Life-Theo."
- He asked the following questions: How can we strengthen the link between life and theology? How is theological knowledge produced and who produces it? He commented that there has been a division in the structure of studying theology that is an influence of the German approach to theology.
- Suggestions:

  1. The teacher of theology must be self-reflective.

  2. The matter of theology is the text. However, texts should not be walls that divide but rather windows into life. There is a call for an interdisciplinary approach.

  3. Theology and pastoral ministry—this is not only applying what we learned in theology in the pastoral ministry. What is needed is to listen to the faith of the people before trying to purify and deepen the faith of the people.

- A good description of what theology is about is that it is an on-going conversation on what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.

Albertus Bagus Laksana

- Truth, goodness, and beauty are some of the categories of thinking that were presented yesterday. Perhaps it is necessary to reflect more on the category of beauty.
- Proclamation is presenting the Gospel in a more inspiring (beauty) rather than more convincing (truth) way, that is, relating the beauty of our Christian life. Non-Christians go to our shrines and participate in our rituals and humanitarian activities but they do not go to schools of theology.
- The new theology of beauty contemplates the mystery of God. It is not discursive but contemplative.

- We can be an oasis of this kind of life; life somehow makes sense despite the frailties and failures; it makes sense to be a Christian.

Patricia Panganiban-Lambino

- Hashtag: teaching from books and teaching from life.
- This is not just a question of pedagogy but a question of theological sources.
- Patricia's experience as a student in LST is that the professors taught from life. However, her criticism is that they read too few books, and not even entire books. Can we read the classics?
- How have we taught and served after Vatican II? Quoting Cardinal Versaldi, she said that we have to find ways to communicate the doctrine. Cardinal Quevedo's answer is that we serve through the promotion of a theology of dialogue. From the testimonies of speakers at the Symposium, it was experiences and fruits of faith seeking understanding.
- The theologian is responsible to society, academy, and church. How are we accountable to the academy?

Michael J. Liberatore

- What is the role of theology in the life of the theologian? His suggestion is to stop teaching the lessons and start praying the lessons, that is, to lead the students to pray. In many cases, questions are more important than giving answers.
- Commitment to a particular place from which the prophetic witness would be able to spring.
- Some of the challenges: how do we evangelize a cleric-centric church to become a more robust lay church?

Quirico T. Pedregosa, Jr.

- The connection between leading and serving is more intimate. In Jesus' ministry, serving is the essence of leading. We have to emphasize more serving than leading—not only

knowledge of God (*scientia dei*) but signs of the love of God (*signa dei amoris*).
- The testimonies had more impact on us because they were concrete and experiential.
- What we need is a theology that is not only informative but also formative and transformative.
- We need local or contextualized theology in Asia.
- To theologize is to communicate God's love to the peripheries. To understand theology is to understand that God is love. The call of Pope Francis to the theologians of Argentina: do not go for desktop theology. Do not be museum theologians.

Open Forum

Jojo Fung (to Panganiban-Lambino and Liberatore): If lay people were to teach the course on the priesthood, what would you tell us about the way we are forming priests today?

Patricia Panganiban-Lambino: My experience of going through formation alongside those being trained to be priests was that I was treated as a minority. There was no ill intent but there should be a better mix of seminarians and lay persons in a class. From a religious education perspective, we need to understand and appropriate. The latter task needs to be strengthened.

Michael Liberatore: The priest's power is tied to the sacraments. The sacramental role of the priest does not give him knowledge of everything. Lay people can bring something to the table; for example, the parish budget. Second, the houses of formation are supposed to be partners with LST. Theology should be taught in the classroom and witnessed to in the house of formation.

Jose Mario Francisco: Liberatore's last comment is true. The religious houses are important in formation and the study of theology. The role of lay people as theologians is also very important. For example, lay people have more experience of marriage, family life, the reality of death, etc. Religious could learn from their stories.

Quirico Pedregosa: We have to respect the sociology of social process. The experiences and the life story of the lay are important loci in theology. Therefore, we have to go to the peripheries.

Joaquin Yap: In my experience as a teacher in LST, the classroom discussion varies from class to class. Lay people, especially women, have a lot to share. Seminarians tend to be more sheltered.

Ruben Habito: I like what you said: there's a need to connect theology with life—[following through on Fr. Quirico's comment, Ruben asks] for whom are we doing theology? We should realize that people are suffering. As we speak, children are dying of hunger. There are cases of suicide in the Ateneo. The earth is facing destruction. The task that I am offering is this: how is our theology informed by these hurts?

Joaquin Yap: Quoting John Paul II: "you theologians speak of God, but you do not speak to God."

Francisco Machado: What worries me is the quality and the quantity, the amount of courses versus depth and dialogue, the number of subjects versus the time for reflection. I don't think it works. Homily seems to be not given much attention in formation, yet it is important to the people because it is their source of knowledge of Church teaching and their daily contact with their priest. Question for Fr. Jojo Fung: what do you mean by mysticism of the earth?

Jojo Fung: Mysticism is relationship with the seen and the unseen. It is like a door that opens us to the beyond, which is God. God is everywhere, ready to be discovered. Does LST have a meeting with the formators, and listen to each other's concerns? How do we form people?

Albertus Bagus Laksana: We have to test all those avenues and see how they connect with the real life of the people. We have to be attuned to the development of culture within our own situation or context. We need to differentiate the sociological aspect and the religious context. Culture is not dead: it thrives and develops, especially with the young who have a sub-culture of their own.

Jose Mario Francisco: When we speak of inculturation we must be careful in speaking of the Gospel as pure Gospel, or of Christianity as pure Christianity. The process is dynamic and it should move both ways.

Patricia Panganiban-Lambino: There is no a priori answer to how far we can go with inculturation. Theologians offer various suggestions. Some endorse creative fidelity, while others call for authenticity. These are attempts to explicate a balancing act.

Jose Mario Francisco: There is one question that needs to be answered: is theology dry and boring, or is it reflective and inspiring, like a recollection? It is important to locate ourselves where we are, pedagogically or theologically.

Quirico Pedregosa: There should be integration with life. All of theology should be integrated and connected with life. The Gospel is not about something but about Someone. Teachers of theology are more appreciated when they share their experience.

Kristiono Puspo: The real situation is that priests are working hard and often they do not have time to reflect. In LST, the people in formation have more time and resources. Therefore, they should be led to do deeper reflection.

James Kroeger: Witnessing and testimonies moved us most deeply. Some of the questions were in Quevedo's talk yesterday: where must we go, where are the peripheries? We need a roadmap where we are going and we are going to go there. The informative/intellectual (the roadmap) has to be there. The transformative aspect forms us. There should also be the performative dimension that should tell us what we are supposed to do.

Grace Marquez: How are we to marry "book-theology" with "life-theology"? Is it possible to include family life and stages of development in the seminary formation?

Second Round Table Discussion on Spirituality & Biblical Theology

Panelists

Rev. Arnel dC. Aquino, S.J., S.T.D. (Moderator)—Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Rev. Samuel H. Canilang, C.M.F., S.T.D.—Director and Professor, Institute for Consecrated Life in Asia, Quezon City.

Rev. Arthur Leger, S.J., Ph.D.—Director and Professor, East Asian Pastoral Institute, Quezon City.

Dr. Melba P. Maggay, Ph.D.—Founder and Director, Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture, Quezon City.

Dr. Carmen M. Scheuerman, Ph.D.—Assistant Professor, Union Theological Seminary, Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Dr. Niceta M. Vargas, O.S.A., Ph.D.—Assistant Professor of Biblical Theology, Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Dr. Federico G. Villanueva, Jr., Ph.D.—Lecturer, Asian Graduate School of Theology; Assistant Professor of Biblical Theology, Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City.

Thoughts of Each Panelist

Melba P. Maggay

- What does it mean to put what we have heard on the ground? There is no need to debunk the need for formal theology. We need theological reflection alongside our experiences. Theologians need help from lay people who think historically to think theologically. If not, history will also go down the drain. A theologian could provide a theological understanding of what happened to us.
- It is important to heed the call to be prophet and mystic. One needs to be in the world and not of the world. What is

the shape of the Kingdom in the Philippine context? With the evangelicals, there is a difficult attempt to bring back the social dimension of the Gospel. We need to develop a hermeneutical community (theologians and social scientists) because theologians tend to think in the abstract.

Carmen M. Scheuerman

- How does one make meaning in theology? It is when we create, live, and embody theology that is based on your context. Theology should not be divorced from the daily life of the people. It should not be separate from our identity. We need to create theology from our authentic identity.
- How is the theological formation of the students mediated though their everyday life? How is the theological teaching mediated through everyday life? The suggestion is to listen to our students. Do students have spiritual directors who can listen to them? How are students transformed?
- How has theological education changed the theological grammar and conversation that bring people to service and leadership? Is *damayan* and *malasakit* learned from the study of theology or is it already imbedded in the psyche of a person?
- I am surprised that there were no Christian educators invited to yesterday's symposium.

Niceta M. Vargas

- See what a woman theologian can offer.
- What does doing theology mean? Doing theology for me should lead to humility and the love of God. Simone Weil said that studying is "in view of the love of God."[1] It is about humility so as to live in truth. To study theology is to

[1]Simone Weil, "Reflections on the Right Use of School Studies with a View to the Love of God," https://www.scribd.com/doc/230812218/Weil-Simone-Reflections-on-the-Right-Use-of-School-Studies-With-a-View-to-the-Love-of-God (accessed March 8, 2016).

pay attention. To pay attention is the beginning of prayer, leading to an encounter, leading to a love of God, to love of neighbor.

- [Quoting Versaldi:] "Integral to the spirituality of the theologian are: a love of truth, a readiness for conversion of heart and mind, a striving for holiness, and a commitment to ecclesial communion and mission."[2] It is thus desirable that theologians are persons of prayer.
- Doing theology is learning how to listen. According to Timothy Radcliffe, studying is not learning to be clever but listening. We wait upon the Lord, and so we are led to what he may give us; we wait with intelligent receptivity to what will be given. Listening, waiting, begging.
- What do you seek? Whom do you seek? Doing theology is the spirituality of seeking Jesus. The story of Jesus becomes my story. Therefore, doing theology leads to sanctity.

Federico G. Villanueva, Jr.

- The main theme of the conference: what is the purpose of doing theology? What is the purpose of studying the Scripture? Versaldi's answer is: to serve the Church. Theologians are sons and daughters of the Church.
- How do you make this into reality? I would like to share three things. First, it is prayer; it is acknowledging our dependence on God and praying with one another.
- Second, there should be a fruitful collaboration between the bishops and the theologians. Biblical scholars should work closely with the pastors. The people of God suffer as a result of this dichotomy.
- Third, according to St. Bernard of Clairvaux, "there are those who seek knowledge for the sake of knowledge—that is called curiosity. There are those who seek it to be known

[2]Cf. Giuseppe Cardinal Versaldi, "Leading and Serving through Theology: 50 Years After Vatican II," *Landas* 30:1 (2016): 21–22.

by others—that is called vanity. And there are those who seek it in order to serve—that is love."[3]

Samuel H. Canilang

- The first point is the figure of the Asian theologian. A theologian is a person who truly prays. A person who truly prays is a theologian. For Asians, witness of life is of utmost importance. Asian people are not moved by power positions or authority. Asians will follow Jesus if they find Jesus in their disciples.
- Second point: the testimonies of yesterday's symposium point to the unity, equality, and inter-complementarity of discipleship.

Arthur Leger

- Spirituality and theories of leadership. Theology alone is inadequate for leadership in the Church today. It is not complete. We need to dialogue with the secular disciplines. Lonergan suggests that we dialogue with the sciences. We need to change the pedagogy. We don't learn about theology but learn theology. Many people advocate this. Examples include Lonergan and Amaladoss (theology of the oppressed).
- Faith seeking understanding is not enough. Understanding is a low level learning in Bloom's taxonomy. As Michael Amaladoss said, it should be "faith seeking transformation through understanding"[4] that leads to conversion.

Open Forum

Walter Isaac: According to Lonergan, the image of God is in everyone. It comes alive when we pray.

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[3]See St. Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sentences* 1.19; 3.57; 3.108.

[4]Michael Amaladoss, "Is there an Asian Way of Doing Theology?" Available at http://www.eapi.org.ph/resources/eapr/east-asian-pastoral-review-2008/volume-45-2008-number-1/is-there-an-asian-way-of-doing-theology/.

Carmen Scheuerman: When you enter a space (say a space of conversation), one should not monopolize. This will not create a space of peace.

Arnel Aquino: The defensive stance of the Church is a medieval stance. And we are already moving away from that.

Melba Maggay: We live in a pluralistic world. Christianity no longer monopolizes the social space. Asian Christians are not interested in boundaries. They are more interested to know where it will lead. The more important process is to journey together. And we ask ourselves the following questions: who are actually shaping us? Who are we and to whom do we belong?

Jeffrey Scheuerman: There is a Native American saying that goes like this: have you walked a mile with my moccasins? Have you danced with the people you are working with? Pope Francis danced with the poor. He danced with the prisoners. He prayed in the mosque.

Arthur Leger: The new pedagogy is to tell the story. In the old pedagogy, the students went to the classroom and the teacher provided all the information and knowledge. In the new pedagogy, the teacher is the facilitator. The students have knowledge, and the role of the teacher is to draw it out and bring the students to the desired level.

Carmen Scheuerman: We cannot remove Christianity from us. However, culture is also in us. How do we weave these two together? In our mission with the Aetas, we use their culture and their categories to evangelize (e.g., Jesus as Apo Namalyari).

Niceta Vargas: Augustine has a theory on dialogue. To study theology is to push the student. This is an exercise of humility.

Melba Maggay: Western culture is left-brained, linear, sequential. Asians are normally right-brained, and appropriation is very important. We tell stories. We sing songs. The music in our soul shall carry us on our deathbed.

Jun-G Bargayo: My frustration in Mindanao is that we do not reflect on the Mindanao displacement. We react only when it is of national importance. We do not reflect and write about what is happening there.

Hernando Coronel: How are we going to make our theology more attractive to families?

Carmen Scheuerman: Suggestions: gather the families and look at their great practices. Bring those practices to the educators so they could learn from them, and teach them to their students.

Federico Villanueva: In what way do we address the hurt of the people? Allow the negative experience to have a place. God is good all the time, but not all can identify with this every single time. We need to teach the people that it is sometimes ok not to be ok.

Niceta Vargas: In the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP), we have written new textbooks for basic education in which we have integrated Scripture with the lesson. Then there are assignments/activities that involve the family. Homilies should be inspiring for the people.

Landas 30:1 (2016) 93–96

LOYOLA SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AND THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL*

Catalino G. Arévalo, S.J.

With these few words, I hope you will let me share a conviction about LST which has been growing in my mind for some years now. I am now the only Jesuit priest who has been in this house and school since its first day of occupied existence fifty years ago, with no change of basic assignment. That same year that we came to this house, the Second Vatican Council ended on December 8, 1965. As the Jubilee Year 2000 was about to begin, Pope John Paul II said what innumerable other qualified observers (both Catholic and from many other Christian denominations) had said before him, and are still saying now, now that we mark the 50th anniversary of that 8th of December in 1965. For Christian communities, including Protestants and others, Vatican II was the single most significant and history-changing event for the Christian church and Christian world at least in the twentieth century—or, some say, even since the Reformation.

Our former Father General, Peter Hans Kolvenbach, wrote that one of St. Ignatius' most remarkably original theological insistences was the insight that *God is truly at work in history*, truly moving it forward,

*Delivered on the occasion of the launching of the LST-LHS Golden Jubilee Celebration (Loyola School of Theology, Quezon City, Philippines: September 12, 2015).

with His wisdom and goodness truly giving it direction and shaping it—with His own ways of wisdom and goodness—with our genuine free collaboration (Fr. Kolvenbach has said that this was a genuinely new "Ignatian perspective" in theology and spirituality). In that context, I believe LST was "created" by God, with His own timing, to be one effective instrument to bring about what He had brought about in Vatican II—to be, at least beginning-wise, realized in the Church in the Philippines, and in the Church in Asia.

Let me admit that while this conviction needs fuller development if it will be accepted by many others, it is my conviction. If we were to create a line-up of some of the factors and events, some of the key people and movements, and some of the realities that strongly brought Vatican II's "results" into the life of the Church in the Philippines and in Asia, I believe LST was in some genuine and significant ways in active participation and interaction with practically every single one of them.

Pope Paul VI's 1970 Visit

We might choose Pope Paul VI's visit in 1970 as "event number one." The Asian Bishops' Meeting was the first big Vatican II "invasion" into the Catholic life of our country. Fr. Horacio de la Costa, our LHS/LST founder, was one of those chosen by the Holy See to contribute to the "input" of that visit, to its theological content and directions, with *Populorum progressio* as its basic theme—"development is the new name for peace." The really remarkable "vision/mission input" Paul VI brought with him, as we now realize (we did not, in 1970), contained *in semine* what in the following decades the Asian Bishops would develop in their "first-time-in-history" assemblies and statements. In a way, the seeds are in Paul VI's "For All the Peoples of Asia" (FAPA).

The concluding statement of the 1970 Asian Bishops' Meeting, its inspiration really basically drawn from Paul VI, already foreshadowed future FABC themes, and LST "was there."

FABC

For the very first meeting, where the foundation of the *Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences* (FABC) was taken up and its beginnings really given initial form and substance, Stephen Cardinal Kim (FABC "Father," if there was one) and Bishop Mariano Gaviola, Secretary General of what was in the future to become the CBCP, asked Fr. de la Costa to convene and organize that meeting at the Jesuit Provincialate in Xavier House. LST was there.

From the first genuinely history-making FABC General Assembly in Taipei in 1974, to the actual nitty-gritty FABC part "in the workings" of the Synod of Bishops in Rome in 1974, LST was really there.[1]

For at least the first twelve years—in the first four FABC General Assemblies; in FABC General Colloquia and International Congresses on Mission/Evangelization and on Ministries; in the smaller Bishops' Institutes for Missionary Apostolate, Social Action, Inter-religious Affairs, Theology of Dialogue, etc.—from 1974 to 1986, LST was really there.

For the FABC Theological Advisory Commission founded in 1986, LST was its convenor-source; from its beginning, LST was there. All of this "active presence and power" would go on and, as the years went by, of course with decreasing force because, *as was desired and actively sought after*, there was greater and more active participation from others! By 1970 to 1990, for about 20 years, "in the beginnings" —somewhat prominently, rather "frontline-wise"—LST was there.

In the Philippines

In the Philippines, for the foundation of what is now the Association of Major Religious Superiors for Men and Women Religious (AMRSMP and AMRSWP), the Sisters' Formation Institute linked with AMRSWP, LST was there (Frs. Horacio de la Costa and

[1]See books by Fr. Gerald O'Collins.

William Galdon, M.M., were the main "architects/constructors" of AMRSM at its beginning).

For the regular CBCP bi-annual assemblies; for episcopal commissions especially for doctrinal and theological concerns; for ecumenism and lay apostolate; for special action—for the National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA), especially with its "praxis beginnings and projects" with Bishop Gaviola—LST was there.

For the writing of pastoral letters and other major episcopal conference statements, for organizing seminars (in theology and pastoral practice [e.g., on Christology and Mariology, on mission in our time, on development, on marriage and sexuality, on holy orders], on ideologies, on non-violence and Church-praxis [during martial law years especially], etc., for many many years), LST was notably there.[2]

On this "primary service" to FABC and its Asian bishops, to the CBCP and even to its individual bishops who ask for it, sometime in the 1980's Fr. Pedro Arrupe personally sought me out to say: "If St. Ignatius were alive today, this service would be the one he would really *give a top-priority to; really nothing would he consider to be more important*." To me he said, "*You can tell your Superiors that Fr. General is giving you his personal assignment to this work as your truly Jesuit mission*."

Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales, repeatedly over the years, has said that "the Church in the Philippines and her Bishops, and clergy, religious and lay institutes and groups …" on the whole—what it has asked of the Society of Jesus was *"intellectual and spiritual formation*." Spelling this out somewhat more fully: solid formation in a spirituality based on the Ignatian Exercises, along with a solid intellectual formation which is, again, rather middle-of-the-road in orientation and choices—well rooted in Tradition and Magisterium, but genuinely and "discerningly" in touch with "what was new, genuine and strong in Vatican II" … plus the cultural realities and movements of our people and our world and time. So, LST in real a way has had its "service road" set out from the beginning.

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[2]Some names: Frs. de Achutegui, Sevilla, Lambino, Blanco [especially on non-violence], San Juan, Arevalo, among others.

Landas 30:1 (2016) 97–102

THEOLOGY WHOSE HEART IS MISSION*

Antonio M. Pernia, S.V.D.

Pope Francis, in his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, invites us to share his dream. He dreams, he says, of a "missionary option,"[1] that is, a Church that moves from the "conservation mode" to the "missionary mode." "Mere administration," he says, "can [no] longer be enough. Throughout the world, let us be permanently in a state of mission."[2] "We need to move 'from a pastoral ministry of mere conservation to a decidedly missionary pastoral ministry.'" "Missionary outreach is paradigmatic for all the Church's activity."[3]

1. Theology as *Fides Quaerens Linguam*

To think about mission is to think about the global Church. In this context, it is said that one of the major transformations of global

*Delivered on May 11, 2016, at the Commencement Ceremonies of the Loyola School of Theology (Quezon City, Philippines).

[1]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013), 27.

[2]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* 25.

[3]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* 15.

Catholicism in recent years is the so-called "demographic change" or "population shift" from the north to the south of the world. At the turn of the millennium, the "center of gravity" of the Catholic Church has shifted from the "global North" (that is, Europe and North America) to the "global South" (that is, Latin America, Africa, and Asia). While in 1900 just 15 percent of the Catholic population lived in the southern hemisphere, by 2000 that figure stood at 67 percent, or two-thirds of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics. By mid-century, the southern share of the Catholic population is projected to be 75 percent. In other words, by 2050, three out of every four Catholics will be living in the global South.

Part of what this means is that the direction and orientation of the Catholic Church will, or should, increasingly be set by bishops, theologians, missionaries, and lay leaders from the global South. But for this to take place, I believe the shift in numbers needs to be accompanied by a corresponding commitment to serious theological research and reflection. For what good is it if we have more Catholics in the South but the Christian faith is not lived more meaningfully and more consequentially?

It is therefore extremely important that in the global South there be reliable institutes of research and reflection and world-class centers of study and teaching in theology and missiology. Just as, in the last millennium, centers of theological reflection emerged in the global North (Louvain, Paris, Milan), so also in this present millennium do similar centers of theological reflection need to be developed in the global South (Manila? Jakarta? Bangalore?).

LST, the Loyola School of Theology, should see itself as one such institute and center in the global South. As such, LST must be both rooted in the classical tradition of theology and responsive to the missionary exigencies of the concrete context. In this sense, theology at LST must be both *fides quaerens intellectum* (faith seeking understanding) and *fides quaerens linguam* (faith seeking expression). Among the many nuances of theology as *fides quaerens linguam*, the following three seem to be important:

1) First of all, *fides quaerens linguam* stresses the missionary dimension of theology. It underlines the fact that faith in Jesus Christ is not, in the first place, a body of truths that we need to understand, but an experience of the Good News that we need to proclaim to others. This is faith seeking to be proclaimed—a *fides quaerens proclamationem*. Naturally, proclamation presupposes understanding, for we cannot properly proclaim what we do not understand. But it can also be said that we come to understand the faith better, and more fully, in our very act of sharing it with others.

2) Secondly, *fides quaerens linguam* underlines the need for theology to be inculturated in the language and culture of a people. Today, we no longer speak simply of the possibility but, indeed, of the necessity of inculturation. As Pope John Paul II once put it, "a faith that does not become culture is a faith which is not fully accepted, not wholly believed, and not faithfully lived."[4] So, this is faith seeking to be expressed in the culture of a people—a *fides quaerens inculturationem*. Here, too, true inculturation requires an authentic understanding of the faith, just as a profound understanding of the faith can only be the fruit of genuine inculturation.

3) And thirdly, *fides quaerens linguam* signals the plurality of contexts in which theology needs to be done today, for, by saying *fides quaerens linguam*, one immediately adverts to the fact that in times past it used to be *fides quaerens intellectum*, or that in other places today, it may be *fides quaerens justitiam* (as in Latin America) or *fides quaerens pacem* (as in Africa) or *fides quaerens vitam* (as in Asia). This, then, is faith seeking to dialogue with other local Churches, other Christian communities, and other religions—a *fides quaerens conversationem*. Also, here, a genuinely fruitful dialogue necessitates a true understanding of the faith, while an enriched understanding of the faith results from respectful dialogue with others.

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[4]John Paul II, *Address to the Italian National Congress of the Ecclesial Movement for Cultural Commitment* 2 (Jan. 16, 1982); John Paul II, "Letter Instituting the Pontifical Council for Culture" (May 20, 1982), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* LXXIV (1982): 683–688.

About a millennium ago, as the eleventh century gave way to the twelfth, St. Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109) defined theology as *fides quaerens intellectum*. Today, when the second millennium has given way to the third, and as we celebrate the fiftieth year of the Loyola School of Theology, may it be said that LST is giving a new shape to theology. One description of it is *fides quaerens linguam*. But it could go by other names. What is important is that, true to the specific vocation of the Church in the Philippines, it is a theology whose heart is mission.

2. Mission Theology from Asia

A mission theology that originates from Asia is, of course, still to be fully elaborated. But some of its features can already be discerned. And these features are based on the assumption that, despite the increase of the Catholic population in Asia, Christianity will, in all likelihood, remain a minority religion in the continent. And it is as a minority that the Church will have to carry out the mission entrusted to it by the Lord. Thus, the mission carried out by the Church as a "little flock" in Asia will probably have to be characterized by the following features:

1) First, *powerlessness*. Much of Asia, as we know, is characterized by the historical experience of colonization, a socio-economic condition of poverty, and a religious situation where Christianity is a minority. So, mission in Asia cannot be, or ought not to be, carried out from a position of power or superiority. Rather, evangelization in Asia must be mission from a position of powerlessness and humility. In Asia, the missionary must not preach the Gospel from a position where he or she looks down on the people. Rather, he or she must pass over to the people and be genuinely one with them in their condition of oppression and poverty, discrimination and loss of identity, suffering and sin. He or she will not stand over against the people from a position of superiority, but stand by them in genuine solidarity.

The missionary in Asia and the Asian missionary will not seek power—economic, political, cultural, technological, or even media power. The only power he or she will need is the power of the Word and of the Spirit. And that power is the power of love, which is

manifested in self-giving. The ultimate reason for humility in mission is that mission is God's and not ours. Put differently, the Kingdom of God is an eschatological reality. And, even if we are called and sent to work for it, we do not know how, when, and in what form God's Kingdom will emerge in the world.

2) Second, *contemplation*. Another distinctive characteristic of Asia is its religiosity and contemplative spirit, and the priority given to being over doing. And so, mission in Asia will not be, or ought not to be, evangelization in terms of doing things for the people but in terms of being with the people and enabling them to do things themselves. The missionary's mission method will be marked not so much by frenetic activity as by contemplative presence among God's people. He or she will not be tempted to explain away the mystery of God by words and discursive language, but will try to lead people into the very mystery of God through signs and symbols in respectful dialogue. He or she will give priority to being missionary over doing missionary things.

The origin of mission is the Triune God. Our participation in mission is, therefore, an encounter with mystery—the mystery of the Triune God who calls all of humanity to share in his life and glory, the mystery of God's salvific plan for the world, the mystery of the presence and action of Christ and the Spirit in the world. Thus, the very first challenge in mission is to seek out, discern, and strengthen the presence of Christ and the action of the Spirit in the world. But it will be impossible to discern if we do not approach mission in contemplation. For to contemplate is precisely to look, to listen, to learn, to discern, to respond.

3) Third, *stewardship*. Once I was talking with an African colleague who decried the fact that missionaries in the past preached the Gospel as if they owned the faith. In this context, still another characteristic of Asia is that the Christian faith has come to it as something imported or even imposed from outside. And despite the enormous efforts at inculturation, the Christian faith in much of Asia has not really become its own as yet. Thus, the missionary in Asia will not, or ought not to, share the faith as if he or she owned it, dictating thereby the terms by which it must be understood, lived, and celebrated. His or

her approach to mission will be to share the faith as a gift received from God through others, conscious of himself or herself as merely its steward or servant and never its owner or master.

Mission is entering into the Triune God's ongoing dialogue with peoples. But in doing so, the missionary should be careful not to interpose himself or herself as an intermediary in this ongoing dialogue but should rather seek to promote and facilitate it. He or she should guard against imposing his or her own agenda but should rather discover God's agenda in this ongoing dialogue. The missionary, therefore, will respect the freedom of God who is present and active among the people, and respect as well the freedom of the people who are responding in their own unique way.

3. Conclusion

And so, powerlessness, contemplation, stewardship—these, I believe, are the features that should characterize mission in Asia or the Asian missionary in other places. But these, too, I believe, are characteristics which need to accompany the mission of announcing God's mercy. Mercy, I believe, is best witnessed to in mission characterized by powerlessness, contemplation, and stewardship.

As *Misericordiae Vultus*, the Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, puts it:

> The Church is commissioned to announce the mercy of God, the beating heart of the Gospel …. The Spouse of Christ must pattern her behaviour after the Son of God who went out to everyone without exception …. It is absolutely essential for the Church and for the credibility of her message that she herself live and testify to mercy. Her language and her gestures must transmit mercy, so as to touch the hearts of all people and inspire them once more to find the road that leads to the Father.[5]

Once again, my sincere congratulations to the graduates of 2016. May God bless you all. Thank you.

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[5]Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus* (2015), 12.

Landas 30:1 (2016) 103–117

THE DYNAMIC SPIRAL OF MISSION SPIRITUALITY

Exploring Insights of Recent Popes

James H. Kroeger, M.M.

Energy, dynamism, and growth are common images evoked by the simple word "spiral." A spiral connotes advancing action, increasing or developing movement. And yet, a spiral, even in its continuous dynamism, moves and advances around a fixed center.

To capture and express realities of a spirituality of ministry and mission always demands the creative use of dynamic and expansive language. Thus, approaching the topic of ministry and spirituality under the rubric of a "spiral" is an attempt to present an apostolic spirituality that encompasses and integrates many facets and riches. Several essential dimensions, all interacting and reinforcing each other, produce a holistic and living spirituality of missionary ministry centered on an encounter with the living God.

Four pivotal Church documents on missionary evangelization contain key insights for a holistic apostolic spirituality. Active Catholics (ordained, religious, and lay faithful) will find these four sources enlightening and inspiring as they serve in their various ministries. Blessed Paul VI's 1975 apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* [EN] (Evangelization in the Modern World) is filled with abundant wisdom for all of Jesus' disciples. Saint John Paul II's mission encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* [RM] (On the Permanent Validity of the

Church's Missionary Mandate), issued in 1990 on the twenty-fifth anniversary of Vatican II's *Ad Gentes*, remains a pivotal source for developing an integral apostolic spirituality. Pope Francis' first apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* [EG] (The Joy of the Gospel), dated November 24, 2013, is a treasury of material for all Christians whom Pope Francis calls "missionary disciples."[1]

Finally, to complement the insights of these three papal "missionary" documents and to situate them in the context of Asia, helpful material is drawn from John Paul II's *Ecclesia in Asia* [EA] (The Church in Asia) released in 1999. The enthusiasm and dynamism that these four documents manifest as well as the insights that they contain are a rich thesaurus for elaborating important elements of a "spirituality spiral" for ministry and mission. Four key theological-pastoral themes expressed in words that all begin with the letter "M" (Mystery, Meditation, Ministry, and Mission) form the basis and structure of this presentation.

Mystery. The origins of all mission and ministry are found in mystery (*mysterion*), understood in the Pauline sense as God's universal loving plan of salvation for the entire world. God loves all peoples, desiring everyone to be saved and to come to know the truth (I Tim. 2:4). The goal of ministry, then, is to serve the unfolding of this wonderful design God has for all peoples. "Missionary activity is nothing other and nothing less than the manifestation or epiphany of God's plan and its fulfillment in the world and in history."[2] Indeed, evangelization will always contain "a clear proclamation that, in Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man, who died and rose from the dead, salvation is offered to all men, as a gift of God's grace and mercy."[3]

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[1]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel), 120. Hereafter referred to as EG.

[2]John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio* (On the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate), 41. Hereafter referred to as RM.

[3]Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Evangelization in the Modern World), 27. Hereafter referred to as EN.

Further exploration into the *mysterion*-theology of Saint Paul helps anchor the foundations of mission. Paul is absolutely certain that God has a wonderful and marvelous vision of salvation for the whole world. His letter to the Ephesians convincingly—almost mystically—explains how "God has given us the wisdom to understand fully the mystery" (1:9), "the mysterious design which for ages was hidden in God" (3:9). Paul personally speaks of "the depths that I see in the mystery of Christ" (3:4) because "it was by a revelation that I was given the knowledge of the mystery" (3:3).

Pauline reflection on God's loving plan of salvation (*mysterion*) synthesizes his belief that this design has been fully revealed in Christ the Savior and will be recapitulated in Christ at the end of time (RM 4, 5, 41, 44). This manifestation is focused on salvation, not condemnation or judgment, and is open to all peoples (RM 55). It unfolds in stages: God's design through the Israelite people, the missions of Jesus and the Spirit, and the Church's presence in the world; humanity's response is faith or personal appropriation of the *mysterion* (RM 6, 9, 11).

Paul is a true minister of the Good News, an evangelizer *par excellence*, because he believed, lived, prayed, labored, and suffered (cf. II Cor. 11:23–28) so that God's loving plan for the redemption of humanity would be known and graciously received. Obviously, Paul's apostolic commitment had the "*mysterion*-encounter" as its central driving force.

Paul's self-awareness as God's instrument was deeply rooted in being chosen as a servant and apostle of God's loving plan of salvation (Rom. 1:1–6; I Cor. 4:1; 15:9–11; Eph. 3:1–21; Col. 1:24–29). It might be stated that this "*mysterion*-awareness" engulfed and consumed Paul; his consciousness was so transformed that he could assert that Christ lived in him (Gal. 2:20), that fellow-Christians could imitate him (I Cor. 4:16), that life or death no longer mattered (Rom. 14:8), and that he gloried in giving his life for Christ (II Tim. 4:6). In brief, the *mysterion* is foundational to Paul's apostolic identity and therefore he emphatically declares: "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel" (I Cor. 9:16).[4] All

[4]See also RM 1.

dedicated apostles must necessarily feel the same sense of "Pauline" urgency to spread the Gospel!

Meditation. Because all mission and ministry flow from God's loving plan of salvation (*mysterion*), the evangelizer necessarily seeks to be deeply rooted in this mystery. There simply is no other foundation for all that one does. "Meditation" is a possible manner of expressing the "rooting-process" whereby the Christian apostle seeks to discover God's constant loving presence in the depths of the soul. Early in his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis writes:

> I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ; … I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since "no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord." (EG 3)

A meditative awareness or consciousness should flow through the various actions of life (prayer, scripture-reading, experience, reflection, service); it should serve as a running thread and connecting bond in all the various activities of the day as well as through the different periods and stages of life. Such an uninterrupted and continuous flow will make the evangelizer's whole life a prayer and a state of meditation and contemplation. In a word, the person in ministry must strive to develop a deep "*mysterion*-consciousness."

Pope Paul VI, who said that *Evangelii Nuntiandi* is a "meditation on evangelization," invites the whole People of God assembled in the Church "to make the same meditation" so that they will receive a "fresh impulse," and follow "a straight course"; thus, each person will more effectively "work as a preacher of the Gospel and acquit himself perfectly of his ministry" (EN 3).

Pope Francis devotes his entire final chapter of *Evangelii Gaudium* to the theme of "Spirit-filled Evangelizers." He notes that "I do not intend to offer a synthesis of Christian spirituality …. I simply wish to offer some thoughts about the spirit of the new evangelization" (EG 260).

> How I long to find the right words to stir up enthusiasm for a new chapter of evangelization full of fervor, joy, generosity, courage, boundless love and attraction! (EG 261)

> Without prolonged moments of adoration, of prayerful encounter with the Word, of sincere conversation with the Lord [this is prayerful meditation], our work becomes meaningless, we lose energy as a result of weariness and difficulties, and our fervor dies out. The Church urgently needs the deep breath of prayer …. (EG 262)

In *Ecclesia in Asia*, Saint John Paul II emphasizes that "*Mission is contemplative action and active contemplation*." Therefore, a minister who has no deep experience of God in prayer and contemplation will have little spiritual influence or missionary success. For the Pope, "the future of mission depends to a great extent on contemplation." All evangelizers "need a true missionary spirituality of prayer and contemplation." In the Oriental context, it is a fact that "a genuinely religious person readily wins respect and a following in Asia."[5]

This discussion focuses attention on the evangelizer's need for a spirituality. If the previous section (*Mystery*) outlined God's plan of salvation in Pauline categories, this section (*Meditation*) emphasizes the personal appropriation and integration of the *mysterion* into our lives and activities, into our very consciousness. As one of the sources for building a "spirituality of ministry," *Redemptoris Missio* contains rich material for enhancing this "rooting-process." Two chapters in particular of John Paul II's mission encyclical treat of *Spirit*-uality. The third chapter presents "The Holy Spirit, the Principal Agent of Mission"; chapter eight is entitled "Mission Spirituality." All spirituality centers on God's action in, with, and through the minister or evangelizer; all mission and ministry are "God's work," "the work of the Spirit"; they are not based "on human abilities but on the power of the Risen Lord" (RM 23, 24).

The Church in Asia desires to promote the Lord's mission: "Her one ambition is to continue his mission of service and love, so that all Asians 'may have life and have it abundantly' (Jn. 10:10)" (EA 50). People in Asia want and need to see the Church's ministers (lay and ordained) "not just as charity workers and institutional administrators but as men whose minds and hearts are set on the deep things of the Spirit (cf. Rom. 8:5)" (EA 43).

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[5]John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Asia* (The Church in Asia), 23. Hereafter referred to as EA.

In the profoundly reflective chapter on the Spirit, one finds some of the most creative insights of *Redemptoris Missio*. Both the opening and closing paragraphs frame the discussion by asserting that "the principal agent of the whole Church's mission" is the Holy Spirit (RM 21, cf. 30). All evangelizers, like Christ himself, experience "*a sending forth in the Spirit*" (RM 22). As Gospel ministers, "we are missionaries above all because of *what we are* as a Church whose innermost life is unity in love, even before we become missionaries *in word or deed*" (RM 23).

The Spirit's action is both within and beyond the bounds of the Church. The encyclical notes that

> the Spirit's presence and activity affect not only individuals but also society and history, peoples, cultures and religions …. The Spirit of God with marvelous foresight directs the course of the ages and renews the face of the earth …. We are obliged to hold that the Holy Spirit offers everyone the possibility of sharing in the Paschal Mystery in a manner known to God. (RM 28)

Proceeding to chapter eight of RM (entitled "Missionary Spirituality"), evangelizers will find several precious pearls for the apostolate. Spirituality demands "a life of complete docility to the Spirit" (RM 87), "intimate communion with Christ" (RM 88), and following Jesus "along the path of suffering and humiliation" (RM 87). The minister must be "a person of charity" who practices "love without exclusion or partiality" (RM 89). One must respond to "the universal call to holiness" and become "a person of the Beatitudes" (RM 90).

One finds scattered at various points in John Paul II's *Redemptoris Missio* two themes related directly to spirituality: conversion and the Eucharist. Jesus invites his co-workers "to faith, conversion and the desire for forgiveness" (RM 14). For the evangelizer, "conversion is expressed in faith which is total and radical, and which neither limits nor hinders God's gift" (RM 46). "We cannot preach conversion unless we ourselves are converted anew every day" (RM 47). As disciple-apostles, all are called "to carry out a sincere review of their lives regarding their solidarity with the poor" (RM 60); "we should reassess our own way of living" (RM 81); "fight hunger by changing your lifestyle" (RM 59).

Vatican II has noted that the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life; the Eucharist is eminently central for the minister. One clear purpose of ministry is "to bring people together in hearing the Gospel, in fraternal communion, in prayer and in the Eucharist" (RM 26). The early Church always sent forth its new ministers in the context of the Eucharist (Acts 13:1–4). The popular word that Catholics use today for Eucharist is "mass"; the words for both mission (*missio*) and mass (*missa*) derive from the same source (*mittere*); the Eucharist always empowers the disciple-apostle for ministry and mission.

As a concluding thought to this section on "meditation," one hears both Popes Paul VI and Francis speak of the transforming power of prayer and contemplation. Quoting Paul VI, Francis asserts:

> Let us recover and deepen our enthusiasm, that "delightful and comforting joy of evangelizing, even when it is in tears that we must sow …. And may the world of our time, which is searching, sometimes with anguish, sometimes with hope, be enabled to receive the good news not from evangelizers who are dejected, discouraged, impatient or anxious, but from ministers of the Gospel whose lives glow with fervor, who have first received the joy of Christ." (EG 10, citing EN 80)

Ministry. Perceiving one's call to active ministry within the Church and to service of Christians and all people is a gradual growth process. The call to become an evangelizer emerges into consciousness and seeks a definite commitment as one meditates on one's personal role in the loving plan of God. Only a life of faith and prayer (*meditation*) leads the apostle to personally experience God's love and plan of salvation (*mysterion*); it is precisely in this process or continuous spiral that ministry becomes a personalized invitation for the mature Christian. In a word, *meditation* on the *mystery* is the only means to discern one's call to *ministry*.

For a deeper understanding of ministry as "faith-service," one can profitably open the pages of *Redemptoris Missio*. The encyclical straightforwardly asserts: "*Mission is an issue of faith*" (RM 11). Without faith, nothing will progress. The Church and her members—all those in ministry—will accomplish little unless their lives and apostolates are rooted in living faith.

John Paul II, constantly encouraging all Christians to follow Christ, was a public witness to faith in Jesus; he lived what he challenged others to do. He noted in RM: "From the beginning of my Pontificate I have chosen to travel to the ends of the earth" (RM 1). These frequent and often grueling trips are "journeys of faith … for evangelical proclamation in spreading the Gospel" (RM 63). "*Faith is strengthened when it is given to others*" (RM 2).

Ministry always connotes the concrete service of others; it is manifested in a variety of forms and apostolates. The Church's various ministries seek to reach the total person within community. *Ecclesia in Asia* pays tribute to Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, to be canonized on September 4, 2016. She was "known all over the world for her loving and selfless care of the poorest of the poor"; thus, she remains "an icon of the service to life which the Church is offering in Asia, in courageous contrast to the many dark forces at work in society" (EA 7). EA also calls upon "the great host of Asian martyrs, old and new, to teach the Church in Asia what it means to bear witness" (EA 49).

Evangelii Nuntiandi (Paul VI), *Redemptoris Missio* (John Paul II), *Evangelii Gaudium* (Pope Francis), as well as *Ecclesia in Asia* all offer helpful insights on apostolic commitment and involvement. Two words capture the comprehensive vision of ministry and mission in these beautiful documents: *integral evangelization*. Briefly, this means that evangelization and salvation are best viewed in a holistic fashion. In EN, Paul VI asserts that "evangelizing means bringing the Good News into all strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new" (EN 18). In RM, John Paul II notes that "Jesus came to bring integral salvation, one which embraces the whole person" (RM 11); "evangelical witness … is directed towards integral human development" (RM 42). Pope Francis speaks of "a definite style of evangelization which I ask you to adopt *in every activity which you undertake*" (EG 18). *Ecclesia in Asia* affirms that ministry flows from a contemporary and holistic vision of evangelization, which is "a reality that is both rich and dynamic [and] has various aspects and elements" (EA 23). In short, contemporary ministry develops the whole person and society. It touches the social and cultural, political and economic, historical and religious dimensions of life—all from

the perspective of faith. Indeed, it is an *integral*, *comprehensive*, and *holistic* vision of evangelization!

Further elaboration of integral evangelization can be found in all the four sources being used in this brief presentation. For example, Paul VI speaks of the holistic nature of evangelization, asserting that it is

> a complex process made up of varied elements: the renewal of humanity, witness, explicit proclamation, inner adherence, entrance into the community, acceptance of signs, apostolic initiative. These elements may appear to be contradictory, indeed mutually exclusive. In fact, they are complementary and mutually enriching. (EN 24)

Keeping all these varied elements in an integral balance, evangelizers (lay and ordained) will "reach a full understanding of the Church's evangelizing activity" (EN 24).

Several key dimensions of integral evangelization are noted by John Paul II in RM; they are: the witness of Christian living (RM 42), the service of humanity (RM 58–60), inculturation and interreligious dialogue (RM 52–54, 55–57), explicit Gospel proclamation (RM 44–45), and sacramental-liturgical-ecclesial life (RM 46–49).

Pope Francis, who emphasizes the "integral meaning of the mission of evangelization" in *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG 176), sees the Church's mission ministry encompassing a wide variety of areas demanding apostolic activities (note that many of these are specific fields where laity can make a significant contribution): "problems affecting peace, social harmony, the land, the defense of life, human and civil rights, and so forth" (EG 65), "new processes for evangelizing culture" (EG 69), "human trafficking, the narcotics trade, the abuse and exploitation of minors, the abandonment of the elderly and infirm, and various forms of corruption and criminal activity" (EG 75); indeed, countless other areas might be mentioned. For Pope Francis, evangelizers "need to give priority to actions which generate new processes in society … processes of people building" (EG 223–224).

In *Ecclesia in Asia*, one finds the assertion that

> evangelization today is a reality that is both rich and dynamic. It has various aspects and elements: witness, dialogue, proclamation,

> catechesis, conversion, baptism, insertion into the ecclesial community, the implantation of the Church, inculturation and integral human promotion. Some of these elements proceed together, while some others are successive steps or phases of the entire process of evangelization. (EA 23)

In a word, the totality of the ministry "cycle" will combine these many elements already mentioned. Together, they form the Church's total program of holistic evangelization; they follow the example of Jesus who lived his ministry in silence and reflection, in action and service, in dialogue and outreach, in teaching and proclamation, as well as in prayer and contemplation. This is *ministry*; this is *evangelization*; this is authentic "faith-service"! The creative involvement of all Christians in integral evangelization today is urgently needed and desired by the Church!

Mission. A stark question must be posed: Is it possible to truly have an authentic lay program of ministry, catechesis, or evangelization without a concomitant vibrant sense of mission? Some may attempt to propose and defend such a possibility through rationalization. Yet, in the considered opinion of this author, any apostolic ministry or program of evangelization without a missionary dynamism and perspective can quickly degenerate into parochialism or provincialism. Promoting mission awareness and commitment among all Catholics (lay, religious, ordained) is an urgent challenge facing all local Churches today!

The Second Vatican Council places mission and evangelization at the center of the Church: "The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature."[6] Pope Paul VI spoke with deep conviction: "We wish to confirm once more that the task of evangelizing all peoples constitutes the essential mission of the Church …. Evangelizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize …" (EN 14). Pope Francis says that the very purpose of his *Evangelii Gaudium* is "to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy"

[6] *Ad Gentes* (On the Mission Activity of the Church), 2.

(EG 1). Again, he notes: "I dream of a 'missionary option,' that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything" (EG 27). He quotes what John Paul II said to the bishops of Oceania: "All renewal in the Church must have mission as its goal if it is not to fall prey to a kind of ecclesial introversion" (EG 27).

What meaning does the imperative of evangelization have for the Church, for Christ's faithful? All Catholics must become a living proclamation of the *mysterion*—God's loving design of universal salvation. Only in this way does the Church as the community of Jesus' disciples realize her "deepest identity" and "her very nature." She is called to be always and everywhere "the universal sacrament of salvation."[7] For her, to live is to evangelize! A non-missionary Church is impossible; it is self-contradictory. Animation and rededication are necessary because Christians are faithful to the nature of the Church to the degree that they love and sincerely promote her missionary activity. In the insightful words of Emil Brunner, "The Church exists by mission as fire exists by burning."[8]

Redemptoris Missio emerged from Pope John Paul II's deep concern about the "*urgency of missionary activity*" (RM 1). He notes that "missionary activity specifically directed 'to the nations' (*ad gentes*) appears to be waning." This fact "must arouse concern among all who believe in Christ [because] in the Church's history, missionary drive has always been a sign of vitality, just as its lessening is a sign of a crisis of faith" (RM 2).

John Paul II seeks the help of all Catholics as ministers and evangelizers in their diverse apostolates to promote "a new missionary age" (RM 92), "a new springtime for the Gospel" (RM 86), and "a fresh impulse to missionary activity" (RM 2). He senses that "the moment has come to commit all of the Church's energies to a new evangelization" (RM 3).

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[7]*Lumen Gentium* (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church), 48; *Ad Gentes* 1.

[8]Emil Brunner, *The Word and the World* (SCM Press: 1931), 108.

Pope Francis' *Evangelii Gaudium* overflows with missionary dynamism and wisdom. He quotes John Paul II (EG 15), noting that "there must be no lessening of the impetus to preach the Gospel … because this is the first task of the Church" (RM 34). Indeed, "today missionary activity still represents the greatest challenge for the Church" (RM 40), and "the missionary task must remain foremost" (RM 86). Francis asks: "What would happen if we were to take these words seriously? We would realize that missionary outreach is *paradigmatic for all the Church's activity*" (EG 15).

One finds copious insights into mission in *Ecclesia in Asia*; this is naturally to be expected, since EA emerges directly from the lived experience of the Asian bishops. The very purpose of the 1998 "Asian Synod" was "to discern the principal areas of mission for the Church in Asia as she crosses the threshold of the new millennium" (EA 18). The Church in Asia has clear convictions about mission; "the question is not whether the Church has something essential to say to the men and women of our time, but how she can say it clearly and convincingly" (EA 29). In speaking of Asia, John Paul II says: "we can pray that in the Third Christian Millennium *a great harvest of faith* will be reaped in this vast and vital continent" (EA 1).

Approximately one-half of EA examines the paths of the Church's mission in Asia, presented under four discernable themes: Church as Communion for Mission (EA 24–28), Dialogue (EA 29–31), Human Promotion (EA 32–41), and the Agents of Evangelization (EA 42–49). One can validly assert that a "communion ecclesiology-missiology" underlies much of EA. Because the Church is "the sacrament of the unity of the human race," EA affirms that "communion and mission are inseparably connected [and] they interpenetrate and mutually imply each other; … communion gives rise to mission and mission is accomplished in communion" (EA 25). Similarly, Pope Francis notes that "communion and mission are profoundly interconnected" (EG 23).

Two inherent demands of "communion missiology" in EA are dialogue and human promotion. The "desire for dialogue" is not simply a strategy for peaceful coexistence among peoples; it is an essential part of the Church's mission, "a veritable vocation for the Church"

(EA 29). Dialogue is "a part of the Church's evangelizing mission, an expression of the mission *ad gentes*"; indeed, "communion and dialogue are two essential aspects of the Church's mission" (EA 31).

As she strives to build a "civilization of love" (EA 32), the Church and her ministers emphasize both Church social teaching and human promotion. Human development is not only a "technical or economic question; it is fundamentally *a human and moral question*." Evangelizers see it as "an integral part of their evangelizing mission" (EA 32). Mission as human promotion, therefore, encompasses the diverse areas of human dignity, preferential love for the poor, health care, education, peacemaking, globalization, foreign debt, and the environment (EA 33–41).

Such renewed commitment to mission on the part of ordained and lay agents of evangelization is a key path for deepening the faith commitment and spirituality of local Churches and missioners everywhere. Mission awareness is both the goal and the crowning achievement of effective evangelization. It remains a paradoxical truth that the home parish or diocese is strengthened when it sends forth missioners—even out of an insufficient supply of personnel. John Paul II in EA urges "the Church in Asia to send forth missionaries, even though she herself needs laborers in the vineyard" (EA 44). God's ways so often supersede our ways!

Specifically, turning to the role of the laity in missionary evangelization, EA 45 notes that

> the vocation of lay people sets them firmly in the world to perform the most varied tasks, and it is here that they are called to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ …. [All] lay people are missionaries; and the arena of their missionary work is the vast and complex worlds of politics, economics, industry, education, the media, science, technology, the arts and sport.

Laity are to serve as

> true missionaries, reaching out to … [those] who might never have contact with clergy and religious. … Witnessing to the Gospel in every area of life in society, the lay faithful can play a unique role in

> rooting out injustice and oppression …. [The] presence of women in the Church's mission of love and service contributes greatly to bringing the compassionate Jesus … [to] the poor and marginalized.

Revisiting the Spiral of Mission Spirituality

This brief essay has sought to capture and elucidate four key elements which are essential for a holistic mission spirituality and ministerial commitment, one truly adequate to mature Christians who are "missionary disciples" (EG 120). It could be termed the "4-M approach": *mystery*, *meditation*, *ministry*, and *mission*. Each element in the four-part spiral builds upon and reinforces the other; if any dimension is lost or under-emphasized, the Church's entire mission of evangelization automatically suffers.

As a spiral, this approach to a spirituality of ministry must be dynamic and progressive, moving forward the individual evangelizer as well as God's holy people, the Church. At times, one dimension of the spiral or cycle may be more visible or more emphasized than another; yet, the spiral remains complete. This spiral must be an integral part of ministerial formation and practice—whether an individual may be in the initial stages of formation or in life-long, on-going formation. All four *M*s are important and essential for integral growth in a spirituality that serves the apostolate and the Church's mission of evangelization. In a word, one does not then really have a spirituality "for" ministry; *living the totality of the ministry spiral is in itself already spirituality*.

While emphasizing four central elements of the spirituality spiral, one could propose additional supports for this paradigm. Two central items (two more *M*s) are the Mass (Eucharist) and Mary (model of discipleship and ministry); both sources provide rich dimensions of spirituality and greatly enhance the spiritual life of effective evangelizers. Pope Francis has many creative insights on the Eucharist [Mass] (EG 13, 47, 104) and the Blessed Mother [Mary] (EG 104, 284–288).

Genuine ministry is of its nature contagious; engaged evangelizers rekindle mission dynamism; the spiral moves forward and upward. All evangelizers are to be "on fire with the love of Christ and burning with zeal to make him known more widely, loved more deeply and followed more closely." Why? "A fire can only be lit by something that is itself on fire" (EA 23). This is an authentic spirituality for mission!

Permit one final suggestion which will propel the "spiral" into further dynamic action: consider reading again and meditating on Pope Francis' *Evangelii Gaudium* in its entirety; your spirituality and motivation for ministry and mission will most certainly be enriched! In addition, for all Asian evangelizers, *Ecclesia in Asia* is undoubtedly imperative reading!

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TEACHING THEOLOGY

A Ministry with a Mystagogy

Jojo M. Fung, S.J.

The fiftieth anniversary celebration of the Loyola School of Theology is an auspicious occasion, a *kairos*, to resolutely face the future with the boldness engendered by the Christian faith. It is an opportune time to offer a constructive critique of the way *theology is done* in most theological institutions. This is dealt with in the first section of this article. This critical appraisal enables the schools of theology to articulate better with the context of Asia. The second section explains the megatrends in the Asian context and describes the ecclesial vision offered by the 2012 Plenary Assembly of the FABC in Vietnam. With the ecclesial vision, the final section postulates that teaching theology needs to be regarded as a ministry that involves a mystagogy.

1. Constructive Appraisal

Human civilization has crossed the threshold of the Mystical Age after leaving behind the era of the Mental Age.[1] The dawn of this mystical age offers immense possibilities for humankind to maneuver

[1]See Frank X. Tuoti, *The Dawn of the Mystical Age: An Invitation to Enlightenment* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Co., 1997) and Kathleen Coyle,

the gradual shift to cosmocentricism. The mystical age is an opportune time (*kairos*) for theological institutions to realize that "we are people of the quantum leap!"[2]

This gradual shift to cosmocentricism calls into question the entrenched excessive anthropocentricism in the mainstream Eurocentric sciences, religions, and theologies. The entrenchment in the sciences amounts to a modern enslavement within the "iron-clad logic"[3] of what Pierre Bourdieu[4] calls the two extremes of rationality, namely "dogmatic rationalism" and "nihilistic irrationality."

1.1 Mainstream Theological Discipline

The enslavement of the mainstream theological disciplines calls for certain reflexive introspection and honest evaluation. First, is the latent and manifest "disdain and disbelief" in "popular spirituality" or "the people's mysticism"[5] revealing something more systemic? For instance, have the ecclesiastical disciplines (not discounting the natural and social sciences) become so addicted to and enslaved by the subtle influences of positivistic rationalism that every effort is made to systematically relativize and sanitize the religio-cultural worldview on the sacredness of *anthropos* and *cosmos*? Second, has the excessive anthropocentricism inherent in these disciplines perpetuated the dualism that alienates humankind from the cosmos? Third, has this anthropocentricism unwittingly lent itself to the patriarchal forces that

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"Theology and the New Cosmology: A Quantum Leap in Theological and Spiritual Insight," *EAPR* 50:2 (2013): 189–205.

[2]Coyle, "Theology and the New Cosmology," 189; Tuoti, *The Dawn of the Mystical Age*, 3.

[3]Francis, *Laudato Si'* (On Care for Our Common Home), 108.

[4]Pierre Bourdieu, "Postscript," in Pierre Bourdieu, et al., *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 629.

[5]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (On the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World), 124.

epitomize men as the apex of power in order to control and exploit women and nature, and this to the detriment of the common good of the earth community and the inviolable sacredness of God's creation?

Prevalent in most religions and theologies is a dualism that theologians of EATWOT[6] are concerned about. This dualism has created a higher level that is "supernatural, divine, eternal, for which one must live, in the face of the lower level on which we live and that is natural, pernicious and full of temptation, ephemeral, a simple material setting of resources to be used."[7] The divine and sacred are confined to the level of "transcendence," thus emptying this world of divinity and sacredness. Theologies speak of a heavenly salvation after death that consists in being delivered from this wretched body and the earth.

Institutionalized religions have to be liberated from such theological anthropocentrism that has alienated humankind from the earth and the cosmos. In this vein, the paper of EATWOT's International Theological Commission entitled "Toward a Work Agenda for Planetary Theology" urges that we

> really need to develop a theology with new foundations, which we have already begun. It is an *oiko*-centered theology that breaks with the old distinction between the natural and the "supernatural," and that undoes the strictly transcendental idea of divinity that de-sacralizes and empties the divine dimension of nature. It is a theology which dialogue[s] with deep Ecology, a theology that refuses to grasp reality as a "history of the salvation of humanity" and that goes beyond anthropomorphism in favor of an *oiko*-centrism.[8]

At the dawn of the Mystical Age that gradually supplants the Mental Age,[9] the context-specific mainstream theologies (the sciences

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[6]*Voices* 35:3–4 (July–December 2012). Voices is the theological Journal of EATWOT, an Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians.

[7]See *Voices*, 21–22.

[8]*Voices*, 20–21.

[9]Tuoti, *The Dawn of the Mystical Age*, 3.

and religions too) need to be enriched by the mystical traditions.[10] This mysticism is well articulated by Teilhard de Chardin:

> All around us, to the right and left, in front and behind, above and below, we have only to go a little beyond the frontier of sensible appearances in order to see the divine welling up and showing through. By means of all created things, without exception, the Divine assails us, penetrates us and molds us. We imagined it as distant and inaccessible whereas, in fact, we live steeped in its burning layers. As Jacob said, awakening from his dream, "the world, this palpable world, is, in truth, a holy place, and we did not know it."[11]

The cosmic sacredness that suffuses the *cosmos* and the *anthropos* will dissolve the distorted anthropocentricism and dualism prevalent in most religions and theologies.

The transition to cosmic mysticism also requires, as Diarmuid O'Murchu[12] opines, a transition from a theology that "emphasizes the patriarchal metaphysical characteristics of God as distinctive, other, remote, and superior" to a *thealogy* that "privileges immediacy, presence, embodiment, and indwelling." In *thealogy*, O' Murchu[13] adds, "the Goddess is perceived as a living body enlivening an embodied cosmos, the generative force for creativity and transformation" instead of as a person.[14]

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[10]In the same vein, Kathleen Coyle remarks, "Rahner continues to remind us that Christianity must recover its mystical tradition; otherwise it has nothing to offer the world. To recover our mystical tradition we need to be more conscious of the Trinitarian life, the core of our graced life which we share. He reminds us that religion without mystical depth is no religion at all" ("Theology and the New Cosmology," 202).

[11]Lorrenzo Carraro, "Mystic Fire," *World Mission* XXIV (February 2012), 36.

[12]Diarmuid O'Murchu, *In the Beginning was the Spirit: Science, Religion, and Indigenous Spirituality* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2012), 161.

[13]O'Murchu, *In the Beginning was the Spirit*, 162.

[14]See O'Murchu, *In the Beginning was the Spirit*, 161–162.

1.2 Grounding Discourses and Apostolic Praxis in Mysticism

With this bedrock of inner experiences, the discourses of theology will not ring hollow. The concepts and the words do not merely convince the mind with arguments but also lead to personal transformation of consciousness, dispositions, and motivations. The emergent discourses will *resonate with* and *communicate afresh* such intimate experiences of the sacred. In the praxis of struggling alongside the victims of contemporary suffering, these encounters, according to Bourdieu,[15] "can be considered a sort of *spiritual exercise*"[16] that enables us to discern and understand how God is at work.[17] In the long run, these inner experiences change the way we view the world and the struggle of marginal communities because we realize that the spirit-power of God that suffuses the cosmos is at work through the marginal peoples. It is like a "double-agency" wherein the victims and those who are in solidarity with them are never alone in the struggle.

In the light of this "double-agency," working for human liberation will not end in dreaded drudgery. The weight of social suffering in the contemporary world will not weigh us down as though we are suffering

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[15]Bourdieu, "Postscript," 614.

[16]Bourdieu, "Postscript," 614.

[17]The full text of what Bourdieu states in his postscript warrants a full citation:

> Thus, at the risk of shocking both the rigorous methodologists and the inspired hermeneutic scholar, I would say that interview can be considered a sort of *spiritual exercise* that, through *forgetfulness of self*, aims at a true *conversion of the way we look at* other people in the ordinary circumstances of life. The welcoming disposition, which leads one to make the respondent's problems one's own, the capacity to take that person and understand them just as they are in their distinctive necessity, is a sort of *intellectual love*: a gaze that consents to necessity in the manner of the "intellectual love of God," that is, of the natural order, which Spinoza held to be the supreme form of knowledge.

See Bourdieu, "Postscript," 627–629.

from a certain "fatigue of meaning" when the struggle becomes frustratingly futile. With reference to the role of social science in the alleviation of the social sufferings of the marginalized, Bourdieu argues that, "contrary to appearances, the observation is not cause for despair: what the social world has done, it can, armed with this knowledge, undo."[18] In the light of this double-agency, the undoing is done through human assistance that becomes the very medium of God's intervention in the praxis of liberation in the contemporary world.[19]

Grounding the theological disciplines in the bedrock of mysticism can possibly position the Church to efficaciously articulate with what God is already actively doing in the context of Asia and boldly envision herself as the Church of Asia.

2. Context of Asia: Megatrends and Ecclesial Vision

Orlando Cardinal Quevedo, O.M.I., enumerates the megatrends of Asia in his paper entitled *The Call to New Evangelization: The Church in Asia in the Next 50 Years.*[20] The 2012 Vietnam Plenary Assembly of the

[18]Bourdieu, "Postscript," 614.

[19]Bourdieu believes in the importance of interviews and human intervention as he argues that,

> contrary to appearances, the observation is not cause for despair: what the social world has done, it can, armed with this knowledge, undo. In any event, what is certain is that nothing is less innocent than noninterference. If it is true that it is not easy to eliminate or even modify most of the economic and social factors behind the worst suffering, particularly the mechanisms regulating the labor and educational markets, it is also true that any political program that fails to take full advantage of the possibilities for action (minimal though they may be) that science can help uncover, can be considered guilty of nonassistance to a person in danger.

See Bourdieu, "Postscript," 629.

[20]Orlando B. Cardinal Quevedo, "The Call to New Evangelization: The Church in Asia in the Next 50 Years," *Landas* 30:1 (2016): 38.

FABC discerned and identified certain megatrends in Asia, to which must be added the geo-political power play between the U.S. as the dominant superpower and China as the emerging superpower in Asia.[21]

The same assembly also rearticulated and expanded the 1974 vision of Church.[22] Significant to this envisioning is the Final Message of the Assembly that speaks of the "Renewed Evangelizers for New Evangelization in Asia," otherwise known as the "spirituality of New Evangelization."[23] This spirituality of the New Evangelization portrays as important various dimensions.[24]

In relation to Pope Francis' "*Assisian* contemplation,"[25] the spirituality of the New Evangelization needs to challenge the Church of Asia to be *a Church of cosmic mystics and mystical prophets* as the Church becomes interspiritually enriched in a continent that abounds in religious mystics and prophets of other faiths. Only with such a mystical presence will the Asian Church be able to bear the silent witness in credibly telling the story of Jesus in Asia.

3. Teaching Theology: A Ministry with a Mystagogy

The megatrends, the ecclesial envisioning, and the multi-dimensions of spirituality lead me to think more critically about

[21]In his article, Cardinal Quevedo opines that unless "the world's social, economic, and political order is radically transformed, the New Evangelization in Asia will be addressing these megatrends over the next fifty years" (Quevedo, "The Call to New Evangelization," 39.

[22]See Quevedo, "The Call to New Evangelization," 39.

[23]Tenth FABC Plenary Assembly, "Renewed Evangelizers for New Evangelization in Asia," Final Message (Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam: Dec. 16, 2012), 4.

[24]*Ecclesia in Asia* 24, citing *Christi fideles laici* 32. See Quevedo, "The Call to New Evangelization," 40–41.

[25]Francis, *Laudato Si'* 125.

teaching theology at the Loyola School of Theology under the Asian Theology Program.

Teaching theology should call our attention to what Cardinal Versaldi alerted us to—the presence of the divine in our cognitive exercises.

> In the Western world it is widely held that only positivistic reason and the forms of philosophy based on it are universally valid. Yet the world's profoundly religious cultures see this exclusion of the divine from the universality of reason as an attack on their most profound convictions. A reason which is deaf to the divine and which relegates religion into the realm of subcultures is incapable of entering into the dialogue of cultures.[26]

As God's presence in cultures is antecedent to the arrival of the Church,[27] it is important for LST to be attentive to how God is active in the plural cultures of the *formandi* who come from different parts of Africa, Oceania, and Asia. LST is like an oasis and the *formandi* are like rivulets from various springs flowing into the oasis. They enrich the learning at LST by contributing different streams of religious experiences, understandings, and presumptions, i.e., their personal history including personal experiences, insights, questions, etc. in their lives and ministries. This intercultural enrichment presumes that the *formandi* "do not actually join a training program but [that] a training program joins their process."[28] The presupposition is that the riches of these springs will overflow to enrich the life of the oasis.

Furthermore, Cardinal Versaldi, citing Pope Francis, calls "on theologians to carry out this service as part of the Church's saving mission. In doing so, however, they must always remember that the

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[26]Versaldi, "Leading and Serving through Theology: 50 Years After Vatican II," 16, quoting Benedict XVI, *Apostolic Journey to München, Altötting and Regensburg: Meeting with the Representatives of Science in the Aula Magna of the University of Regensburg* (September 12, 2006).

[27]Society of Jesus, General Congregation 35, Decree 4, No. 17. A copy is available at http://www.sjweb.info/35/documents/Decrees.pdf.

[28]See Perttu Salovaara & Arja Ropo, *Embodied Learning Experience in Leadership Development* (Finland: School of Management, University of Tampere, 2013), 202.

Church and theology exist to evangelize, and not be content with a desk-bound theology."[29] His emphasis resonates with the call of the Asian bishops to articulate with the ecclesial mission of the Church that is bound inseparably to the vision and spirituality of the Asian Church.

Just as spirituality is the indispensable matrix of the FABC's ecclesial vision, so is spirituality to theology. Cardinal Versaldi, citing the International Theological Commission, postulates that theology "is characterised by a distinctive spirituality" and that "[i]ntegral to the spirituality of the theologian are: a love of truth, a readiness for conversion of heart and mind, a striving for holiness, and a commitment to ecclesial communion and mission."[30] This postulation on theology certainly articulates with the aspirations of the 2012 Vietnam Plenary Assembly of the FABC.

At the same time, Cardinal Versaldi insists on the place of *sophia* in theology for reasons that theology as wisdom "is able to integrate aspects of the faith both studied and experienced and to transcend in the service of God's truth the limits of what is strictly possible from an intellectual standpoint."[31] Most insightful of all is the indelible remark of Cardinal Versaldi that "theologians must be persons of prayer"[32] since theologians "are called by Christ to follow him, to walk with him, and to rediscover that 'history therefore becomes the arena where we see what God does for humanity.'"[33]

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[29]Versaldi, "Leading and Serving through Theology: 50 Years After Vatican II," 20, quoting Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* 133.

[30]Versaldi, "Leading and Serving through Theology: 50 Years After Vatican II," 21, quoting the International Theological Commission, *Theology Today: Perspectives, Principles and Criteria* (2011), n. 93.

[31]Versaldi, "Leading and Serving through Theology: 50 Years After Vatican II," 22, quoting the International Theological Commission, *Theology Today*, n. 95.

[32]Versaldi, "Leading and Serving through Theology: 50 Years After Vatican II," 22.

[33]John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* (On the Relationship Between Faith and Reason [1998]), n. 12.

Given the interrelation of theology with missiology and spirituality, I posit that the teaching of theology has to be a *ministry* in which the lecturers lend themselves more conscientiously to God for God to fulfill God's desires of forming the *formandi* in God's image so they may collaborate more effectively with God in what God is already actively doing in Asia. This ministry of teaching theology involves a mystagogy in which the lecturer guides the *formandi* in a contemplation of placing oneself in God's triune presence, becoming attentive to God's voice and the deepest passion, to the burning issues and challenges in the *formandi*'s heart.

In teaching *An Asian Contextual Theology of Sacred Sustainability*,[34] a mystagogy was introduced to the pastoral spiral for the course. This spiral began with a 2-night immersion-experience in the Aeta communities in Tarlac.[35] The critical and prayerful analysis done in class culminated in a contemplative moment of attending to what God is saying and already doing in the midst of the Aeta communities.[36] The theological reflection done in class is also interspersed with a discerning contemplative moment. I remembered guiding the *formandi* through an "incarnational contemplation"[37] of being taken up into the presence of the Triune God, gazing on the world of the Aeta communities. At the same time, the *formandi* are guided to be attentive to what God is saying by identifying the surging passion and the burning challenges/issues in their hearts. Each one was to identify what was deep down in his heart, be it poverty, environment, justice, etc.[38] After the prayer, the *formandi* were encouraged to correlate critically what was identified

[34]The course I offer is Theo 345.5: Religion, The Catholic Church, and Society: An Asian Contextual Theology of Sacred Sustainability. It is held every Wednesday, from 2:00–4:40pm, at Seminar Room 2, Loyola School of Theology.

[35]The immersion in the Aeta communities of Tarlac took place on Jan. 15–17, 2016.

[36]The guided prayer took place at the end of the session on March 2, 2016.

[37]Cf. Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises* 102.

[38]The guided prayer took place at the middle of the session on March 11, 2016.

in the guided prayer with relevant Bible passages as well as Catholic social and papal teachings.[39]

The course will culminate in a recollection in which the same mystagogy hopes to introduce the *formandi* to an experience of the *Assisian contemplatio*, an "awe-filled contemplation of creation"[40] that Pope Francis has ingeniously woven into *Laudato Si'*. This ingenuity serves to alert contemporary women and men of the need to "water the vast inner desert"[41] in human civilization with the dews of the contemplative and prophetic mysticism of St. Francis of Assisi.[42] This recollection aims to dispose the *formandi* to listen to God and what God is asking each of them to do for/with God and the marginal communities.[43]

Only the dews of mystical moments enable contemporary women and men in theological studies to awaken within themselves the insightful exhortation of Ali al-khawas: "There is a subtle mystery in each of the movements and sounds of this world. The initiate will capture what is being said when the wind blows, the trees sway, water flows, flies buzz, doors creak, birds sing, or in the sound of strings or flutes, the sighs of the sick, the groans of the afflicted."[44] In this mystical experience, the "distance between the creatures of the world

[39]The Bible passages and Catholic Social/Papal Teachings are given to the *formandi* in a paper entitled *Sacred Nature: Sustainable Life: Bible & Catholic Social Teachings*.

[40]Francis, *Laudato Si'* 125.

[41]Francis, *Laudato Si'* 217.

[42]See Francis of Assisi, *Canticle of the Creatures*, in R. J. Armstrong, J.A. Wayne Helimann, & W. J. Short, eds., *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents* (New York/London/Manila: New City Press, 1999), 113–114.

[43]May 11, 2016 is the day in the course when the *formandi* prays to understand what God is asking each of them to do for God and God's marginal people.

[44]Francis, *Laudato Si'*, footnote 159. See Eva de Vitray-Meyerovitch, ed., *Anthologie du soufisme* (Paris: 1978), 200.

and the interior experience of God" no longer exists.[45] In addition, neither does the distance between the cosmos and all things created and the mystical experience of God exist.[46]

This cosmic mysticism will be the basis for embodying a mystical prophetism that enables the *formandi* to be sensitive to the cries of the poor[47] and promote the sustainability of livelihood with dignity for the marginalized. This mystical prophetism will enable the *formandi* to be attentive to what God is desiring by discerning the aspirations, joys, and sorrows of the marginalized. After the prayerful discernment will the *formandi* be better disposed to collaborate with what God is already actively doing to ensure that the marginalized have a place in our common home.

Conclusion

The *kairos* is God's time calling for a human response. God has been faithfully accompanying the Loyola School of Theology. As a Jesuit institution of Asia, our remembrance of what we have done for Christ calls for a critical reappraisal of where we are so that we are grateful to God for what we are doing and what more we can do for the greater glory of God. Indeed, embarking on the pathway of envisioning how LST is leading and serving theology calls for teaching theology as a ministry with a mystagogy so that we can better respond to God's mission within the context of the megatrends, with the richness of the intercultural-religious-spiritualities as a globalized Church of Asia.

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[45]Francis, *Laudato Si'*, footnote 159.

[46]This kind of cosmic mysticism is what I describe as "cosmicism" in which the pray-er is drawn into a felt-experience that God is all in all (Eph. 4:6) in the cosmos and that this "allness" is in creation and creation is in this "allness." In other words, the "allness" (of God) is the "allness" (of creation) and vice versa. Dualism no longer exists.

[47]Francis, *Laudato Si'* 46.

CONTRIBUTORS

Catalino G. Arévalo, S.J., widely recognized as the Dean of Filipino Theologians, is Professor Emeritus of Loyola School of Theology. He is a beloved teacher and mentor to generations of students and seminarians of San Jose Seminary and Loyola School of Theology. On August 16, 2009, the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences presented an Award of Recognition to Fr. Arévalo for "several of his pivotal and perduring contributions to assist the Asian Bishops, specifically: in serving as theological *peritus* to the FABC from its beginnings in 1970 until 1995; in crafting the visionary and programmatic final document of the First FABC Plenary Assembly in 1974, *Evangelization in Modern Day Asia*; in convening and founding the FABC Theological Advisory Commission in 1985; in promoting indigenous Asian theology, for which he is properly recognized as the 'Father of Asian Theology.'"

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Orlando Cardinal Quevedo, O.M.I., D.D., earned his degree in Philosophy from San Jose Seminary, Quezon City, in 1960. After finishing his STB and MA in Religious Education at the Oblate College, Catholic University of America, in Washington, D.C., he was ordained a priest of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate on June 5, 1964. He was made the Bishop of Kidapawan in 1980, Archbishop of Nueva Segovia in 1986, and Archbishop of Cotabato in 1998. A peace advocate and a powerful voice for interreligious dialogue in the southern Philippines, he co-founded the Bishops-Ulama Conference of the Philippines in 1996. He was elected President of the Catholic

Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) from 1999 to 2003, and of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) from 2005 to 2011. Pope Francis made him a Cardinal in the consistory of February 22, 2014.

Giuseppe Cardinal Versaldi, D.D., obtained a degree in psychology and then a doctorate in canon law from the Pontifical Gregorian University. In 1976, he set up a diocesan family counseling center, of which he was director, and promoted the family apostolate. Subsequently he became president of the Piedmontese Federation of Christian Counselors. In 1980, he was invited to teach canon law and psychology at the Pontifical Gregorian University while retaining some of his activities in the Archdiocese of Vercelli. He obtained the title of advocate at the Roman Rota, and then became a referendary in 1985 and a member of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura in 2007, while also teaching anthropology at the Studium of the Roman Rota. On April 4, 2007, he was appointed Bishop of Alessandria, and in 2011 he was named President of the Prefecture for the Economic Affairs of the Holy See. Benedict XVI appointed him Cardinal in the consistory of February 18, 2012, and Pope Francis appointed him Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education on March 31, 2015.

Nelson and Ma. Socorro Villafania were among the more than fifty lay individuals from different countries who participated in the Synod on the Family held last October 4–25, 2015. Nelson is collaborator at the Evangelion Foundation in Mandaluyong City; Maria Socorro is former lecturer in theology at the Assumption College in Makati City and works with the Salesian Sisters in the preparation of catechists.